OUT of REACH

THE HIGH COST OF HOUSING

2021

NATIONAL LOW INCOME HOUSING COALITION

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Established in 1974 by Cushing N. Dolbeare, the National Low Income Housing Coalition is dedicated solely to achieving socially just public policy that ensures people with the lowest incomes in the United States have affordable and decent homes.

NLIHC provides up-to-date information, formulates policy, and educates the public on housing needs and the strategies for solutions. Permission to reprint portions of this report or the data therein is granted, provided appropriate credit is given to the National Low Income Housing Coalition. Additional copies of *Out of Reach* are available from NLIHC.

Additional local data can be found online at **www.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.

The pocket in this booklet's back cover contains a handout with *Out of Reach 2021* data for your state. Data for other states, metropolitan areas, counties, and zip codes can be found at http://nlihc.org/oor

OUT of REACH
2021

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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 cost-burdened. Households paying over 50% of their income are considered severely 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.

Extremely Low Income (ELI) refers to earning less than the poverty level or 30% of AMI.

Housing Wage is the estimated full-time hourly wage 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. 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.

Renter wage is the estimated mean hourly wage among renters, based on 2019 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 2021.

PREFACE

BY U.S. HUD SECRETARY MARCIA FUDGE

The COVID-19 crisis has devastated our nation. More than half a million American lives have been claimed by this virus. Millions more have grappled with grief, isolation, and the financial hardship of lost jobs or reduced wages.

We know that Americans with the lowest incomes—who are more often people of color—have suffered disproportionate harm. Black, Native American, Hispanic, and Asian and Pacific Islander households have endured higher rates of infection, hospitalization, and death. Similarly, job losses and an uneven recovery have hit communities of color especially hard. This includes many landlords of color who have lost rent payments.

The Biden-Harris Administration has taken bold action to deliver relief for American families and communities. The American Rescue Plan, together with previous COVID relief bills, will provide more than $46 billion to help people who have fallen behind on their rent payments. In addition, it includes $10 billion in emergency housing vouchers and supportive services for people who are experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness. HUD is working with communities to deploy and leverage these vital resources in an efficient and equitable manner.

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Moving forward, the Biden-Harris administration will continue to work relentlessly to provide every person with a fair chance to secure a safe, affordable, and dignified place to call home—and to live in a thriving community where opportunity is abundant.

This year's *Out of Reach* report from the National Low Income Housing Coalition outlines the urgent need for our government to expand affordable housing. It estimates that a full-time worker must earn at least $20.40 per hour to rent a modest one-bedroom home, or $24.90 per hour to rent a modest two-bedroom home. These amounts are far higher than many Americans—including seniors, people with disabilities, and working families—actually earn.

Even before the pandemic, our nation had a shortage of 7 million affordable and available homes for renters with the lowest incomes. As a result, 70% of these households routinely spent more than half of their incomes on rent. They have little ability to save—and one emergency or unexpected expense could send them into homelessness. To make matters worse, three out of four very low-income renters who are eligible for federal rental assistance do not receive it.

We can and must do more.

That is why the President has proposed the Build Back Better agenda, which would help build and modernize more than 2 million affordable and sustainable places to live. It is why he has directed HUD to explore every avenue for enforcing the Fair Housing Act—to ensure every American, regardless of their background, can enjoy equal access to affordable housing.

The President's budget proposes an additional allocation for rental assistance that would cover an estimated 200,000 households struggling to make ends meet. If, enacted the President's budget and the Build Back Better agenda would serve as a critical down payment toward his plan to put housing assistance in reach for every household in need.

As the United States continues to rebuild from the COVID-19 pandemic, we have an immense responsibility—and the great opportunity—to help our nation build back stronger than ever before. For HUD, that means doing our part to offer every American the chance to live each day with security, with dignity, and with hope. I hope each person who reads this important report will join our Department in working to make this vision a reality for the American people.

Sincerely,

Marcia Fudge

Marcia L. Fudge

Secretary

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic and its economic fallout underscore the need for a stronger housing safety net in the United States. During the peak of the crisis, when it was imperative for everyone to stay home and maintain social distancing, over 580,000 Americans were experiencing homelessness in shelters or on the streets (HUD, 2021). Millions more were at severe risk of eviction because interruptions in incomes broke their already-strained budgets. COVID-19 was an economic catastrophe for many households, disproportionately people of color, precisely because so many already could not afford their homes. Jurisdictions across the country worked to create new emergency rental assistance programs because pre-pandemic housing assistance programs, where they existed at all, were inadequate to keep renters housed. With the imminent lifting of the CDC eviction moratorium and most state and local moratoriums, many renters are at risk of eviction and need emergency assistance to pay off accumulated back rent. Long after the public health dangers and economic crisis gradually recede, low-wage workers and low-income renters will continue to be in a precarious position until we create permanent solutions to widespread housing unaffordability.

The economic downturn of 2020 hit low-wage workers especially hard. Industries with lower-paying jobs, including retail, food and beverage, and hospitality, were more likely to be exposed to shutdowns (Dey and Loewenstein, 2020), and consequently low-wage workers were more likely to see their hours reduced or their jobs cut. As of late March 2021, nearly 14 million renter households with annual incomes below $50,000 had lost employment income during the pandemic (Census, 2021). According to the Economic Policy Institute, over 82% of the 9.6 million net jobs lost in 2020 were held by workers in the bottom quartile of the wage distribution (Gould & Kandra, 2021). That loss of employment income often caused serious material hardship. The need for food banks, for example, was considerably higher than normal throughout 2020, and four in 10 food bank visitors sought such assistance for the first time (Cohen, 2020). Surveys conducted between August 2020 and March 2021 suggest about a third of all households were consistently having trouble paying for usual household expenses. A year after the start of the pandemic, nearly a fourth of renters with incomes below $50,000 were borrowing from friends and family to meet spending needs (Census, 2021).

People of color are more likely to have experienced a loss of income during the pandemic. By March 2021, 39% of white, non-Latino adults had experienced a loss of household income, compared to 49% of Black adults and 58% of Latino adults (Census, 2021). Pervasive racial and ethnic inequities across multiple domains—in wealth, income, employment, neighborhood quality, health care access, and housing—mean that when disaster strikes, people of color are often the most severely harmed.

