

The logo for STL (St. Louis) is a white 'STL' text on a blue square background.

FORWARD
THROUGH
FERGUSON

Photo by Bryan Sutter

Photo by Lawrence Bryant

#StillCompromising: Racial Disparities in the time of COVID -19

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Data & Research Catalyst, Forward Through Ferguson

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How we got here.

Photos by Lindy Drew



“ a thorough, wide-ranging and unflinching study of the social and economic conditions that impede progress, equality and safety in the St. Louis region.



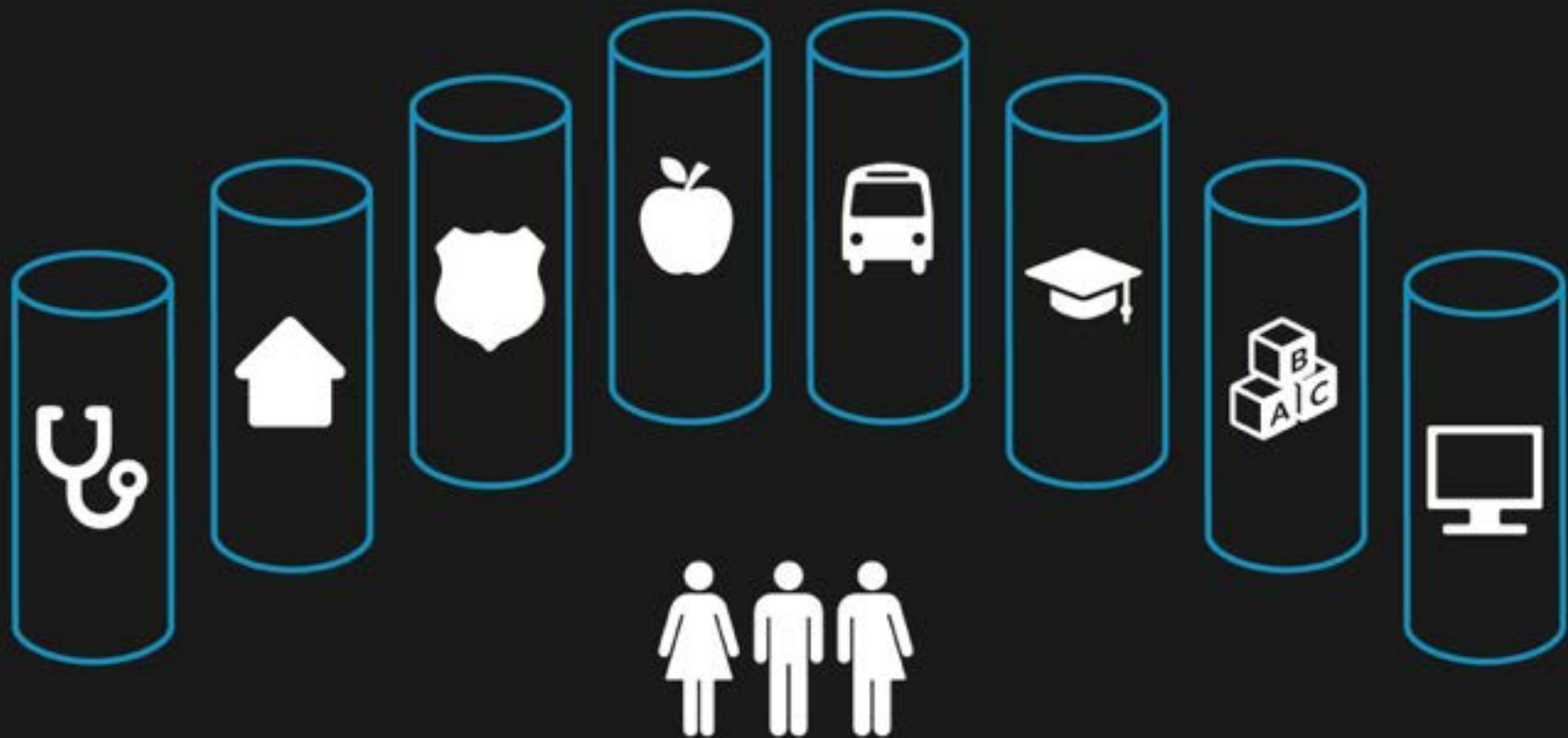
COMMISSION BY THE NUMBERS

Commissioners, working group members, and other citizens contributed more than



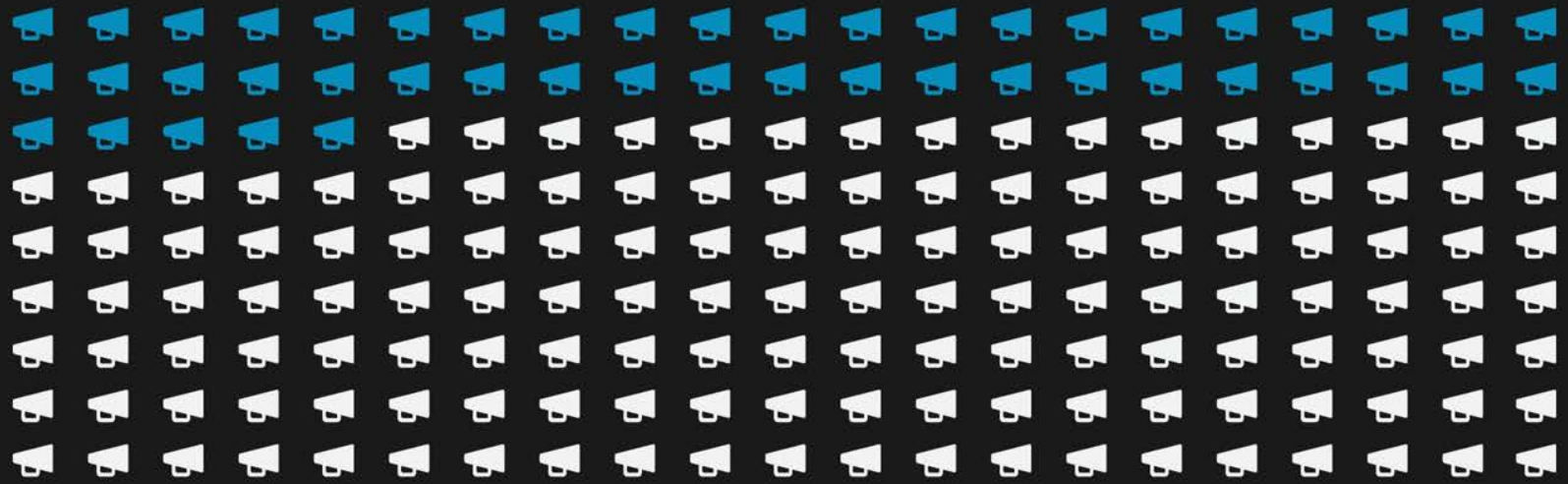
 = 1,000 hours

30,000 *Hours*





COMMISSION BY THE NUMBERS



189

Calls To Action

47

Signature Priorities



OUR MISSION:

Embracing the Ferguson Commission's mandate, Forward Through Ferguson centers impacted communities and mobilizes accountable bodies to advance racially equitable systems and policies that ensure all people in the St. Louis region can thrive.



Still Compromising: The Disparate Impact of COVID-19 in St. Louis

In March of 1820, the Missouri Compromise was signed and the state of Missouri was born out of an insistence on the systematic subjugation and devaluation of Black lives.

In March and April of 2020—200 years later — COVID-19 is revealing that we are still very much grappling with that original sin. The pandemic and its disproportionate effect on Black St. Louisans is pulling back the veil on our broken and inequitable systems. In this series we explore how COVID-19 has laid bare the ways we continue to compromise on our shared values and how we can use this crisis as an opportunity to catalyze Racial Equity.

