

# SPOTLIGHT ON FLORIDA'S BLACK IMMIGRANTS

by Alexis Davis, September 2020

While Latinx individuals comprise the greatest share of Florida's immigrant population and are often centered in public discourse, a significant number of immigrants identify as Black.\* To promote racial equity and inform policymaking, it is important to highlight their unique contributions to the Sunshine State.

## 739,000

Number of Florida immigrants who identify as Black.



## #2

Florida's rank among the 50 states for number of Black immigrant residents, trailing behind only New York.



## 79%

Share of Black working-age immigrants in the state labor force.

Labor force participation overall is 72% statewide.

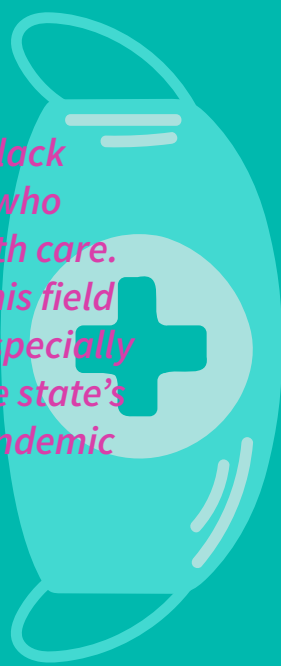


## HAITI & JAMAICA

Top countries of birth for Black immigrant Floridians.

## 1 IN 5

Number of Black immigrants who work in health care. Workers in this field have been especially pivotal to the state's COVID-19 pandemic response.



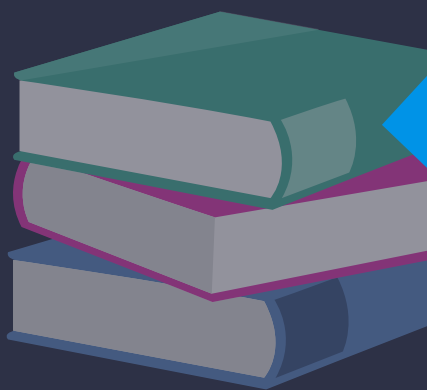
## 44%

Share of Black immigrants who speak English or English-derived languages\*\* like Jamaican Patois. 43% speak French or French-derived languages like Haitian Creole.



## 305,000

Number of Black immigrants aged 25+ who have attended college.



## 14,500

Number of Black immigrants aged 25+ who own businesses.



# ISLANDE’S STORY

Islande is a 46-year-old Haitian immigrant who has been a Florida resident for the past 20 years. She, like many immigrants, came to the Sunshine State in search of a better life when both safety and economic opportunities proved elusive. Since her arrival, Islande has raised two daughters, who both graduated from Florida's public school system, and she has become a United States citizen and active, registered voter.

But like many during the COVID-19 pandemic, Islande has suddenly seen her stable life turned upside down. She worked as a housekeeper in a South Florida hospital for many years, continuing to do so along with others dubbed “essential” during the pandemic, despite the risk. When Islande contracted COVID-19, her loyalty and humanity were ultimately ignored as her employer let her go with no warning or recourse. Her daughters have since had to put their career dreams on hold to help out Islande, who now owes more than \$4,000 in back rent. She feels her treatment is due, in part, to her identity as both an immigrant and a Black woman. If there’s one thing Islande hopes for Florida and the U.S. at large, it’s that leaders come to welcome “all immigrants—not just Haitians” and recognize the dire circumstances that often bring them here.

*FPI presents this infographic with the caveat that while it can be insightful to underscore immigrants' economic contributions to their communities, focusing solely on these contributions fails to convey the inherent worth of every Floridian, including those who do not or cannot participate in the labor force, like children, retirees, caregivers, and some individuals with disabilities.*

Sources: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and Fiscal Policy Institute analyses of 2014–2018 American Community Survey public use microdata from the U.S. Census Bureau; personal interview arranged, interpreted, and translated by Miami Workers Center.

\*"Black" includes those who identify as Black alone or Black in combination with other race(s).

\*\*The Census miscategorizes some creole-based languages as French or English. More information: <https://bit.ly/3iafYVb>

