NATIONAL LOW INCOME HOUSING COALITION

OUT of REACH

2025

THE HIGH COST OF HOUSING

ABOUT US

The National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) is dedicated to achieving racially and socially equitable public policy that ensures people with the lowest incomes have quality homes that are accessible and affordable in communities of their choice.

Founded in 1974 by Cushing N. Dolbeare, NLIHC educates, organizes, and advocates to ensure decent, safe, and affordable housing for everyone.

NLIHC's goals are to preserve existing federally assisted homes and housing resources, expand the supply of low-income housing, and establish housing stability as the primary purpose of federal low-income housing policy.

NLIHC's staff teams work together to achieve the Coalition's advocacy goals. The research team studies trends and analyzes data to create a picture of the need for low-income housing across the country. The policy team educates lawmakers about housing needs and analyzes and shapes public policy. The field team mobilizes members and supporters across the country to advocate for effective housing policy. The communications team shapes public opinion about low-income housing issues, and the administration team works to ensure that NLIHC remains a sustainable, high-capacity organization.

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Additional data for states, metropolitan areas, counties, and ZIP codes can be found at http://nlihc.org/oor

The Print / PDF version of *Out of Reach* contains limited data in an effort to present the most important information in a limited number of pages.

The *Out of Reach* methodology was developed by Cushing N. Dolbeare, founder of the National Low Income Housing Coalition.

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PREFACE

The nation is in the midst of an ongoing fair and affordable housing and homelessness crisis. I regularly hear from people around the country who cannot afford the cost of rent. In communities – rural, urban, and suburban alike – families are struggling to make ends meet, and making impossible decisions about whether to pay rent, buy groceries, or purchase needed medication.

In my district, tenants at Independence Towers have limited housing options and had to organize to fight for property conditions that are decent, affordable and accessible. I have firmly stood with these tenants in our shared rage and in resolution.

While the stories and circumstances are unique, the root causes of housing instability are not: there are not enough decent, affordable, and accessible homes in communities, and wages have not kept pace with the ever-increasing cost of rent.

I know these challenges firsthand. As a child, my family and I lived in public housing. We relied on it to put a roof over our heads, and to make sure there was enough money to put food on the table. Public housing helped give me the stability and security I needed – that all children need – to grow and thrive. All children deserve that opportunity.

But for too long, Congress has failed to provide long-term, large-scale investments in affordable housing and rental assistance required to ensure everyone has a safe, affordable, accessible place to call home. Only one in four households eligible for rental assistance receive it, and the number of people experiencing homelessness has reached record levels. Now, the Trump Administration has proposed a budget for the coming year that would decimate HUD's vital programs, implement unnecessary barriers to maintaining housing assistance, and push more of the nation's lowest income seniors, people with disabilities, families, veterans, caregivers, and low-wage workers into homelessness.

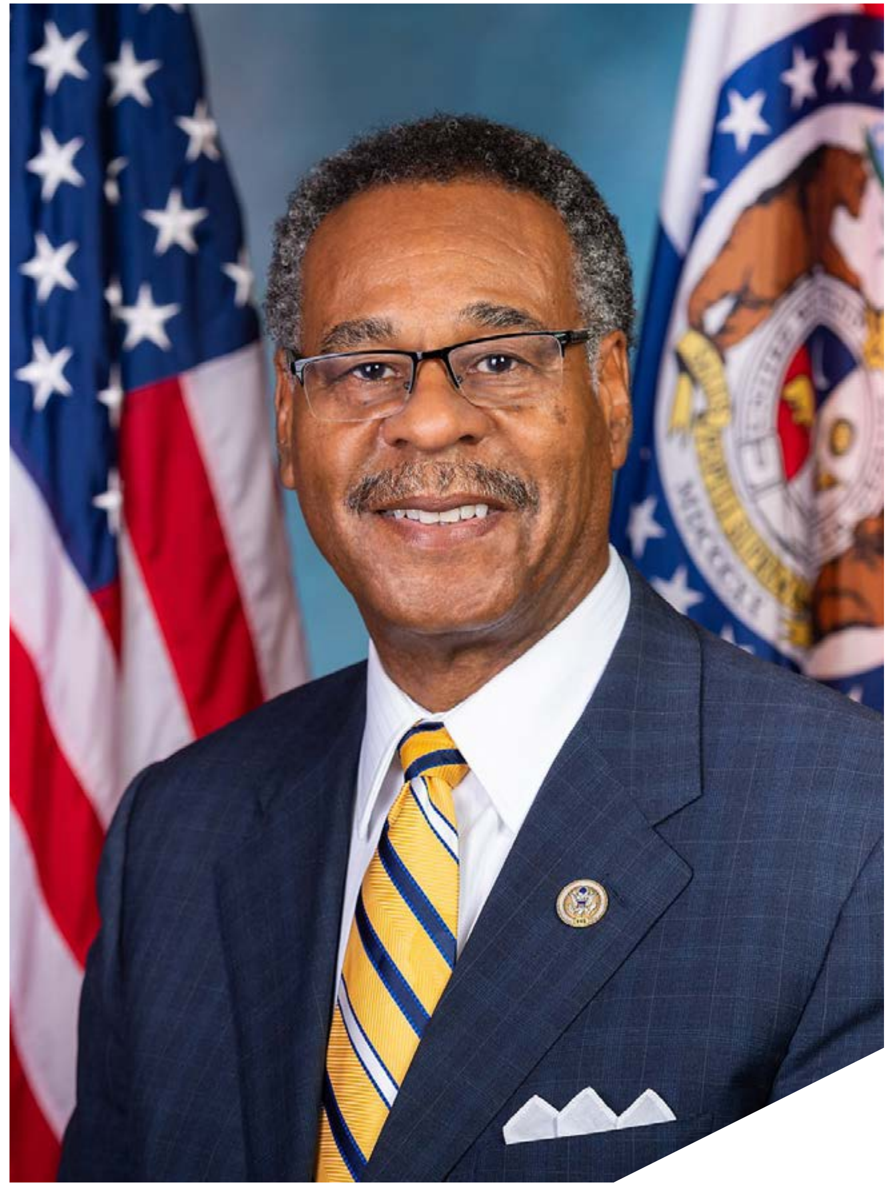
NLIHC's seminal research report, *Out of Reach*, documents the growing gap between income and the cost of rent, and demonstrates how low pay makes it impossible for low-wage workers and people living on a fixed income to reasonably afford a safe, quality place to call home. Without additional support, these households are often paying over half of their income on rent alone, leaving them one missed paycheck, broken-down car, or unreimbursed medical bill away from eviction and, in worst cases, homelessness.

Our communities and constituents deserve better. We all deserve the opportunity to live full lives and thrive, but thriving is impossible without a stable home. Together, we must build the political will to enact affordable housing and homelessness solutions that meet this crisis at the scale required to ensure everyone has a safe, affordable, and accessible place to call home.

Sincerely,

EMANUEL CLEAVER II
U.S. Representative for Missouri's 5th Congressional District.

"I know these challenges firsthand. As a child, my family and I lived in public housing. We relied on it to put a roof over our heads, and to make sure there was enough money to put food on the table."



EMANUEL CLEAVER II
U.S. Representative for Missouri's 5th Congressional District.

INTRODUCTION

Affordable, decent-quality housing remains out of reach for many of the nation's lowest-income renters. Despite modest economic gains for lower-income households in recent years, the rental housing crisis persists. Half of all renter households are now housing cost-burdened, paying more than 30% of their income on rent and utilities, and over a quarter are severely housing cost-burdened, spending more than half of their income (NLIHC, 2025). These cost burdens disproportionately impact the lowest-income renters.

Amidst ongoing economic uncertainty, incomes are struggling to keep pace with rents. At the same time, housing assistance remains deeply underfunded, and a severe shortage of affordable homes continues to push renters into unstable and uncertain living situations. Addressing these challenges will require sustained investment in affordable housing programs and other reforms.

From 2022 through the end of 2024, the U.S. experienced a period of economic growth. This growth included improvements in the labor market, with rising wages especially among workers in the bottom 10th percentile (Gould & DeCourcy, 2024). There was also some relief in the rental market: median rents declined by 3.5% from their peak in August 2022 (Apartment List, 2025). However, significant challenges persist in the housing sector. The post-pandemic construction boom has slowed and building costs have continued to rise—materials costs alone have increased 34% since 2020 (NAHB, 2025).

After a sustained period of growth, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) contracted 0.2% in the first quarter of 2025, signaling rising economic uncertainty. Any further economic decline this year

The American public should insist that Congress make sustained, long-term investments in affordable housing programs to ensure that the lowest-income renters can access and maintain safe, stable homes.

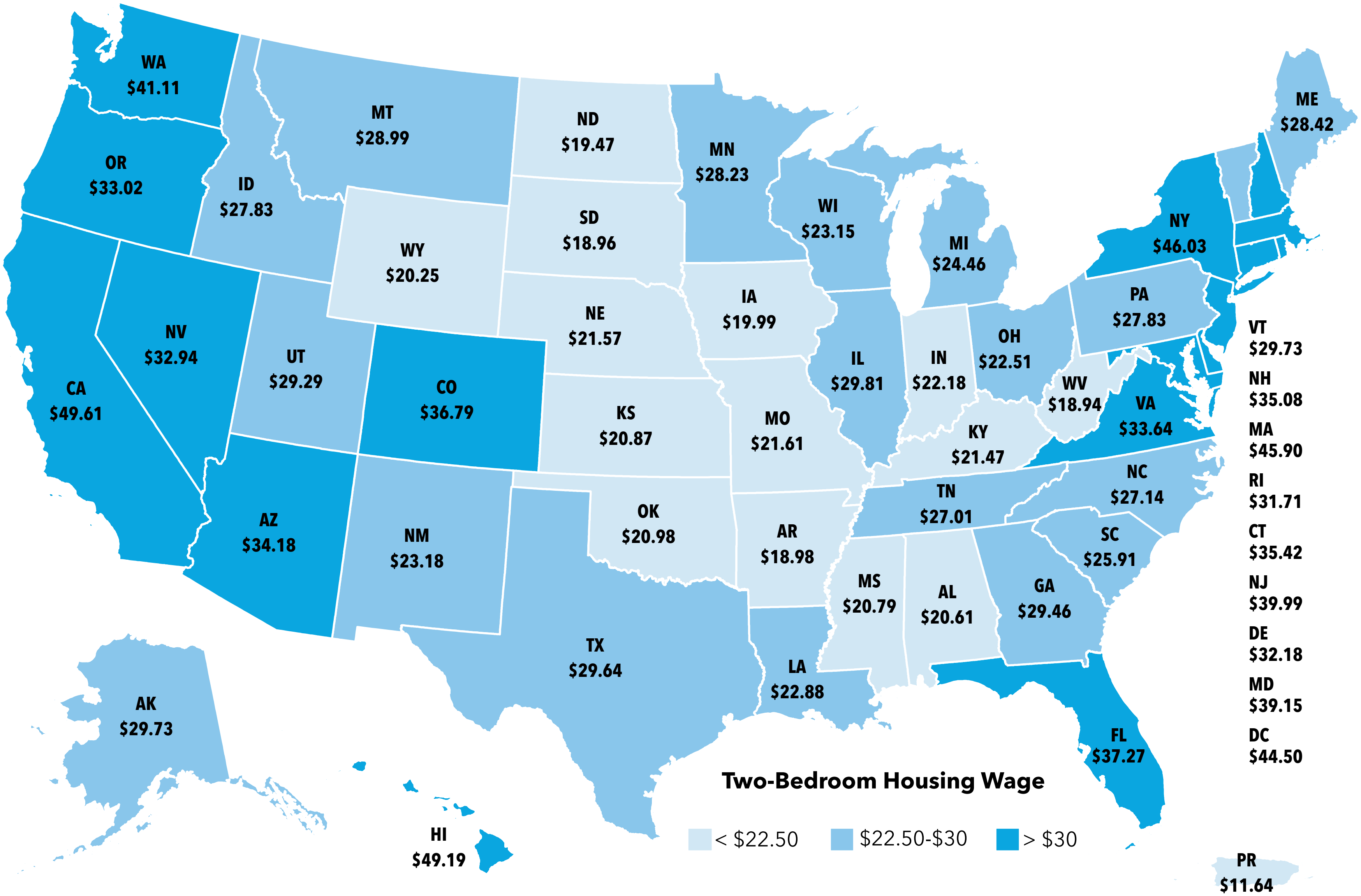
could deepen the housing crisis for renters through income loss and greater financial strain. However, even if the economy avoids a downturn, renters will continue to face significant challenges in securing and affording stable housing. In the face of this uncertainty, the urgent need for housing assistance remains as critical as ever.

For more than 30 years, the National Low Income Housing Coalition's (NLIHC) *Out of Reach* report has documented the gap between wages and rental housing costs in the U.S. Each year, the report shows that affordable rental homes remain out of reach for millions of low-wage workers, families, and other renters. The report's signature statistic, the "Housing Wage," estimates the hourly wage a full-time worker must earn to afford a modest rental home at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Fair Market Rent, without spending more than 30% of their income. Fair Market Rents estimate what a household moving today could expect to pay for a modest, decent-quality rental home—not luxury housing. Yet for many renters, even these homes are priced beyond reach.

In 2025, the national Housing Wage is $33.63 per hour for a modest two-bedroom rental home and $28.17 for a modest one-bedroom. Figure 1 provides state-specific two-bedroom Housing Wages, reflecting the wide variation in housing costs across the country. As this report demonstrates, these required wages far exceed not just the federal minimum wage but also the median wages of workers in many of the most common occupations, such as home health aides, food service workers, and administrative assistants. Almost half of all U.S. workers earn less than the hourly wage required to afford a modest one-bedroom rental home (BLS, 2024).