#StillCompromising

#STILLCOMPROMISING

Ep 1. (How We Know) Who Gets Sick



Ep 2. Who Gets Sickest



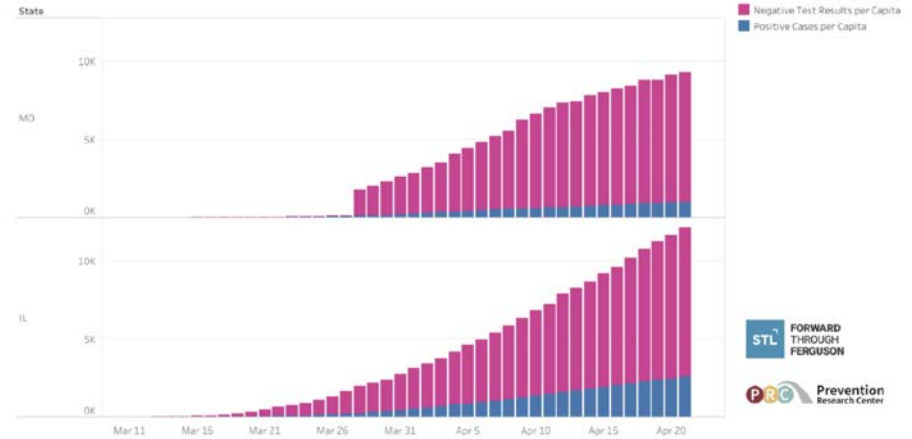
Ep 3. Who Is "Essential"



EP. 1: (HOW WE KNOW) WHO GETS SICK

- Testing rationing encourages disparities in who gets tested, which contributes to disparities in who gets COVID and who dies from it

COVID-19 testing and positive rates in MO compared to IL
Updated April 21, 2020

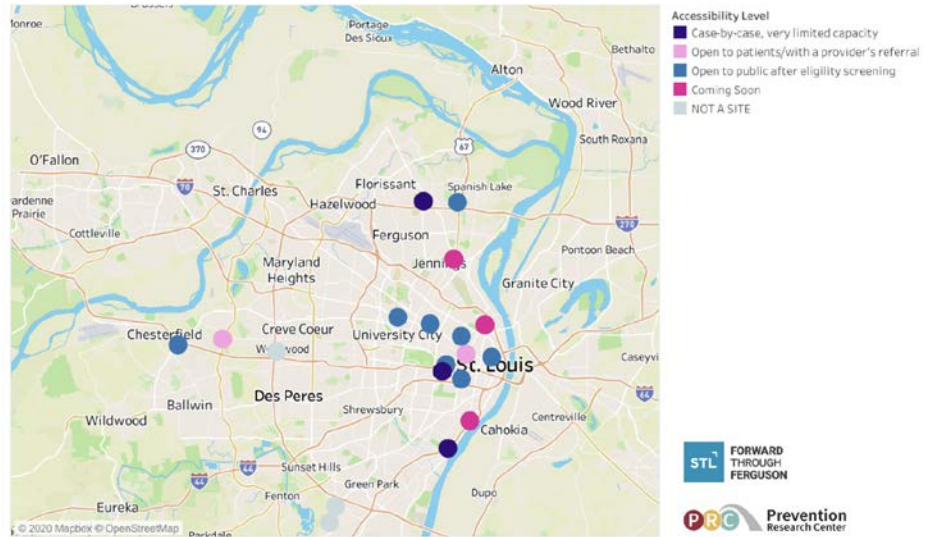


For the first half of March, Missouri's testing rates lagged behind those in neighboring Illinois. In the second half, Missouri's testing capacity increased considerably. State data for New York and California are included to give a sense of what testing is like in the hardest-hit state in the country (NY) and in a state that has received praise for its response (CA). Updated April 21, 2020. Sources: The COVID Tracking Project, U.S. Census Bureau.

