Chicago Department of
PUBLIC HEALTH
OFFICE OF EPIDEMIOLOGY & RESEARCH | *Data Brief: September 2025*

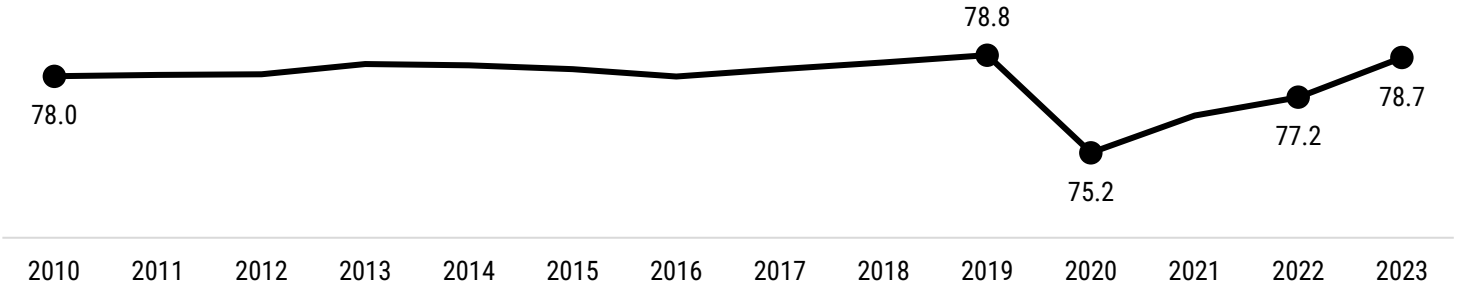
LIFE EXPECTANCY IN CHICAGO, 2023

How long are Chicagoans living?

Life expectancy at birth for Chicagoans was 78.7 years in 2023. Life expectancy has increased by 1.5 years since 2022 and 3.5 years since 2020. These increases are largely due to decreases in premature COVID-19 deaths, but also due to decreases in premature deaths from chronic diseases like heart disease and diabetes. Chicago has nearly returned to pre-pandemic levels of life expectancy.

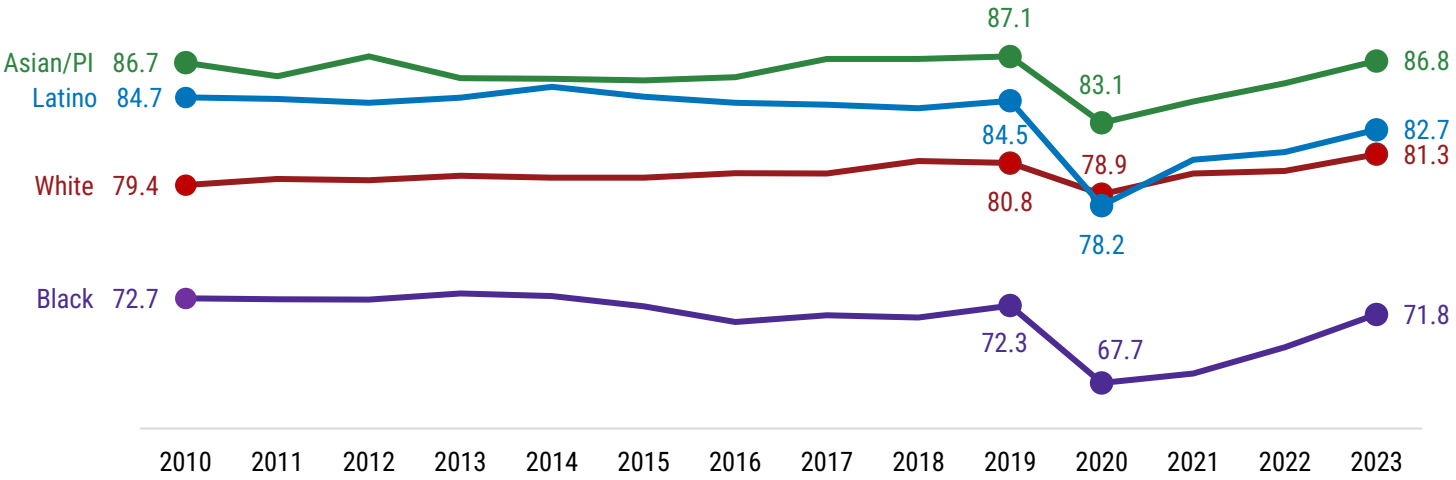
Life expectancy in Chicago had almost reached its pre-pandemic level by 2023, gaining back 3.5 years in the past three years.