Resources for affordable housing remain insufficient to support the nation's lowest-paid and lowest-income renters. Only one in four eligible households receives federal housing assistance—not because of lack of need, but due to chronic underfunding (Bailey, 2022). To meaningfully address the crisis, the federal government must expand housing vouchers and both preserve and increase the supply of deeply affordable homes. Yet instead of investing in these vital solutions, the president and his allies in Congress propose a 44% cut to essential housing programs—an action that would only exacerbate the crisis. These harmful cuts must be firmly rejected. The American public should insist that Congress make sustained, long-term investments in affordable housing programs to ensure that the lowest-income renters can access and maintain safe, stable homes.

FIGURE 1. 2025 TWO-BEDROOM RENTAL HOUSING WAGES

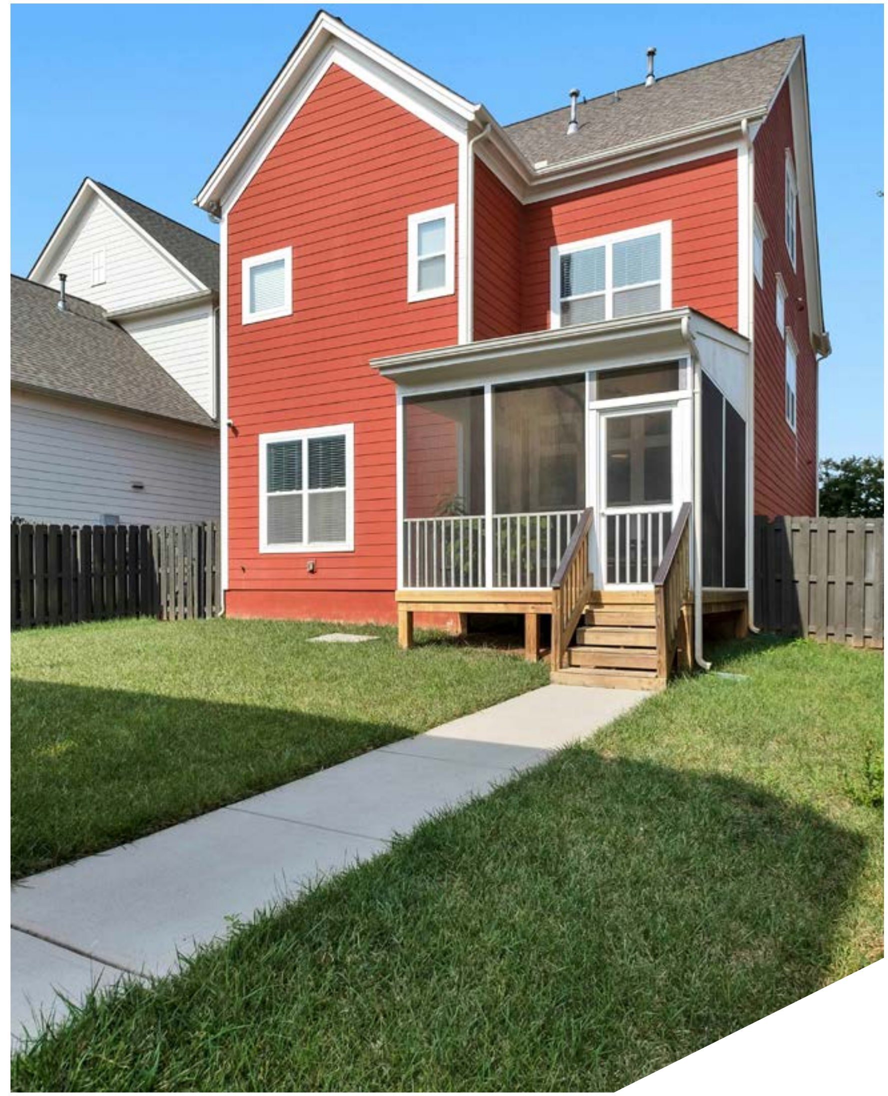


This map displays the hourly wages that a full-time worker must earn (working 40 hours per week, 52 weeks per year) in every state, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico in order to afford Fair Market Rent for a **TWO-BEDROOM RENTAL HOME**, without paying more than 30% of income.

RENTAL HOUSING IS UNAFFORDABLE FOR LOW-WAGE WORKERS

In the absence of an adequate federal minimum wage, a patchwork of minimum wage laws helps states and localities bridge the gap between wages and the rising cost of living. As of 2025, 30 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and 64 localities have minimum wages above the federal minimum of $7.25 an hour (Appendix A). These wages range from $8.75 per hour in West Virginia to $17.50 in the District of Columbia. Yet even in areas with higher minimum wages, the reality remains grim: nowhere in the United States—no state, metropolitan area, or county—can a full-time minimum-wage worker afford a modest two-bedroom rental home at Fair Market Rent. The outlook for one-bedroom homes is only slightly better: just 7% of counties nationwide (219 out of more than 3,000, excluding Puerto Rico) have a one-bedroom Fair Market Rent that is affordable for a full-time minimum-wage worker. All 219 of the counties are in states where the minimum wage exceeds the federal minimum.

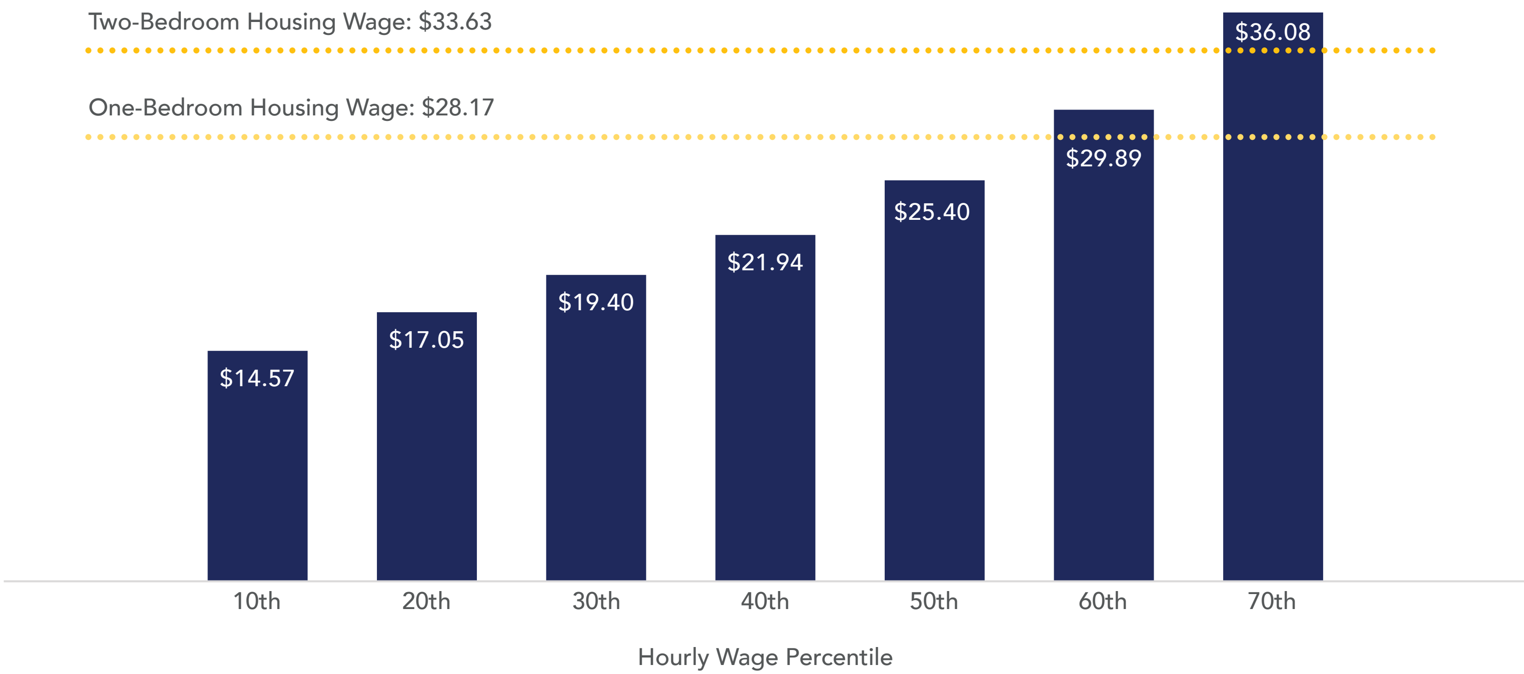
Even after factoring in higher state and local minimum wages, the average minimum-wage worker in the U.S. must work 116 hours per week—nearly three full-time jobs—to afford a modest two-bedroom rental home at Fair Market Rent. To afford a modest one-bedroom rental home, they would need to work 97 hours per week, or 2.4 full-time jobs. Higher minimum wages, however, are insufficient in addressing the housing affordability crisis. In each of the 64 counties and municipalities with minimum wages above both state and federal levels, local minimum wages still fall short of the local Housing Wage for both one- and two-bedroom rental homes (Appendix A).



The affordability crisis affects more than just minimum wage earners. As shown in **Figure 2**, more than half of all wage earners cannot afford a modest one-bedroom rental home at Fair Market Rent while working full-time. At least 60% cannot afford a modest two-bedroom rental home while working full-time. In 2025, the average hourly wage earned by renters is $23.60, which is $10.03 less than the national two-bedroom Housing Wage of $33.63 and $4.57 less than the one-bedroom Housing Wage of $28.17. In 49 states, the average renter wage is not enough to afford a two-bedroom rental. In 37 states, it falls short of affording even a one-bedroom rental.

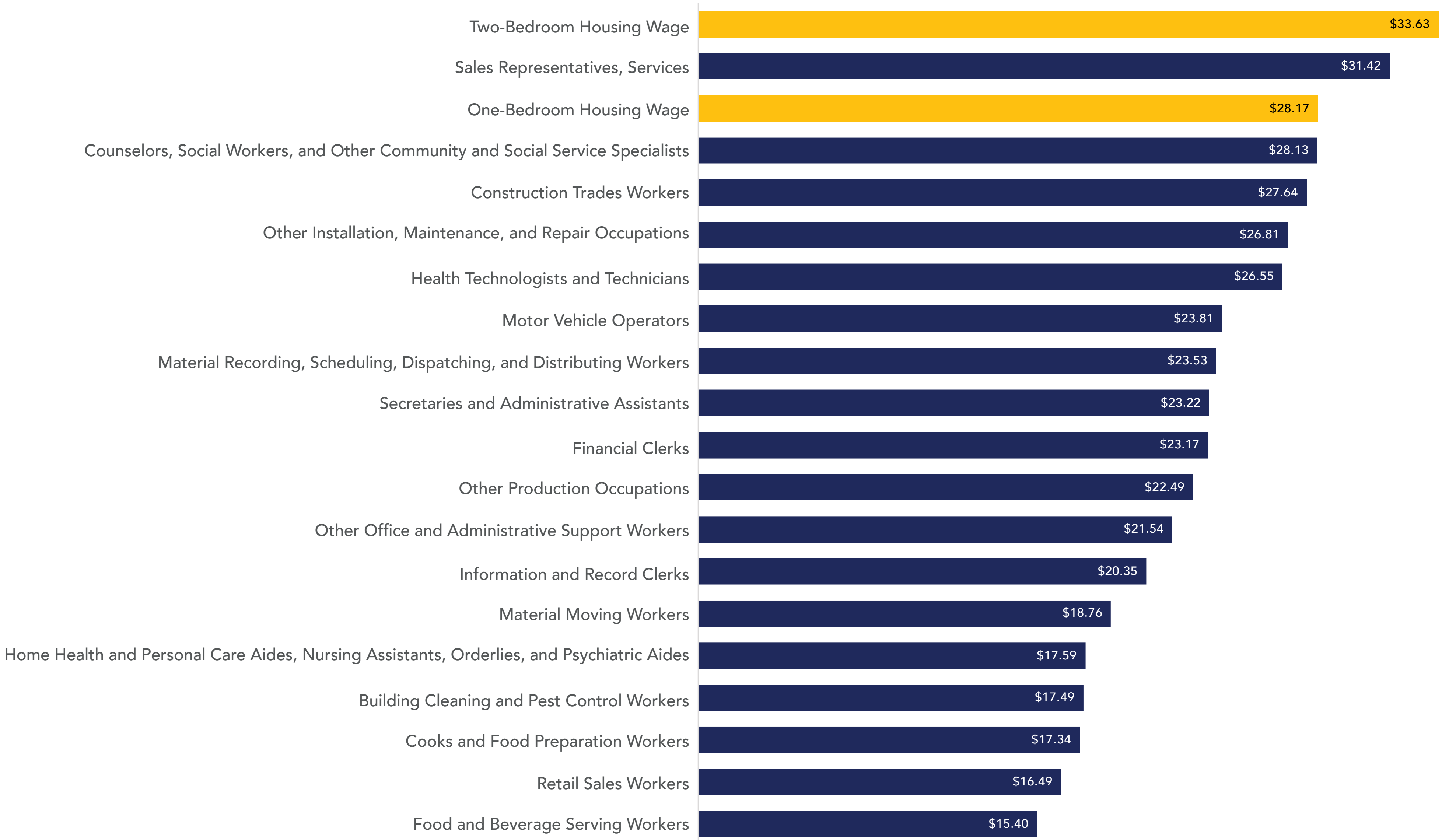
Even workers in the nation's most common occupations struggle to afford housing (**Figure 3**). Of the 25 most common jobs in the U.S., 17 pay median wages that fall below the Housing Wage for a one-bedroom rental and 18 pay below the two-bedroom Housing Wage. These 18 occupations employ approximately 74 million people—nearly half of the entire U.S. workforce.

