

## **Double Pandemics: Racism and COVID-19**

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As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, we must not lose sight of the fact that the pandemic disproportionately affects racial and ethnic minorities. [Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Pacific Islanders, and Asian populations are more likely to die from COVID-19 than white Americans](#). Black Americans, specifically, represent the highest risk for COVID-19-related mortality and are 3.8 times more likely to die from COVID-19 than white Americans. Despite representing approximately 13% of the overall US population, [Black Americans represent approximately 20% of all deaths due to COVID-19](#). The disparity in death rates is no mystery: it is the consequence of longstanding social, economic, and political inequality in the United States that is rooted in the enduring legacy of white supremacy and racism. This ongoing legacy undergirds social and cultural institutions and demands fundamental change. At the same time as the COVID-19 crisis, racial justice activists have brought renewed attention to how systemic racism is responsible for the disproportionately high levels of police violence against black and brown people. As US Representative Barbara Lee has explained, Black Americans are experiencing “[a pandemic within a pandemic](#),” both of which share a common root cause of systemic racism. Indeed, racism itself is a [public health issue](#) that necessitates societal interventions to address COVID-19 disparities, police violence, and broader social inequalities.