

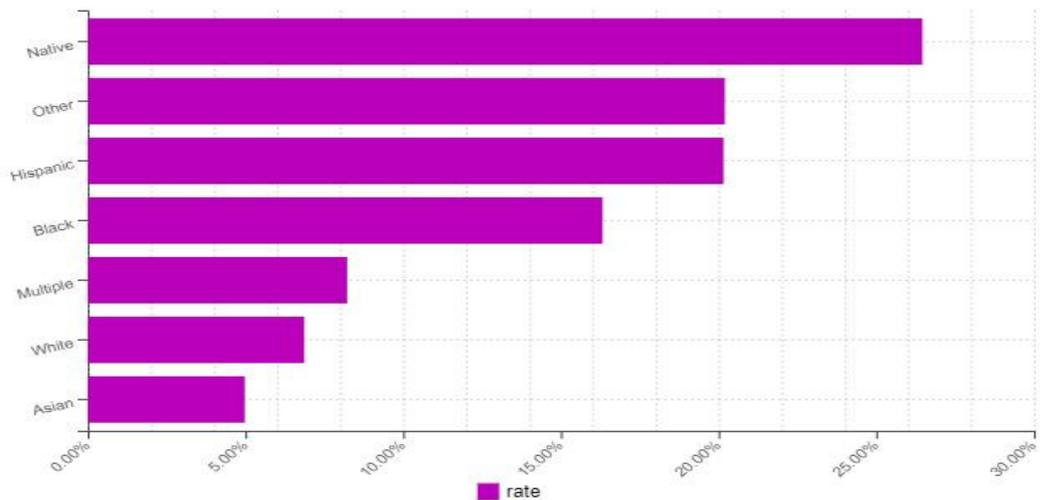
## Findings:

Since 2019, communities have begun to pay closer attention to the demographic disparities in their homeless populations. For example, in Collier County, residents who are black or African American comprise only 7% of the general population, but account for 20% of individuals experiencing homelessness. Nearly 1 in 4 individuals experiencing homelessness (23%) in this county is a child under age 18 who is black or African American. Including children of all races elevates the ratio to about one in three (33%).

African Americans are more likely to experience poverty and other social gaps that place people at risk of homelessness, ranging from interactions with the child welfare and criminal legal systems to lack of access to affordable housing, employment and health care, and the longstanding impacts from the practice of redlining, which prohibited black people from accruing land and wealth. African Americans are also more likely to experience bias within the very systems and data algorithms designed to support them.

Chart 1

Collier County, Florida Poverty by Race



[CSV](#) [JSON](#)

Name	Total	In Poverty	Poverty Rate
Hispanic	102,766	20,714	20.16%
White	231,230	15,874	6.87%
Black	24,912	4,066	16.32%
Other	5,718	1,155	20.20%
Multiple	4,743	390	8.22%
Asian	4,842	241	4.98%
Native	650	172	26.46%

## FL 606 Naples, FL: Hunger & Homeless Coalition of Collier County Continuum of Care

During the coronavirus pandemic, disparities by race have persisted: Renters of color report having less confidence in their ability to pay rent and experiencing greater difficulties staying current on rent compared with their white counterparts according to the US Census Bureau 2020. The coronavirus pandemic is affecting renters of color differently, exacerbating past inequality, and leading the path to a future of worsening inequality.