FIGURE 2. HOURLY WAGES BY PERCENTILE VS. ONE- AND TWO-BEDROOM HOUSING WAGES



Source: Housing wages based on HUD Fair Market Rents. The hourly wages by percentile are drawn from the Economic Policy Institute State of Working America Data Library 2024, adjusted to 2025 dollars.

FIGURE 3. 17 OF THE 25 MOST COMMON OCCUPATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES PAY MEDIAN WAGES LESS THAN THE ONE- AND TWO-BEDROOM HOUSING WAGES



Source: NLIHC calculation of weighted-average HUD Fair Market Rent. Occupational wages from May 2024 BLS Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, adjusted to 2025 dollars.
Note: The BLS Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics excluded Colorado in 2024 due to data quality issues.

THE REALITY FOR RENTERS: STRUGGLING TO KEEP UP

We highlight the experiences of renters from across the country to underscore the realities behind the data throughout this report. Their voices illustrate the human impact of the affordable housing crisis and the urgent need for action.

Across the U.S., renters are finding that one full-time job is no longer enough to cover rent. Many must take on extra hours or multiple jobs, often at the expense of their health, families, personal lives, and well-being. Carla, a single mother in South Carolina, explains: "They're working for the rent, but it's not enough… families are trying to do everything to keep themselves in a home." Others share the same story: Detrese in Maryland puts it plainly: "Everything is going up but the paycheck." Vee in Missouri notes that small wage increases are being erased by rising rents, and Jessie in Arizona reflects, "I've worked my way up, and we're still struggling even more than we were before." Laura, also in Arizona, shares how difficult it is to keep up with rent, even with a decent job. Detrese explains how a lot of renters often have no choice but to pick up more shifts just to cover rent. Further, Monica in Georgia highlights how having to work multiple jobs is especially challenging for parents, as it takes away time from caring for their children and potentially forces parents to leave children unsupervised. These stories reveal the harsh reality that renters can fall further behind despite hard work and increased pay—and the cost is felt not just economically, but in every part of life.

"They're working for the rent, but it's not enough… families are trying to do everything to keep themselves in a home."

LONG-TERM LOSS AND SYSTEMIC SHORTAGE OF AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING

The U.S. faces a shortage of 7.1 million affordable and available rental homes for extremely low-income (ELI) renters—those whose incomes are at or below the federal poverty guideline or 30% of the area median income (AMI), whichever is greater (NLIHC, 2025). Not a single state or major metropolitan area has an adequate supply of housing to meet the needs of its lowest-income renters. Compounding the crisis is the ongoing decline in the supply of low-cost rental housing. Between 2012 and 2022, the U.S. lost 2.1 million rental homes with inflation-adjusted rents under $600: roughly the maximum affordable to a household earning $24,000 annually (JCHS, 2024).

At the root of the housing crisis is a structural issue: the private market cannot, on its own, provide an adequate supply of homes that are affordable for the lowest-income renters. Without public subsidies, the rents that ELI households can afford are too low to cover the development and operating costs of new housing. As a result, almost all new rental construction in the private market is priced for higher-income households. In the absence of new affordable construction, ELI renters are forced to rely on older housing that becomes less expensive over time through a process known as filtering. In downward filtering, higher-income households move into newer, more expensive housing, vacating older units for lower-income renters. While this process can help increase access to lower-cost units, it does not guarantee affordability or relief from cost burdens (Myers & Park, 2020; Spader, 2024). In many cases, rents that would be affordable to the lowest-income renters might be insufficient to sustain the operation of properties as rental housing. In the weakest housing markets, landlords may lack the economic incentive to maintain properties, leading to disinvestment, conversion to other uses, or abandonment. Conversely, in tighter markets, upward filtering often occurs, in which landlords renovate older homes and rent them at a higher price, further shrinking the supply of affordable housing. While new construction is important to overall affordability and downward filtering can be an important source of lower-cost housing, neither mechanism delivers an adequate supply of affordable housing for the lowest-income renters.

Subsidies are essential to addressing the housing needs of the lowest-income renters. They are needed to support the construction of new affordable homes, preserve the physical quality and long-term affordability of existing homes, and bridge the gap between what the lowest-income renters can afford to pay and rents in the private market. At the same time, federal housing assistance programs are chronically underfunded. Only one in four renters who qualify for assistance actually receives it (Bailey, 2022). The limitations of the private market and chronically underfunded housing programs ensure that the lowest-income renters face a shortage of affordable and available rental homes in virtually every community (NLIHC, 2025). Even when the lowest-income renters are able to find an affordable unit in the private market, the housing is often of lower quality or only temporarily affordable. Meanwhile, the already limited supply of federally assisted housing faces its own set of challenges, including aging buildings, inadequate maintenance funding, and expiring affordability requirements (NLIHC and PAHRC, 2024).

THE REALITY FOR RENTERS: SUBSTANDARD HOUSING

The shortage of affordable housing leaves low-income renters with few options, often forcing them into older, poorly maintained units. Detrese in Maryland describes tenants in Baltimore as "being forced to live in horrible conditions," with rising rents and no repairs in sight. Monica in Georgia highlights similar issues, explaining that substandard living conditions are common, even in rentals with high prices. Terri in Michigan shares the struggles her friends face with basic maintenance issues like hot water and heating, while Amber, a resident of a federally assisted unit in Oregon, underscores the emotional and physical toll of living in unsafe conditions. Amber explains that despite the problems in her unit, she cannot afford to move because the rent prices in her area are too expensive. Terri points to a broader trend of landlords neglecting routine maintenance, and Hailee expresses her frustration after repeated requests to address flooding in her apartment were ignored by property management. Kimrah in Boston emphasizes the systemic lack of investment in maintaining low-income housing. Renters like Vikki in Illinois, who needs to relocate with her son, feel trapped because the only available units are in unacceptable condition. These first-hand accounts highlight the challenges of relying on aging housing stock without adequate investment. They also underscore the urgent need for increased funding to preserve and maintain federally assisted housing and ensure that all renters have access to homes that are both affordable and safe.

NOT ENOUGH MONEY IS LEFT FOR OTHER BASIC NEEDS

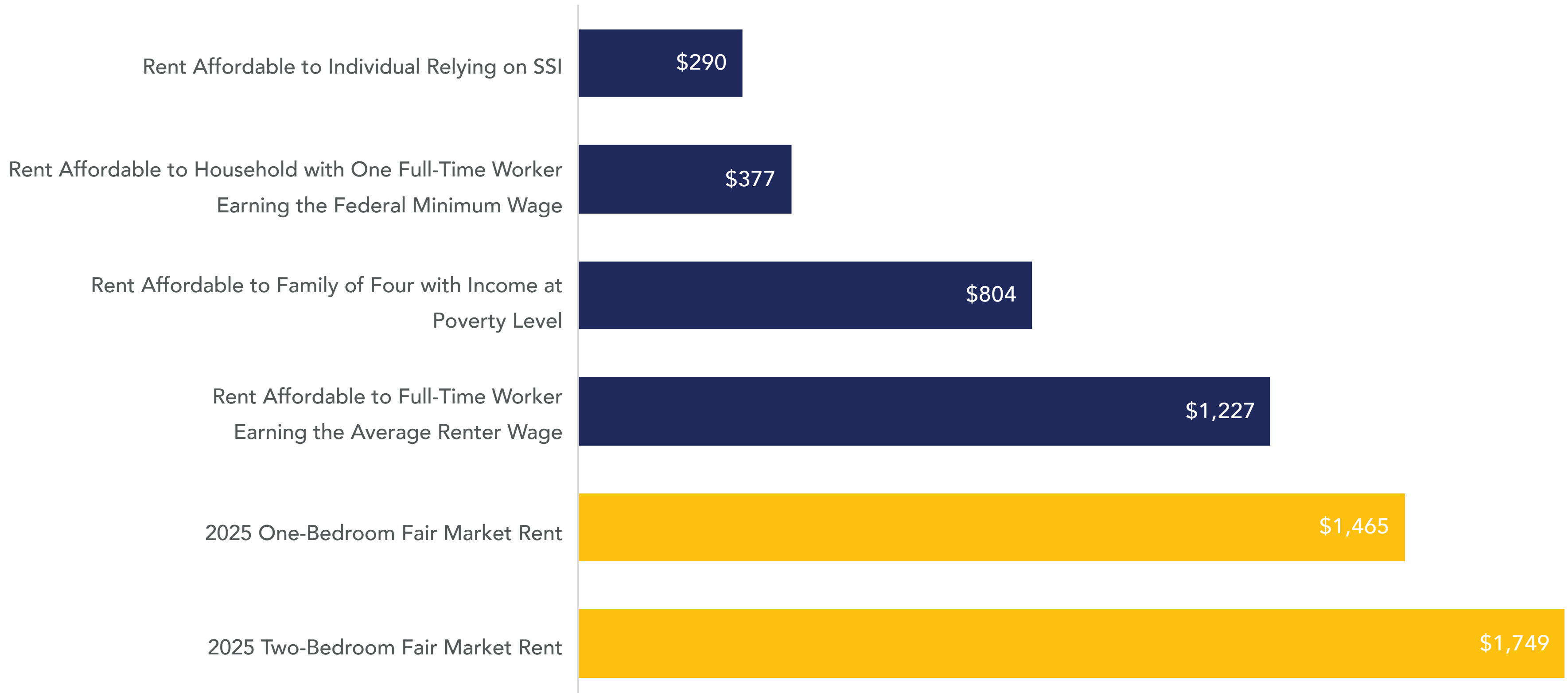
Limited housing options mean that millions of low-income renters are forced to spend large portions of their income just to keep a roof over their heads. Households that spend more than 30% of their income on housing are considered cost-burdened, while those spending more than 50% of their income on housing are classified as severely cost-burdened. Nearly half of all renter households in the U.S. are cost-burdened, while 26% are severely cost-burdened (NLIHC, 2025). The impact is especially severe for the nation's lowest-income renters: among households earning less than the federal poverty guideline or 30% of AMI, 87% are cost-burdened and 75% are severely cost-burdened (NLIHC, 2025). These households account for 43% of cost-burdened renters and a striking 68% of all severely cost-burdened renters in the U.S.

For the lowest-income households, the consequences of paying so much for rent are devastating. With much of their income consumed by housing, little remains for life's other necessities like food, childcare, transportation, or healthcare. For example, a family of four living at the federal poverty line in 2025 earns just $2,679 per month. To rent a modest two-bedroom apartment at Fair Market Rent—an average of $1,749 per month—they would need to spend 65% of their income on rent, leaving just $930 for all other expenses. Meanwhile, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) thrifty food budget for a family of four is estimated at $993 per month—more than what remains for this family after paying rent (USDA, 2025). Research shows that severely cost-burdened poor renters spend 39% less on food and 42% less on healthcare than unburdened poor renters, indicating potentially painful choices between rent and survival (JCHS, 2024). Many families also end up in overcrowded or unsafe housing conditions, jeopardizing their health and well-being and putting their stability at further risk.

The lowest-income renter householders are also more likely to be seniors, have disabilities, be in school, or be single-adult caregivers (NLIHC, 2025). Many cannot work and must subsist on fixed incomes below the poverty level, while many others work low- or minimum-wage jobs. In most areas of the U.S., a family of four with a poverty-level income can afford no more than $804 per month on rent, assuming they can manage to spend as much as 30% of their income on housing (**Figure 4**). In reality, many can afford far less. A full-time worker earning the federal minimum wage of $7.25 can afford only $377 per month. Individuals with disabilities relying on federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) can afford only $290 per month—a staggering $1,175 less than the monthly Fair Market Rent for a one-bedroom apartment. As **Figure 4** shows, average monthly Fair Market Rents for both one- and two-bedroom homes are far out of reach for low-income renters in most situations, leaving the vast majority cost-burdened.

Moreover, the standard "30% rule" for measuring housing affordability can fall short of capturing true economic hardship. Not all households can afford to spend even 30% of their income on rent—especially those with medical needs, large families, or caregiving responsibilities. The residual income approach offers a more accurate measure of affordability, asking whether a household has enough money left over after rent to cover the estimated cost of their other basic needs. Recent research estimates typical non-housing costs, such as food, transportation, healthcare, childcare, and taxes, and then compares that to a household's remaining income after rent. If the residual income after paying rent is insufficient to meet these basic expenses, the household is considered as having residual-income cost burden. Research using this method found that all renters earning under $30,000 annually, and 81% of those earning between $30,000 and $44,999, cannot afford other necessities after paying rent (Airgood-Obrycki et al., 2022).

FIGURE 4. RENTS ARE OUT OF REACH



Source: NLIHC calculation of weighted-average HUD Fair Market Rent. Affordable rents based on income data from BLS QCEW, 2024 adjusted to 2025 dollars; and Social Security Administration, 2025 maximum federal SSI benefit for individual.

THE REALITY FOR RENTERS: WHAT'S LEFT AFTER RENT?

With so much of their income going toward rent, renters across the U.S. are forced to make impossible choices about basic needs. David in Vermont shares that by the last week of each month, he runs out of food. Detrese in Maryland describes tenants sacrificing food, medicine, and transportation just to keep a roof over their heads: "Tenants we know have to pick up additional shifts, sacrifice medication, or struggle to pay childcare." Terri in Michigan says she's had to stop buying groceries and even cut her pain medications because of the financial strain of rent. Vikki in Illinois describes the emotional toll of rent hikes and constant financial pressure: "I'm stressing on how I could make it, it's hard, I just want to burst into tears right now." These stories highlight the brutal sacrifices millions of renters make to afford housing and the growing urgency for policies that ensure they don't have to choose between shelter and survival.

"Tenants we know have to pick up additional shifts, sacrifice medication, or struggle to pay childcare."

