



Ten Equity Implications of the COVID 19 Pandemic in the United States

The Imperative for Civil Rights Advocacy, Monitoring, and Enforcement

- I. Racism and stigmatization have increased, particularly towards the Asian population.**
 - a. [Coronavirus: The latest disease to fuel mistrust, fear, and racism](#)—The Conversation
 - b. [Feds Sound Alarm Over Claims of Asian Discrimination in Schools](#)—The Wall Street Journal
 - c. [Coronavirus panic sparks racist incidents against Asian Americans](#)—CBS News

- II. Vulnerable populations face differential exposure and extensive corresponding implications.**
 - a. Grandparents engaged to provide childcare when schools closed are at greater risk.
 - i. [Fears of virus risk to grandparents offering emergency care](#)—The Guardian
 - b. Risk to incarcerated persons is significantly more than the general population due to confined space.
 - i. [Correctional Facilities the Perfect Incubators for Coronavirus](#)—Mother Jones
 - ii. [Prisons and Jails are Vulnerable to COVID 19 Outbreaks](#)—The Verge
 - c. Immigrant Health is at increased risk from fear of detention and due to denial of healthcare.
 - i. [With Coronavirus, 'Health Care for Some' Is a Recipe for Disaster](#)—NY Times
 - ii. [Democrats warn Trump's immigration policies risk aggravating coronavirus](#)—The Hill
 - d. Elderly persons with chronic illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes, and lung disease, all of which are more prevalent in African American communities, are more likely to be impacted by the virus.
 - i. [Here's what older at-risk people should know about the virus.](#)—Healthline
 - e. Nursing homes have been hit hard by the pandemic.
 - i. [Nursing homes face unique challenge with coronavirus](#)—US News and World Reports
 - ii. [For Relatives of Nursing Home Residents, Anger and Worry Spread](#)—Time
 - f. Risk for homeless persons is at least doubled.
 - i. [Homeless at 'double risk' of getting, spreading coronavirus](#)—ABC News
 - ii. [Homeless among the most vulnerable to coronavirus, experts say](#)—Fox News
 - g. Low income communities under quarantine and unable to work will not be in a position to buy basic needs—food, water, and non-toxic sanitation supplies and may need assistance with energy bills /or rent.
 - i. [For urban poor coronavirus complicates existing health risks](#)—NY Times
 - ii. [Avoiding coronavirus may be a luxury some workers can't afford](#)—NY Times
 - iii. [Colorado wants to make sure coronavirus doesn't affect low income communities, minorities, disproportionately](#)—The Colorado Sun
 - iv. [Rural Americans are vulnerable to the virus](#)—Center for American Progress

- III. Frontline workers face tough choices amid differential health and economic risks and impacts.**
 - a. Protection for cleaners is lacking, resulting in differential exposure and risk.
 - i. [Airport workers say they lacked gloves and training to clean planes amid coronavirus](#)—LA Times
 - ii. [Coronavirus in NY: Workers don hazmat suits to scrub germs off NYC buses](#)—NY Post
 - b. Many workers can't afford to be off work due to lost pay.
 - i. [Coronavirus poses risk for workers who can't afford to lose pay](#)—Wall Street Journal
 - ii. [Paid sick leave could prevent the spread of coronavirus but 18 states prevent local governments from implementing](#)—The Business Insider
 - c. Gig Economy workers have little choice in being on the frontlines of exposure.
 - i. [Coronavirus hits gig workers particularly hard](#)—Financial Times
 - ii. [Self-isolate or get paid? That's the choice for gig workers in a virus outbreak](#)—CNN
 - iii. [Virus spread emphasizes precariousness of gig economy work](#)—Axios