Chart 2

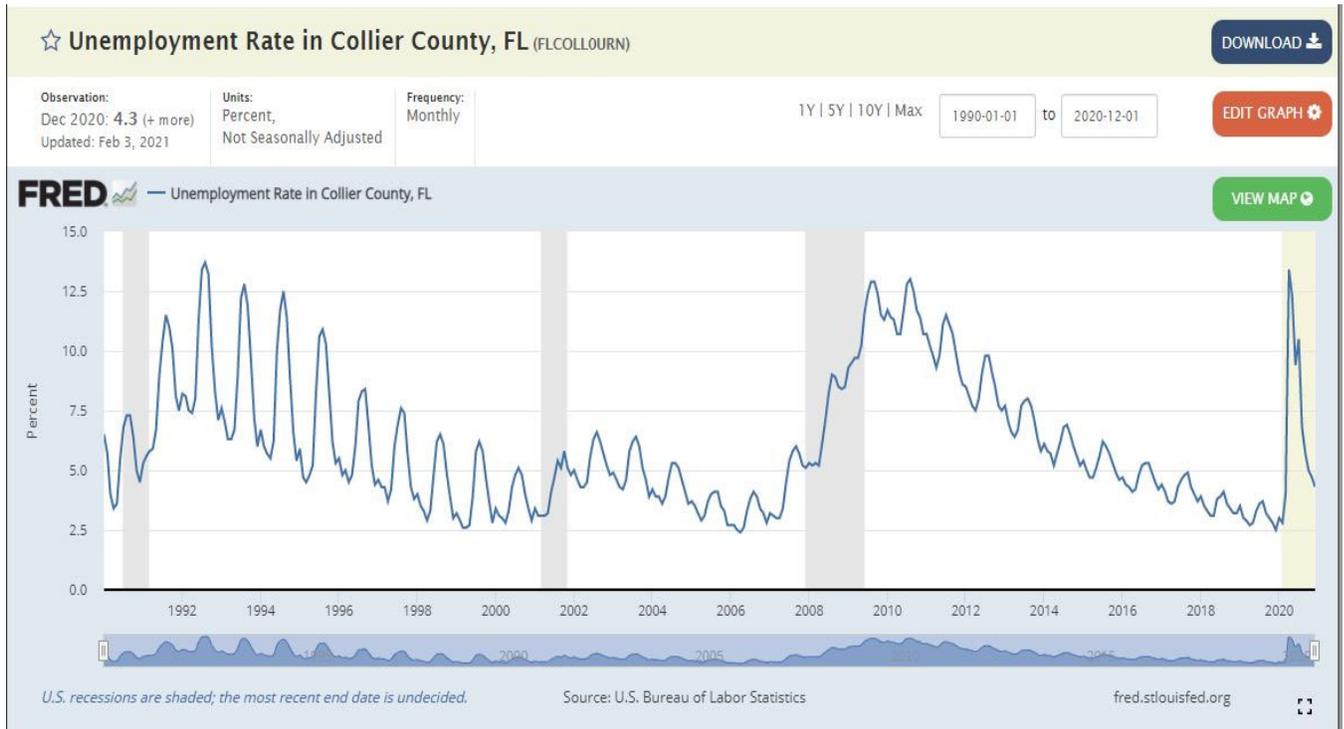
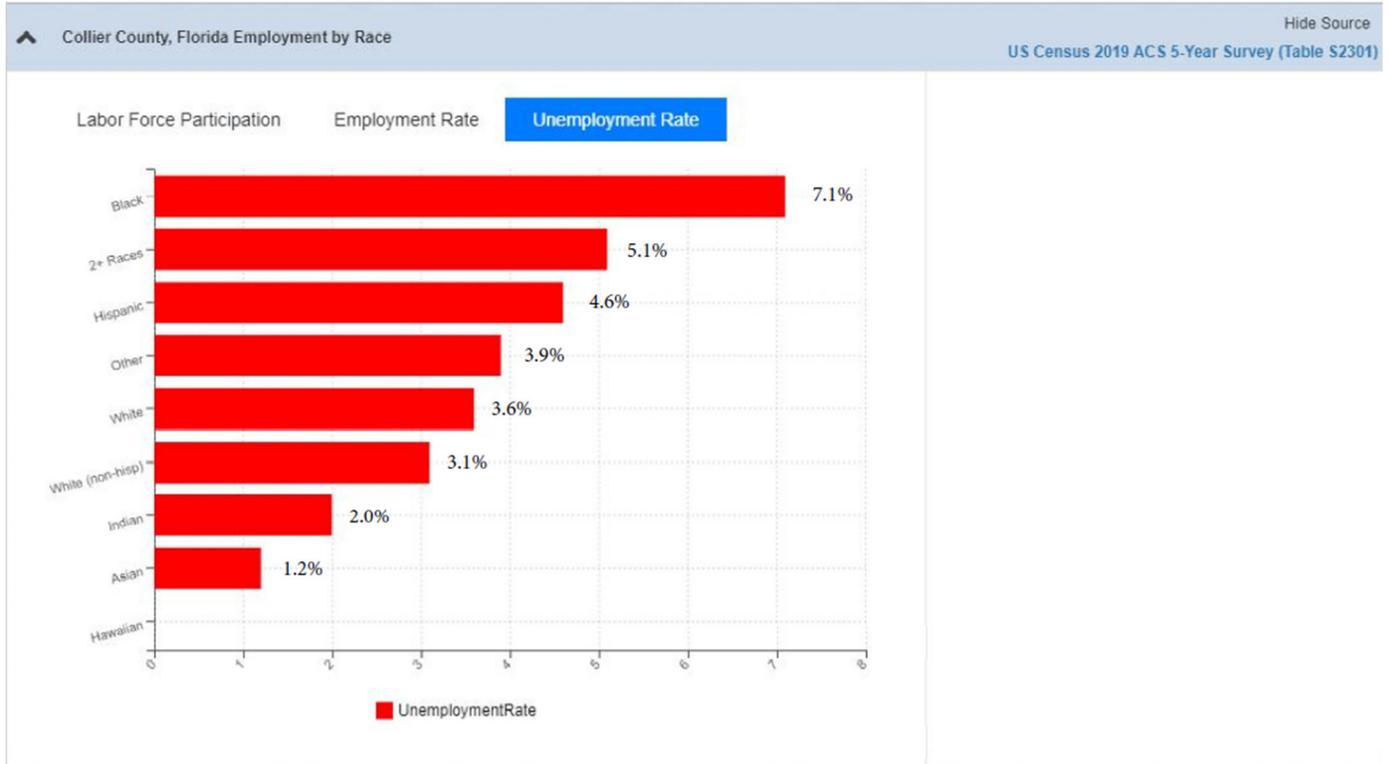


