

Racism & Racial Equity

Racism and Racial Equity are immense and complicated topic that cannot be summarized into just one page. Still, it is very important to begin to understand different forms of racism and how people are affected by them. **Individual racism** is specific beliefs, attitudes, and actions of individuals that support or perpetuate racism in conscious and unconscious ways.

Systemic (or institutional) racism is what we talk about in terms of elected official and policies. Per the [Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change](#), *“the term structural racism refers to a system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate racial group inequity.”* In systemic racism, institutions themselves are designed to perpetuate unequal outcomes for people of color regardless of the individual biases of the people in those institutions.

Racism affects every institution and elected office, and it is apparent in the difference in outcomes for white people versus people of color in our healthcare, social services, policing, education, and other government and societal systems. These are just a few:

- In Durham, 96% of white residents have a high school diploma compared to about 86-88% of black and American Indians/Alaskan Natives.
- In 2018, 59% of traffic stops were of black drivers compared to 27% of white drivers in Durham, while only 38% of the population of Durham County is black.
- 49% of black Durham County residents and 56% of Hispanic/Latino residents were asset poor compared to only 21% of their white counterparts.
- In Durham, for every 4.43 businesses owned by whites, there is one business owned by a black person

Want to know more about systemic racial equity and policy making and elections?

[What is Systemic Racism](#) 8-part video series by raceforward.org that shows how racism shows up in institutions and society in wealth, employment, housing, incarceration, immigration, and infant mortality.

[News Podcasts with a Racial Equity Focus](#) The Hub’s list of teen-friendly news podcasts that look at current events from a racial equity perspective

[AllSides.com Racism Coverage](#) Looks at news on racism from across the political spectrum

[KQED Youth Reporting on Racism & Racial Equity](#)

Who Decides?

Racism isn't something a singular part of government or department can simply fix. Racial Equity needs to be part of the decision-making in all government policies to make a difference. One way to look at progress toward that is to look at the racial makeup and lived experience of the elected officials who make these decisions.

According to the [American Bar Association](#), here are some questions you can ask to evaluate Candidates on racial equity:

- Who have they professed solidarity with?
- Who benefits from the policies that they advocate for?
- Who finances their campaign?
- Do they seem to understand the interconnections of racism, sexism, and economics?
- Will they represent the interests of the most disenfranchised groups in the community?
- Are they willing to work for long-term, structural change in our society?

Racism - Who Decides?



You vote for:	They work on:
EVERY elected and appointed government official has a role in deciding	Developing government structures, laws, service and education programs that have been parts of structural racism

Racial breakdown of government:

US Senate 3% Black, 5% Latinx, 91% White	Presidents 1 Black, 44 White (in all time)	NC Senate 0% Latinx, 20% Black, 80% White
US House of Representatives , 9% Latinx, 12% Black, 77% White	Durham County Commissioners 0% Latinx, 40% Black, 60% White	NC House 0% Latinx, 21% Black, 78% White