



# The Rhode Island Health Equity Measures

Developed through the RIDOH Community Health Assessment Group



## How the Rhode Island Health Equity Measures were developed

The CHAG includes partners from diverse sectors, including representatives from local and state government, academia, philanthropy, community-based organizations, healthcare, Health Equity Zones, nonprofit policy and advocacy organizations, and the private sector. CHAG members spent more than two years developing this set of measures through an extensive community engagement process that included the following phases:

**Phase 1:** Identified policy priorities and reviewed similar work nationally and internationally.

**Phase 2:** Examined 180+ potential measures.

**Phase 3:** Selected a core set of measures.

**Phase 4:** Encouraging use of the measures as the statewide standard to assess progress toward health equity in Rhode Island.

Imagine a Rhode Island where every person has a fair and just opportunity to be healthy. This is known as health equity. We all want to live in a place without obstacles to health like poverty and discrimination. And we all want to live in communities where we and our loved ones can access good jobs with fair pay, quality education, and safe environments. Yet in every neighborhood, a range of conditions affect people's health and safety every day.

## Health happens inside our homes, schools, jobs, and communities

Generations-long social, economic, and environmental inequities have resulted in adverse health outcomes. They affect communities differently and have a greater influence on health outcomes than individual choices or access to healthcare. Reducing these inequities can help improve opportunities for everyone. To improve surveillance of the socioeconomic and environmental factors that drive health inequities, the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) collaborated with members of the Community Health Assessment Group (CHAG) to develop Rhode Island's first set of statewide health equity measures.

## Key information

The Rhode Island Health Equity Measures include 15 determinants of health in five domains that affect health equity: integrated healthcare, community resiliency, physical environment, socioeconomics, and community trauma. Data come from various sources. When possible, data are reported by geographic location, race/ethnicity, disability status, income level, or other demographic characteristics.

## How to use the data

We encourage Rhode Islanders to collaborate across sectors to address barriers to health and advance health equity. The Rhode Island Health Equity Measures can help identify systems and policies that affect the ability of every Rhode Islander to live a healthy life and achieve their full potential. They are intended to help communities measure the impact of health equity interventions, such as RI's **Health Equity Zone** initiative, by providing baseline data and informing outcomes evaluation. They also provide a way to measure our shared progress.

To learn more about the Measures, visit [www.health.ri.gov/data/healthequity](http://www.health.ri.gov/data/healthequity).

To learn more about how RIDOH's Health Equity Institute is collaborating with state leaders and community partners to build healthy, resilient communities, contact [Christopher.Ausura@health.ri.gov](mailto:Christopher.Ausura@health.ri.gov) or call **401-222-1383**.

Domain	Determinant	Measure	Data Source
Integrated Healthcare	Healthcare Access	Percentage of adults who reported not seeking medical care or dental care due to cost (2 measures)	Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)
	Social Services	Ratio: Number of individuals receiving to number of individuals eligible for SNAP benefits, based on income	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), US Census Bureau
	Behavioral Health	Ratio: Number of naloxone kits distributed to number of overdose deaths	RIDOH, Prevent Overdose RI website
Community Resiliency	Civic Engagement	Percentage of registered voters participating in the most recent presidential election	Rhode Island Board of Elections
	Social Vulnerability	Index score that reflects the social vulnerability of communities	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Social Vulnerability Index, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)
	Equity in Policy	Ratio: Number of low to moderate-income housing units to number of low to moderate-income households	HousingWorks RI, Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy
Physical Environment	Natural Environment	Percentage of overall landmass with tree canopy cover	US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service i-Tree Tools
	Transportation	Index score that reflects the affordability of transportation for renters	US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Low-Cost Transportation Index
	Environmental Hazards	Number and percentage of children with blood lead levels higher than 5 micrograms per deciliter	RIDOH Environmental Lead Program
Socio-economics	Housing Cost Burden	Percentage of cost-burdened renters and owners	American Community Survey
	Food Insecurity	Percentage of population who are food insecure	Feeding America
	Education	Percentage of high school students graduating with a regular diploma within four years	Rhode Island Department of Education
Community Trauma	Discrimination	Percentage of adults reporting racial discrimination in healthcare settings in the past 12 months	BRFSS (available 2020)
	Criminal Justice	Number of non-violent offenders under Rhode Island probation and parole (per 1,000 residents age 18 and older)	Rhode Island Department of Corrections, US Census Bureau
	Public Safety	Violent crime rate and non-violent crime rate (per 100,000 people)	Rhode Island State Police Uniform Crime Reports, FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program

### Notes

- Many efforts are already underway in Rhode Island and across the country to address obstacles to health and evaluate initiatives to advance health equity. The Rhode Island Health Equity Measures were developed to complement this work and provide a statewide standard for assessing progress to improve the social, economic, and environmental conditions that impact health.
- The measures are strategically aligned with, and intended to complement, other measures related to socioeconomic and environmental determinants of health, such as Governor Gina M. Raimondo's Third Grade Reading Goal and the nationwide Health Opportunity and Equity (HOPE) Initiative, supported by Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and led by National Collaborative for Health Equity and Texas Health Institute in partnership with Virginia Commonwealth University's Center on Society and Health.
- The set of measures includes some positive measures (e.g. tree canopy, graduation rates), and some negative measures (e.g. cost-burdened renters and owners, violent crime rate). The measures reflect a range of systems and policies that affect the ability of every Rhode Islander to live a healthy life in a healthy community.
- Measures reflect data available at this time. As additional data become available, some measures may be updated.