DISPROPORTIONATE HARM TO BLACK, LATINO, NATIVE AMERICAN, AND WOMEN WORKERS

People of color are disproportionately impacted by the nation's housing affordability crisis. Compared to white households, they are more likely to be renters, to have extremely low incomes, and to experience cost burdens that put them at greater risk of housing instability (Brooks, 2023; Cornelissen & Hermann, 2023; NLIHC, 2025). These disparities are rooted in a long history of systemic racism. Generations of discriminatory housing policies and practices—such as redlining, exclusionary zoning, and predatory lending—have denied many Black, Latino, and Native American families access to homeownership and the opportunity to build wealth. Ongoing racial discrimination in hiring, wage-setting, and workplace advancement continues to reinforce these inequities, concentrating many workers of color in low-wage sectors (Gemelas et al. 2021; Mandel & Senyonov, 2016, Oddo et al., 2021; Pager et al, 2009; NLIHC, 2025).

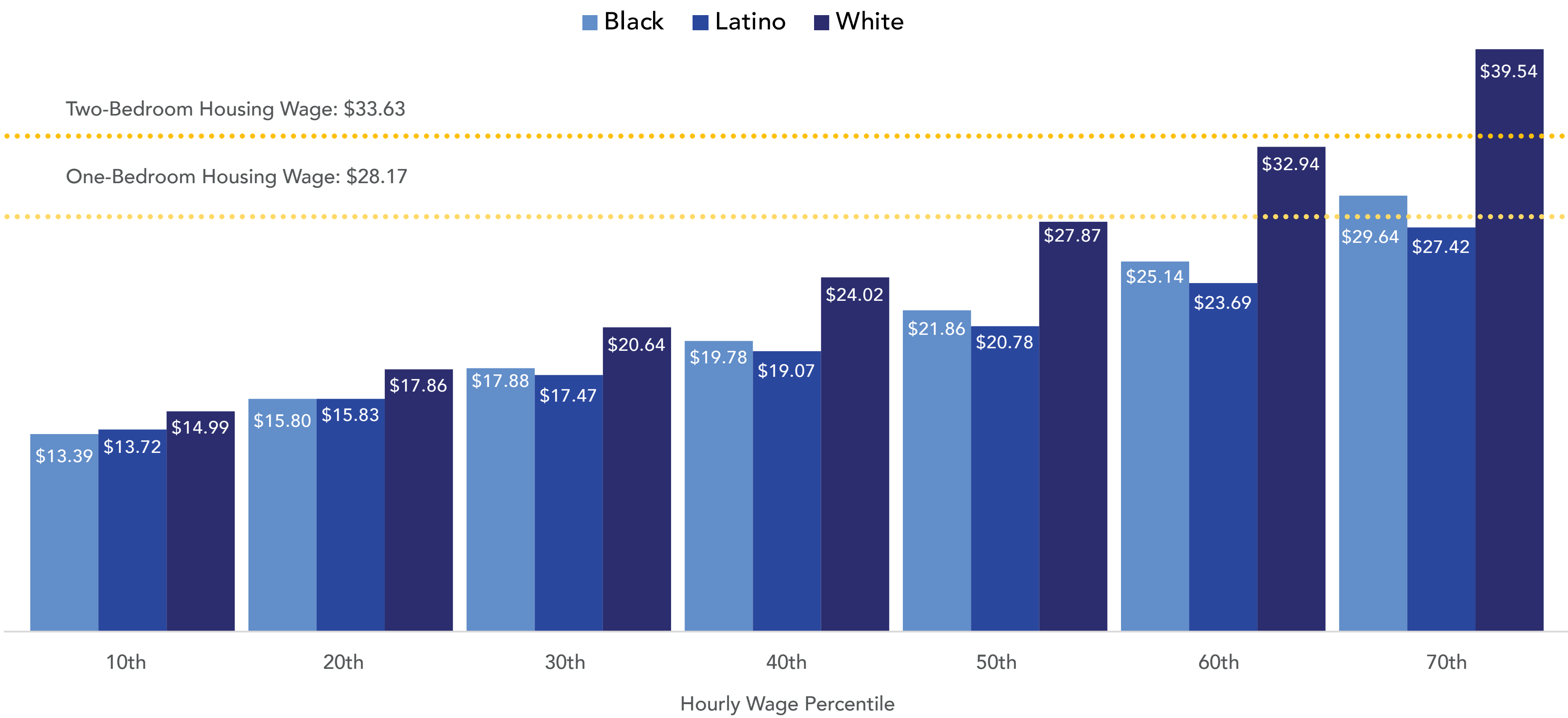
The severe housing burdens experienced by renters of color are closely linked to disparities in income and employment. Extremely low-income renters account for 18% of Black households, 17% of American Indian or Alaska Native households, and 13% of Latino households, compared to just 6% of white households (NLIHC, 2025). Black, Latino, and Native American workers are more likely than white workers to be employed in lower-paying industries such as service, production, and transportation. In contrast, white workers are more often employed in higher-paying management and professional positions (Wilson et al., 2021; Allard & Brundage, Jr., 2019). Even within the same job categories, wage disparities persist: Black and Latino workers consistently earn less than white workers performing similar roles (Wilson et al., 2021).

Figure 5 illustrates these racial wage disparities across the income distribution. At the 10th wage percentile, Black workers earn 11% less and Latino workers earn 9% less than white workers. These gaps widen with income: the median Black worker earns 22% less and the median Latino worker earns 26% less than the median white worker. The median wage of a full-time white worker is nearly enough to afford a one-bedroom apartment at Fair Market Rent, but the same is not true for Black or Latino workers. Even at the 60th percentile, white workers can generally afford a two-bedroom rental home at Fair Market Rent, while Black and Latino workers earning a 60th percentile wage cannot afford a one-bedroom rental.

Gender further compounds these racial wage disparities. Black and Latina women face some of the steepest wage gaps in the labor market (**Figure 6)**. Black women earning the median wage for their race and gender make $21.25 per hour, which is $1.35 less than Black men and $9.28 less than white men. Latina women earn $2.28 less than Latino men and $10.58 less than white men. While a white man earning the median wage can afford a one-bedroom apartment at Fair Market Rent, Black and Latina women fall short by $6.92 and $8.22 per hour, respectively.

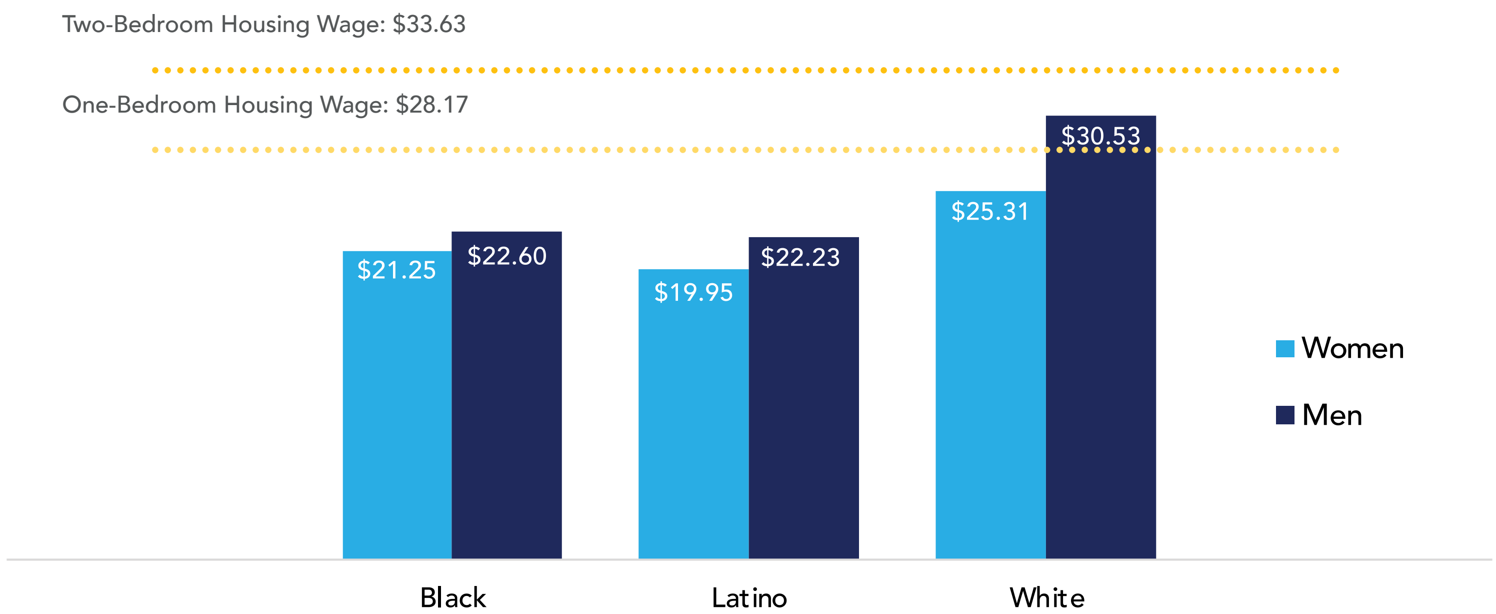
In addition to lower wages, people of color also experience higher rates of unemployment and underemployment. In 2023, the annual unemployment rate for white workers was 3.3%, compared to 4.6% for Hispanic or Latino workers, 5.5% for Black workers, and 6.6% for American Indian or Alaska Native workers (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024). These employment disparities further limit access to affordable housing as stable, full-time employment is often essential to secure and maintain rental housing.

FIGURE 5. HOURLY WAGE PERCENTILES VS. ONE- AND TWO-BEDROOM HOUSING WAGES, BY RACE & ETHNICITY



Source: Housing wages based on HUD Fair Market Rents. Hourly wages by percentile from the Economic Policy Institute State of Working America Data Library 2024, adjusted to 2025 dollars.

FIGURE 6. MEDIAN HOURLY WAGES BY RACE, ETHNICITY, AND GENDER



Source: Housing wages based on HUD Fair Market Rents. Hourly wages by percentile from the Economic Policy Institute State of Working America Data Library 2024, adjusted to 2025 dollars.

HOUSING INSTABILITY DEEPENS WITH ECONOMIC DOWNTURNS

Uncertainty is a defining feature of life for millions of renters, especially those with the fewest financial resources. As David, a 65-year-old renter from Vermont, put it: “It’s the uncertainty of everything that is the problem right now.” With rising concerns about the possibility of another economic slowdown, lessons from past shocks like the Great Recession and the COVID-19 pandemic are critical to understanding the deep and lasting impact downturns have on housing stability. Economic uncertainty, including negative GDP growth in the first quarter of 2025, signals a potential threat for renters who are least equipped to endure another crisis (BEA, 2025).

Economic inequality in the U.S. has been rising for decades, leaving many families with fewer savings and limited resources to weather financial hardship (Weller & Karakilic, 2022). While the top 10% of earners held 70.5% of the nation's wealth just before the COVID-19 pandemic, real wealth for most U.S. households had declined since the Great Recession. Median wealth for all non-retired households dropped from $117,627 (in 2019 dollars) in 2007 to $91,540 in 2019 (Weller & Karakilic, 2022). The Great Recession dealt a heavy blow to working families, and when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, it exacerbated their economic precarity.

Recent proposals to drastically cut federal housing programs will further destabilize the nation's lowest-income renters and leave them even more exposed to the next inevitable economic downturn.

Many households had even less of a financial cushion than they did a decade earlier. Renters of color were especially affected—Black and Latino households were more likely to hold low-wage jobs and had fewer savings to rely on during the widespread job losses caused by the pandemic (Gemelas et al., 2021; Weller & Karakilic, 2022).

Recent recessions have fueled long-term increases in the prevalence of housing cost burdens, particularly among the lowest-income renters. During the Great Recession, the share of lowest-income renters with cost-burdens rose from 84.2% in 2007 to 87.0% by 2010, while those with severe cost-burdens increased from 67.8% to 72.0%. By 2019, their cost-burden rate had declined slightly to 85.5%, and the severe cost-burden rate was 70.1%, but both rates remained above pre-recession levels. By 2023, after the COVID-19 recession, cost-burden prevalence grew further to 87.4% among the lowest-income renters and the rate of severe cost-burdens it rose to 74.6%.

Even when economic indicators show recovery, the lowest-income renters are often left behind, reflecting a housing system that consistently fails to protect the lowest-income renters most vulnerable to economic shocks. Recessions deepen rent burdens, and the effects endure long after the economy begins to recover Recent proposals to drastically cut federal housing programs will further destabilize the nation's lowest-income renters and leave them even more exposed to the next inevitable economic downturn.

FEDERAL POLICIES ARE NEEDED TO END THE HOUSING CRISIS

Federal subsidies are essential to addressing the deep and systemic shortage of affordable housing available to the nation's lowest-income renters. Despite widespread need, only one in four eligible households receives housing assistance, leaving millions without support (Bailey, 2022). Yet rather than expanding vital programs, recent federal legislative proposals threaten to slash funding, impose harmful restrictions, and undo years of hard-won progress. To truly address this crisis, Congress must not only protect existing housing programs but significantly strengthen them through sustained investment, expanded rental assistance, and policies that eliminate barriers to housing access.

Several legislative proposals offer promising steps forward. The "Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers Act" would provide 250,000 new housing vouchers and pair them with counseling services to help families with young children secure housing in areas with strong schools, job opportunities, and essential resources—giving families a chance at long-term stability and improved outcomes. Similarly, Congress must also provide sufficient funding to sustain existing programs, like the Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) program, created under the "American Rescue Plan Act of 2021." This $5 billion program funded new tenant-based rental assistance vouchers for those experiencing or at immediate risk of homelessness, including survivors of intimate partner violence and human trafficking. Without additional congressional funding, HUD estimates the EHV program will exhaust its resources by 2026, putting 60,000 households who rely on an EHV to keep a roof over their head at risk of returning to homelessness.

