

Racial Disparity and Disproportionality in Child Support

Maggie Renno, Director
Bureau of Analytics and Research
Division of Family and Economic Security
Department of Children and Families



Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

Missing Data

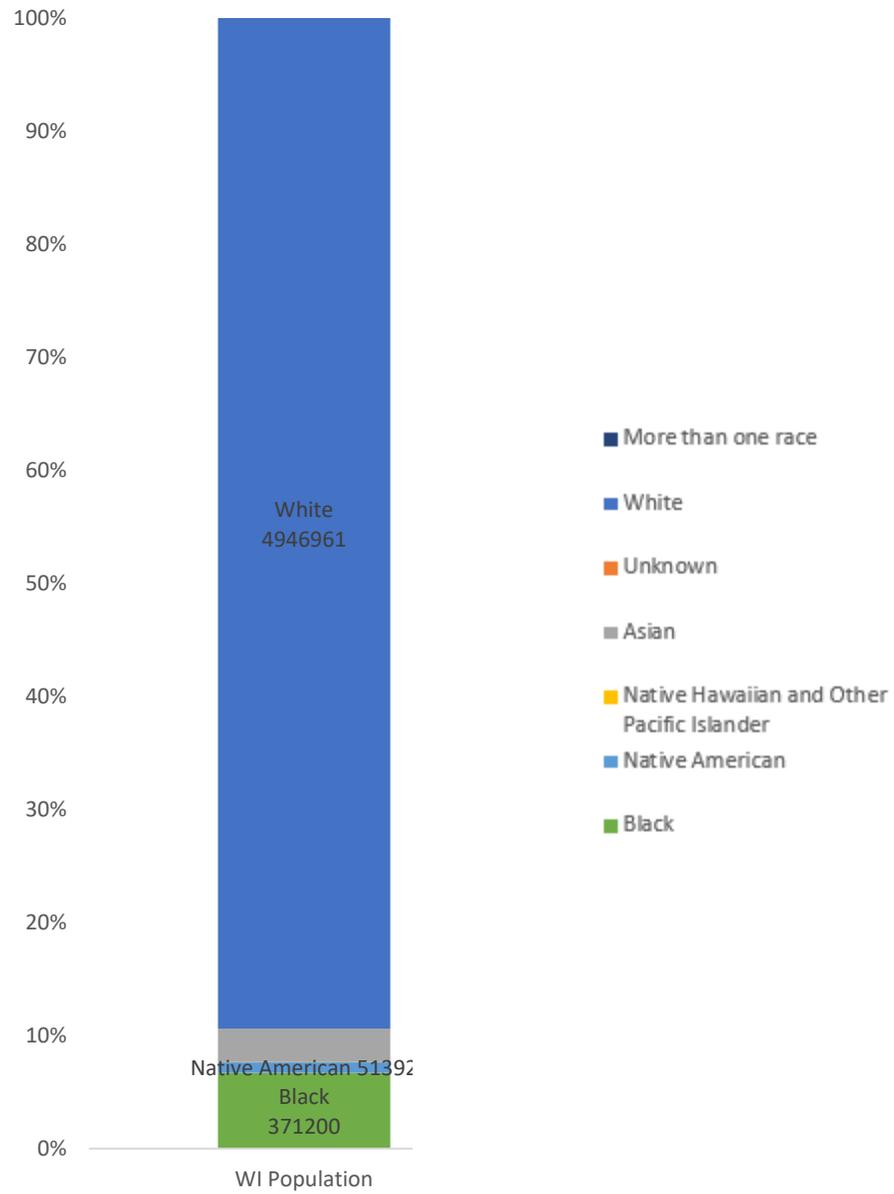
- 33.5% of NCPs have no race information available in KIDS, thus were coded as “Unknown”
- Missing data in race categories greatly limits the interpretability of the current research



Definitions

- **Disparity:** An inequitable outcome experienced by social, economic, and/or environmental disadvantage historically linked to discrimination or exclusion (CDC Reducing Stigma, 2020).
- **Disproportionality:** Racial disproportionality is defined as the overrepresentation of individuals of color in social institutions, such as the child welfare and youth justice systems, compared with racial group proportions in the general population (Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 2008).

