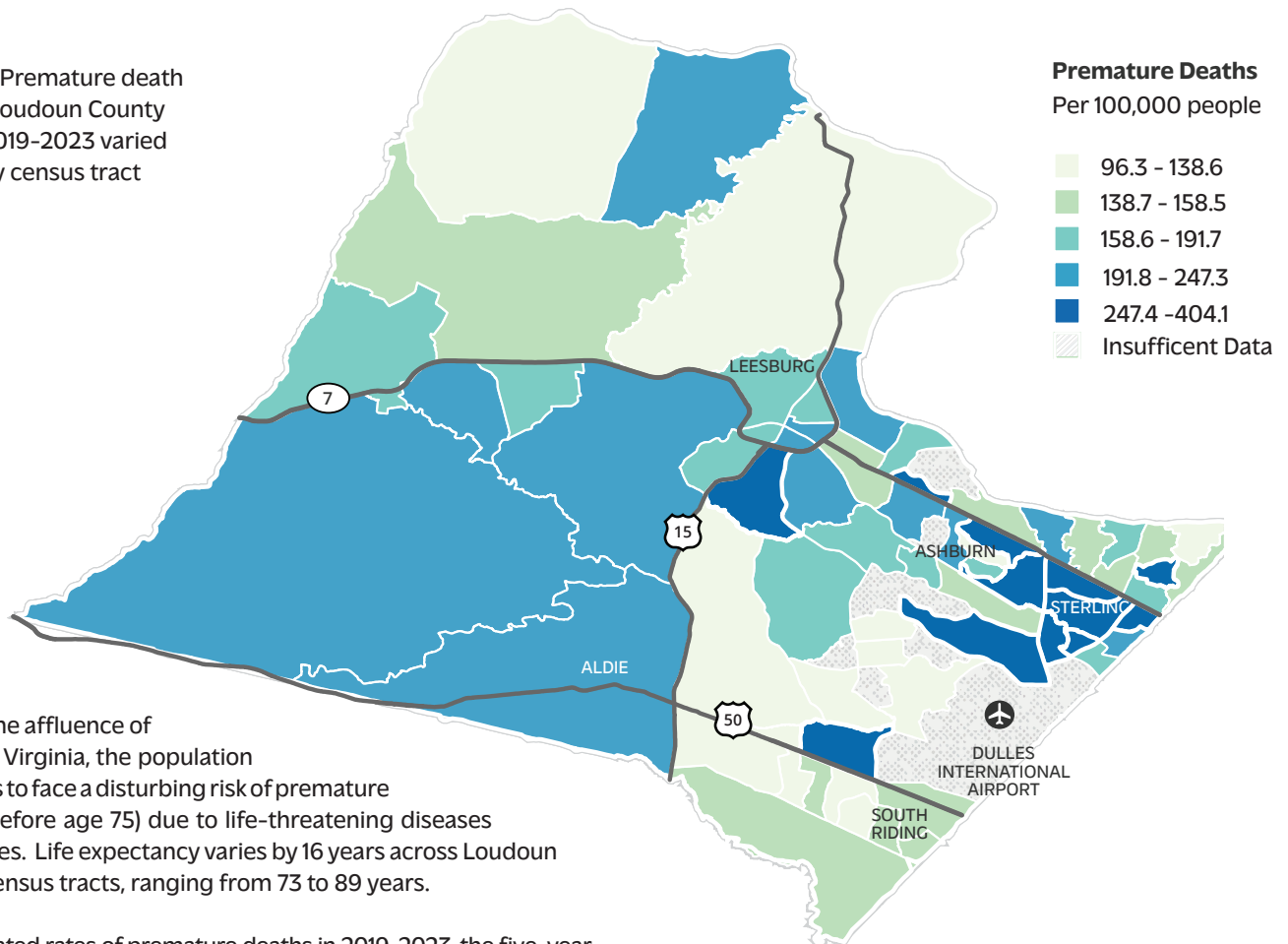


# LOUDOUN COUNTY

March 2026

**Figure 1.** Premature death rates in Loudoun County during 2019–2023 varied starkly by census tract



Despite the affluence of Northern Virginia, the population continues to face a disturbing risk of premature deaths (before age 75) due to life-threatening diseases and injuries. Life expectancy varies by 16 years across Loudoun County census tracts, ranging from 73 to 89 years.

We calculated rates of premature deaths in 2019–2023, the five-year period with the most recently available data. During those years, the premature mortality rate in Loudoun County was 163.9 per 100,000 persons. By comparison, the corresponding rates per 100,000 in surrounding jurisdictions were 196.3 in Alexandria, 167.0 in Arlington County, 168.3 in Fairfax County, and 245.9 in Prince William County.

The risk of premature death varied more than 3-fold across Loudoun County, with rates ranging from 96.3 per 100,000 in census tract 6110.30 in Moorefield Station to 339.9 per 100,000 in tract 6113 in Sterling (Figure 1). Rates were 27% higher among non-Hispanic (NH) Black residents of Loudoun County (224.4 per 100,000) than among NH White residents (176.3 per 100,000), but the lowest rates occurred among Hispanic (132.9 per 100,000) and NH Asian (116.6 per 100,000) residents. NH Black residents were almost twice as likely to die prematurely than NH Asian residents of Loudoun County.