Beyond expanding and preserving vouchers, Congress must address structural barriers that restrict affordable housing supply. Local zoning rules that drive up development costs and limit housing availability must be reformed. The "Yes In My Backyard (YIMBY) Act" would require local governments receiving Community Development Block Grants to report on actions taken to reduce barriers to affordable housing, including zoning reforms that encourage multifamily housing development. While zoning reform alone cannot solve the affordable housing crisis, particularly for the lowest-income renters, it is an essential part of a broader strategy to increase the supply of market-rate and affordable housing.

The "American Housing and Economic Mobility Act" would provide large scale investments to increase the supply of affordable housing. It would invest $445 billion over 10 years in the national Housing Trust Fund to build, repair, and operate nearly two million homes affordable to families with low incomes. The bill also includes $70 billion for repairs to public housing and money to build new rental housing in rural areas.

Finally, Congress must improve the efficiency of existing housing programs. The "Choice in Affordable Housing Act" would address inspection delays, offer incentives for landlords to participate in the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program, and expand the use of Small Area Fair Market Rents to expand housing choices for voucher holders. The bill would also increase funding for the Tribal HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program, providing much-needed support for Native American renters living on Tribal lands.

Preventing housing instability also requires a safety net for renters facing sudden financial shocks. The "Eviction Crisis Act" would establish a national housing stabilization fund to provide temporary assistance for renters at risk of eviction, helping to prevent the cascade of negative consequences that often follow displacement. Together with other reforms, these targeted policy solutions can be part of a comprehensive strategy to address the affordable housing crisis.

Looking ahead, the future of federal housing assistance is increasingly uncertain. The fiscal year 2025 (FY25) HUD budget underfunded the HCV program, potentially resulting in the loss of 32,000 vouchers through attrition. Current federal budget proposals threaten to deepen the crisis. The president's budget request for FY26 proposes a devastating 44% cut to HUD's overall funding, which would eliminate rental assistance programs, consolidate five key programs into a single, restrictive State Rental Assistance Block Grant, and impose a two-year time limit on assistance. The Trump Administration is also expected to pursue harmful regulations that would make it more difficult for families to obtain and maintain HUD assistance, including burdensome work reporting requirements. These policies would not only deepen the affordable housing crisis but actively push more families toward housing insecurity and homelessness.

A meaningful response to the affordable housing crisis requires Congress to reject the harmful cuts proposed by the president, strengthen federal programs, and commit to sustained, long-term investments in deeply affordable housing. Without such action, the country's lowest-income renters will remain trapped in a cycle of housing precarity, unable to afford a safe, stable, and accessible place to call home.

THE REALITY FOR RENTERS: AFFORDABLE HOUSING DOESN'T HAVE TO BE OUT OF REACH

For many renters, a single unexpected event, such as an illness or a lost job, can spiral into housing instability or eviction. Rental assistance programs serve as a crucial lifeline, yet the resources they provide remain out of reach for those who need them most. The risk of losing housing remains high for many, especially those on fixed incomes or recovering from a crisis. Kimrah, a renter in Boston with homelessness experience, puts it plainly: "Everybody is one paycheck away, one accident, one illness away from being me." Rosey, a renter in Detroit, describes the vulnerability of living paycheck to paycheck: "Just something as simple as being sick or your kids being sick can affect your paycheck… which could affect your ability to pay rent." Without a safety net, these common hardships are enough to push families into homelessness.

Housing assistance can provide not just housing but security, dignity, and a foundation for a better life.

For families who do receive assistance, the difference is clear. Carla, a renter in South Carolina, explains how the HCV program was her family's lifeline, allowing her to avoid homelessness while raising her children. "It really helped people like myself, single mothers… who really needed the assistance otherwise they may be homeless." Amber in Oregon explains how living in a federally assisted property helped her avoid homelessness, "If I hadn't had that option in the last few years, in some points I would have been homeless." These stories highlight how housing assistance can provide not just housing but security, dignity, and a foundation for a better life.

This year's *Out of Reach* report shows clearly that what is out of reach is not just housing, but security and dignity for the nation's lowest-income renters. In an uncertain economic climate, renters with the fewest resources too often struggle to pay rent, live in unsafe or substandard housing, and are forced to make impossible choices between housing and other basic needs. People can work hard and still fall behind, knowing that one unexpected expense or missed paycheck could leave them homeless. Some people, like seniors and people with certain disabilities, are simply not able to work. Federal housing assistance would be a lifeline for all of these renters, yet it remains deeply underfunded and increasingly under threat. The American public must reject the harmful budget cuts proposed by the president and demand that Congress protect HUD and the programs it administers. Long-term investments in deeply targeted federal housing programs are needed to ensure the lowest-income renters have stable, safe, accessible, and affordable homes.

THE NUMBERS IN THIS REPORT

Out of Reach data are available for every state, metropolitan area, and county at www.nlihc.org/oor. We encourage you to visit the site, click on your state, and select "more info" to view an interactive page on which you can explore data for specific metropolitan areas and counties in your state. The final pages of this report describe where the numbers come from and how to use them, identify the most expensive jurisdictions, and provide state rankings.

The Housing Wage varies considerably across the country. The Housing Wage for a modest two-bedroom rental home in Santa Cruz County, California, for example, is $81.21- far higher than the national two-bedroom Housing Wage of $33.63. On the other end of the price spectrum, the two-bedroom Housing Wage in Barbour County, Alabama is $14.85- much lower than the national two-bedroom Housing Wage. Even so, many jurisdictions with lower-than-average Housing Wages still suffer from a shortage of affordable rental homes. Jurisdictions with low Housing Wages tend to have lower-than-average household incomes, meaning a low Housing Wage is still out of reach for too many households.

The Housing Wage is based on HUD Fair Market Rents (FMR), which are estimates of what a family moving today can expect to pay for a modest rental home, not what all renters are currently paying. The FMR is the basis of the rent-payment standard for Housing Choice Vouchers and other HUD programs. The FMR is usually set at the 40th percentile of rents for typical homes occupied by recent movers in an area. FMRs are often applied uniformly within each FMR area, which is either a metropolitan area or nonmetropolitan county. Therefore, the Housing Wage does not reflect rent variations within a metropolitan area or nonmetropolitan county. HUD publishes Small Area FMRs based on U.S. Postal Service ZIP codes to better reflect small-scale market conditions within metropolitan areas. NLIHC calculated the Housing Wage for each ZIP code to illustrate the variation in the Housing Wage within metropolitan areas. These wages can be found online at www.nlihc.org/oor.

Readers are cautioned against comparing statistics in one edition of *Out of Reach* with those in another. Over time, HUD has changed its methodology for calculating FMRs and incomes. Since 2012, HUD has developed FMR estimates using American Community Survey (ACS) data to determine base rents, and this methodology can introduce more year-to-year variability. HUD more recently began using proprietary data from private companies to better capture rental inflation in calculating FMRs. From time to time, an area's FMRs are based on local rent surveys rather than the ACS. For these reasons, not all differences between statistics in previous editions of *Out of Reach* and this year's report reflect actual market dynamics. Please consult the appendices and NLIHC research staff for assistance in interpreting changes in the data over time.

DEFINITIONS

AFFORDABILITY in this report is consistent with the federal standard that no more than 30% of a household's gross income should be spent on rent and utilities. Households paying over 30% of their income are considered housing cost-burdened. Households paying over 50% of their income are considered severely housing cost-burdened.

AREA MEDIAN INCOME (AMI) is used to determine income eligibility for affordable housing programs. The AMI is set according to family size and varies by region.

AVERAGE RENTER WAGE is the estimated mean hourly wage among renters, based on 2023 Bureau of Labor Statistics wage data adjusted by the ratio of renter household income to the overall median household income reported in the ACS and projected to 2025.

EXTREMELY LOW INCOME (ELI) refers to household income that is less than the federal poverty guideline or 30% of AMI.

VERY LOW INCOME (VLI) refers to household income that is less than 50% of AMI.

HOUSING WAGE is the estimated full-time hourly wage that workers must earn to afford a decent rental home at HUD's Fair Market Rent while spending no more than 30% of their income on housing costs.

FULL-TIME WORK is defined as 2,080 hours per year (40 hours each week for 52 weeks). The average employee works roughly 35 hours per week, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

FAIR MARKET RENT (FMR) is typically the 40th percentile of gross rents for standard rental units of recent movers. FMRs are determined by HUD on an annual basis and reflect the cost of shelter and utilities. FMRs are used to determine payment standards for the Housing Choice Voucher program and Section 8 contracts.

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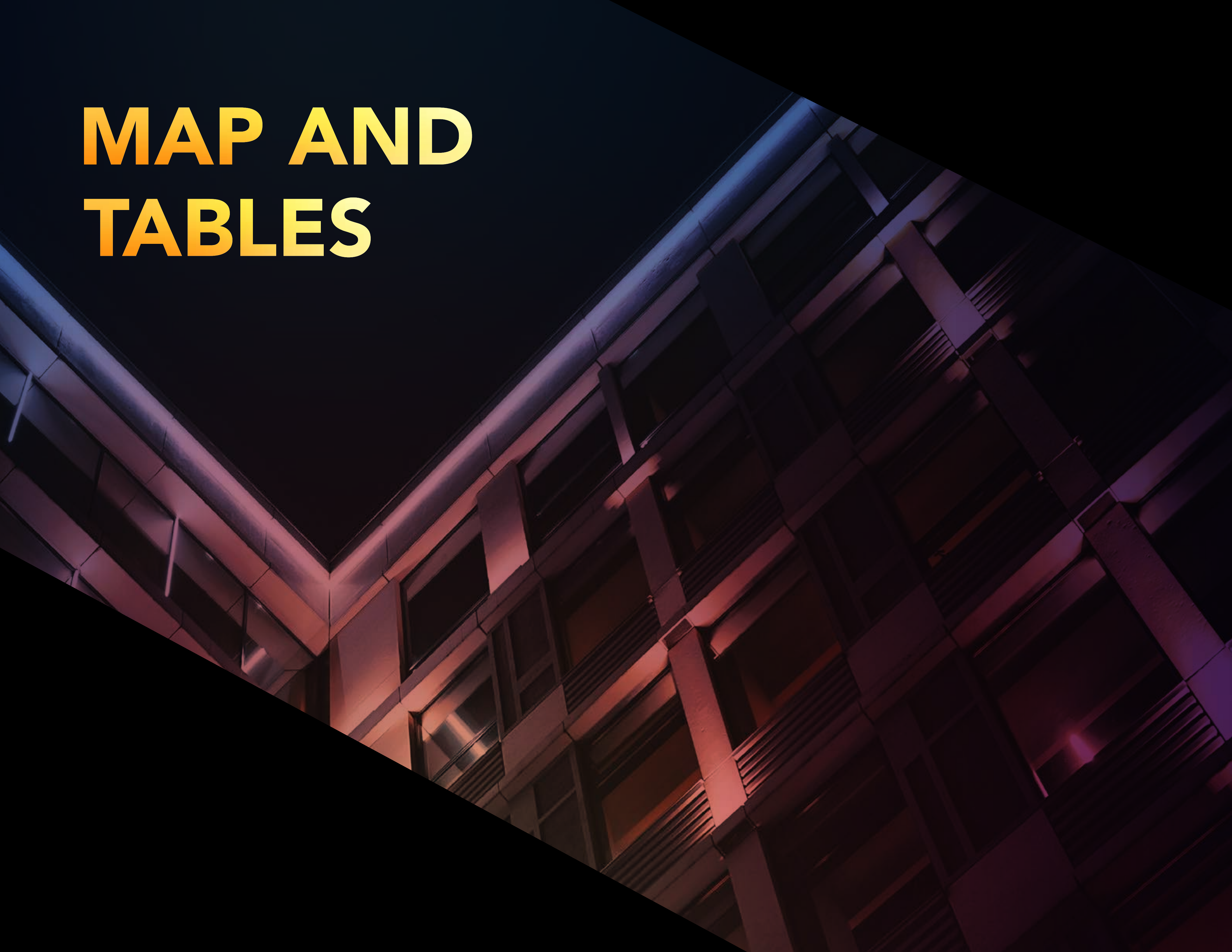
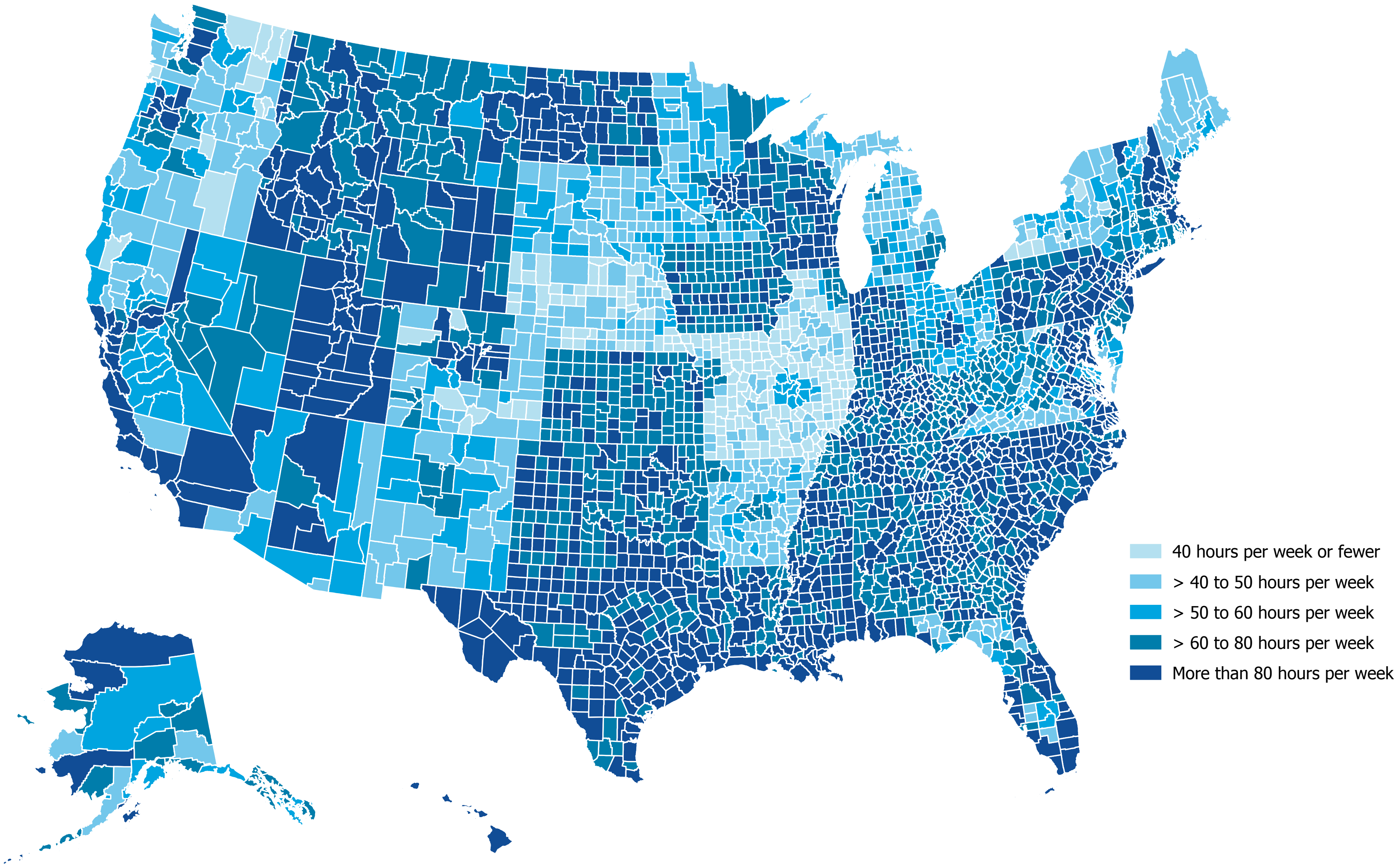
MAP AND TABLES