EP. 1: (HOW WE KNOW) WHO GETS SICK

- Barriers to testing (location, cost, ever-changing and complex informational landscape) encourage disparities

COVID-19 Testing Locations in St. Louis City and County
Updated April 20, 2020

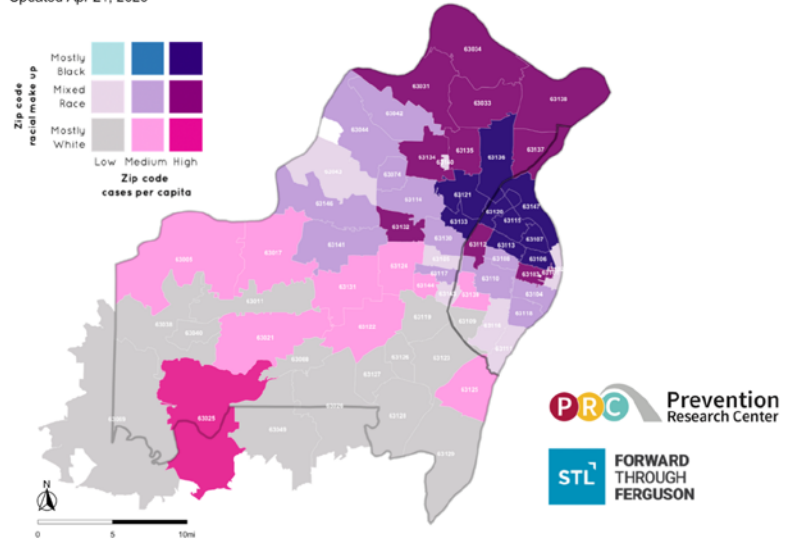


We called all the testing locations listed on the City and County websites, as well as any others we saw documented in the news. Contacts at several Mercy locations informed us that they were NOT active testing sites. These sites are designated in grey. We included them to help correct the record.

EP. 1: (HOW WE KNOW) WHO GETS SICK

- COVID-19 cases are highly concentrated in St. Louis' mostly Black communities

COVID-19 Taking Hold: Cases per 100,000 by Race and Zip Code
Updated Apr 21, 2020



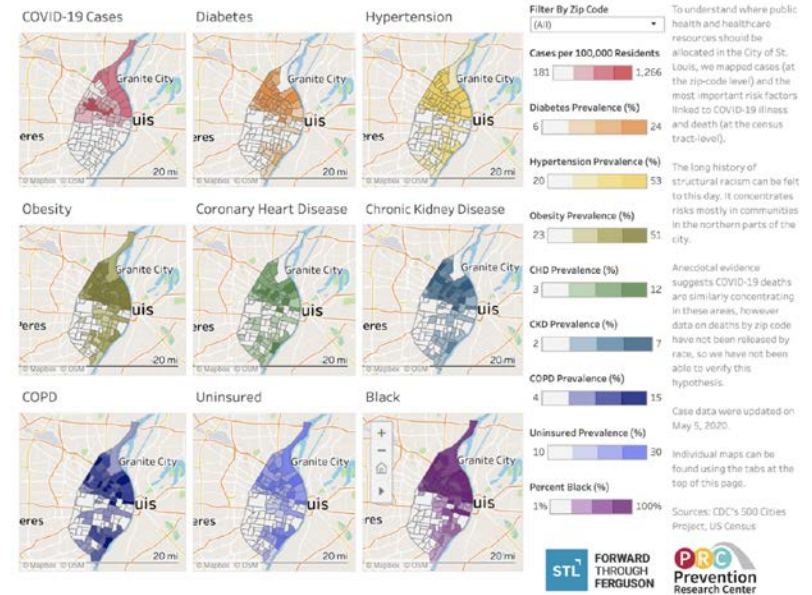
COVID-19 cases and deaths have disproportionately concentrated in areas of high Black population density, poverty, and disinvestment. Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; St. Louis City Department of Health; St. Louis County Department of Public Health

Technical notes: Cases-per-capita levels represent terciles: "Low"= bottom third; "Medium"= middle third; "High"= top third. Racial make up levels were defined as follows: "Mostly Black"= Zip codes that were $\geq 80\%$ Black; "Mostly White"= Zip codes that were $\geq 80\%$ White; "Mixed Race"= All other zip codes.

