

COVID-19 Community Task Force



MONTHLY MEETING REPORT

October Meeting

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Boulder County has engaged the Philanthropiece Foundation to form a [COVID-19 Community Task Force](#) consisting of 11 community members from diverse communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. In addition, 11 Cultural Brokers (Boulder County staff from various departments) will pair up with Task Force members. This partnership has formed The Community Engagement Team, housed at the Community Action Programs Division at the Community Services Department.

Monthly reports summarize the findings of our meetings. The findings are divided into three sections:

1. Task Force input
2. Cultural brokers commentaries
3. Community resources based on the community input

For the month of October the Task Force members were given an assignment to reflect on their personal daily experiences during the COVID-19. The reflections touched on the following recurrent issues:

1. Civic engagement, institutional accountability and community relations with law enforcement.
2. Economic Instability and resource accessibility issues.
3. Mental health and family systems.
4. Youth development and education.

We encourage partners to submit strategies and ideas for the FTS Community Engagement Team, the COVID-19 Community Task Force and the Cultural Brokers to review and provide input.

SECTION 1

COMMUNITY NEEDS

This section is dedicated to present a bullet point summary of the expressed community needs by the Task Force members.

The community issues expressed in the October meeting...

Recurrent Issues for this month:

- Community Input
 - There is not a clear path for community involvement in participatory planning. Community members do not feel their voices are included in the decision making process and there is not an accountability structure in place to ensure the input gets included in the decision making process when establishing priorities.
- Economy and Jobs Security
 - The disproportionate economic impact of the winter season will affect families. New COVID-19 restrictions to businesses will impact the workforce, especially outdoor jobs.
 - Local BIPOC businesses will struggle with new restrictions due to a reduction on clientele and lack of resources to be competitive in the digital and social media platforms.

- Youth Development & Education
 - Opportunities for youth development have decreased since COVID-19. Opportunities to learn and socialize were challenging. Internships, Volunteer Work and Summer jobs were limited or not available.

- Law Enforcement
 - Lack of trust towards law enforcement in the midst of the pandemic and the county fires has exacerbated systemic inequities. Homeless population vulnerable trying to balance both need for shelter and COVID-19 Safety. Police reform and oversight are not enough, investment in public safety networks needed.

- Residents with Invisible Disabilities
 - The disabilities that are not clearly recognizable are often ignored. Deaf and hard of hearing community members continue to struggle accessing information and resources.

- Mental Health and Family Systems
 - The balance between telework, school work and family relations can be challenging when it is all combined. Family units struggle with the lack of separation between work and personal life. Winter season will increase stress with the decrease in outdoor activities and inability to observe holidays celebrations in a traditional way.

Highlighted Issue for this month:

- Childcare
 - Families are debating between taking care of their kids at home where they will be safer but it will bring challenges for parents to accommodate between home schooling and work and also on the other hand paying for child care makes it impossible for some

families especially those with single parents and multiple kids to take care of, and if this wasn't enough the uncertainty of the kids getting more exposed to the virus for being in a place where other kids and families are.

SECTION 2

CULTURAL BROKERS COMMENTARIES

This section is dedicated to present Cultural Brokers commentaries based in the Task Force monthly input.

Cultural Brokers paired with the COVID-19 Community Task Force members explore and process topics on a weekly basis to expand on what is shared on the Community Meetings.

- Community Input
 - Traditional recruitment for boards and commissions or working groups are not appealing to community members. Lack of systems to support and retain diverse representation in these groups are not inviting to BIPOC participants. Capacity development programs such as the Boulder County PERL Program for civic engagement of diverse community members needs to be highlighted and supported, but also paired with supporting structures based on equity.
- Economy & Job Security
 - Jobs offers will decrease in the winter months. Those in the so-called "gig" economy, specially outdoor workers, tend to work extra in the warmer season in order to mitigate the jobs availability decrease during the cold months. COVID-19 restrictions

prevented this approach and exposed seasonal workers to economic hardship.

- BIPOC businesses will not have access to resources to be competitive over the winter. The heavy reliance on technology and social media will put them at disadvantage.

- Youth Development and Education
 - Youth development in the areas of education and work experience is often needed to increase professional opportunities. Limited availability of such resources could harm higher education prospects and the quality labor opportunities.

- Other topics
 - The commentaries and input provided by the Task Force Member and the Cultural Brokers have been summarized into bullet points. We encourage community partners to reach out to gain more context on what has been shared.

SECTION 3

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

This section is dedicated to present resources and potential community projects based on the input provided this month.

As we move forward, the reports will contain more information, commentaries and resources based on specific community needs. We encourage partners to submit strategies and ideas for the FTS Community Engagement Team, the COVID-19 Community Task Force and the Cultural Brokers to review and provide input.

- Articles
 - How is coronavirus affecting seasonal work across America? - <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/10/covid19-coronavirus-seasonal-work-employment/>
- Resource
 - The Campaign for College Opportunity - <https://collegecampaign.org/covid-19/>
 - Better Together: Community Resiliency Classes - <https://www.bouldercounty.org/disasters/flood/2013-flood/resiliency/>
- Ideas - Volunteer Coordination
 - Community members expressed the desire to be connected and feel useful during this pandemic. Volunteer efforts could be coordinated to create a peer-support helpline for folks to combat isolation and emotional stress caused by the pandemic.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The Forward Together Safely Community Engagement Team is housed at the Community Action Programs (CAP) Division. We invite you to communicate with our team and submit resources, questions or strategies for the Task Force to review and provide commentary.

Community Engagement Team

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