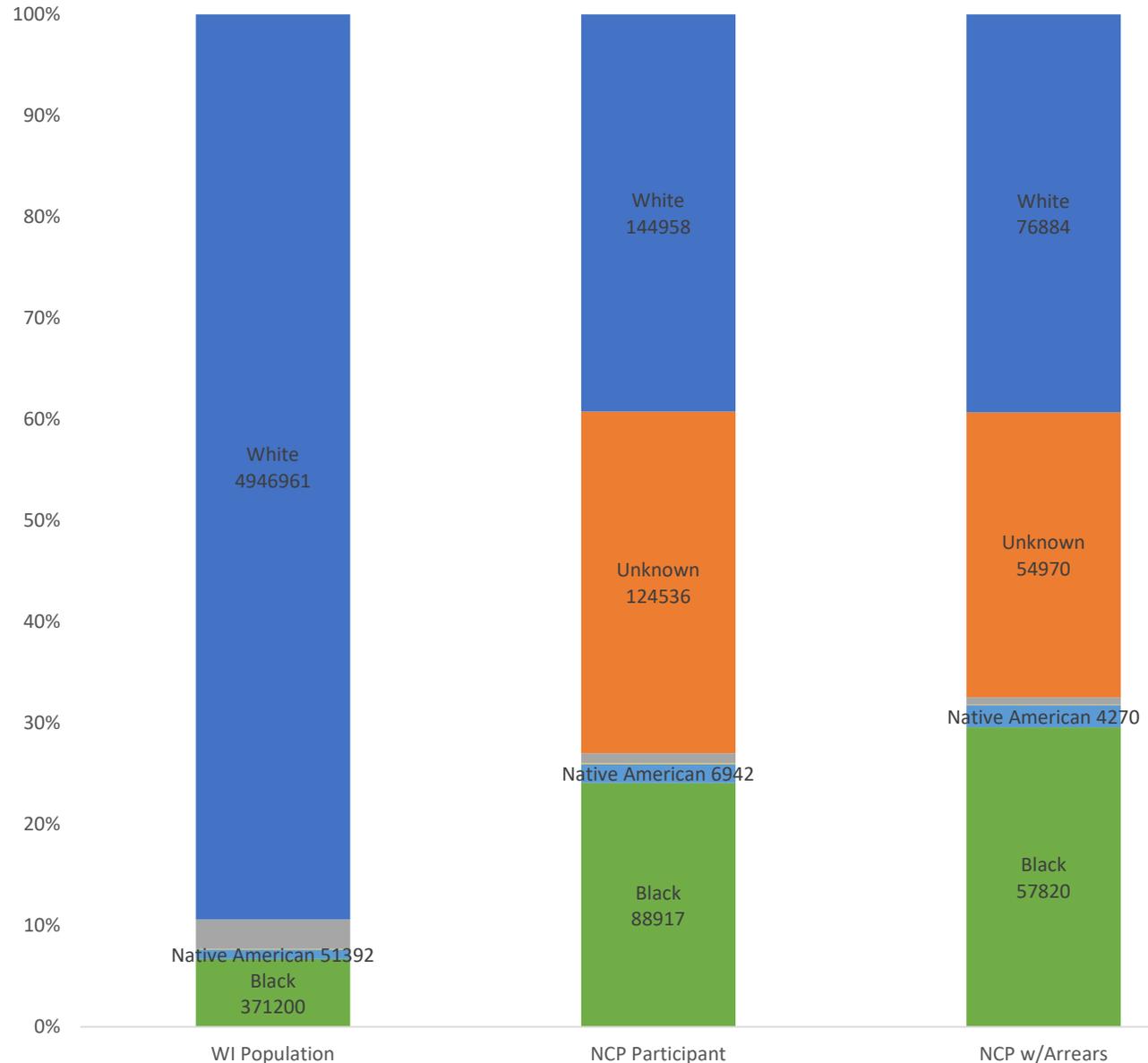




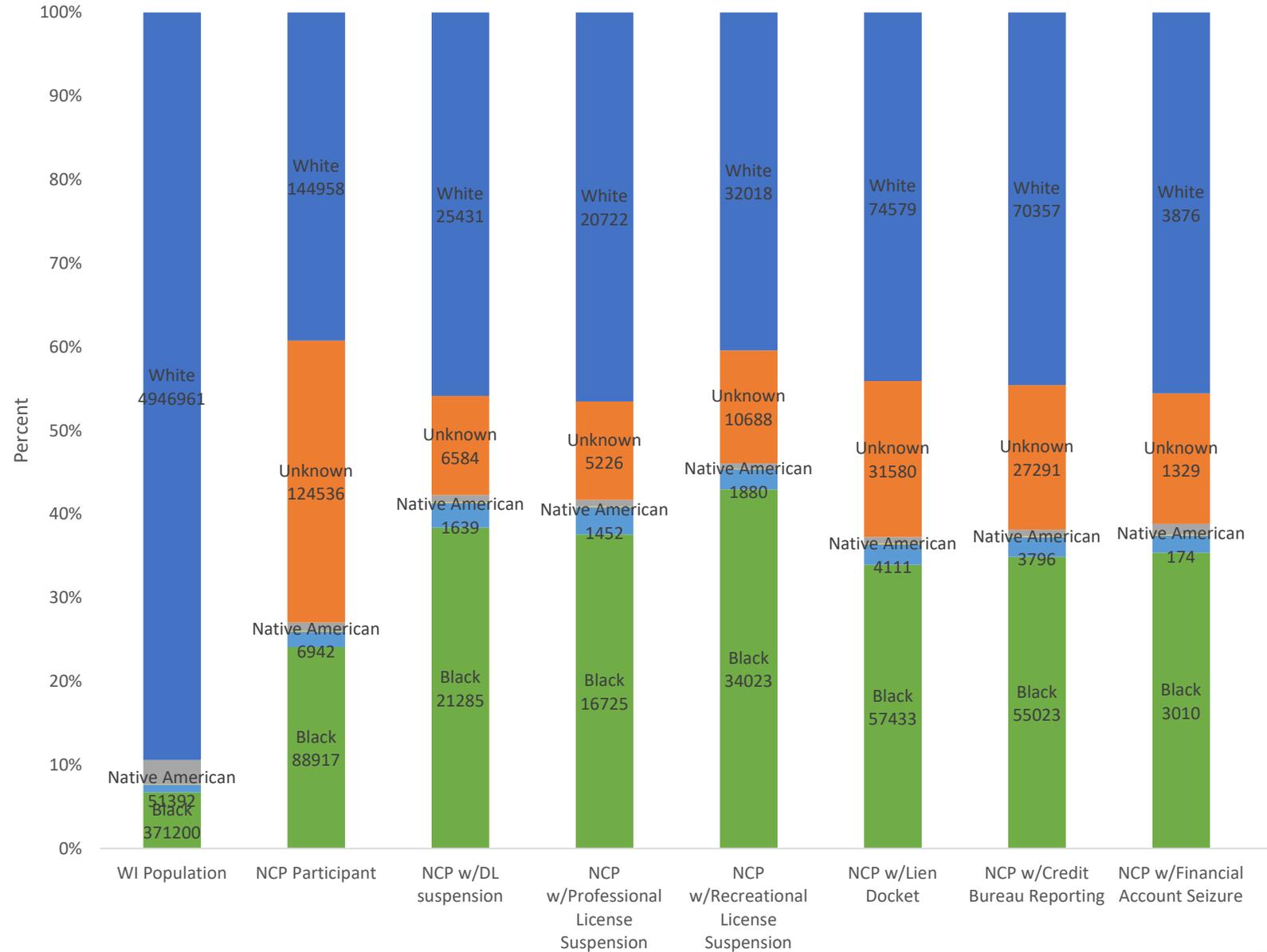
Race Data

“Unknown” is really missing data and for NCP data, it is **sizeable**.