Chart 3



Persons of color are extraordinarily overrepresented as a proportion of the homeless population when compared to the general population. While Caucasians represent 79% of Collier County’s general population, they comprise 70% of the population accessing homeless services. Residents who identify as African American represent 7% leaving American Indian or Alaskan Native & Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander at 2%.

- When looking at program exit destinations, African Americans clients were 5% less likely to exit into a permanent housing destination than whites. In 2020, over half of white clients (95%) exited into permanent housing compared to only 90% of African Americans.
- There is a disproportion in the collection of exit destination data with a greater percentage of Alaskan Native & Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander leaving with an exit destination (100%) compared to Blacks (90%) and Caucasians at 95%.
- Of the populations served Non-Hispanic accounts for 49% within the community. The remainder population of Hispanics are at 51%.
- When looking at program exit destinations the CoC averages 94%, Non-Hispanics has a success rate of 92% while Hispanics have a success rate of 96%.

Chart 4

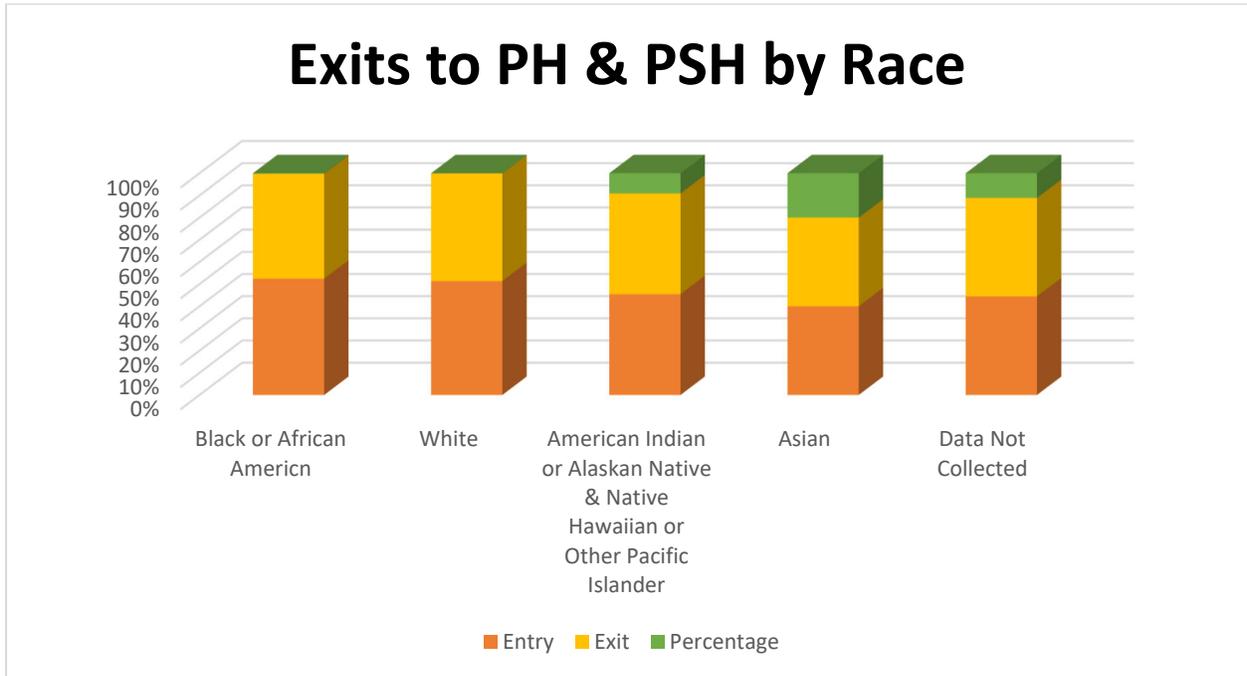
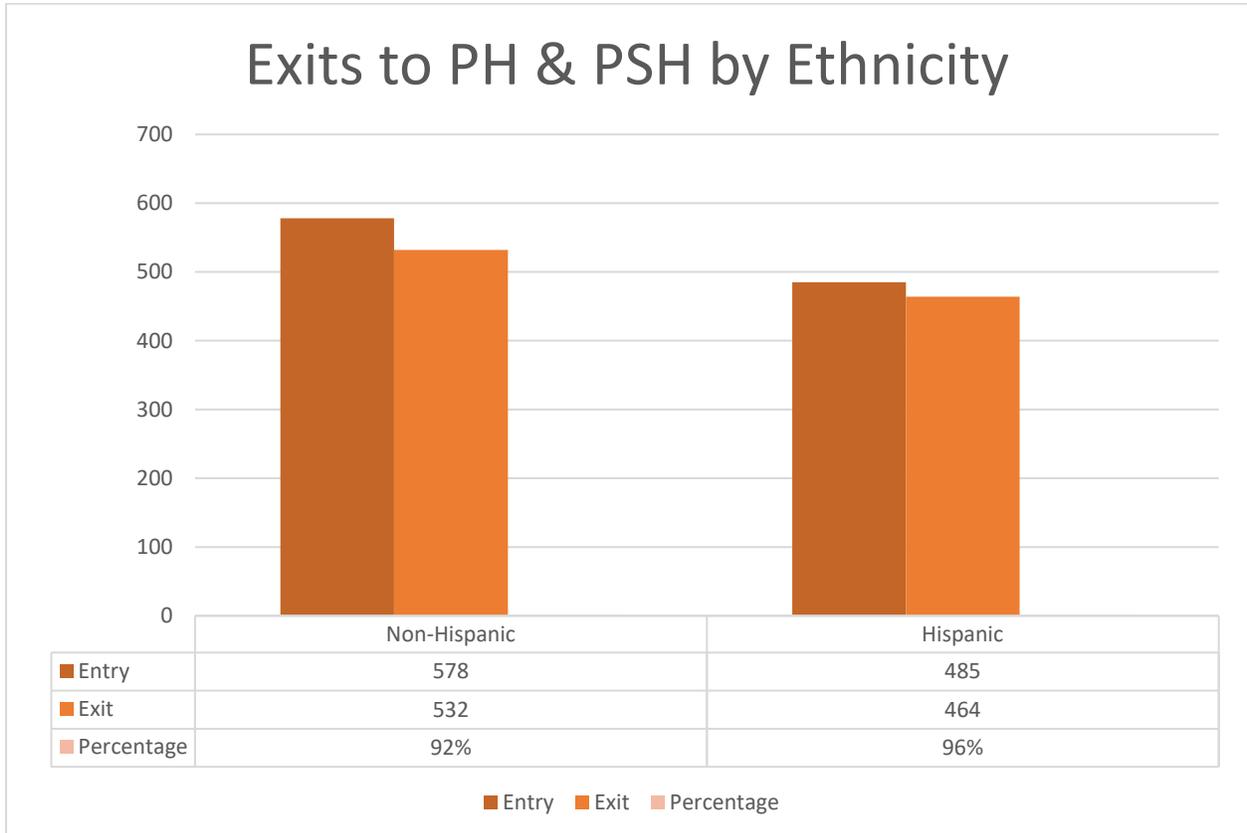


Chart 5



## Next Steps:

To ensure an equitable recovery from this pandemic, past harms and current hardships faced by communities of color must be reconciled. To do so, specifically when it comes to rental housing, requires:

- Prioritizing community partnerships in developing and implementing solutions
- Protecting equity initiatives and adequately funding programs
- Expanding renter protections
- Repealing collateral consequences and statutory barriers to obtaining and maintaining secure housing
- Increasing the supply of affordable, accessible housing that meets the needs of a diverse range of households.

We must recognize that approaching homelessness through a racial equity lens is not playing favorites; it is responding to the data. We must go upstream and focus on prevention. By turning off the pipeline into homelessness from criminal justice, child welfare, and foster care systems, we can begin to move the needle on new homelessness among people of color.

Every conversation about preventing or ending homelessness must include the voice and perspective of people of color who have been there. By amplifying the voices of people who have lived experiences in homelessness—particularly people of color—we will come to understand new strategies and new solutions. We will construct new ways of thinking and new approaches that have not yet been considered. Through this difficult and courageous work, together we will begin to dismantle, brick by brick, the walls of structural racism that we have spent centuries constructing.