The recovery from the pandemic has been uneven. The declining overall unemployment rate—which fell from 14.8% in April 2020 to 6.0% by March 2021—obscures substantial lingering pain for low-wage workers. Economists at the Federal Reserve estimated that workers in the lowest-wage quartile, disproportionately people of color, still faced an unemployment rate of 22% in February 2021 (Brainard, 2021). Likewise, researchers at Opportunity Insights estimate that in March 2021, employment for high-wage workers was up nearly 2% compared to a pre-pandemic levels but down 28% for low-wage workers (Opportunity Insights, 2021).

Even if economic recovery is robust and sustained, low-wage workers will continue

COVID-19 was an economic catastrophe for many households, disproportionately people of color, precisely because so many already could not afford their homes.

to struggle. First, it will be difficult for many households to erase accumulated debts without significant assistance. Ten million low-income renter households routinely spend more than half their incomes on rent (NLIHC, 2021b), and those households are unlikely to be able to pay for both ongoing expenses and debts accumulated during months of furlough or shutdown in 2020. Second, the economic circumstances low-wage workers face even during periods of economic strength are tremendously difficult. A return to the previous status quo will mean that millions of low-wage workers will continue to face financial precarity and housing instability.

Since 1989, NLIHC's *Out of Reach* report has called attention to the gulf between actual wages and what people need to earn to afford their rents. Every year, the report documents that an affordable rental home is out of reach for millions of low-wage workers and other low-income families. This year's report shows the extent to which housing costs outpaced wages even before the economic crisis, and the situation many renters face today is even more challenging.

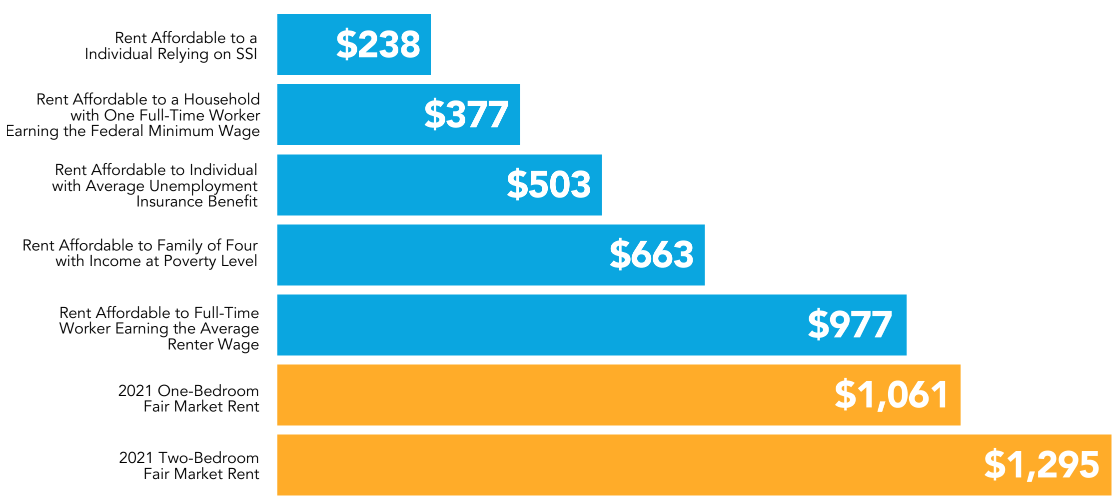
The report's Housing Wage is an estimate of the hourly wage full-time workers must earn to afford a rental home at HUD's fair market rent without spending more than 30% of their incomes. Fair market rents are estimates of what a person moving today can expect to pay for a modestly priced rental home in a given area. The kind of home that can be rented for the fair market rent is in decent condition, but it is not luxury housing. **The 2021 National Housing Wage is $24.90 per hour for a modest two-bedroom rental home and $20.40 per hour for a modest one-bedroom rental home.**

The federal minimum wage of $7.25 per hour falls well short of both the two-bedroom and one-bedroom National Housing Wages. Because the federal minimum wage does not rise automatically with inflation, it is worth considerably less today than it was worth in recent decades. If the minimum wage had increased at the rate of productivity growth, it would be over $21 per hour in 2021 (Cooper, 2019). Thirty states, the District of Columbia, and several dozen counties and municipalities now have minimum wages higher than the federal minimum wage, but even taking higher state and county minimum wages into account, the average minimum wage worker must work nearly 97 hours per week (more than 2 full-time jobs) to afford a two-bedroom rental home or 79 hours per week (almost 2 full-time jobs) to afford a one-bedroom rental home at the fair market rent. People who work 97 hours per week and need 8 hours per day of sleep have around 2 hours per day left over for everything else—commuting, cooking, cleaning, self-care, caring for children and family, and serving their community. Doing so is an impossibility for a single parent who needs a larger-than-one-bedroom apartment. Even for a one-bedroom rental, it is unreasonable to expect individuals to work 79 hours per week to afford their housing. For people who can work, one full-time job should be enough.

The struggle to afford rental housing is not confined to minimum-wage workers. The average renter's hourly wage of $18.78 is $6.12 less than the national two-bedroom Housing Wage and $1.62 less than the one-bedroom Housing Wage. As a result, the average renter must work 53 hours per week to afford a modest two-bedroom apartment. Many single parents or caregivers find it difficult to work those hours.

The average monthly fair market rent for a one-bedroom or two-bedroom rental home is $1,061 or $1,295, respectively—much higher than what many renters can afford **(Figure 1)**. A family of four with

FIGURE 1: RENTS ARE OUT OF REACH FOR MANY RENTERS



Fair Market Rent = Fair Market Rent.
Source: NLIHC calculation of weighted-average HUD Fair Market Rent. Affordable rents based on income and benefits data from BLS QCEW, 2019 adjusted to 2021 dollars; Center on Budget and Policy Priorities' Policy Basics: Unemployment Insurance, 2021; and Social Security Administration, 2021 maximum federal SSI benefit for individual.

poverty-level income in most areas of the U.S. can afford a monthly rent of no more than $663, assuming they can manage to spend as much as 30% of their income on housing. Many extremely low-income families can afford far less. Individuals with disabilities relying on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) can afford a monthly rent of only $238. A household receiving the average unemployment insurance benefit can afford a rent of no more than $503 per month. Since unemployment insurance is determined by an individual's former wages, those who had been making the minimum wage receive even less.

