



OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Marc Elrich  
*County Executive*


Tiffany Ward  
*Director and Chief Equity Officer*

MEMORANDUM

February 24, 2022

To: Jennifer Bryant, Director  
Office of Management and Budget

cc: Gabe Albornoz, President  
Montgomery County Council

From: Tiffany Ward, Director  
Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice 

Re: Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) for Special Appropriation #22-56 Health and Human Services Covid 19

- I. **FINDING:** The Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) finds that Supplemental Appropriation #22-56 Health and Human Services Covid 19 advances racial equity and social justice in the County by taking into consideration racial and ethnic disparities in Covid-19 impacts and addressing the emergency needs of residents affected by the Rock Creek Flood in September 2021.
- II. **BACKGROUND:** The purpose of Special Appropriation #22-56 is to enable an allocation of funds for costs incurred by the Department of Health and Human Services for emergency services related to the Covid-19 pandemic and the Rock Creek Flood.

As of January 10, 2022, these expenses included:

- Contractual staff and brokers to support testing and vaccine sites in the County, \$21,500,000;
- Rapid COVID-19 tests, \$21,491,000;
- County-wide testing, \$13,900,000;
- Testing for Latino Health Initiative, \$1,000,000;
- Testing for MCPS, \$3,000,000;
- Shelters and housing individuals at hotels, \$8,700,000 and
- Response to the Rock Creek flood, \$100,000.

To date, the ORESJ has documented in numerous Racial Equity Impact Assessments (REIAs) national and local racial disparities related to the Covid-19 pandemic, including in the areas of healthcare, employment, education, and housing in numerous. These REIAs also provide analysis of leading policies and practices from policy experts and other jurisdictions for addressing and preventing disparate outcomes in the future.

Given that this Special Appropriation continues many of the efforts previously examined by ORESJ, the Office directs those considering this appropriation to do so by reviewing the following supplemental appropriations:

- Supplemental Appropriation #21-528 Covid-19 FEMA Emergency Protective Measures Grant: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/21-528.pdf>
- Supplemental Appropriation #21-529 Covid-19 Mass Vaccination CARES Grant: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/21-529.pdf>
- Special Appropriation #21-533 Por Nuestra Salud y Bienestar: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/21-533.pdf>

In addition to resources provided for Covid-19 related emergency services, this Supplemental Appropriation also covers costs associated with the County's emergency response to the Rock Creek Flood in September 2021. The flood affected residents in three different apartment buildings; funding was used to provide hotel rooms for 145 people. The majority of people lived in the Rock Creek Woods apartment. Typically to assess the effects of a particular resource allocation we would look at the demographics of the beneficiaries to see whether they were proportional to the population overall, and to determine whether the resources would close racial disparities or prevent disparities from widening.

In this case, because there weren't demographic data about recipients available at the time of this analysis, we instead analyzed the demographics of the census tract (7012.19) in which the Rock Creek Woods apartment is located:

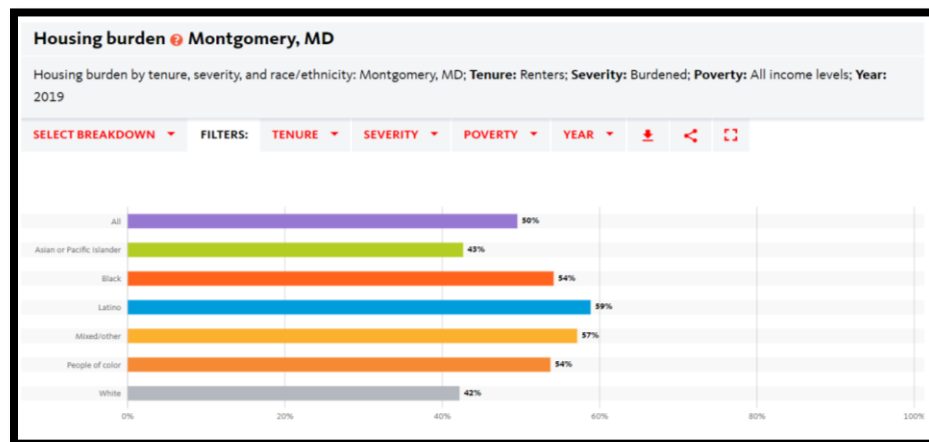
Population	Percent of total population
Non-Hispanic White	23%
American Indian	.24%
Asian/Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	25%
Black	13%
Hispanic	36%
Other/Two or More Races	4%

**Source:** Author's calculations of 2021 demographic data available at the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Census Tract Look up: <https://geomap.ffiec.gov/FFIECGeocMap/GeocodeMap1.aspx>. The total population does not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Presuming the race and ethnicity of resident of the Rock Creek Woods Apartment were like that of residents in the census tract overall, it is likely that residents impacted by the flood were people of color, with more than 30% being Hispanic/Latinx. Given existing racial disparities in

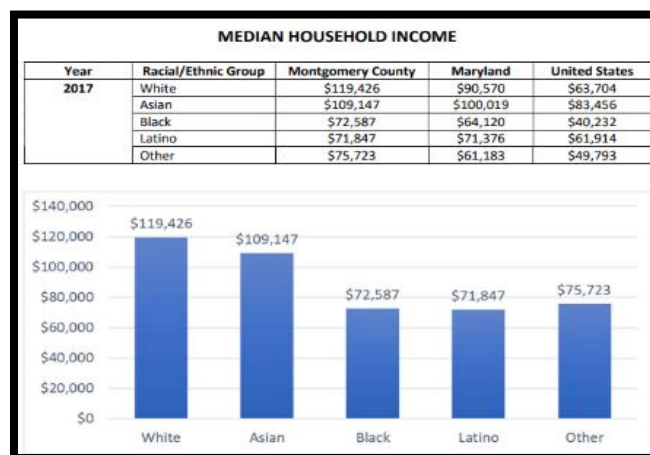
household income and rental-cost burden in the County, emergency housing provided for residents displaced by the flood was necessary to prevent disparities from growing.

- III. **DATA ANALYSIS:** The chart below illustrates rent-housing cost burden by race/ethnicity in Montgomery County in 2019. It shows that rental housing cost burden is highest among Latino residents at 59% and that the percentage of residents of color experiencing rental housing cost burden is 4 percentage points higher than in the County overall, and 14 percentage points higher than the percent of white residents who are rental housing cost burdened.



**Source:** Policy Link. National Equity Atlas. Housing burden by tenure, severity, and race/ethnicity: Montgomery, MD; **Tenure:** Renters; **Severity:** Burdened; **Poverty:** All income levels; **Year:** 2019. Available at: [https://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators/Housing\\_burden#/?geo=04000000000024031](https://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators/Housing_burden#/?geo=04000000000024031)

The chart below shows racial disparities in median household income in Montgomery County in 2017. Median household income for Black and Latino residents was about 60% of the median household income for white residents.



**Source:** Montgomery County, Maryland Office of Legislative Oversight Montgomery County Racial Equity Profile. Available here: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/Files/2019%20Reports/RevisedOLO2019-7.pdf>

cc: Ken Hartman, Director, Office of Strategic Partnership, Office of the County Executive  
 Raymond Crowel, Director, Department of Health and Human Services