EP. 2: WHO GETS SICKEST

- People who are older or have medical conditions like diabetes, high blood pressure, and obesity get more sick from COVID-19 and die at a higher rate
- COVID-19 underlying conditions cluster within neighborhoods.
- The long history of **policies and practices of segregation** can be felt to this day in these predominantly Black neighborhoods, resulting in higher poverty and lower economic opportunity, food access, access to insurance, mobility, and air quality.

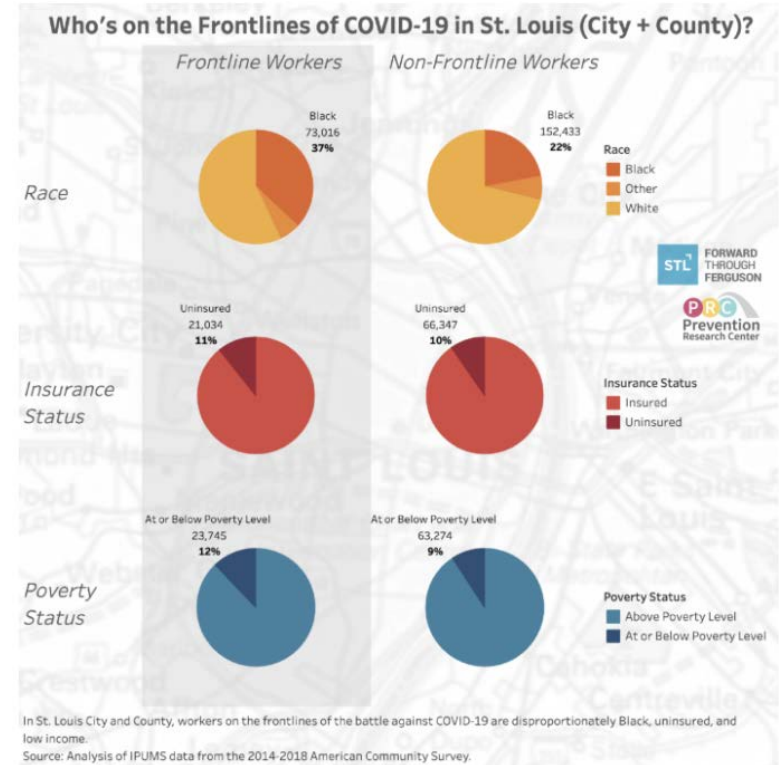
Illness on Top of Illness: Underlying Risk Factors of COVID-19 Death in St. Louis



To understand where public health and healthcare resources should be allocated in the City of St. Louis, we mapped cases (at the zip code level) and the most important risk factors linked to COVID-19 illness and death (at the census tract level). Case data were updated on May 5, 2020. Sources: CDC's 500 Cities Project, US Census.

EP. 3: WHO IS “ESSENTIAL”?