- IV. Democracy vehicles are being jeopardized by coronavirus impacts.**
- a. Census Bureau is beginning to weigh how coronavirus may affect operations.
 - i. [The Census Bureau wasn't counting on coronavirus](#)—The City Lab
 - b. Primaries may be impacted, particularly for older voters.
 - i. [Ten More States Have Primaries in March. Here's How Coronavirus Could Affect Voter Turnout](#)—Time
 - c. One large political gathering has already seen an incident of an infected participant.
 - i. [CPAC Attendee Has the Coronavirus, Attendees Say](#)—The New York Times
- V. Coronavirus remediation will result in increased exposure to toxic cleaning chemicals from products used in households, businesses, schools, which may harm occupants and cleaners.**
- a. [Coronavirus: Disinfectants selling out at Sacramento stores](#)—KCRA.com
 - b. [Abilene Sells Out of Cleaning Supplies, Masks Amid Coronavirus Concerns](#)—KTXS.com
 - c. [The Dirty Truth About Cleaning Products](#)—The Today Show
 - d. [Environmental Working Group's Hall of Shame: Toxic Household Cleaners](#)—CBS News
- VI. School impacts may include infection outbreaks in closed spaces, and education interruptions, if schools close.**
- a. [Parents express concern over how coronavirus could impact schools](#)—Hawaii News
 - b. [Many Districts Won't Be Ready for Remote Learning If Coronavirus Closes Schools](#)—Ed News
- VII. Testing kits are lacking and when they become available, it's unclear how access will be prioritized and for whom, as well as what the implications of diagnosis will be for those who are uninsured.**
- a. [How many Americans have been tested for coronavirus?--](#)The Atlantic
 - b. [Coronavirus: White House concedes US lacks enough test kits](#)—BBC News
 - c. [The CDC's rocky efforts to get the US tested for coronavirus, explained](#)--Vox
- VIII. Quarantine policies and practices are unfolding with a risk to human and civil rights, given the unprecedented scale of the pandemic, possibly exacerbated by the historic experiences of marginalized communities with state sponsored confinement.**
- a. [What Can the Government Force People to Do in the Name of Containing the Virus?](#)—LA Times
 - b. [The US Government Can Contain You for Coronavirus and There's Almost Nothing You Can Do About It](#)—The Washington Post
 - c. [Cancer patient quarantined on cruise ship fears she won't make it home for chemotherapy](#)—Fox40 News
 - d. [Neenah family now back together after being separated due to coronavirus quarantine](#)—Fox 11 News
- IX. The coronavirus has already been used to justify restrictive immigration policies and increased militarization.**
- a. [Trump to deploy 160 active duty troops to border in response to court rulings, coronavirus](#)—USA Today
 - b. [The US Coronavirus travel ban could backfire: Here's How--](#)CNN
 - c. [Trump blames dem immigration policy for coronavirus: 'border security is also health security'](#)—Newsweek
 - d. ['Walls don't stop viruses': Donald Trump Jr torched for exploiting coronavirus to bash immigration](#)—The Raw Story
- X. Denial and misinformation on the crisis can exacerbate the pandemic, by discouraging critical precautions.**
- a. [Trump says the coronavirus is the democrats' new hoax](#)—CNBC
 - b. [As CDC Says 'Do Not Go to Work,' Trump Says Thousands With Coronavirus Could Go to Work and Get Better](#)—Common Dreams
 - c. [President Trump said people with coronavirus "go to work" and critics are furious](#)—CBS News
 - d. [Trump rallies his base to treat coronavirus as a hoax--](#)Politico
 - e. [Trump supporter says she doesn't believe coronavirus exists despite 7 US deaths](#)—The Mirror

Civil Rights Advocacy Recommendations

First and foremost, the Administration should declare a [Public Health Emergency](#) to mobilize the level of resources necessary to deal with a catastrophe of such magnitude.

I. Racism/xenophobia/stigma

- a. **Short term:** Advocate for federal, state, and local governmental officials dominating the airways to lead on narrative shift with messaging to include: The virus is the enemy, not the person who is infected; This pandemic could have started anywhere. It just happened to have started in China through no fault of the people of China.; We are all in this together! We are stronger together Only through collective, global cooperation can we contain this pandemic!
- b. **Long term:** Eradicate racism!

