



INCARCERATED INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN CANADA - CURRENT STATISTICS

Contents

General Statistics of Incarcerated Indigenous Peoples in Canada.....	2
Incarcerated Indigenous Women in Canada	3
Incarcerated Indigenous Youth.....	3
Statistics on Poverty & Risks to Health	4

*Research compiled by Alexandria Ruigrok and Darragh Dzisiak
for the Canadian Bar Association. Information is accurate as of July 28, 2022.*

Poverty as risk factor for health

“Indigenous status has been associated with higher rates of community-acquired MRSA (Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*), but there has been no attempt to separate Indigeneity from the impacts of systemic and colonial violence on Indigenous communities in Canada. They also describe that while other infections, such as susceptible tuberculosis, pneumococcal disease, sexually transmitted infections, and gastrointestinal infections, have a higher prevalence among Indigenous peoples, there does not appear to be an elevated rate of resistance for these infections within these groups”

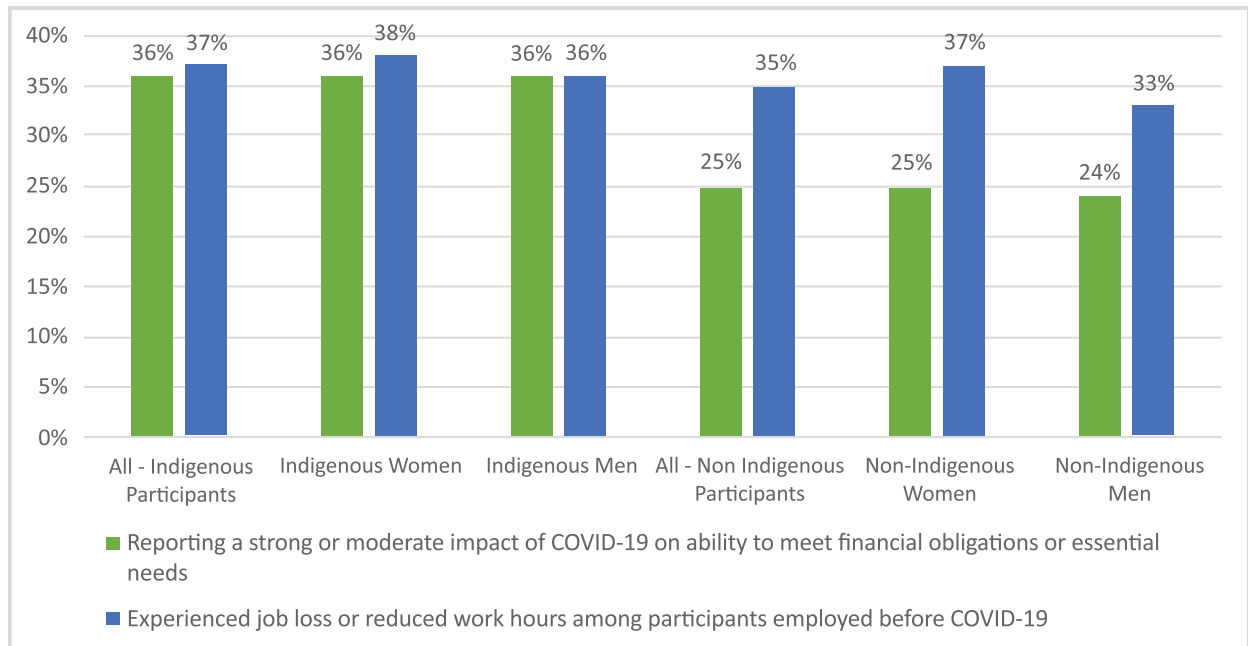
Data was not sufficient to conclusively link poverty to and risk of resistance in Indigenous communities, but did find an elevated burden of disease for these communities which indicates with further study, this may be found. ([Teagan King, Richelle Schindler, Swati Chavda & John Conly, 2022](#))

COVID-19 and Poverty in Indigenous Communities

During pandemics, Indigenous Peoples suffer higher infection rates, and more severe symptoms and death than the general population because of the powerful forces of the social and cultural determinants of health and lack of political power.

- During the 1918 Spanish Influenza pandemic, Māori died at a rate of seven times that of the European population, which is likely an underestimation because of undocumented Māori deaths. (Summers, Baker, & Wilson, [2018](#))
- First Nations people in Canada were eight times more likely to die compared with non-First Nations. (Kelm, [1999](#))
- Although COVID-19 infection rates are currently low, in the 2009 H1N1 influenza pandemic, Indigenous people in central Australia experienced rates five times higher than the nonindigenous population.
- Pacific Island and Māori people were seven times more likely to be hospitalized than Europeans and three and a half times more likely to die. (Mousseau, [2013](#))
- Mortality for American Indian and Alaska Natives from H1N1 was four times higher than people from all other ethnicities combined. (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, [2009](#))
- In Canada, First Nations people were three times more likely to be hospitalized, and six and a half times more likely to be admitted to an intensive care unit. (Boggild, Yuan, Low, & McGeer, [2011](#))
- The COVID-19 case fatality rate among First Nations people living on a reserve is 63% of the case fatality rate in the general Canadian population ([Government of Canada](#))

Self-reported employment and financial impact of COVID-19, Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants, May 26 to June 8, 2020



Source: [Statistics Canada](#). Graph shows that both Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants experienced job loss or reduction in work hours due to COVID-19, while 11% more of Indigenous participants reported a strong or moderate impact of COVID-19 on their ability to meet financial obligations or essential needs.

“Indigenous people are more likely to be living in poverty and they also show greater incidence of a range of afflictions and premature death from a variety of causes” ([Smylie & Firestone, 2016](#))

Gendered Poverty

In Canada, it is widely recognized that Indigenous women experience violence, including spousal abuse, at much higher rates than non-Indigenous women. (Brzozowski et al. [2006](#); Brzozowski and Brazeau [2008](#); Brennan [2011](#))

Between the two groups of women, there are considerable socioeconomic differences. In Canada, the poverty rate of Indigenous women is considerably higher than that of non-Indigenous women, with that of Indigenous single mothers at 73%. (Statistics Canada [2006](#); see also McCaskill et al. [2011](#), sec. 6.2.2)

Indigenous women aged 15 years and over experienced relatively high rates of low income. In 2005, 30% of all Indigenous females were classified as living in a household with incomes below Statistics Canada’s LICO-BT. This was almost double the figure for non-Indigenous women, 16% of whom had low incomes that year. The share of Indigenous women with low incomes was also higher than that of Indigenous men (26%). ([Statistics Canada](#))