FIGURE 1. LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (YEARS), CHICAGO, 2010-2023



Though life expectancy has improved for all race and ethnicity groups since 2020, only White Chicagoans had surpassed their pre-pandemic life expectancy by 2023.

FIGURE 2. LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (YEARS) BY RACE AND ETHNICITY GROUP, CHICAGO, 2010-2023

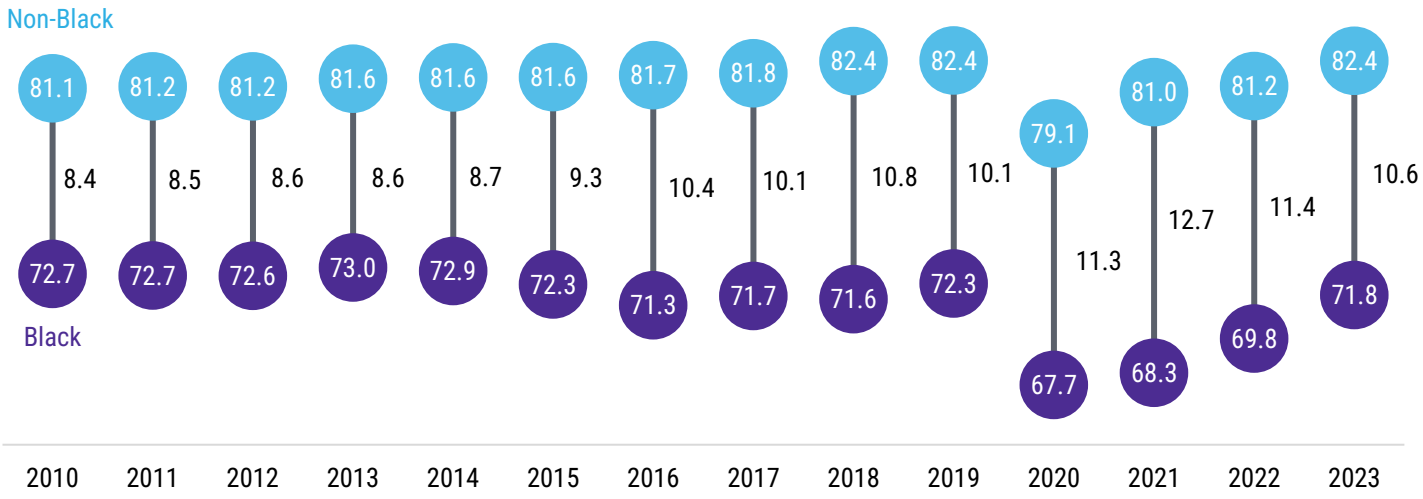


There are large differences in life expectancy between race and ethnicity groups in Chicago. In 2023, Asian and Pacific Islander (PI) Chicagoans had the highest life expectancy at 86.8 years, while Black Chicagoans had the lowest at 71.8 years. Only White Chicagoans have surpassed their pre-pandemic life expectancy (80.8 years in 2019). By 2023, Asian and PI, Latino, and Black Chicagoans had still not reached their respective life expectancy levels observed in 2019.

The largest increases in life expectancy since 2020 among race and ethnicity groups have been among Black Chicagoans, who experienced an increase of 6.1% (4.1 years) and Latino Chicagoans who experienced a 5.8% increase (4.5 years) since their pandemic low levels.

The life expectancy gap in years between Black and non-Black Chicagoans continues to shrink after reaching a 12.7-year gap, in 2021.

FIGURE 3. LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (YEARS) FOR BLACK AND NON-BLACK POPULATIONS, CHICAGO, 2010-2023