Even under the best of circumstances, rent is unaffordable for most low-wage workers. When they lose a job, face unexpected expenses like an emergency medical bill, or experience a disaster, their families struggle even more. Stable, affordable housing is a prerequisite for basic well-being, and no family should live in danger of losing their home.

Addressing the long-term housing affordability crisis in this country requires increasing rental assistance to all who need it, as well as expanding and preserving the affordable housing stock. At its current funding levels, federal housing assistance is available to only one in four income-eligible households (Fischer & Sard, 2017). To be effective, expanded rental assistance must be paired with a commitment to funding the construction of more affordable homes and implementing robust renter protections.

LOW WAGES IN A WEALTHY COUNTRY

The COVID crisis had a profound short-term impact on the U.S. labor market, with many low-wage workers furloughed or laid off and many higher-wage workers telecommuting. How the crisis will shape the labor market in the long term, after the public health risks subside, is still uncertain. One thing that is clear, however, is that the long-term trends over the past 40 years have not been favorable for low-wage workers. Over the course of the last several decades, low-wage workers have struggled to afford their homes in both good and bad economic times, and COVID-inspired changes are unlikely to solve that problem.

Wage growth has been slow for the lowest-wage workers for decades. Results from the Current Population Survey indicate that, between 1979 and 2019, inflation-adjusted hourly wages grew just 6.5% for the lowest-wage (at the 10th percentile) workers and 8.8% for median-wage workers. For Latino workers at the 10th percentile, inflation-adjusted hourly wages actually fell, as did the median hourly wages for Black and Latino men. In contrast, wages for the highest-paid workers (at the 90th percentile) grew by 41.3% (Congressional Research Service, 2020). Only in ten of the last 40 years did most workers see sustained increases in real wages, and in recent decades wages have been disconnected from increases in productivity. Between 1979 and 2018 productivity grew by nearly 70% while compensation for production and nonsupervisory workers grew by just 12% (Gould, 2020).

For many low-wage workers, employment is not sufficient to keep them out of poverty: the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) estimates that in 2018, seven million "working poor" individuals spent more than half the year in the labor force but fell below the official poverty level (BLS, 2020b). Considering the criticisms that the official poverty measure undercounts the number of people experiencing what most would

> Over the course of the last several decades, low-wage workers have struggled to afford their homes in both good and bad economic times, and COVID-inspired changes are unlikely to solve that problem.

consider poverty (Fremstad, 2020), the actual number of "working poor" is likely even greater. There are racial disparities in who is likely to be working poor as well: 7.2% of Black workers in the labor force for at least 27 weeks per year were working poor, compared to 7% of Latino workers, 3.5% of white workers, and 2.3% of Asian workers.

There are likely multiple reasons for these wage trends and the economic precarity of many workers in an otherwise rich country. Some argue that "job polarization"—a decline of jobs in the middle of the wage distribution and growth at the extreme—plays a role in explaining the prevalence of low wages (Tüzeman & Willis, 2013). The industries in which people work might explain some trends: the share of jobs in manufacturing and production declined between 1979 and 2019, while the share of service-sector jobs, more likely to be low-wage, slightly increased (Congressional Research Service, 2020). Even within industries, though, the types of jobs have changed, as technological changes have eliminated some jobs in the middle of the distribution. Changing job requirements may disadvantage low-wage workers and leave them with fewer options. The higher-education wage premium increased significantly between 1979 and 2019. For workers without a college degree, median wages fell over this period (Congressional Research Service, 2020).

The continued prevalence of low-wage jobs is not a natural and unalterable outcome—public policy shapes workers' prospects. Slow growth in the federal minimum wage likely indirectly affects all low-wage work (Zipperer, 2015). Lack of meaningful support for organized labor affects the bargaining power of low-wage workers. While private-sector unions historically helped boost wages, especially for lower-wage workers and for Black and Latino workers generally, the share of workers who were unionized fell from 27% in 1979 to 11.6% in 2019. By one estimate, wages would have been 7.9% higher in 2019 if not for the forty-year decline in unionization rates (Mishel, 2021).

Whatever the causes, low wages make it difficult for households to achieve long-term economic stability, to save for future needs or even just to pay the rent each month. The COVID-19 pandemic and economic crisis has made this already dire situation worse for many low-income workers.

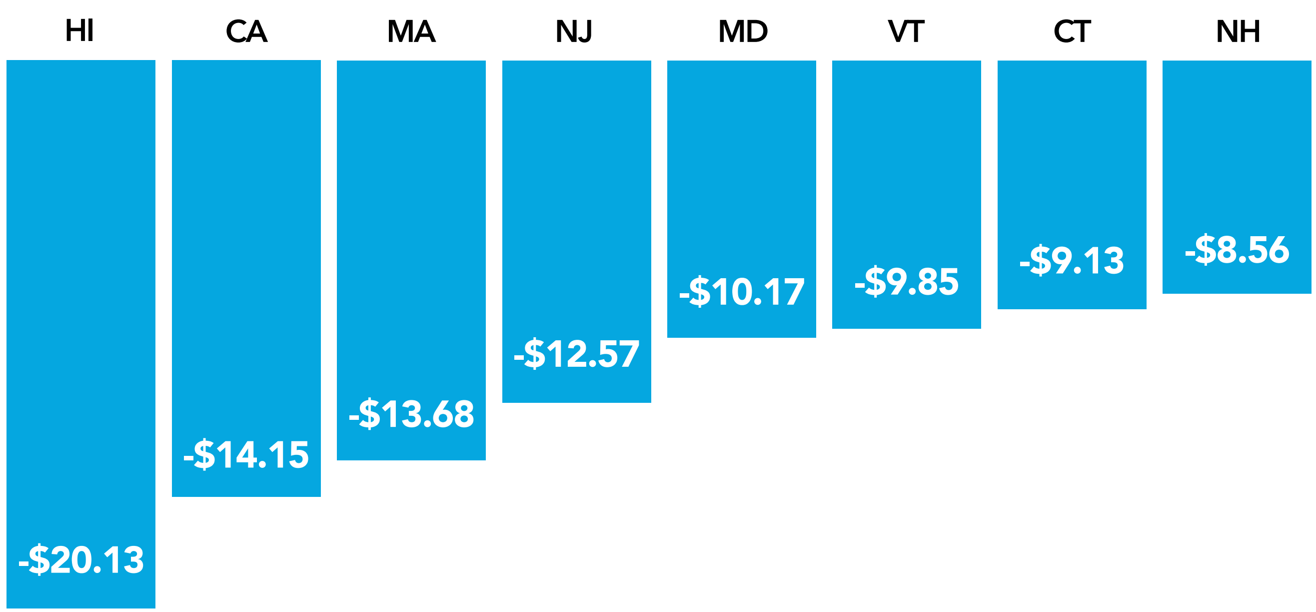
THE RENTAL HOUSING MARKET FOR LOW-WAGE WORKERS