Fully 66.8% of the premature deaths in Loudoun County were avoidable, meaning that they could have been averted through preventive measures (e.g., screening tests, vaccines) or more timely

treatments. The 10 leading causes of premature death in Loudoun County were cancer, heart disease, suicide, accidental poisoning (e.g., drug overdoses), diabetes, COVID-19, cerebrovascular diseases (e.g., stroke), infant death, chronic lower respiratory disease, and transport (e.g., motor vehicle accidents).

However, leading causes of death varied across racial and ethnic groups. For example, suicide, the 5th leading cause of death in the overall region, ranked 3rd in the NH White population but 9th in the NH Black population. During 2019–2023, COVID-19 ranked as the 2nd and 3rd leading cause of death in the Hispanic and NH Asian populations, respectively, but 8th in the NH White population. Infant deaths were the 4th leading cause of death in the Hispanic population but the 11th in the NH White population.

This snapshot of conditions in 2019–2023 obscures important changes that occurred in recent years, not least the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and the heavy loss of life in Loudoun

County at its peak (2020–2021). During those years 87 residents of Loudoun County died from COVID-19.

However, premature death rates from non-COVID causes also shifted over time. For example, between 2015–2019 and 2019–2023, the premature death rate in Loudoun County increased by 15.8%, reflecting not only COVID-19 deaths but also large increases in death rates from heart disease (19.9%), stroke (35.5%), diabetes (21.2%), cancer (10.9%), and drug overdoses (14.7%). Although COVID-19 death rates skyrocketed in 2020–2021, becoming the third leading cause of death in Loudoun County, they waned with widespread vaccination. The most striking contrast between the pandemic’s peak in 2020–2021 and what occurred in 2022–2023 was a 59.6% decrease in COVID-19 mortality but there were also striking increases in non-COVID deaths. This interval saw continued increases in death rates from heart disease (19.1%), and stroke (39.0%), as well as increases in infant mortality (40.7%), suicide (26.3%), and motor vehicle accidents (70.8%).

Risk factors for premature death include not only unhealthy diet and behaviors (e.g., smoking) and inadequate health care but also social and environmental conditions. For example, rates are higher

for residents of Loudoun County with limited education and income and those living in marginalized neighborhoods that lack resources for healthy living (e.g., affordable and healthy food and housing, walkways and green space for physical activity) or that expose residents to health threats such as gun violence and pollution. Table 1 contrasts the social and environmental conditions for census tracts in Loudoun County with the highest and lowest premature deaths rates. In the quintile (20%) of census tracts with the highest death rates, the percentage of adults who were uninsured was almost four times higher than in the lowest mortality quintile.

Strategies to reduce premature death rates in Loudoun County must focus on these root causes. This includes policies to widen access to quality health care and promote healthy behaviors but also to reduce socioeconomic hardship, racial or ethnic discrimination, and food and housing insecurity. Environmental threats to health ranging from firearms to toxins and severe weather events are also priorities. For Loudoun County and other jurisdictions, inattention to these issues or disinvestment in public health priorities pose the risk of increasing premature deaths.

| <b>Table 1. Premature mortality and social conditions in Loudoun County, grouped by mortality quintiles<sup>1</sup></b>                                                                                                                                 |       |       |       |       |       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| <b>Premature death rates</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |       |       |       |       |       |
| Quintile                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 1     | 2     | 3     | 4     | 5     |
| Average premature mortality rate (per 100,000)                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 117.0 | 139.6 | 161.3 | 195.5 | 273.0 |
| <b>Social Conditions</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |       |       |       |       |       |
| <b>Educational attainment</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |       |       |       |       |       |
| No high school diploma                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 4%    | 5%    | 5%    | 8%    | 10%   |
| Bachelor’s degree or higher                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 73%   | 65%   | 63%   | 57%   | 55%   |
| <b>Poverty</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |       |       |       |       |       |
| Children                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 1%    | 3%    | 3%    | 8%    | 6%    |
| Adults (18–64 years)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 3%    | 4%    | 3%    | 5%    | 5%    |
| Adults (65 years and older)                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 2%    | 2%    | 4%    | 8%    | 6%    |
| <b>Other living conditions</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |       |       |       |       |       |
| Single-parent household                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 7%    | 13%   | 11%   | 18%   | 18%   |
| Limited English                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 2%    | 4%    | 3%    | 5%    | 7%    |
| Uninsured                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 3%    | 6%    | 7%    | 9%    | 11%   |
| Overcrowded housing                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 1%    | 1%    | 2%    | 3%    | 4%    |
| <b>Racial and ethnic composition of population</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                      |       |       |       |       |       |
| NH White                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 47%   | 51%   | 61%   | 59%   | 42%   |
| NH Black                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 8%    | 7%    | 7%    | 7%    | 7%    |
| Hispanic                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 7%    | 12%   | 14%   | 20%   | 25%   |
| NH Asian                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 33%   | 23%   | 13%   | 10%   | 20%   |
| Foreign-Born                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 30%   | 27%   | 20%   | 22%   | 35%   |
| Source: Social conditions data from American Community Survey, 2019–2023                                                                                                                                                                                |       |       |       |       |       |
| NH = non-Hispanic                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |       |       |       |       |       |
| <sup>1</sup> Census tracts in Loudoun County were grouped by quintiles, with quintile 1 representing the 20% of census tracts with the lowest premature mortality rates and quintile 5 representing the 20% of tracts with the highest mortality rates. |       |       |       |       |       |