II. Vulnerable Populations

- a. **Grandparents at risk via childcare:** Advocate for expanded parental leave benefits so that grandparents do not have to be in the position of having to do emergency childcare. This is a matter of workers' rights and corporate social responsibility. This can also a call to federal government to develop a mechanism to provide a short term benefit (perhaps through the unemployment system so that a new mechanism doesn't have to be developed) for workers in small businesses to be able to have some support when they are unable to work.
- b. **Incarcerated persons:** Advocate for: 1) Facilities to take all precautions in cleaning/sanitation with non-toxic cleaning supplies; 2) Incarcerated persons be prioritized for testing, given differential vulnerability. 3) Quality healthcare to be afforded to those who are infected. 4) Any quarantine efforts do not result in persons being put into more restrictive environments, such as solitary confinement cells.
- c. **Immigrant population:** Advocate for: 1) A sanctuary model to be employed with regard to testing and treatment of immigrant populations with no fear of detention. Clear messages should go out directing that ICE will not be called for anyone seeking health care. 2) Quarantine sheltering should be provided with no questions asked before, during, or after and this message needs to be very abundantly conveyed so that persons do not fear seeking assistance. 3) Trusted institutions in the community should be resourced, including training, equipment, and supplies, to provide services including testing, health care, and sheltering/quarantine to this differentially vulnerable population that will have trust issues with strangers in spite of all assurances.
- d. **Elderly Persons/Person with Special Health Needs:** Advocate for: 1) Prioritization for universal routine testing, monitoring, and treatment; 2) Special delivery of basic needs; Training on staying safe and healthy.
- e. **Nursing home residents:** Advocate for: 1)Prioritization for universal routine testing, monitoring, and treatment; 2)Capacity and resources to remove and support infected persons in quarantine so that they do not infect other residents and/or staff members; 3)Resourced training and supplies for staff and management;
- f. **Homeless Persons**
 - i. **Short term:** Advocate for: 1) Provision of universal emergency sheltering services: 2) Prioritization for universal routine testing; 3) Mobile basic needs delivery, including food, clothing, and sanitation supplies, for those who do not want to accept emergency sheltering services; 4) Training on staying safe and healthy;
 - ii. **Long term:** Eliminate homelessness—housing for ALL!
- g. **Low Income communities**
 - i. **Short term:** Advocate for: 1) Provision of universal emergency sheltering services: 2) Prioritization for universal routine testing, monitoring, and treatment; 3) Mobile basic needs delivery, including food and sanitation supplies,
 - ii. **Long term:** Eradicate poverty!

III. Workers' Rights

a. *Cleaning workers*

- i. **Short term:** Advocate for: 1) Stringent adherence to the standards delineated in the Occupational Safety and Health Act. 2) Provision of training and safety gear as well as non-toxic cleaning materials. 3) Prioritization of provision of routine testing to this differentially vulnerable group; 4) Provision of quality treatment and quarantine in adherence with the standards of the Quarantine Bill of Rights referenced below.
- ii. **Long term:** Advocate for strengthened OSHA standards to adequately respond to extreme circumstances such as the COVID 19 Pandemic.

b. *Workers without paid leave*

- i. **Short term:** Advocate for 1) Provision of testing; 2) If infection is diagnosed, provision of quality treatment and quarantine in adherence with the standards of the Quarantine Bill of Rights referenced below. 3) Establishment of a system which allows workers without paid leave to still draw an income if they are unable to work due to the coronavirus, potentially through a mechanism such as the unemployment system.
- ii. **Long term:** Advocate for the establishment of a paid leave system for all workers.

c. *Gig economy workers*

- i. **Short term:** Advocate for 1) Access to training, equipment, and supplies to minimize exposure/contact with the virus. 2) Provision of testing; 2) If infection is diagnosed, provision of quality treatment and quarantine in adherence with the standards of the Quarantine Bill of Rights referenced below. 3) Establishment of a system which allows workers without paid leave to still draw an income if they are unable to work due to the coronavirus, potentially through a mechanism such as the unemployment system.
- ii. **Long term: Advocate for establishment of systems for health**

IV. Democracy

- a. **Census**—Advocate for: 1) Extensive training of outreach workers on safety, sanitation, and health measures; 2) Provide alternate means of data collection; 3) Extend data collection period beyond when the virus is contained to ensure optimal results.
- b. **Primaries**—Advocate for: 1) Extension of voting hours; 2) Thorough cleaning of all surfaces of polling places including cleaning of each booth between each voter; 3) Staggering of voting periods and amount of people in each period to minimize lines in close quarters; 4) Provision of thorough training of poll workers; 5) Explore alternate means of voting to ensure universal participation.
- c. **Political gatherings**—Advocate for: 1) Minimization and/or cancellation of all large gatherings given the extreme risk; 2) Explore models for virtual town hall meetings via social media and otherwise until pandemic is contained.