For most low-wage workers, decent rental housing is unaffordable. While wages have been stagnant or slow to rise, rents continue to climb. In 45 states and the District of Columbia, median gross rents increased faster than median renter household income between 2001 and 2018 (Mazzara, 2019). In no state, metropolitan area, or county in the U.S. can a worker earning the federal or prevailing state or local minimum wage afford a modest two-bedroom rental home at fair market rent by working a standard 40-hour work week. In only 7% of all U.S. counties (218 counties out of more than 3,000 nationwide, not including Puerto Rico) can a full-time minimum-wage worker afford a one-bedroom rental home at fair market rent. Fifty local jurisdictions have minimum wages higher than the federal or state minimum wage, but these local minimum-wage ordinances all fall short of the local one-bedroom and two-bedroom Housing Wage (Appendix A).

Even the average renter too often does not earn enough to afford a modest rental home. In 49 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, the average renter earns less than the average two-bedroom Housing Wage. North Dakota is the sole exception. In 17 states, including California, Florida, and New York, the average renter earns at least $5.00 less than the state's average two-bedroom Housing Wage. **Figure 2** shows the eight states with the largest gap between the average renter's wage and the two-bedroom Housing Wage. In 26 states and Puerto Rico, the average renter's wage is lower than even the one-bedroom Housing Wage.

The income distribution in **Figure 3**, which includes all wage and salary workers, shows that modest rental housing is out of reach for nearly every worker in the bottom half of the wage distribution. A modest one-bedroom rental home is unaffordable to more than 40% of wage earners. A modest two-bedroom rental home is unaffordable for nearly 60% of wage earners.

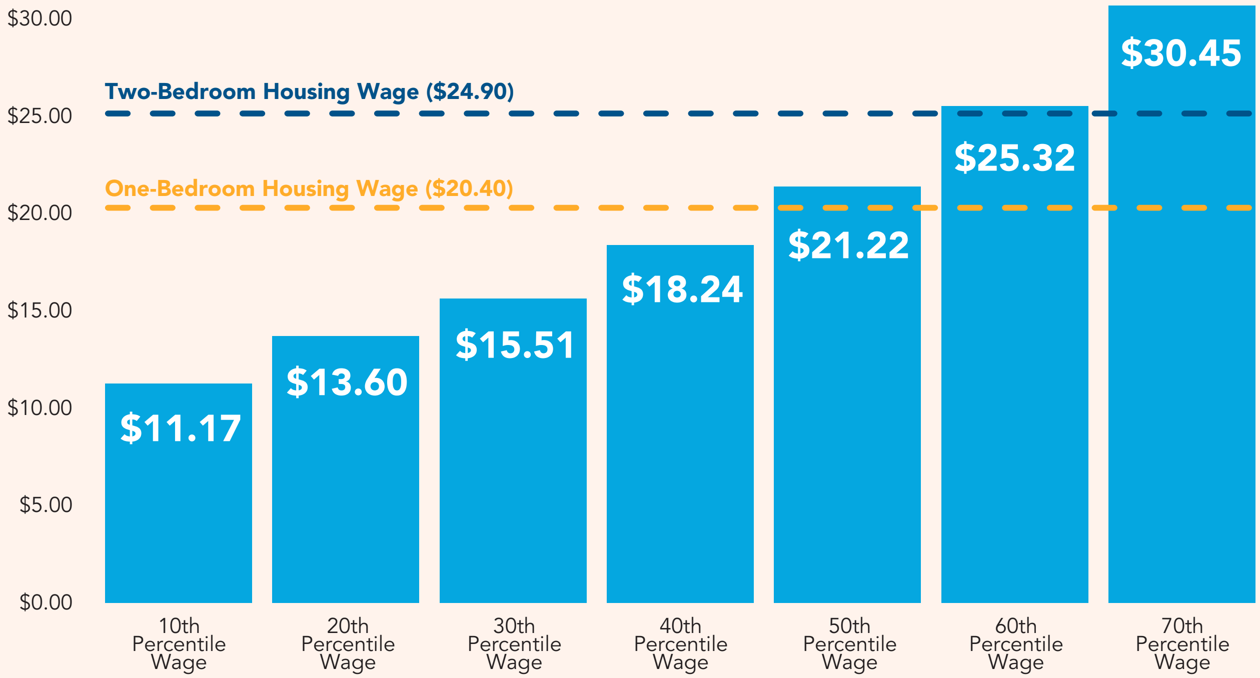
FIGURE 2: STATES WITH THE LARGEST SHORTFALL BETWEEN AVERAGE RENTER WAGE AND TWO-BEDROOM HOUSING WAGE



Source: Housing wages based on HUD fair market rents. Average renter wages based on BLS QCEW, 2019 adjusted to 2021 dollars.