Even so, one can begin to see the disproportionality here:



Compared to both the general population and NCP population in WI, **Black** individuals are **overrepresented** in being subject to all enforcement actions



Disproportionality Index

Numerator: Percent of NCP in each corresponding racial group for the decision point

Divided By

Denominator: Percent of adults in a racial group in the base population

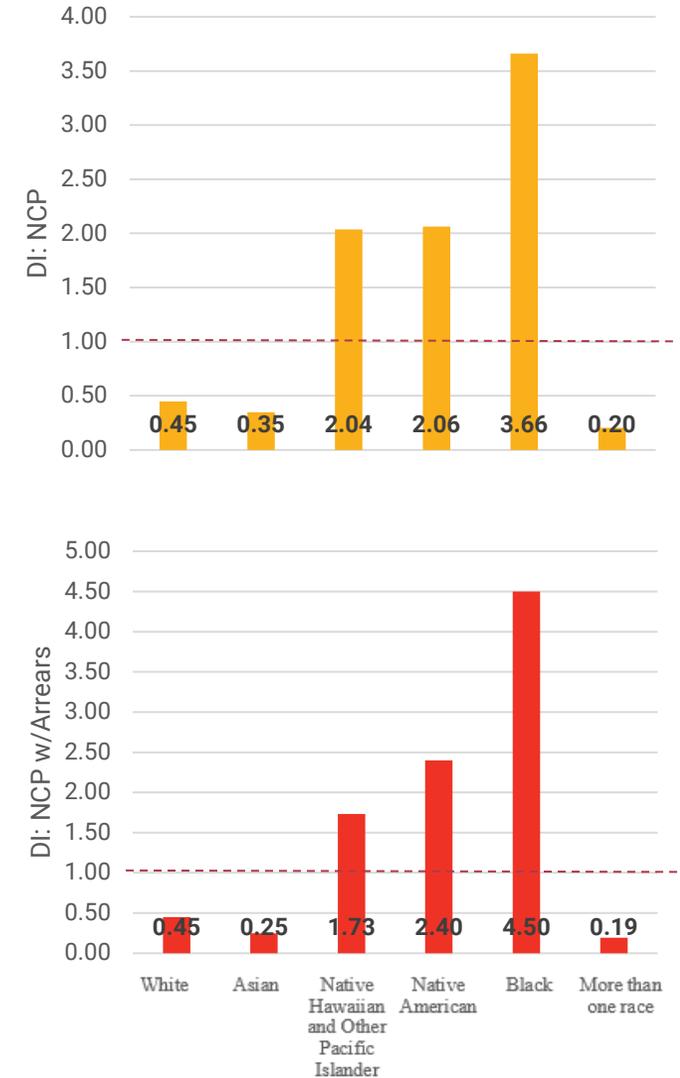


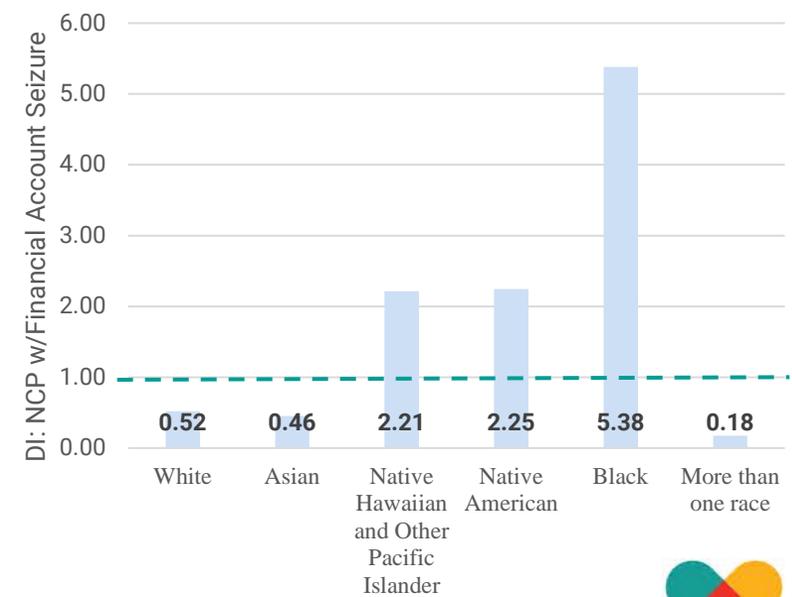
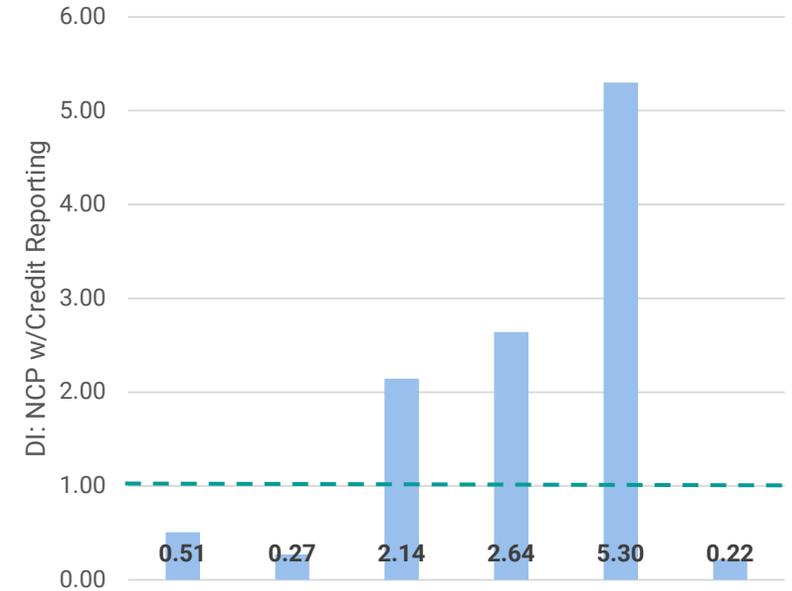
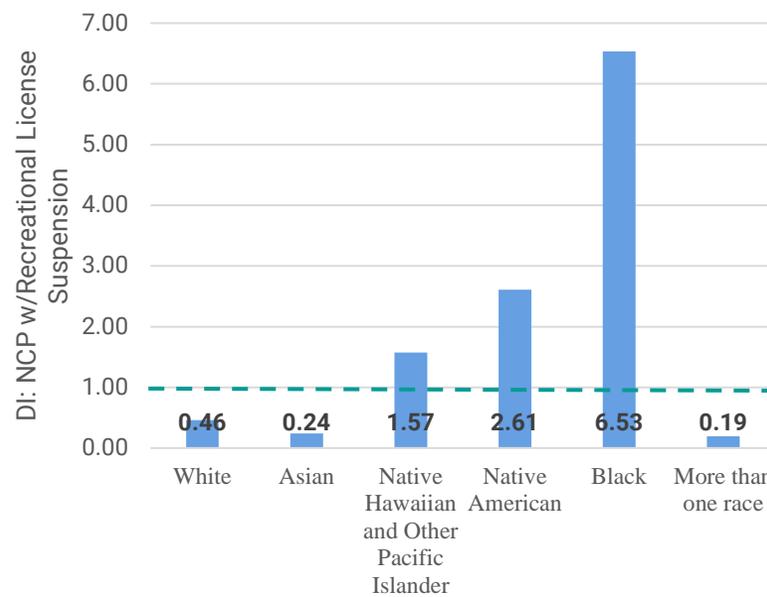
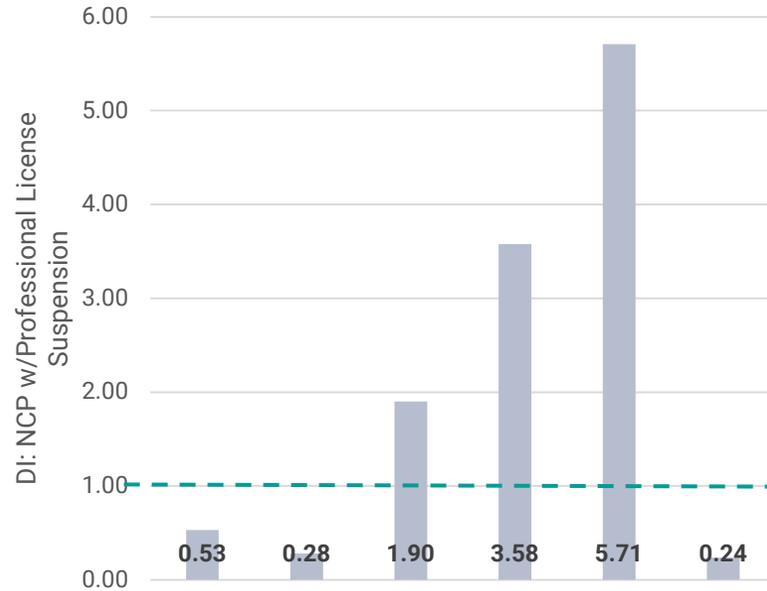