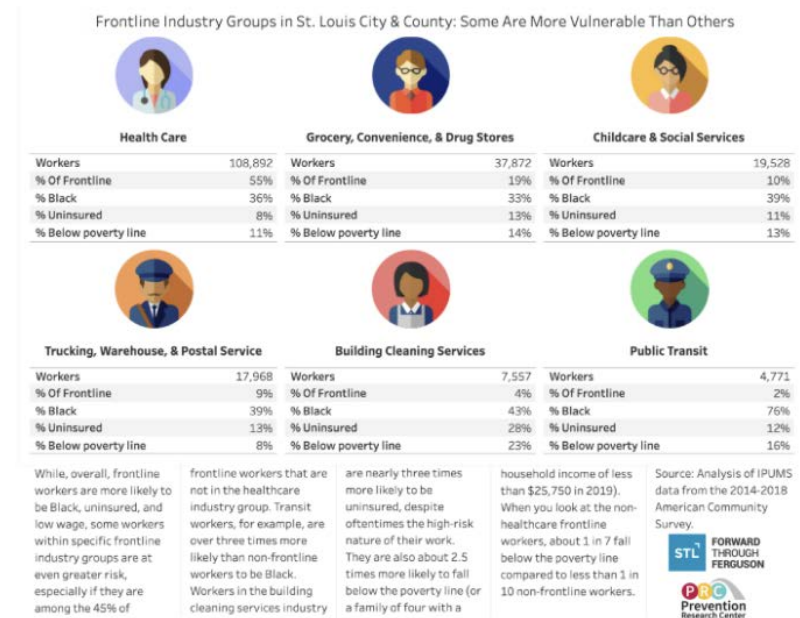
- Essential workers are being asked to risk their health--as well as their families' health--to keep us comfortable and safe.
- Frontline workers in the St. Louis region are 68% more likely to be Black, 32% more likely to fall below the poverty line, and 12% more likely to be uninsured than non-frontline workers.



EP. 3: WHO IS “ESSENTIAL”?

- When you look at the non-healthcare frontline workers, the disparities grow even larger.
- These workers are twice as likely to be Black compared to non-frontline workers as well as nearly 50% more likely to fall below the poverty line and over 40% more likely to be uninsured.
- Public transit workers and workers in the building cleaning services industry group are particularly unprotected. Nearly one in six transit workers and one in four building cleaners fall below the poverty line. Over one in four building cleaners are uninsured. These frontline workers are also the most likely to be Black.

Frontline Industry Groups in St. Louis City & County: Some Are More Vulnerable Than Others (interactive view)





Things are not getting worse, they are getting uncovered. we must hold each other tight and continue to pull back the veil.

-Adrienne Maree Brown

Programs are short-term interventions that create temporary improvements in the wake of challenges. Policies, on the other hand, are covenants we collectively choose to live by, as articulated in legislation and regulation. ■

-Rev. Starsky Wilson



WHAT CAN WE DO?

Policymakers & COVID19 Response Planners

- Apply a Racial Equity lens to planning
- Focus resources where we know infection and mortality will be worst
- Make data disaggregated by race easily accessible
- Protect frontline workers (hazard pay, health insurance, co-pay subsidies, life insurance)
- Name deeply broken systems as drivers of COVID19 disparities

Community Leaders & Individuals

- Apply a Racial Equity lens to your own understanding of the pandemic and how it affects you and others
- Advocate for all of the above
 - Plug into grassroots advocacy efforts:
 - Early Childhood Education
 - Minimum Wage
 - Medicaid Expansion
- Continue practicing social distancing and wear masks
- Practice gratitude

Don't let a "good" crisis go to waste.

WHERE CAN WE GO FROM HERE?

Reports outlining recommendations:

- [Ferguson Commission's report](#)
- [For the Sake of All report](#)
- [Dismantling the Divide report](#)
- #StillCompromising series
 - [Ep 1. \(How We Know\) Who Gets Sick](#)
 - [Ep 2. Who Gets Sickest](#)
 - [Ep 3. Who Is "Essential"](#)
 - Ep 4-6 coming soon ([sign up](#) for our newsletter if you want to be notified)

(Some) Advocacy efforts to plug into:

- [Fight for \\$15 \(minimum wage\)](#)
- [Missouri Healthcare for All](#) (Medicaid expansion)
- [Ready by Five](#) (Early childhood education)

THANK YOU!

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