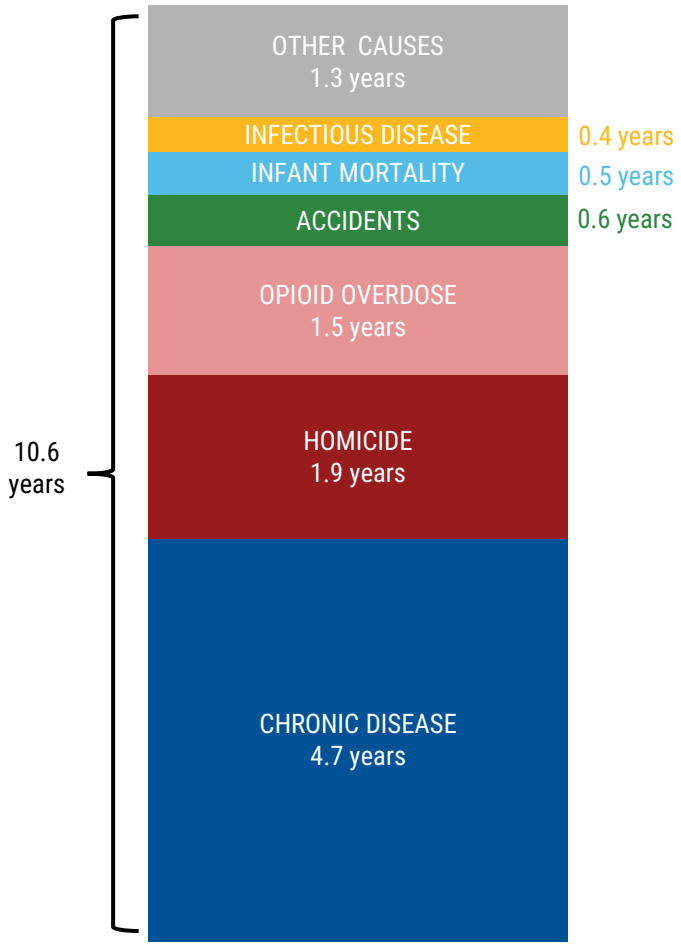
What causes the life expectancy gap in Chicago?

The top contributors to the 10.6-year racial gap (Figure 4) are cause of death categories that occur among Black Chicagoans more often, at a younger age, or both, than in non-Black Chicagoans. Premature deaths from chronic diseases are the largest contributor, making up 4.7 years of this racial gap. Within chronic diseases, deaths from heart disease were the largest contributor (1.9 years), followed by cancer deaths (1.0 year). Homicides contributed 1.9 years to the gap, the same as heart disease. Opioid overdose deaths contributed 1.5 years. In total, homicides and opioid overdose deaths make up 32% of the total racial gap in life expectancy.

The racial gap in life expectancy shrunk from 11.4 years in 2022 to 10.6 years in 2023. Half of that 0.8-year decrease was due to nearly equal COVID-19 death rates between the two groups in 2023. Black Chicagoans had much higher death rates from COVID-19 during the early years of the pandemic. The remainder of the shrinking racial gap was due to a decrease in the proportion of deaths that occurred in Black Chicagoans in 2023 compared to 2022, mainly among those less than 40 years old.

Chronic disease is the largest contributor to the racial life expectancy gap.

