



Rates of Extreme Sentencing by Race in North Carolina

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Methodology

- All statistics derived from data supplied by the NC Department of Public Safety (DPS)
- <https://webapps.doc.state.nc.us/opi/downloads.do?method=view>
- “The files contain all public information on all NC Department of Public Safety offenders convicted since 1972.”



Methodology, cont.

- DPS identifies people in their custody by both race and ethnicity
- The race categories are Asian/Ortl, Black, Indian, Other, Unknown, and White
- The ethnicity categories are African, American Indian, Asian, European, N. Am./Austr., Hispanic/Latino, Nordic/Scandanavian, Oriental, Other, Pacific Islander, Slavic (E. European), and Unknown

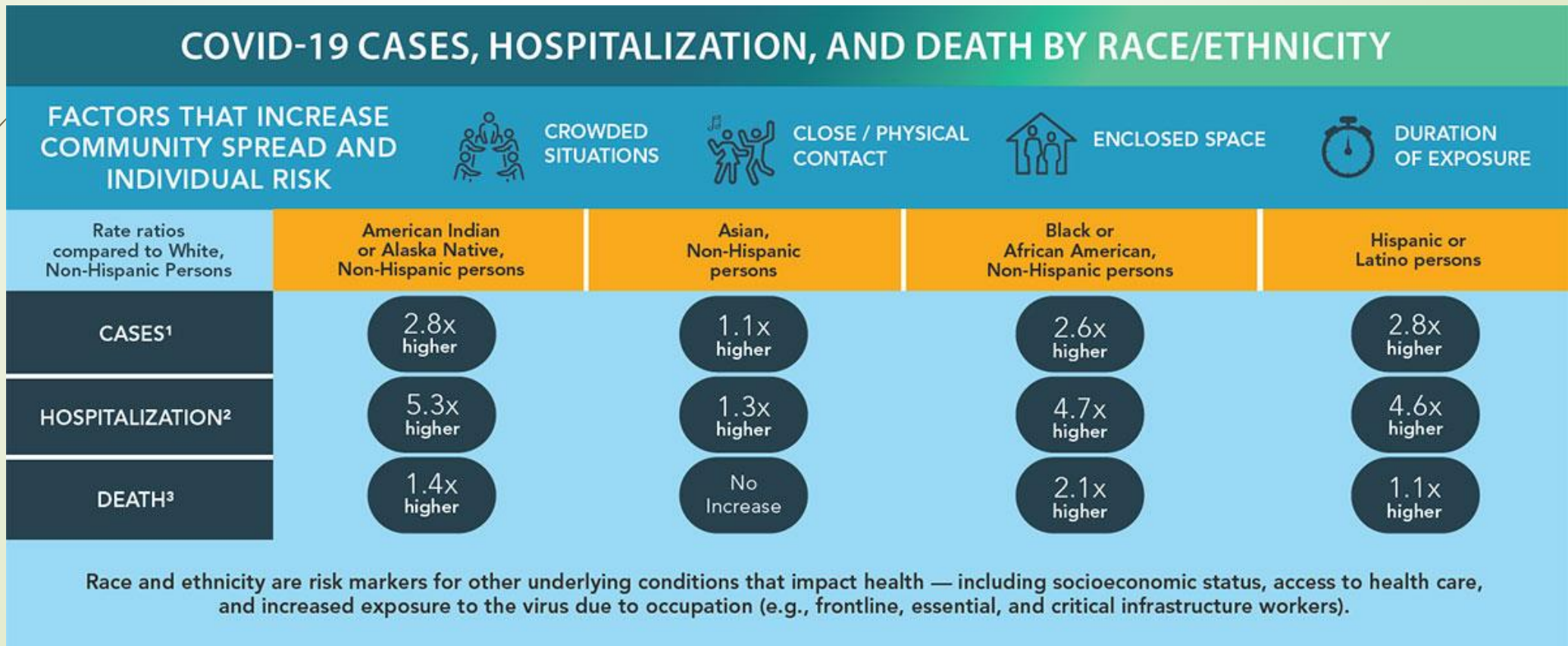


Methodology, cont.