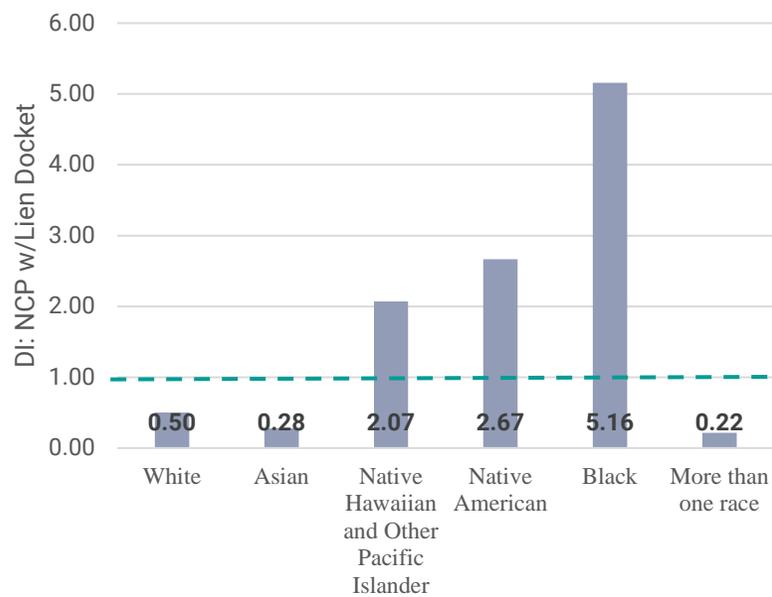
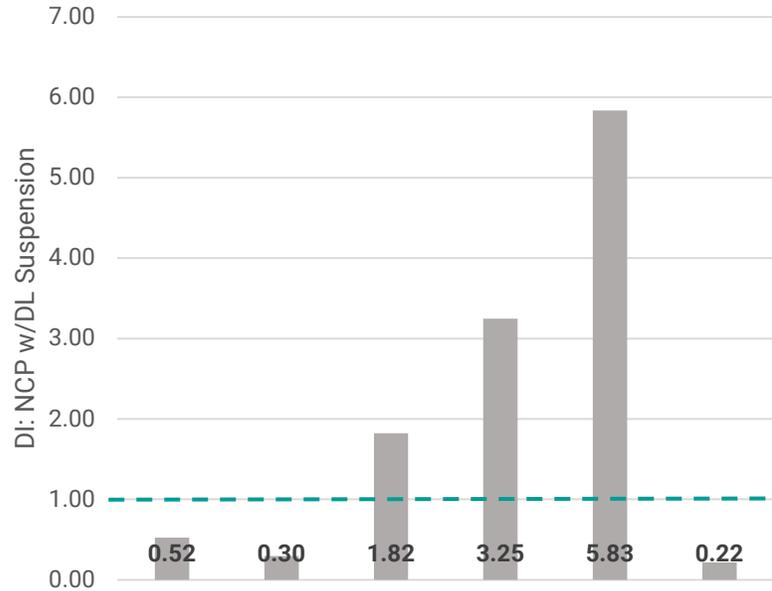
Disproportionality Index

Left: The race profile for NCPs in the child support system.

Right: The disproportionality index (DI) for these NCPs. Overrepresentation is marked by DI values greater than 1.0.

Compared to the population in WI, **Black** and **Native American** and **Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander** individuals are **overrepresented** in NCP participants and NCP with Arrears





Summary

- Compared to the population in WI, Black and Native American individuals, as well as Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander individuals, are overrepresented in the NCP population
- Compared to NCP participants in WI, Black, Native American, and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander NCPs **are overrepresented in having arrears and experiencing enforcement actions taken on them**



Interpretation

- This analysis raises the possibility that certain demographic groups are disadvantaged by the size of the child support orders they must comply with.
- This analysis also raises questions regarding the effectiveness of enforcement actions in the context of the larger aims of the child support program.