FIGURE 4. YEARS CONTRIBUTED BY EACH CAUSE OF DEATH CATEGORY TO THE LIFE EXPECTANCY RACIAL GAP, CHICAGO, 2023

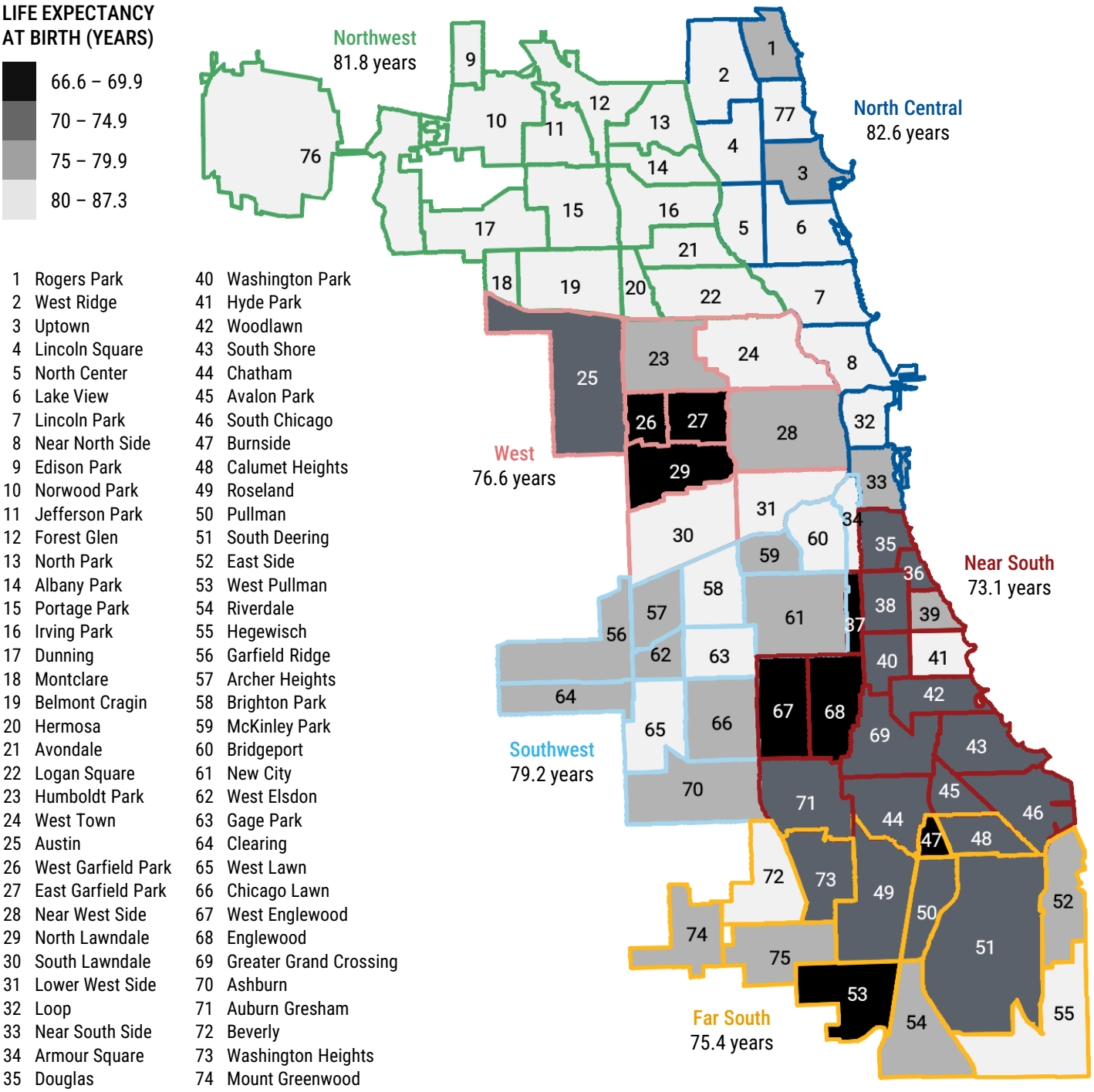


How did life expectancy differ by geography in 2023?

The North Central region had the highest average life expectancy (82.6 years) while Near South had the lowest (73.1 years). Residents of the Loop had the highest average life expectancy in 2023 (87.3 years), compared to residents of West Garfield Park who had the lowest average life expectancy in 2023 (66.6), a 20.7-year difference.

Life expectancy differs greatly by city region and community area.

FIGURE 5. LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (YEARS) BY HEALTHY CHICAGO ZONE AND COMMUNITY AREA, CHICAGO, 2023