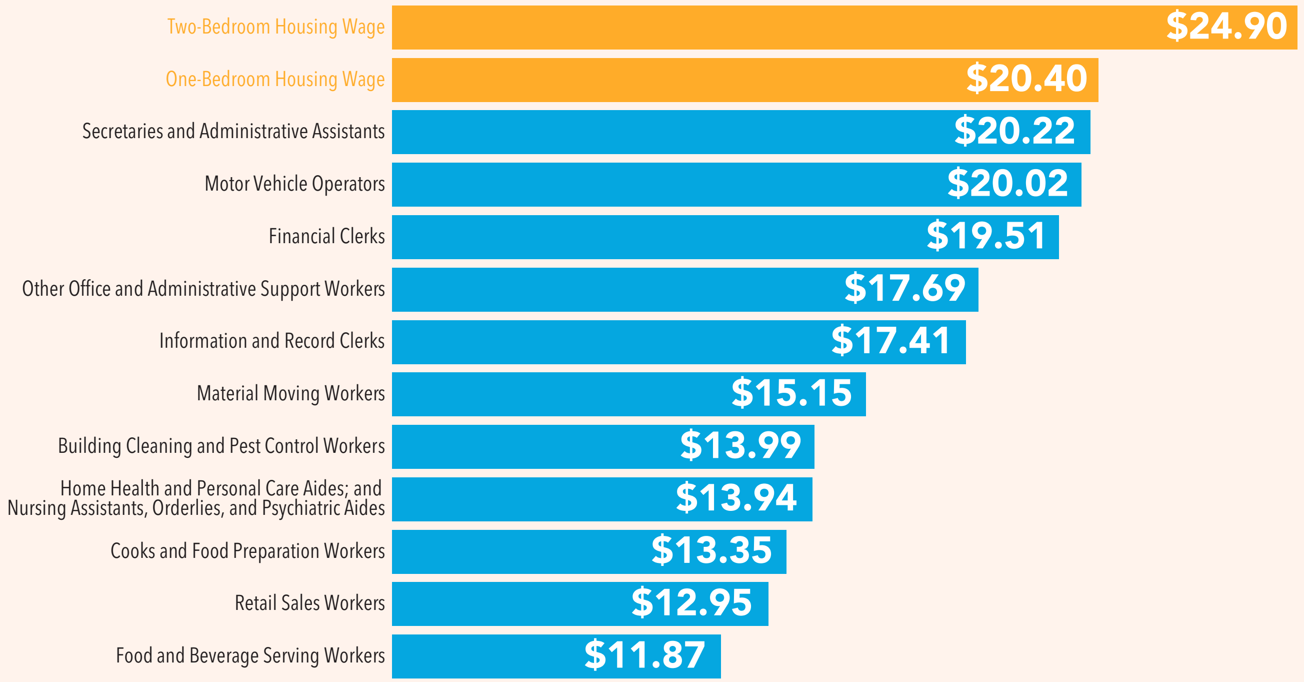
In 49 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, the average renter earns less than the average two-bedroom Housing Wage.

FIGURE 3: 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 from the Economic Policy Institute State of Working America Data Library 2020, adjusted to 2021 dollars.

FIGURE 4: ELEVEN OF THE TWENTY LARGEST OCCUPATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES PAY LESS THAN THE HOUSING WAGE



Source: Occupational wages from May 2020 Occupational Employment Statistics, BLS, adjusted to 2021 dollars. Housing wages based on HUD fair market rents.

Eleven of the twenty largest occupations in the United States pay a lower median hourly wage than what a full-time worker needs to earn to afford a modest apartment at the national average fair market rent **(Figure 4)**. The workers in these occupations account for more than 36% of the total U.S. workforce, excluding farmworkers. Nearly 14 million people work in retail sales or food and beverage service, occupations whose median wages are far less than what full-time workers need to afford a one-bedroom or two-bedroom apartment. Home health aides, personal care workers, and nursing assistants—occupations that are disproportionately Black and Latino (Rho, Brown, & Fremstad, 2020)—earn a median wage just two-thirds of what a full-time worker needs for a one-bedroom apartment. While low-wage jobs are sometimes labeled “low-skill” in the technical literature, in practice they can be quite difficult to perform. Low-wage jobs are often brutally taxing, and servers, drivers, personal care aides, and building maintenance staff develop specialized skills to meet the demands of the job and provide essential services to their communities (Lowrey, 2021).

Low-wage workers are not the only renters that struggle to afford their housing. Over 4.4 million renter households with incomes less than 50% of area median income have elderly heads of households not in the labor force. Over 1.7 million more have a householder with a disability out of the labor force, and approximately 800,000 are single-adult caregivers or in school. Low-income families with a variety of circumstances struggle to afford their rent.

DISPROPORTIONATE HARM TO PEOPLE OF COLOR

Housing unaffordability for low-wage workers disproportionately impacts people of color. Income inequality along racial lines, which contributes to the problem, is the product of historical and ongoing systemic racism: discrimination, economic exploitation, and unequal opportunities. Figure 5 compares the hourly wage distributions of white, Black, and Latino workers. For example, the 10th percentile wage bars show what the lowest-paid 10% of white, Black, and Latino workers are paid. White workers at the bottom of the white income distribution earn more than Black and Latino workers at the bottom of their respective income distributions. A Black worker at the 20th percentile of Black wages earns 15% less than a white worker at the 20th percentile of white wages. A Latino worker at the 20th percentile of Latino wages earns 12% less than the 20th percentile white worker. This disparity holds across all income levels. The median Black worker and Latino worker earn 24% and 26% less than the median white worker. Native American households also face significant discrimination and barriers, and as a result they have lower odds of employment than white households (Austin, 2013) and generally lower incomes. Among households in the labor force in 2019 American Community Survey, Native American median household income was 47% lower than white median household income.

> Black and Latino workers are more likely than white workers to be employed in sectors with lower median wages.

