

# [COVID-19 Presents Significant Risks for American Indian and Alaska Native People](#)

Category: Covid-19

written by NCUIH | July 16, 2020

The Kaiser Family Foundation posted this article to its [blog](#) on May 14, 2020. They stated, “[t]he COVID-19 emergency presents significant risks for the over 5 million individuals who self-identify as American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) alone or in combination with another race. AIAN people live across the country, but are concentrated in certain states, with roughly half living in seven states (CA, OK, AZ, TX, NM, WA, and NY). Under treaties and laws, the federal government has a unique responsibility to provide health care services to AIAN people. AIAN people face disproportionate risks from the COVID-19 outbreak given significant underlying disparities in health, social, and economic factors. Addressing their needs as part of COVID-19 response efforts will be key for preventing further widening of these disparities and fulfilling the federal government’s [federal trust responsibility](#).”

The article contains 3 charts and discusses barriers to treatment, new financial burdens from COVID 19, and contains several links to support its discussion of underlying disparities. They note, “AIAN individuals are more likely to [lack access to clean water and plumbing](#) and to live in [substandard and crowded housing situations](#), limiting the ability to practice frequent hand washing and social distancing.”