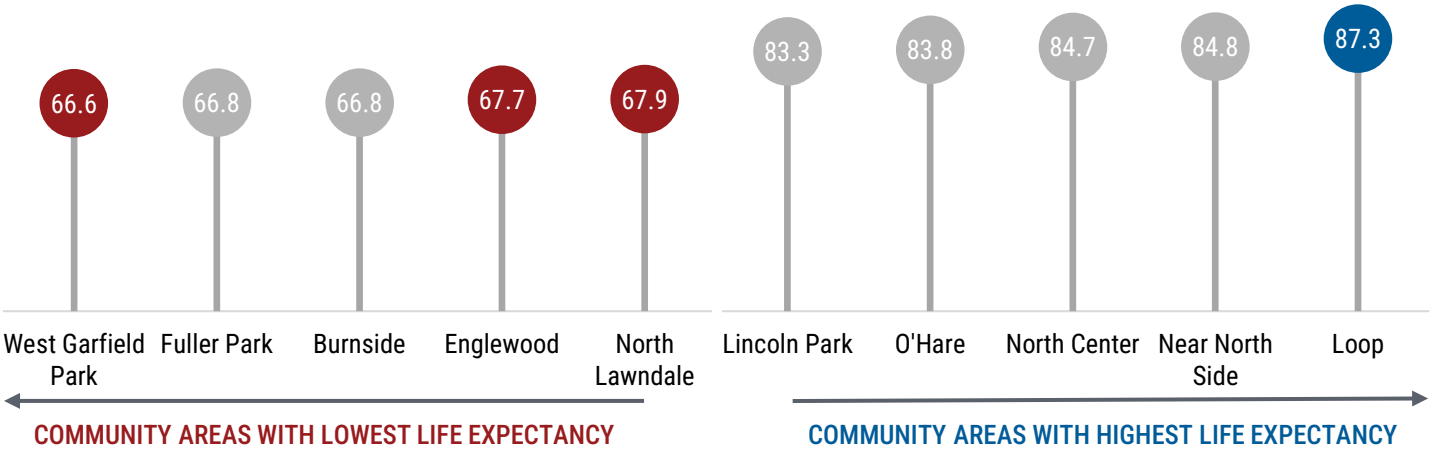


1 Rogers Park
2 West Ridge
3 Uptown
4 Lincoln Square
5 North Center
6 Lake View
7 Lincoln Park
8 Near North Side
9 Edison Park
10 Norwood Park
11 Jefferson Park
12 Forest Glen
13 North Park
14 Albany Park
15 Portage Park
16 Irving Park
17 Dunning
18 Montclare
19 Belmont Cragin
20 Hermosa
21 Avondale
22 Logan Square
23 Humboldt Park
24 West Town
25 Austin
26 West Garfield Park
27 East Garfield Park
28 Near West Side
29 North Lawndale
30 South Lawndale
31 Lower West Side
32 Loop
33 Near South Side
34 Armour Square
35 Douglas
36 Oakland
37 Fuller Park
38 Grand Boulevard
39 Kenwood
40 Washington Park
41 Hyde Park
42 Woodlawn
43 South Shore
44 Chatham
45 Avalon Park
46 South Chicago
47 Burnside
48 Calumet Heights
49 Roseland
50 Pullman
51 South Deering
52 East Side
53 West Pullman
54 Riverdale
55 Hegewisch
56 Garfield Ridge
57 Archer Heights
58 Brighton Park
59 McKinley Park
60 Bridgeport
61 New City
62 West Elsdon
63 Gage Park
64 Clearing
65 West Lawn
66 Chicago Lawn
67 West Englewood
68 Englewood
69 Greater Grand Crossing
70 Ashburn
71 Auburn Gresham
72 Beverly
73 Washington Heights
74 Mount Greenwood
75 Morgan Park
76 O'Hare
77 Edgewater

For individual community area estimates, visit the Chicago Health Atlas

Three of the five CDPH priority community areas are among the city's lowest for life expectancy in 2023.

FIGURE 6. FIVE COMMUNITY AREAS WITH THE HIGHEST AND LOWEST LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (YEARS), CHICAGO, 2023



All five priority community areas, as outlined in the Healthy Chicago 2025 Strategic Plan (West Garfield Park, East Garfield Park, Englewood, West Englewood, North Lawndale) had life expectancies **under 70 years** in 2023, while the community areas with the highest life expectancy levels in the city were all well above 80 years.

What are the key findings of this data brief?

Inequity in life expectancy persists in Chicago, despite consistent citywide progress since 2021. Since CDPH began tracking life expectancy by race and ethnicity in 1990, large disparities between Black and non-Black Chicagoans have existed.[1] Emergent events which have exacerbated the disparity have included the opioid epidemic, beginning in 2015, and the varied consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, beginning in 2020. In 2023, COVID-19 is no longer exacerbating racial disparities in life expectancy, but deaths from chronic disease, homicide, and opioid overdose remain the largest drivers of the gap. Continuing recent increases in the overall life expectancy in Chicago and closing of the life expectancy gap between Black and non-Black Chicagoans requires focusing on these health outcomes and associated conditions in Chicago's Black population and among those who live in neighborhoods located in the Near South, West, and Far South regions.

Data Sources and Methods

Life expectancy is defined as the number of years a person could expect to live if death rates remained the same as in the year they were born. Abridged life tables were calculated for 2010-2023 using Illinois Department of Public Health death certificate data and US Census Bureau decennial census counts for 2010 and 2020. The Chiang method was used for life expectancy values by race group over time and by geography, and the Arriaga method was used for the racial life expectancy graph by cause of death category.[2,3] "Black" refers to the race group labeled in both death certificate data and census data as "non-Latino Black". "Non-Black Chicagoans" refer to all other race-ethnicity groups (Latino Black and any ethnicity of the following races: White, Asian, Pacific Islander, Native American, multi-race, and some other race).

References

1. Laflamme E, Bhatt J, Hankinson A, Bocskay K. Life Expectancy in Chicago, 1990-2010. Chicago Department of Public Health: Healthy Chicago Reports, June 2014.
2. Arriaga, EE. Measuring and explaining the change in life expectancies. Demography. 1984 Feb;21(1):83-96.
3. Chiang, Chin Long & World Health Organization. Life table and mortality analysis. 1979.

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