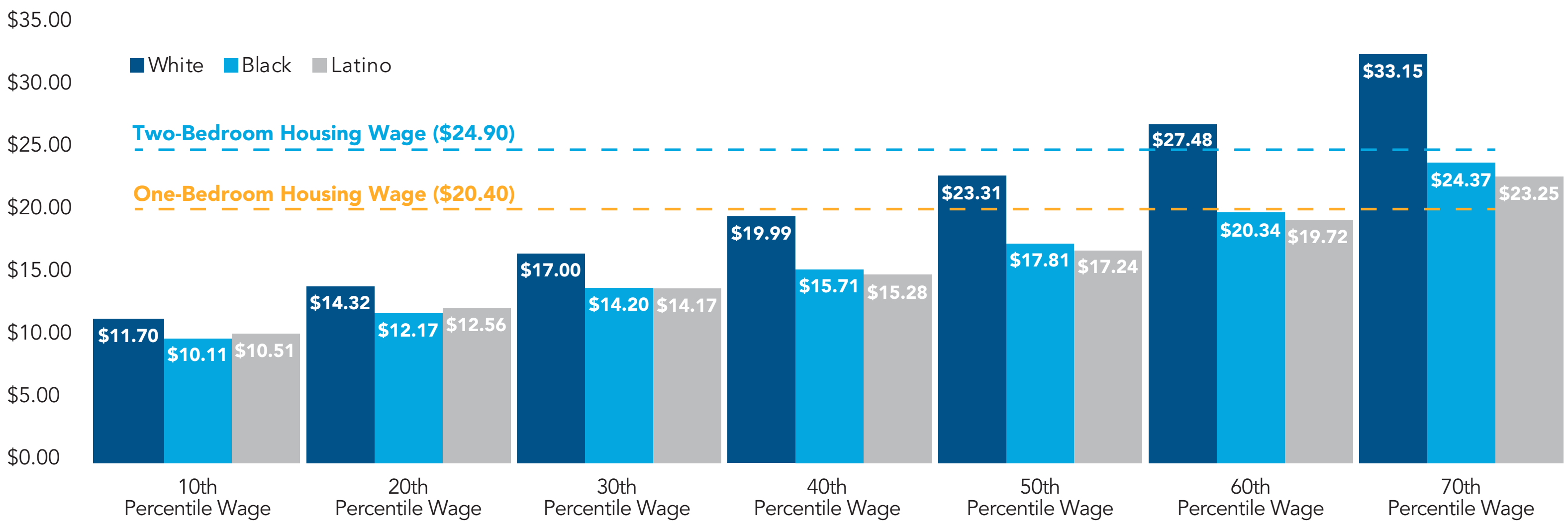
Black and Latino workers are more likely than white workers to be employed in sectors with lower median wages, like service or production, while white workers are more likely to be employed in higher-paying management and professional positions (BLS, 2020a). Native American workers are also much less likely than white workers to be employed in management and professional occupations (Allard & Brundage, Jr., 2019). Even within occupational groups (e.g., among all workers in management and professional positions), the median earnings for white workers are often higher than median earnings for Black or Latino workers. Likewise among college graduates there are significant income disparities by race (Choi & Goodman, 2020). Workplace discrimination in hiring and promotion plays a role in creating these disparities (Quillian, Pager, Hexel, & Midtbøen, 2017).

Black and Latino workers face larger gaps between their wages and the cost of housing than white workers. The median-wage, full-time white worker earns a wage adequate to afford a one-bedroom apartment at fair market rent, but the median-wage, full-time Black or Latino worker does not **(Figure 5)**. At the 60th percentile, a full-time white worker can afford a two-bedroom rental home at fair market rent. Meanwhile, a full-time Black or Latino worker at the 60th percentile-wage for their race or ethnicity cannot afford even a one-bedroom rental.

The unaffordability of the rental market disproportionately harms Black and Latino households, because they are more likely at all income levels to be renters. In 2019, 28% of white households were renters, compared with 58% of Black households and 54% of Latino households (Census, 2020). Historical and ongoing discrimination has limited opportunities for homeownership for many people of color, and a large racial wealth gap makes it more difficult for people of color to become homeowners. In 2019, the median family wealth for Black and Latino households was just 13% and 19% of white households' median family wealth (Bhutta, Chang, Dettling & Hsu, 2020).

Households headed by people of color are more likely than white households to be renters with extremely low incomes: 20% of Black households, 18% of American

FIGURE 5: HOURLY WAGE PERCENTILES VS. ONE- AND TWO-BEDROOM HOUSING WAGES



Source: Housing wages based on HUD Fair Market Rents. The hourly wages by percentile from the Economic Policy Institute State of Working America Data Library 2020. Adjusted to 2021 dollars.

Indian or Alaska Native households, 14% of Latino households, and 10% of Asian households are extremely low-income renters, compared to just 6% of white households. These extremely low-income renters have the greatest unmet housing needs of any income group (NLIHC, 2021b).

Black, Native American, and Latino households have been especially hard hit by the pandemic and its attendant economic downturn—more likely to be infected, more likely to develop serious illness, and more likely to lose a job or income (CDC, 2020).

The unemployment rates for Black, Native American, and Latino workers were already higher than the unemployment rate for white workers before the pandemic, and the wave of shutdowns in the spring of 2020 expanded that disparity. In February 2020, the unemployment rate for Latino workers was 1.3 percentage points higher than the rate for white workers, and the rate for Black workers was 2.7 percentage points higher. By May 2020, the Latino-white unemployment gap grew to 5.3 percentage points, and the Black-white unemployment gap grew to 5.2 percentage points. The recovery since has been slower for Black and Latino workers. In March 2021, the size of the unemployment gap was still higher than pre-pandemic: the Latino unemployment rate was 2.5 percentage points higher than the white rate, and the Black unemployment rate was 4.2 percentage points higher (BLS, 2021). Other research shows that the Native American unemployment rate is consistently 4 to 5 percentage points higher than the white unemployment rate, and the gap may have grown by as much as 10 percentage points during the crisis (Feir & Golding, 2020).

This uneven economic hardship explains why Black and Latino renters have been much more likely than white renters to have no or only slight confidence in their ability to pay next month's rent on time. At the end of April 2020, 43% of Latino renters and 44% of Black renters had no or only slight confidence in their ability to pay next month's rent on time (or had deferred payment), compared to 22% of white renters. One year later, that disparity persisted: 43% of Latino renters and 35% of Black renters still had no or only slight confidence, compared to 17% of white renters (Census, 2021). This difference in confidence likely reflects greater precarity for renters of color, who will need assistance to erase arrearages and stay housed in the coming year.

> Renters of color are at greater risk of eviction and will need assistance to erase arrearages and stay housed.

THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING SHORTAGE AND AFTERSHOCKS OF THE PANDEMIC

While an economic crisis disproportionately impacting the lowest-wage workers has certainly exacerbated their housing instability, the shortage of affordable rental homes for low-income households is not new. Prior to the pandemic there were only 37 affordable and available rental homes for every 100 renter households with extremely low incomes (NLIHC, 2021b), and every state and nearly every county in the U.S. lacked an adequate supply. As a result of this shortage, 85% of extremely low-income renters could not afford their rent, and 70% were spending more than half of their incomes on housing costs. Severely housing cost-burdened households have to sacrifice other basic necessities to pay the rent—to cut back on basic nutrition or forgo needed medical care, for instance. While many renters struggle to find affordable housing, the affordable housing shortage is predominantly a problem for renters with extremely low incomes. Extremely low-income households account for only 25% of all renters, yet they account for 72% of all severely housing cost-burdened renter households.

Low-wage workers struggle to find affordable homes in both good times and bad. During economic downturns, demand for lower-cost rental housing can increase, as distressed homeowners and renters in more expensive apartments seek cheaper options. As a result, rents for lower-cost housing can increase even while high-end residential rents fall, as seen in 2020 (Rampell, 2021).

During times of economic growth, the private market fails to provide a sufficient supply of affordable housing for the lowest-income renters. Most new rental housing in the private market is built for high-income renters, in order to turn a profit after paying high development costs. The median asking rent for apartments in multifamily buildings constructed between July 2018 and June 2019 was $1,620 per month, far more than what low-wage workers can afford (JCHS, 2020). Only 32% of all renters in 2019 could afford this level of rent. The argument is frequently made that new development will start a process by which housing will "filter down" to the lowest-income renters, as older housing is vacated by those with higher incomes. This filtering does not provide enough housing for the lowest-income renters, though, because landlords can virtually never, without state or federal subsidies, feasibly maintain housing at rent levels the lowest-income renters can afford (Apgar, 1993). When the housing market is strong, landlords have an incentive to renovate their properties to capture higher rents. The economic recovery from the crisis of 2020 will not on its own solve the problems low-income renters face.

Low-wage workers struggle to find affordable homes during economic downturns and during periods of economic growth.

THE FEDERAL POLICIES NEEDED TO END THE HOUSING CRISIS

As communities continue to combat COVID-19 and restore their economies, policymakers must ensure that emergency response programs are successful. Jurisdictions must implement emergency rental assistance programs in ways that ensure renters with the greatest needs can access the help they need, to remain stably housed and to address their accumulated back rent debt (Yae, Foley, Russell, & Orozco, 2021). With over $46 billion appropriated by Congress to emergency rental assistance in the end-of-2020 COVID relief package and the 2021 American Rescue Plan, jurisdictions need to ensure that unnecessary barriers, like overly burdensome documentation requirements and landlord non-participation, do not prevent the lowest income and most marginalized renters from receiving needed assistance (Johnson & Yae, 2021).

The emergency rental assistance provided in response to the pandemic and current crisis will not, however, solve the long-term rental affordability challenge that low-wage workers and other low-income households have faced for decades. A stronger housing safety net is required to provide assistance to every household in need and to scale up automatically during crises, to prevent evictions and to reduce housing instability among the lowest-income renters who are already housing cost-burdened. Addressing the roots of the housing affordability problem requires a sustained commitment to universal rental assistance for eligible households, investments in new affordable housing affordable to the lowest-income people, the preservation of the affordable rental homes that already exist, and the establishment of strong renter protections.

First, Congress should expand access to rental assistance to every eligible household in need. Universal rental assistance could be provided by fully funding the Housing Choice Voucher program. Participants in the HCV program pay 30% of their adjusted gross incomes toward housing costs in the private market, and the voucher covers the remaining costs up to the local housing authority's payment standard. Vouchers typically cost less than new construction, making them an efficient option in markets where there is already an abundant supply of vacant, physically adequate housing. An expansion of Housing Choice Vouchers could be phased in, to give housing agencies time to build capacity to implement the program (Fischer, Acosta, & Gartland, 2021).

Many members of Congress have proposed expansions to rental assistance. Senators Todd Young (R-IN) and Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) introduced the "Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers Act," which would create 500,000 new housing vouchers and counseling services to help families move to areas with greater access to schools, economic opportunities, and services. The "Ending Homelessness Act," released as a discussion draft by House Financial Services Committee Chair Maxine Waters (D-CA) would fully fund the Housing Choice Voucher program so it could assist all income-eligible households. President Biden made universal rental assistance a key part of his pre-election platform.

Second, Congress must expand the supply of affordable homes affordable to the lowest-income people with significant increases in capital investments. An annual investment of at least $45 billion into the national Housing Trust Fund (HTF) is needed to create, preserve, or rehabilitate homes for renters with extremely low incomes. Currently funded by small mandatory contributions from Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, the national HTF is a block grant that gives states flexibility in how they use the money, provided at least 90% is used for rental housing and 75% of rental housing serves extremely low-income households.

> Universal rental assistance could be provided by fully funding the Housing Choice Voucher program.

Congressional support for significant investments in the national Housing Trust Fund continues to grow. Chair Waters provides $45 billion for the national Housing Trust Fund in the "Housing is Infrastructure Act," mirroring President Biden's American Jobs Plan proposal. The "American Housing and Economic Mobility Act" introduced by Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and colleagues and the "Pathways to Stable and Affordable Housing for All Act," introduced in the 116th Congress by Senators Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), and Cory Booker (D-NJ) would direct $45 billion annually to the national Housing Trust Fund.

Funding is also needed to preserve, rehabilitate, and expand public housing, which provides an affordable home and housing stability to some of the nation's lowest-income renters. Public housing is a critical component of the U.S. housing infrastructure, but public housing authorities face a backlog of capital repair needs of $70 billion (NLIHC, 2021a). Multiple proposals previously introduced or under discussion in Congress would address these needs. President Biden's American Jobs Plan includes $40 billion to make much needed repairs to public housing. The "Housing is Infrastructure Act," as well as Senator Warren and Representative Nydia Velázquez's (D-NY) "Public Housing Emergency Response Act," would allocate $70 billion to meet these capital needs.