HOURS AT MINIMUM WAGE NEEDED TO AFFORD A ONE-BEDROOM RENTAL HOME AT FAIR MARKET RENT IN 2025



***Note:** New England states are displayed with HUD Fair Market Rent areas. All other states are displayed at the county level. This map does not account for municipalities with minimum wages higher than the prevailing county, state, or federal minimum wage. No minimum wage enacted by a municipality is sufficient to afford a one-bedroom rental home at the Fair Market Rent with a 40 hour work week. The geographic variation of Oregon and New York's state minimum wages are reflected at the county level.

2025 MOST EXPENSIVE JURISDICTIONS

Metropolitan Areas	Metropolitan Counties[1]	Housing Wage for 2 Bedroom FMR[2]
Santa Cruz-Watsonville, CA MSA[3]	Santa Cruz County, CA	$81.21
San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara HMFA[4]	Santa Clara County, CA	$66.27
San Francisco HMFA	Marin County, San Francisco County, San Mateo County, CA	$63.81
Santa Maria-Santa Barbara, CA MSA	Santa Barbara County, CA	$58.23
Salinas, CA MSA	Monterey County, CA	$57.35
Santa Ana-Anaheim-Irvine, CA HMFA	Orange County, CA	$55.82
San Diego-Carlsbad MSA	San Diego County, CA	$55.40
Boston-Cambridge-Quincy HMFA		$54.56
Napa, CA MSA	Napa County, CA	$53.69
New York HMFA	New York County, Kings County, Queens County, Bronx County, Richmond County, Rockland County, Putnam County, Westchester County, NY	$53.46

State Nonmetropolitan Areas (Combined)	Housing Wage for 2 Bedroom FMR
Massachusetts	$47.36
Hawaii	$40.22
Montana	$29.91
Alaska	$29.11
Conneticut	$28.98
New Hampshire	$28.85
California	$27.81
Colorado	$27.11
Nevada	$24.98
Vermont	$24.77

Nonmetropolitan Counties (or County-Equivalents)	Housing Wage for 2 Bedroom FMR
Nantucket County, MA	$54.65
Summit County, CO	$44.06
Monroe County, FL	$43.73
Dukes County, MA	$42.73
Eagle County, CO	$41.81
Pitkin County, CO	$41.81
Kauai County, HI	$41.06
Gallatin County, MT	$40.13
Hawaii County, HI	$39.90
Aleutians West Census Area, Alaska	$38.65

1 FMR areas are not defined by county boundaries in New England.
2 FMR = Fair Market Rent.
3 MSA = Metropolitan Statistical Area. Geographic entities defined by the Office of Management & Budget (OMB) for use by the federal statistical agencies in collecting, tabulating, and publishing federal statistics. An MSA contains an urban core of 50,000 or more in population.
4 HMFA = HUD Metro FMR Area. This term indicates that a portion of an Office of Management & Budget (OMB)-defined core-based statistical area (CBSA) is in the area to which the FMRs apply. HUD is required by OMB to alter the names of the metropolitan geographic entities it derives from CBSAs when the geographies are not the same as that established by the OMB.

STATES RANKED BY TWO-BEDROOM HOUSING WAGE

States are ranked from most expensive to least expensive.

Rank[1]	State	Housing Wage for 2 Bedroom FMR[2]
1	California	$49.61
2	Hawaii	$49.19
3	New York	$46.03
4	Massachusetts	$45.90
6	Washington	$41.11
7	New Jersey	$39.99
8	Maryland	$39.15
9	Florida	$37.27
10	Colorado	$36.79
11	Connecticut	$35.42
12	New Hampshire	$35.08
13	Arizona	$34.18
14	Virginia	$33.64
15	Oregon	$33.02
16	Nevada	$32.94
17	Delaware	$32.18
18	Rhode Island	$31.71
19	Illinois	$29.81
20	Alaska	$29.73
21	Vermont	$29.73
22	Texas	$29.64
23	Georgia	$29.46
24	Utah	$29.29
25	Montana	$28.99
26	Maine	$28.42
27	Minnesota	$28.23
28	Pennsylvania	$27.83

Rank[1]	State	Housing Wage for 2 Bedroom FMR[2]
29	Idaho	$27.83
30	North Carolina	$27.14
31	Tennessee	$27.01
32	South Carolina	$25.91
33	Michigan	$24.46
34	New Mexico	$23.18
35	Wisconsin	$23.15
36	Louisiana	$22.88
37	Ohio	$22.51
38	Indiana	$22.18
39	Missouri	$21.61
40	Nebraska	$21.57
41	Kentucky	$21.47
42	Oklahoma	$20.98
43	Kansas	$20.87
44	Mississippi	$20.79
45	Alabama	$20.61
46	Wyoming	$20.25
47	Iowa	$19.99
48	North Dakota	$19.47
49	Arkansas	$18.98
50	South Dakota	$18.96
51	West Virginia	$18.94
OTHER		
5	District of Columbia	$44.50
52	Puerto Rico	$11.64

1 Includes District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.
2 FMR = Fair Market Rent.

STATE SUMMARY

	FY25 Housing Wage	Housing Costs			Area Median Income (AMI)				Renter Households				
State	Hourly wage needed to afford 2 BR[1] FMR[2]	2 BR FMR	Annual income needed to afford 2 BR FMR	Full-time jobs at minimum wage[3] needed to afford 2BR FMR	Annual AMI[4]	Monthly rent affordable at AMI[5]	30% of AMI	Monthly rent affordable at 30% of AMI	Renter households (2019-2023)	% of total households (2019-2023)	Estimated hourly mean renter wage (2025)	Monthly rent affordable at mean renter wage	Full-time jobs at mean renter wage to afford 2BR FMR
Alabama	$20.61	$1,072	$42,869	2.8	$87,543	$2,189	$26,263	$657	592,043	30%	$17.19	$894	1.2
Alaska	$29.73	$1,546	$61,835	2.3	$118,942	$2,974	$35,683	$892	89,496	33%	$24.13	$1,255	1.2
Arizona	$34.18	$1,778	$71,101	2.3	$101,832	$2,546	$30,550	$764	923,559	33%	$23.31	$1,212	1.5
Arkansas	$18.98	$987	$39,472	1.7	$82,540	$2,063	$24,762	$619	402,626	34%	$17.78	$924	1.1
California	$49.61	$2,580	$103,184	3.0	$123,754	$3,094	$37,126	$928	5,940,036	44%	$31.47	$1,637	1.6
Colorado	$36.79	$1,913	$76,518	2.5	$127,322	$3,183	$38,197	$955	783,361	34%	$26.31	$1,368	1.4
Connecticut	$35.42	$1,842	$73,664	2.2	$125,828	$3,146	$37,748	$944	480,258	34%	$22.69	$1,180	1.6
Delaware	$32.18	$1,674	$66,941	2.1	$110,159	$2,754	$33,048	$826	109,869	28%	$22.11	$1,150	1.5
Florida	$37.27	$1,938	$77,522	2.9	$95,911	$2,398	$28,773	$719	2,794,102	33%	$23.23	$1,208	1.6
Georgia	$29.46	$1,532	$61,273	4.1	$100,669	$2,517	$30,201	$755	1,388,484	35%	$22.08	$1,148	1.3
Hawaii	$49.19	$2,558	$102,323	3.5	$122,833	$3,071	$36,850	$921	183,122	37%	$21.98	$1,143	2.2
Idaho	$27.83	$1,447	$57,876	3.8	$98,136	$2,453	$29,441	$736	191,681	28%	$18.81	$978	1.5
Illinois	$29.81	$1,550	$61,997	2.0	$112,042	$2,801	$33,613	$840	1,658,870	33%	$23.01	$1,197	1.3
Indiana	$22.18	$1,153	$46,125	3.1	$96,318	$2,408	$28,895	$722	795,052	30%	$18.05	$939	1.2
Iowa	$19.99	$1,040	$41,582	2.8	$101,882	$2,547	$30,565	$764	371,145	28%	$17.32	$901	1.2
Kansas	$20.87	$1,085	$43,402	2.9	$97,227	$2,431	$29,168	$729	384,404	33%	$18.66	$970	1.1
Kentucky	$21.47	$1,116	$44,647	3.0	$87,050	$2,176	$26,115	$653	568,417	32%	$17.89	$930	1.2
Louisiana	$22.88	$1,190	$47,581	3.2	$83,285	$2,082	$24,985	$625	582,761	33%	$17.28	$899	1.3
Maine	$28.42	$1,478	$59,120	1.9	$102,090	$2,552	$30,627	$766	152,957	26%	$17.53	$912	1.6
Maryland	$39.15	$2,036	$81,434	2.6	$139,884	$3,497	$41,965	$1,049	760,808	33%	$22.31	$1,160	1.8
Massachusetts	$45.90	$2,387	$95,476	3.1	$141,275	$3,532	$42,383	$1,060	1,033,084	37%	$28.66	$1,490	1.6
Michigan	$24.46	$1,272	$50,869	2.0	$97,246	$2,431	$29,174	$729	1,094,011	27%	$18.98	$987	1.3
Minnesota	$28.23	$1,468	$58,711	2.5	$120,661	$3,017	$36,198	$905	630,433	28%	$20.57	$1,070	1.4
Mississippi	$20.79	$1,081	$43,244	2.9	$77,396	$1,935	$23,219	$580	345,471	31%	$14.54	$756	1.4
Missouri	$21.61	$1,124	$44,951	1.6	$99,295	$2,482	$29,789	$745	796,762	32%	$19.13	$995	1.1
Montana	$28.99	$1,508	$60,307	2.7	$97,153	$2,429	$29,146	$729	138,417	31%	$18.35	$954	1.6
Nebraska	$21.57	$1,122	$44,870	1.6	$104,322	$2,608	$31,297	$782	263,282	33%	$17.71	$921	1.2

1 BR = Bedroom.
2 FMR = Fiscal Year 2025 Fair Market Rent.
3 This calculation uses the higher of the state or federal minimum wage. Local minimum wages are not used. See Appendix B.
4 AMI = Fiscal Year 2025 Area Median Income
5 Affordable rents represent the generally accepted standard of spending no more than 30% of gross income on rent and utilities.