- For descriptive sake, I have collapsed these races and ethnicities into six categories:
 1. Asian (including people with ancestry from the Indian subcontinent and Pacific islands)
 2. Black
 3. Latinx
 4. Native American
 5. Two or more races/ethnicities or unknown
 6. White

A word about COVID-19

- ▶ The coronavirus pandemic has disproportionately affected communities of color
- ▶ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/health-equity/race-ethnicity.html>





COVID, cont.

- The risk to people in prison is also high because those people “live, work, eat, study, and participate in activities within congregate environments”
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/correction-detention/guidance-correctional-detention.html>
- Transfers of people in and out of prisons and movements of staff and vendors all increase the risk of introduction of COVID-19 into facilities
- Social distancing is impossible in prison
- As we will see, if prison populations are threatened, people of color are threatened



North Carolina Demographics

Race/Ethnicity	1990	Most recent Census estimate
ASIAN	0.8	3.3
BLACK	21.3	21.5
LATINX	1.2	9.8
NATIVE AM.	1.2	1.6
TWO OR MORE/UNKNOWN	0.5	1.2
WHITE	75.0	62.6



General Prison Demographics

Race/Ethnicity	1990 (Statewide)	Current (Statewide)	Since 1972 (In prisons)	Current (In prisons)
ASIAN	0.8	3.3	0.2	0.4
BLACK	21.3	21.5	49.4	51.5
LATINX	1.2	9.8	3.9	5.4
NATIVE AM.	1.2	1.6	1.9	1.9
TWO OR MORE/UNKNOWN	0.5	1.2	0.2	0.5
WHITE	75.0	62.6	44.3	40.3



Long-term Incarceration Rates

Race/Ethnicity	Statewide	Serving at least 20 Years
ASIAN	3.3	0.5
BLACK	21.5	55.8
LATINX	9.8	5.1
NATIVE AM.	1.6	2.1
TWO OR MORE/UNKNOWN	1.2	0.3
WHITE	62.6	36.2




Long-term, cont.

Race/Ethnicity	Statewide	Serving at least 20 Years	Life with parole or life equivalent	LWOP
ASIAN	3.3	0.5	0.4	0.7
BLACK	21.5	55.8	60.1	59.6
LATINX	9.8	5.1	2.5	3.2
NATIVE AM.	1.6	2.1	2.4	2.9
TWO OR MORE/UNKNOWN	1.2	0.3	0.3	0.5
WHITE	62.6	36.2	34.2	33.1



Long-term, cont.

Race/Ethnicity	Statewide	Juvenile Life	VHF	JLWOP
ASIAN	3.3	1.0	0.0	3.2
BLACK	21.5	74.0	80.0	80.9
LATINX	9.8	2.0	0.0	5.3
NATIVE AM.	1.6	2.0	4.0	2.1
TWO OR MORE/UNKNOWN	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
WHITE	62.6	21.0	16.0	8.5



Long-term Incarceration of Black People

Black people make up

- 21.5% of state population
- 51.5% of the current prison population
- 55.8% of the people serving more than 20 years in prison
- 60.1% of the people serving life sentences or the equivalent
- 59.6% of the people serving LWOP who will never be released
- 74% of the children serving life with parole sentences
- 80% of the people serving LWOP sentences for violent habitual felon status
- 80.9% of the children sentenced to LWOP



Long-term Incarceration of People of Color

People of color make up

- 25% of the state population in 1990
- 37.4% of state population today
- 59.7% of the current prison population
- 63.8% of the people serving more than 20 years in prison
- 65.8% of the people serving life sentences or the equivalent
- 66.9% of the people serving LWOP who will never be released
- 79% of the children serving life with parole sentences
- 84% of the people serving LWOP sentences for violent habitual felon status
- 91.5 % of the children sentenced to LWOP



The Role of Infractions

- Infractions affect nearly every part of prison life
- How many and what type of infractions people in prison get determine where they live, where they work, and how soon they get out
- Work release, home passes, and parole all depend on avoiding infractions
- DPS's extended limits of confinement program for COVID-19 is not available to anyone with a class A or B infraction in the past 6 months



The Black-White Infraction Split

Race/Ethnicity	% of prison population	% of infractions received
ASIAN	0.4	0.2
BLACK	51.5	64.7
LATINX	5.4	3.3
NATIVE AM.	1.9	2.5
TWO OR MORE/UNKNOWN	0.5	0.3
WHITE	40.3	29.0