

SOCIAL VULNERABILITY & COVID-19

The Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) is a tool that uses census data to identify and map places where a community may have more difficulty preventing human suffering and financial loss in a disaster. This is important in responding to incidents in an equitable way.

Not all populations are equally at-risk for acquiring COVID-19 or suffering adverse outcomes from it. During the spring surge, places in Michigan that were most impacted by COVID-19, also had the highest value on the SVI. This demonstrates the need to prioritize support to the most vulnerable communities for COVID-19 testing and vaccination.



Socioeconomic Status

- Below poverty
- Unemployed
- Income
- No high school diploma



Family Composition & Disability

- Aged 65 years or older
- Aged 17 years or younger
- Older than age 5 with a disability
- Single parent household



Minority Status & Language Minority

- Minority
- Speak English "less than well"



Housing Type & Transportation

- Multi-unit structures
- Mobile homes
- Crowding
- No vehicle
- Group quarters



How is social vulnerability determined?

The SVI assesses the extent that 15 known vulnerabilities (indicators) are present within a community and categorizes them into four themes: socioeconomic status, household composition and disability, minority status and language minority and housing type and transportation.

How is the SVI used?

The SVI indicators help to prioritize distribution of scarce resources such as COVID-19 testing sites and vaccinations to ensure effectiveness and equity for all Michiganders.



Indicators like poverty and transportation can highlight places where people may have difficulty accessing COVID-19 testing, treatment and vaccination. While supplies are low, outreach efforts must be concentrated in areas with higher social vulnerabilities, where people may face more difficulty accessing vaccine.

Vaccine administrators should use the SVI to develop targeted outreach strategies while planning vaccine clinics to ensure protection of people who are the most vulnerable.