STATE SUMMARY

	FY25 Housing Wage	Housing Costs			Area Median Income (AMI)				Renter Households				
State	Hourly wage needed to afford 2 BR[1] FMR[2]	2 BR FMR	Annual income needed to afford 2 BR FMR	Full-time jobs at minimum wage[3] needed to afford 2BR FMR	Annual AMI[4]	Monthly rent affordable at AMI[5]	30% of AMI	Monthly rent affordable at 30% of AMI	Renter households (2019-2023)	% of total households (2019-2023)	Estimated hourly mean renter wage (2025)	Monthly rent affordable at mean renter wage	Full-time jobs at mean renter wage to afford 2BR FMR
Nevada	$32.94	$1,713	$68,507	2.7	$97,857	$2,446	$29,357	$734	481,479	41%	$22.12	$1,150	1.5
New Hampshire	$35.08	$1,824	$72,971	4.8	$129,301	$3,233	$38,790	$970	151,523	27%	$20.92	$1,088	1.7
New Jersey	$39.99	$2,079	$83,173	2.6	$131,201	$3,280	$39,360	$984	1,262,873	36%	$23.97	$1,247	1.7
New Mexico	$23.18	$1,205	$48,205	1.9	$84,106	$2,103	$25,232	$631	252,957	31%	$18.06	$939	1.3
New York	$46.03	$2,394	$95,749	3.0	$114,419	$2,860	$34,326	$858	3,504,163	46%	$33.09	$1,720	1.4
North Carolina	$27.14	$1,411	$56,442	3.7	$97,896	$2,447	$29,369	$734	1,408,252	34%	$21.09	$1,096	1.3
North Dakota	$19.47	$1,013	$40,501	2.7	$112,820	$2,820	$33,846	$846	118,956	37%	$20.17	$1,049	1.0
Ohio	$22.51	$1,171	$46,825	2.1	$97,502	$2,438	$29,251	$731	1,594,003	33%	$18.62	$968	1.2
Oklahoma	$20.98	$1,091	$43,640	2.9	$88,024	$2,201	$26,407	$660	527,573	34%	$18.36	$955	1.1
Oregon	$33.02	$1,717	$68,673	2.2	$107,889	$2,697	$32,367	$809	623,205	37%	$22.16	$1,152	1.5
Pennsylvania	$27.83	$1,447	$57,886	3.8	$104,672	$2,617	$31,402	$785	1,605,715	31%	$20.42	$1,062	1.4
Rhode Island	$31.71	$1,649	$65,954	2.1	$116,064	$2,902	$34,819	$870	160,558	37%	$18.22	$947	1.7
South Carolina	$25.91	$1,347	$53,896	3.6	$91,682	$2,292	$27,505	$688	591,532	29%	$17.76	$923	1.5
South Dakota	$18.96	$986	$39,444	1.6	$101,905	$2,548	$30,572	$764	112,447	31%	$17.36	$903	1.1
Tennessee	$27.01	$1,404	$56,172	3.7	$93,993	$2,350	$28,198	$705	912,950	33%	$21.27	$1,106	1.3
Texas	$29.64	$1,542	$61,661	4.1	$101,215	$2,530	$30,364	$759	4,023,511	37%	$25.01	$1,301	1.2
Utah	$29.29	$1,523	$60,930	4.0	$117,135	$2,928	$35,141	$879	321,551	29%	$20.52	$1,067	1.4
Vermont	$29.73	$1,546	$61,833	2.1	$112,203	$2,805	$33,661	$842	71,479	27%	$17.67	$919	1.7
Virginia	$33.64	$1,749	$69,967	2.7	$121,930	$3,048	$36,579	$914	1,091,768	33%	$23.66	$1,230	1.4
Washington	$41.11	$2,138	$85,501	2.5	$128,304	$3,208	$38,491	$962	1,090,864	36%	$29.95	$1,557	1.4
West Virginia	$18.94	$985	$39,392	2.2	$81,804	$2,045	$24,541	$614	185,366	26%	$15.20	$791	1.2
Wisconsin	$23.15	$1,204	$48,149	3.2	$106,769	$2,669	$32,031	$801	785,523	32%	$18.86	$981	1.2
Wyoming	$20.25	$1,053	$42,119	2.8	$101,401	$2,535	$30,420	$761	66,877	28%	$18.20	$947	1.1
OTHER													
District of Columbia	$44.50	$2,314	$92,560	2.5	$163,900	$4,098	$49,170	$1,229	189,268	59%	$39.60	$2,059	1.1
Puerto Rico	$11.64	$605	$24,219	1.1	$35,020	$876	$10,506	$263	395,015	32%	$9.69	$504	1.2

1 BR = Bedroom.
2 FMR = Fiscal Year 2025 Fair Market Rent.
3 This calculation uses the higher of the state or federal minimum wage. Local minimum wages are not used. See Appendix B.
4 AMI = Fiscal Year 2025 Area Median Income
5 Affordable rents represent the generally accepted standard of spending no more than 30% of gross income on rent and utilities.

USER GUIDE

HOW TO USE THE NUMBERS

For a family earning 100% of AMI, monthly rent of $2,678 or less is affordable.

Renter households represented 35% of all households between (2019-2023).

The estimated mean (average) renter wage in the United States is $23.60 per hour (2025).

A renter household needs to earn at least $33.63 per hour in order to afford a two-bedroom home at FMR.

The annual median family income (AMI) in the United States is $107,110 (2025).

There were 44,983,919 renter households in the United States (2019-2023).

	FY25 HOUSING WAGE	HOUSING COSTS			AREA MEDIAN INCOME (AMI)				RENTERS				
	Hourly wage necessary to afford 2-BR[1] FMR[2]	2 BR FMR	Annual income needed to afford 2 BR FMR	Full-time jobs at minimum wage needed to afford 2 BR FMR[3]	Annual AMI[4]	Monthly rent affordable at AMI[5]	30% of AMI	Monthly rent affordable at 30% of AMI	Renter households	% of total households	Estimated hourly mean renter wage	Rent affordable at mean renter wage	Full-time jobs at mean renter wage needed to afford 2-BR FMR
UNITED STATES	$33.63	$1,749	$69,959	2.9	$107,110	$2,678	$32,133	$803	44,983,919	35%	$23.60	$1,227	1.4

The FMR for a two-bedroom rental home in the United States is $1,749 (2025).

In the United States, a family at 30% of AMI earns $32,133 annually.

A renter household needs an annual income of $69,959 in order to afford a two-bedroom rental home at FMR.

For a family earning 30% of AMI, monthly rent of $803 or less is affordable.

If a full-time worker earns the mean renter wage, monthly rent of $1,227 or less is affordable.

On average, a renter household needs 2.9 full-time jobs paying the minimum wage in order to afford a two-bedroom rental home at FMR.

A renter household needs 1.4 full-time jobs paying the mean renter wage in order to afford a two-bedroom rental home at FMR.

1: BR = Bedroom.
2: FMR = Fiscal Year 2025 Fair Market Rent.
3: This calculation uses the higher of the county, state, or federal minimum wage, where applicable.
4: AMI = Fiscal Year 2025 Area Median Family Income.
5: Affordable rents represent the generally accepted standard of spending no more than 30% of gross income on rent and utilities.

WHERE THE NUMBERS COME FROM

Divide income needed to afford FMR ($69,959) by 52 (weeks per year) and then by 40 (hours per work week) ($69,959 / 52 = $1,345; $1,345 / 40 = $33.63).

HUD FY25 estimated median family income based on data from the American Community Survey (ACS). See Appendix B.

Multiply Annual AMI by .3 to get maximum amount that can be spent on housing for it to be affordable ($107,110 x .3 = $32,133). Divide by 12 to obtain monthly amount ($32,133 / 12 = $2,678).

ACS (2019-2023).

Divide number of renter households by total number of households (ACS 2019-2023) (44,983,919 / 128,717,092 = .35). Then multiply by 100 (.35 x 100 = 35%).

Average wage reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) for 2023 adjusted to reflect the income of renter households relative to all households in the United States, projected to 2025. See Appendix B.

	FY25 HOUSING WAGE	HOUSING COSTS			AREA MEDIAN INCOME (AMI)				RENTERS				
	Hourly wage necessary to afford 2 BR[1] FMR[2]	2 BR FMR	Annual income needed to afford 2 BR FMR	Full-time jobs at minimum wage needed to afford 2 BR FMR[3]	Annual AMI[4]	Monthly rent affordable at AMI[5]	30% of AMI	Monthly rent affordable at 30% of AMI	Renter house-holds	% of total households	Estimated hourly mean renter wage	Monthly rent affordable at mean renter wage	Full-time jobs at mean renter wage needed to afford 2 BR FMR
UNITED STATES	$33.63	$1,749	$69,959	2.9	$107,110	$2,678	$32,133	$803	44,983,919	35%	$23.60	$1,227	1.4

Developed by HUD annually (2025). See Appendix B.

Multiply the FMR by 12 to get yearly rental cost ($1,749 x 12 = $20,988). Then divide by .3 to determine the total income needed to afford $20,988 per year in rent ($20,988 / .3 = $69,959).

National average of jobs needed across all counties, weighted by number of renter households. To find jobs needed in a particular state, metro, or county, divide annual income needed to afford the FMR by 52 (weeks per year). Then divide by the prevailing minimum wage. Then divide by 40 (hours per work week).

Multiply Annual AMI by .3 ($107,110 x .3 = $32,133).

Multiply 30% of Annual AMI by .3 to get maximum amount that can be spent on housing for it to be affordable ($32,133 x .3 = $9,640). Divide by 12 to obtain monthly amount ($9,640 / 12 = $803).

Calculate annual income by multiplying mean renter wage by 40 (hours per week) and 52 (weeks per year) ($23.60 x 40 x 52 = $49,088). Multiply by .3 to determine maximum amount that can be spent on rent ($49,088 x .3 = $14,726). Divide by 12 to obtain monthly amount ($14,726 / 12 = $1,227).

Divide income needed to afford the FMR by 52 (weeks per year) ($69,959 / 52 = $1,345). Then divide by $23.60 (the United States' mean renter wage) ($1,345 / $23.60 = 57 hours). Finally, divide by 40 (hours per work week) (57 / 40 = 1.4 full-time jobs).

1: BR = Bedroom.

2: FMR = Fiscal Year 2025 Fair Market Rent.

3: This calculation uses the higher of the county, state, or federal minimum wage, where applicable.

4: AMI = Fiscal Year 2025 Area Median Family Income.

5: "Affordable" rents represent the generally accepted standard of spending no more than 30% of gross income on rent and utilities.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: LOCAL MINIMUM WAGES

Locality	Local Minimum Wage (as of 7/1/25)	1 BR Housing Wage	2 BR Housing Wage
Alameda, CA	$17.00	$42.33	$51.58
Bellingham, WA	$18.66	$26.56	$31.58
Belmont, CA	$18.30	$53.46	$63.81
Berkeley, CA	$19.18	$42.33	$51.58
Boulder County, CO	$16.57	$32.73	$39.60
Boulder, CO	$15.57	$32.73	$39.60
Burien, WA[1]	$21.16	$44.10	$51.37
Burlingame, CA	$17.43	$53.46	$63.81
Chicago, IL[2]	$16.20	$30.00	$33.87
Cupertino, CA	$18.20	$57.21	$66.27
Daly City, CA	$17.07	$53.46	$63.81
Denver, CO	$18.81	$34.40	$41.15
East Palo Alto, CA	$17.45	$53.46	$63.81
Edgewater, CO	$16.52	$34.40	$41.15
El Cerrito, CA	$18.34	$42.33	$51.58
Emeryville, CA	$19.90	$42.33	$51.58
Everett, WA[3]	$20.24	$44.10	$51.37
Flagstaff, AZ	$17.85	$32.96	$37.35

Locality	Local Minimum Wage (as of 7/1/25)	1 BR Housing Wage	2 BR Housing Wage
Foster City, CA	$17.39	$53.46	$63.81
Fremont, CA	$17.75	$42.33	$51.58
Half Moon Bay, CA	$17.47	$53.46	$63.81
Hayward, CA[4]	$17.36	$42.33	$51.58
Howard County, MD[5]	$16.00	$30.85	$37.79
King County, WA[6]	$20.29	$44.10	$51.37
Las Cruces, NM	$12.65	$18.08	$20.02
Los Altos, CA	$18.20	$57.21	$66.27
Los Angeles County, CA	$17.81	$40.02	$50.48
Los Angeles, CA	$17.87	$40.02	$50.48
Malibu, CA	$17.27	$40.02	$50.48
Menlo Park, CA	$17.10	$53.46	$63.81
Milpitas, CA	$18.20	$57.21	$66.27
Minneapolis, MN	$15.97	$26.56	$32.40
Montgomery County, MD[7]	$17.65	$39.54	$44.50
Mountain View, CA	$19.20	$57.21	$66.27
Novato, CA[8]	$17.27	$53.46	$63.81
Oakland, CA	$16.89	$42.33	$51.58

Locality	Local Minimum Wage (as of 7/1/25)	1 BR Housing Wage	2 BR Housing Wage
Palo Alto, CA	$18.20	$57.21	$66.27
Pasadena, CA[9]	$17.50	$40.02	$50.48
Petaluma, CA	$17.97	$40.17	$52.69
Portland, ME	$15.50	$30.06	$38.67
Redwood City, CA	$18.20	$53.46	$63.81
Renton, WA[10]	$20.90	$44.10	$51.37
Richmond, CA	$17.77	$42.33	$51.58
Rockland, ME	$15.50	$19.17	$22.65
Saint Paul, MN[11]	$15.97	$26.56	$32.40
San Carlos, CA	$17.32	$53.46	$63.81
San Diego, CA	$17.25	$44.77	$55.40
San Francisco, CA	$19.18	$53.46	$63.81
San Jose, CA	$17.95	$57.21	$66.27
San Mateo County, CA	$17.46	$53.46	$63.81
San Mateo, CA	$17.95	$53.46	$63.81
Santa Clara, CA	$18.20	$57.21	$66.27
Santa Fe County, NM	$15.00	$26.31	$31.29
Santa Fe, NM	$15.00	$26.31	$31.29

Locality	Local Minimum Wage (as of 7/1/25)	1 BR Housing Wage	2 BR Housing Wage
Santa Monica, CA[12]	$17.81	$40.02	$50.48
Santa Rosa, CA	$17.87	$40.17	$52.69
SeaTac, WA[13]	$20.17	$44.10	$51.37
Seattle, WA	$20.76	$44.10	$51.37
Sonoma, CA	$18.02	$40.17	$52.69
South San Francisco, CA	$17.70	$53.46	$63.81
Sunnyvale, CA	$19.00	$57.21	$66.27
Tucson, AZ	$15.00	$20.23	$26.40
Tukwila, WA[14]	$21.10	$44.10	$51.37
West Hollywood, CA	$19.65	$40.02	$50.48

1. This is the minimum wage for employers with 500 or more employees. Minimum wage for employers with 21 to 499 employees pay $20.16 and employers with 20 or fewer employees pay $16.66.
2. The minimum wage in Chicago will increase on 7/1/25 to account for CPI. However, this information was not available at the time of writing this report.
3. This minimum wage goes into effect July 1, 2025 for large employers, into effect generally January 1, 2026, and for small employers it will go into effect July 1, 2027.
4. This is the minimum wage for large employers. For small employers with 25 or fewer employees the minimum wage is $16.50
5. This is the minimum wage for large employers. For small employers with 14 or fewer employees the minimum wage is $15.00.
6. This is the minimum wage for large employers with more than 500 employees. For mid-size employers with more than 15 employees the minimum wage is $18.29. For small employers with 15 employees or less and a gross revenue of less than $2 million the minimum wage is $17.29.
7. This is the minimum wage for large employers (those with 51 employees or more). The minimum wage for mid-sized employers, those with less than 50 employees but more than 11 employees, is $16.00. The minimum wage for small employers with less than 10 employees is $15.50.
8. This is the minimum wage for large employers with 100 or more employees. Minimum wage for mid-size employers with 26-99 employees is $17.00 and the minimum wage for small employers with 1-25 employees is $16.50.
9. The minimum wage in Pasadena will increase on 7/1/25 to account for CPI. However, this information was not available at the time of writing this report.
10. This is the minimum wage for large employers with more than 500 employees currently. The minimum wage for mid-size employers with 15-500 employees will be $19.90 from July 1, 2025 to Dec. 31, 2025. Small employers with fewer than 15 employees are not covered.
11. This is the minimum wage for large employers with more than 100 employees. The minimum wage for small employers with between 6 and 100 employees is $15.00 and the minimum wage for micro employers with 5 or fewer employess is $13.25.
12. The wage for hotels and businesses operating on hotel property is $20.32 per hour and will increase again on July 1, 2025. This updated wage was unavailable at the time of writing this report.
13. This is the minimum wage only for hospitality and transportation workers within SeaTac boundaries.
14. This is the minimum wage for mid - size to large employers with more than 15 employees or employers with over $2 million annual gross revenue.