V. Toxic Cleaning Materials

- a. **Short Term:** Advocate for: 1) Agencies such as CDC and other to emphasize non-toxic cleaning products; Businesses including airlines, transportation companies, etc. be required to only provide non-toxic cleaning products for worker usage.
- b. **Long Term:** Significantly increase the stringency of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) Chemical Substance Inventory and maintain thorough monitoring and enforcement.

VI. Schools (Exposure and Education Interruptions)

- a. **Exposure**—Advocate for: 1) Equal standards of sanitation, safety, and health in all schools; 2) Training of all school personnel and students on healthy practices; 3) Provision of equipment and supplies necessary to maintain health and safety standards; 4) Routine testing when kits become available; 5) Execution of appropriate containment processes if an infection is discovered, while ensuring the centering of equity, justice, dignity, safety, and health.

- b. Education Interruptions**—Advocate for: 1) Education continuity to the highest standard possible in the event of the need for school closure due to infection or risk. 2) Establishment of alternative means of education that are accessible to all and of comparable quality to the in-classroom experience.

VII. Testing and Treatment Access

- a. Advocate that as testing kits become available, vulnerable groups/populations are prioritized for testing and treatment.

VIII. Quarantine Policies and Practices

- a. Advocate for the establishment and enforcement of a Quarantine Bill of Rights that sets forth conditions by which one can be remitted into quarantine, the conditions of quarantined, and the criteria for release while centering equity, justice, dignity, safety, health, comfort, and self-determination throughout the continuum.

IX. Restrictive Immigration Policies and Practices

- a. Advocate for: 1) Establishment of sanctuary municipalities and states; 2) Repeal of the travel ban; 3) Repeal of the restrictions on provision of healthcare to immigrants; 4) Improved conditions at the border in accordance with stringent public health standards.

X. Denial and Misinformation Impacts

- a. **Short term:** Advance a counternarrative/vigilant refuting of misinformation and replacing with science based facts. Advocate for the federal, state, and local officials to only present factual information to the public.
- b. **Longer term:** Advance litigation for willful misleading of the public for political gain while jeopardizing the wellbeing of the nation.

Questions we must ask ourselves as implications of this pandemic continue to unfold:

1. How do we maintain rigorous grassroots mobilization on other fronts of struggle amidst the coronavirus crisis?
2. How do we anticipate and begin to mitigate against the shocks to the economy that will inevitably hit the most vulnerable first and worst?

Promising Emerging Equity Based Efforts:

- 1) VA Governor Launches Coronavirus Equity Taskforce (source forthcoming)
- 2) Chicago Groups Advance Chicago Coronavirus COVID 19 People's Action Plan (source forthcoming)
- 3) National Nurses United Guidance <https://www.nationalnursesunited.org/covid-19>

CORONAVIRUS MANGEMENT RESOURCES

- 1) [Coronavirus-How to Protect Yourself](#) (World Economic Forum)
- 2) [Get Your Household Ready](#) (CDC)
- 3) [Everything You Need to Know About Getting Tested for Coronavirus](#) (PoliSci)
- 4) [Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patients](#) (CDC)
- 5) [Coronavirus 101](#) (World Health Organization)
- 6) [How to Quarantine Yourself](#) (New York Times)
- 7) [Coronavirus Map](#) (NBC News)
- 8) [Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#) (CDC)
- 9) [Resources for K-12 Schools and Childcare Programs](#) (CDC)
- 10) [Resources for Community and Faith Based Leaders](#) (CDC)
- 11) [Seventeen Best Natural Cleaning Products](#) (NY Magazine)

For More Information: Jacqueline Patterson, ECJP Senior Director, ecjp@naacpnet.org