

Coronavirus deadliest in NYC's Black, Latino neighborhoods



New York, May 20 (RHC)-- The coronavirus death rates in the United States are much higher in Black, Latino areas than in white neighbourhoods. Some New York City neighbourhoods have seen death rates from COVID-19 nearly 15 times higher than others, according to data released by New York City's health department, showing the disproportionate toll taken on poor communities.

The data shows for the first time a breakdown on the number of deaths in each of the city's more than 60 postcodes. The highest death rate was seen on the edge of Brooklyn in a neighbourhood dominated by a large subsidised-housing development called Starrett City.

Civic leaders had been pushing for the more granular data, which they said would show stark racial and economic disparities after New York City became the heart of one of the worst coronavirus outbreaks in the world in March and April.

In the wealthy, mostly white enclave of Gramercy Park in Manhattan, the rate is 31 deaths per 100,000 residents, the data shows. A long subway ride away, in Far Rockaway, in the borough of Queens, which is more than 40 percent Black and 25 percent Latino or Hispanic, the death rate is nearly 15 times higher: 444 deaths per 100,000 residents.

"It's really heartbreaking and it should tug at the moral conscience of the city," Mark Levine, chairman of the City Council's health committee, said in an interview. "We knew we had dramatic inequality. This, in graphic form, shows it's even greater than maybe many of us feared."

Poor Black and Latino New Yorkers are much more likely to do low-paid, essential jobs that cannot be done remotely, putting them at higher risk of exposure, Levine said. They are also more likely than rich, white New Yorkers to live in smaller, more crowded apartments.

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