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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN DUVAL COUNTY (DOH-DUVAL) AWARDED NATIONAL GRANT TO ADDRESS COVID-19 HEALTH DISPARITIES

Jacksonville, Florida - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's COVID-19 Health Equity Project is a federal grant program that aids public health professionals in addressing COVID-19 health disparities among populations at high-risk in their communities; [DOH-Duval](#) has been selected as one of the grant recipients.

Jacksonville has a population of approximately 846,949 residents (twelve years of age and older) and has been greatly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. According to [the State's COVID-19 Weekly Situation Report](#) (as of June 10, 2021), there have been 100,193 cases of COVID-19; in addition - 382,348 have been vaccinated - resulting in a vaccination rate of 45%.

"Health disparities are a problem in our county, and we are continuously strategizing on how we can reach those who need us most," said Dr. Pauline Rolle, Medical Director of DOH-Duval. "This grant is a step in the right direction and will help us improve contact tracing, provide more culturally appropriate health education, increase our capacity to provide vaccines, and decrease the spread of COVID-19 in our community."

COVID-19 Health Disparity Data

- Black residents, those of Other races, and Hispanics are at higher risk for poor outcomes due to COVID-19 and have been selected as priority populations for this COVID-19 Health Equity Project.
- 8% of white residents have been infected with COVID-19.
- In contrast, 12% of black residents, 18% of residents of Other races, and 10% of Hispanic residents have been infected with COVID-19.
- Although Black residents represent 32% of the population, they account for 40% of all COVID-19 hospitalizations.

The grant funding spans from July 1, 2021 to May 31, 2023 and will provide DOH-Duval with \$6,549,091.00 to secure additional COVID-19 resources for populations identified as high-risk and underserved in Jacksonville, Florida.

DOH-Duval's COVID-19 Health Equity Strategies

1. Expand existing and/or develop new mitigation/prevention resources and services to reduce COVID-19 disparities among populations at higher risk and that are underserved.
2. Build, leverage, and expand infrastructure support for COVID-19.
3. Mobilize partners and collaborators to advance health equity and address the social determinants of health as they relate to COVID-19 disparities among populations at higher risk and that are underserved.

The COVID-19 Health Equity grant will also enable DOH-Duval to hire a Health Equity team and establish a COVID-19 taskforce as a subcommittee of Duval County's Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) partnership to provide advice, guidance, and recommendations for addressing COVID-19 disparities and advancing health equity.

Key External Partnerships

- City of Jacksonville
- UF Health
- Voices Institute
- The Refugee Taskforce
- The Jacksonville Housing Authority
- The Mayor's Hispanic Advisory Board
- Safe Future Foundation
- First Coast Black Nurses Association
- Philippine Nurses Association of Northeast Florida
- Muslim American Social Services (MASS) Clinic
- Northeast Florida AHEC
- Duval County Medical Society
- Inspire to Rise

For additional information on the COVID-19 Health Equity Project or to schedule an interview with the Florida Department of Duval County, please contact [Samantha Epstein](#).

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