APPENDIX B: DATA NOTES, METHODOLOGIES, AND SOURCES

Appendix B describes the data used in *Out of Reach*. Information on how to calculate and interpret the report's numbers are in the pages "How to Use the Numbers" and "Where the Numbers Come From."

FAIR MARKET RENT AREA DEFINITIONS

HUD determines Fair Market Rents (FMRs) for metropolitan and rural housing markets across the country. In metropolitan areas, HUD starts with the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) metropolitan area boundaries to define FMR areas. Since FMR areas are meant to reflect cohesive housing markets, the OMB boundaries are not always preferable. Also, significant changes to OMB metropolitan boundaries can affect current housing assistance recipients. In keeping with OMB's guidance to federal agencies, HUD modifies OMB boundaries in some instances for program administration.

OMB released new metropolitan area boundaries in February 2013. For FY16, HUD elected to apply pre-2013 boundaries to FMR areas except where the post-2013 OMB boundaries resulted in a smaller FMR area. Counties that had been removed from metropolitan areas were treated by HUD as nonmetropolitan counties. Counties that had been added to metropolitan areas were treated by HUD as metropolitan subareas (HMFAs) and given their own FMR if local rent data were statistically reliable. New multi-county metropolitan areas were treated by HUD as individual county metropolitan subareas (HMFAs) if the data were statistically reliable. This is consistent with HUD's objective to allow variation in FMRs locally. These changes resulted in more metropolitan areas in *Out of Reach*, beginning in 2016. HUD followed the same methodology for OMB's 2018 metropolitan area boundaries, starting in FY 2022.

The FY 2025 FMRs are based on OMB's 2018 metropolitan area boundaries first incorporated in the Census Bureau's 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) data and the corresponding FY 2022 FMRs. OMB published revised metropolitan area definitions in July 2023. The Census Bureau had not yet incorporated the new boundaries into the data available to HUD when HUD calculated the FY 2025 FMRs, so HUD did not use the new metropolitan area definitions. HUD, however, was able to use the new metropolitan area definitions in calculating the FY 2025 Income Limits. *Out of Reach* 2025 retains the metropolitan area definitions used for the FY 2025 FMRs throughout the report.

In cases in which an FMR area crosses state lines, *Out of Reach* provides an entry for the area under both states. While the Housing Wage, FMR, and Area Median Income (AMI) values apply to the entire FMR area and will be the same in both states, other data such as the number of renter households, the minimum wage, and renter wages apply only to the portion of the FMR area within that state's borders.

FAIR MARKET RENTS

The FY25 FMRs are based on five-year 2018-2022 American Community Survey (ACS) data. For each FMR area, a base rent is typically set at the 40th percentile of adjusted standard quality two-bedroom gross rents from the five-year ACS. The estimate is considered reliable by HUD if its margin of error is less than 50% of the estimate and is based on at least 100 observations. If an FMR area does not have a reliable estimate from the five-year 2018-2022 ACS, then HUD checks whether the area had a minimally reliable estimate (margin of error was less than 50% of estimate and based on more than 100 observations) in at least two of the past three years. If so, the FY25 base rent is the average of the inflation-adjusted reliable ACS estimates. If an area has not had at least two minimally reliable estimates in the past three years, the estimate for the next largest geographic area is the base for FY25, which for a nonmetropolitan county would be the state nonmetropolitan area.

HUD then adjusts the base FMRs to account for inflation between 2022 and 2025. In its calculation of FY2025 FMRs, HUD used the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in conjunction with data reported by several private companies to better capture local rent inflation. More information can be found in the *Federal Register*. A recent mover adjustment factor is also applied to the base rent.

Statistically reliable local rent surveys can be used to estimate rents when their estimates are statistically different from the ACS-based rents. HUD currently does not have funds to conduct local rent surveys, so surveys must be paid for by local public housing agencies or other interested parties if they wish for HUD to reevaluate the ACS-based FMRs.

While the *Out of Reach* report highlights the one-bedroom and two-bedroom FMRs, the *Out of Reach* website includes zero- to four-bedroom FMRs. HUD finds that two-bedroom rental units are the most common and the most reliable to survey, so two-bedroom units are utilized as the primary FMR estimate.

HUD applies bedroom-size ratio adjustment factors to the two-bedroom estimates to calculate FMRs for other bedroom-size units. HUD makes additional adjustments for units with three or more bedrooms to increase the likelihood that the largest families, who have the most difficulty in finding units, will be successful in finding rental units eligible for programs whose payment standards are based on FMRs.

Due to changes in FMR methodology over the years, we do not recommend comparing the current edition of *Out of Reach* with previous editions.

FMRs for each area are available at https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/fmr.html

HUD's *Federal Register* notices for FY25 FMRs are available at https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/fmr.html#documents_2025

NATIONAL, STATE, AND NON-METRO FAIR MARKET RENTS

The FMRs for the nation, states, and state nonmetropolitan areas in *Out of Reach* are calculated by NLIHC and reflect the weighted average FMR for the counties (FMR areas in New England) included in the larger geography. The weight for FMRs is the number of renter households within each county (FMR area in New England) from the five-year 2019-2023 ACS.

AFFORDABILITY

Out of Reach is consistent with federal housing policy in the assumption that no more than 30% of a household's gross income should be consumed by gross housing costs. Spending more than 30% of income on housing is considered "unaffordable."

AREA MEDIAN INCOME (AMI)

This edition of *Out of Reach* includes HUD's FY25 AMIs. HUD calculates the family AMI for metropolitan areas and nonmetropolitan counties. The Census definition of "family" is two or more persons related by blood, marriage, or adoption residing together. This family AMI is not intended to apply to a specific family size. Information on HUD's methodology for calculating AMIs can be found at https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html

Applying the assumption that no more than 30% of household income should be spent on housing costs, *Out of Reach* calculates the maximum affordable rent for households earning the median income and households earning 30% of the median.

The median incomes for states and state nonmetropolitan areas reported in *Out of Reach* reflect the weighted average of county AMI data weighted by the total number of households from the 2019-2023 ACS.

FY25 family AMI for metropolitan areas and nonmetropolitan counties, the methodology, and HUD's adjustments to subsequent income limits are available at https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html

PREVAILING MINIMUM WAGE

Out of Reach incorporates the minimum wage in effect as of July 1, 2025. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and 30 states have a minimum wage higher than the federal level of $7.25 per hour. *Out of Reach* incorporates the higher prevailing state minimum wage in these states. Some local jurisdictions have a minimum wage that is higher than the prevailing federal or state rate. Local rates for counties, but not sub-county jurisdictions, are incorporated into *Out of Reach*.

Among the statistics included in *Out of Reach* are the number of hours and subsequent full-time jobs a minimum wage earner must work to afford the FMR. These estimates are included for all states and counties, but not for sub-county jurisdictions. If the reader would like to calculate the same statistics using a different wage such as a higher city-based minimum wage, a simple formula can be used for the conversion:

[hours or jobs at the published wage] x published wage] / [alternative wage]

For further guidance, see "Where the Numbers Come From" or contact NLIHC research staff.

The national average number of hours a full-time worker earning minimum wage must work to afford the FMR is calculated by taking into account the prevailing minimum wage at the county level (or New England FMR area) and finding the weighted average of hours needed in all counties, weighting counties by their number of renter households. Accordingly, that average reflects higher state and county minimum wages, but not higher minimum wages associated with sub-county jurisdictions.

The Department of Labor provides further information on state minimum wages at www.dol.gov/whd/minwage/america.htm.

AVERAGE RENTER WAGE

Recognizing that the minimum wage reflects the earnings of only the lowest-income workers, *Out of Reach* also calculates an estimated mean renter hourly wage. This measure reflects the compensation that a typical renter is likely to receive for an hour of work by dividing average weekly earnings by 40 hours, thus assuming a full-time workweek. Earnings include several non-wage forms of compensation like paid leave, bonuses, tips, and stock options.[1]

The estimated mean renter hourly wage is based on the average weekly earnings of private (non-governmental) employees working in each county.[2] Renter wage information is based on 2023 data reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW). For each county, mean hourly earnings are multiplied by the ratio of median renter household income to median household income from the five-year 2019-2023 ACS to arrive at an estimated average renter wage.

An inflation factor was applied to the estimated mean renter hourly wage to adjust from 2023 to FY25. The inflation factor was based on the Congressional Budget Office's (CBO) February 2025 projection of the CPI for FY25 and the 2023 calendar year CPI.

In a small share of counties or county equivalents (including Puerto Rico), the renter wage is below the federal, state, or local minimum wage. One explanation is that workers in these counties likely average fewer than 40 hours per week, but the mean renter wage calculation assumes weekly compensation is the product of a full-time work week. For example, mistakenly assuming earnings from 20 hours of work were the product of a full-time workweek would underestimate the actual hourly wage by half, but it would still accurately reflect the true earnings.

Wage data from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages are available through the Bureau of Labor Statistics at https://www.bls.gov/cew/.

OCCUPATIONAL WAGES

The occupational wages included in *Out of Reach* are from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics. An inflation factor was applied to adjust wages from May 2024 to FY25. The inflation factor was based on the CBO's February projection of the CPI for FY25 and the CPI in May 2024.

MEDIAN RENTER HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Median renter household income is from the five-year 2019-2023 ACS projected to FY25 using the inflation factor based on the Congressional Budget Office's (CBO) February 2025 projection of the CPI for FY 2025 and the 2023 calendar year CPI.

WORKING HOURS

Calculations of the Housing Wage and of the number of jobs required at the minimum wage or mean renter wage to afford the FMR assume that an individual works 40 hours per week, 52 weeks each year, for a total of 2,080 hours per year. Seasonal employment, unpaid sick leave, temporary layoffs, job changes, and other leave prevent many individuals from maximizing their earnings throughout the year. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, as of May 2025, the average wage earner on private, nonfarm payrolls in the U.S. worked 34.3 hours per week.

1. This measure is different from median renter household income, which reflects an estimate of what renter households are earning today and includes income not earned in relation to employment.
2. Renter wage data for some counties are not provided in *Out of Reach* either because the BLS could not disclose the data for confidentiality reasons or because the number of employees working in the county was insufficient to estimate a reliable wage.

Not all employees have the opportunity to translate an hourly wage into full-time, year-round employment. For these workers, the Housing Wage underestimates the actual hourly compensation needed to afford the FMR. Conversely, some households include multiple wage earners. For these households, a home renting at the FMR would be affordable even if each worker earned less than the area's stated Housing Wage, as long as their combined wages exceed the Housing Wage for at least 40 working hours per week.[3]

SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME (SSI)

Out of Reach compares rental housing costs with the rent affordable to individuals receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments. The national numbers are based on the maximum federal SSI payment for individuals in 2025, which is $967 per month. *Out of Reach* calculations for states include state supplemental payments that benefit all individual SSI recipients in states where the Social Security Administration (SSA) reports the supplemental payment amount.

Supplemental payments provided by other states and the District of Columbia are excluded from *Out of Reach* calculations. For some, these payments are administered by the SSA but are available only to populations with specific disabilities, in specific facilities, or in specific household settings. For the majority, however, the supplements are administered directly by the states, so the data are not readily available if they haven't been reported to the SSA. Residents of Puerto Rico cannot receive federal SSI payments.

Information on SSI payments is available from the Social Security Administration at https://www.ssa.gov/OACT/COLA/SSI.html.

ADDITIONAL DATA AVAILABLE ONLINE

The print / PDF version of *Out of Reach* contains limited data in an effort to present the most important information in a limited number of pages. Additional data can be found online at http://www.nlihc.org/oor.

The *Out of Reach* methodology was developed by Cushing N. Dolbeare, founder of the National Low Income Housing Coalition.

3. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2025). *The employment situation – May 2025*. U.S. Department of Labor. https://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.nr0.htm

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