An expansion of public housing could provide affordable homes to many households who currently do not receive any housing assistance. The Faircloth Amendment, which forbids expanding public housing beyond its 1999 levels, should be repealed. The "Homes for All Act," introduced in the 116th Congress by Representative Ilhan Omar (D-MN), would repeal the Faircloth amendment and invest $1 trillion for new public housing and deeply affordable private-market homes.

Third, Congress needs to create a National Housing Stabilization Fund to provide emergency assistance to families who experience a sudden and temporary shock to their finances. The pandemic-related downturn provided a dramatic reminder of the precarity of many low-income households, and a stabilization fund could prevent evictions, housing instability, and homelessness by providing short-term assistance. The "Eviction Crisis Act," introduced by Senators Michael Bennet (D-CO) and Rob Portman (R-OH) in the 116th Congress, would create an Emergency Assistance Fund for state and local governments to establish short-term financial assistance and housing stabilization services.

Fourth, Congress must strengthen and enforce renter protections. Given that many voucher-holders struggle to find voucher-accepting landlords, a federal ban on "source-of-income" discrimination against voucher-holders is needed. The "Fair Housing Improvement Act," introduced in the 116th Congress by Senator Tim Kaine (D-VA) and Representatives Scott Peters (D-CA), Adam Schiff (D-CA), Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ), José Serrano (D-NY), and Ayanna Pressley (D-MA), would prohibit housing discrimination on the basis of source of income. Greater enforcement of the existing protections of the Fair Housing Act are also needed, to reduce racial and ethnic discrimination, and protections should be expanded to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, and marital status. The "Fair and Equal Housing Act" introduced in the last Congress by Senator Kaine and Representative Brad Schneider (D-IL) would create protections against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Very few renters have a lawyer during eviction proceedings, though legal representation gives them a much better chance of remaining stably housed, so a national right to counsel and sufficient funds to provide those services are needed. Congress should also enact legislation to create "just-cause" eviction protections, which limit the reasons for which a landlord may evict a tenant and create greater housing stability for renters.

A return to a pre-pandemic status quo would fail the millions of renters who could not afford their rent even in a better economic climate. As the country looks to recover from the pandemic and economic crisis, the time is ripe to make meaningful and long-lasting structural changes to ensure low-wage workers and the most marginalized people have stable, affordable homes.

> A stabilization fund could prevent evictions, housing instability, and homelessness by providing short-term assistance.

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 see an interactive page on which you can choose specific metropolitan areas or 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 the San Francisco metropolitan area, for example, is $68.33, far higher than the national Housing Wage. On the other end of the price spectrum, the two-bedroom Housing Wage is $12.19 in areas of Alabama. Even so, many jurisdictions with lower-than-average Housing Wages still suffer from a shortage of affordable rental homes. Jurisdictions with a low Housing Wage tend to have less vibrant economies and 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. 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 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 with interpreting changes in the data over time.

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HOW TO USE THE NUMBERS

For a family earning 100% of AMI, monthly rent of $2,050 or less is affordable.

Renter households represented 36% of all households (2015-2019).

The estimated mean (average) renter wage in the United States is $18.78 per hour (2021).

A renter household needs to earn at least $24.90 per hour in order to afford a two-bedroom home at FMR.

The annual median family income (AMI) in the United States is $81,997 (2021).

There were 43,848,654 renter households in the United States (2015-2019).

	FY21 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	$24.90	$1,295	$51,789	2.4	$81,997	$2,050	$24,599	$615	43,848,654	36%	$18.78	$977	1.3

The FMR for a two-bedroom rental home in the United States is $1,295 (2021).

In the United States, a family at 30% of AMI earns $24,599 annually.

A renter household needs an annual income of $51,789 in order to afford a two-bedroom rental home at FMR.

For a family earning 30% of AMI, monthly rent of $615 or less is affordable.

If a full-time worker earns the mean renter wage, monthly rent of $977 or less is affordable.

On average, a renter household needs 2.4 full-time jobs paying the minimum wage in order to afford a two-bedroom rental home at FMR.

A renter household needs 1.3 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 2021 Fair Market Rent.

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

4: AMI = Fiscal Year 2021 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

Multiply Annual AMI by .3 to get maximum amount that can be spent on housing for it to be affordable ($81,997 x .3 = $24,599). Divide by 12 to obtain monthly amount ($24,599 / 12 = $2,050).

Divide number of renter households by total number of households (ACS 2015-2019) (43,848,654 / 121,920,243 = .36). Then multiply by 100 (.36 x 100 = 36%).

Average wage reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) for 2019, adjusted to reflect the income of renter households relative to all households in the United States, and projected to 2021. See Appendix B.

Divide income needed to afford FMR ($51,789) by 52 (weeks per year) and then by 40 (hours per work week) ($51,789 / 52 = $996; $996 / 40 = $24.90).

HUD FY21 estimated median family income based on data from the American Community Survey (ACS). See Appendix B.

ACS (2015-2019).

	FY21 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	$24.90	$1,295	$51,789	2.4	$81,997	$2,050	$24,599	$615	43,848,654	36%	$18.78	$977	1.3

Developed by HUD annually (2021). See Appendix B.

Multiply the FMR by 12 to get yearly rental cost ($1,294.73 x 12 = $15,537). Then divide by .3 to determine the total income needed to afford $15,537 per year in rent ($15,537 / .3 = $51,789).

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 ($81,997 x .3 = $24,599).

Multiply 30% of Annual AMI by .3 to get maximum amount that can be spent on housing for it to be affordable ($24,599 x .3 = $7,379.70). Divide by 12 to obtain monthly amount ($7,379.70 / 12 = $615).

Calculate annual income by multiplying mean renter wage by 40 (hours per week) and 52 (weeks per year) ($18.78077 x 40 x 52 = $39,064). Multiply by .3 to determine maximum amount that can be spent on rent ($39,604 x .3 = $11,719.20). Divide by 12 to obtain monthly amount ($11,719.20 / 12 = $977).

Divide income needed to afford the FMR by 52 (weeks per year) ($51,789 / 52 = $996). Then divide by $18.78 (the United States' mean renter wage) ($958 / $18.22 = 53 hours). Finally, divide by 40 (hours per work week) (53 / 40 = 1.3 full-time jobs).

1: BR = Bedroom.

2: FMR = Fiscal Year 2021 Fair Market Rent.

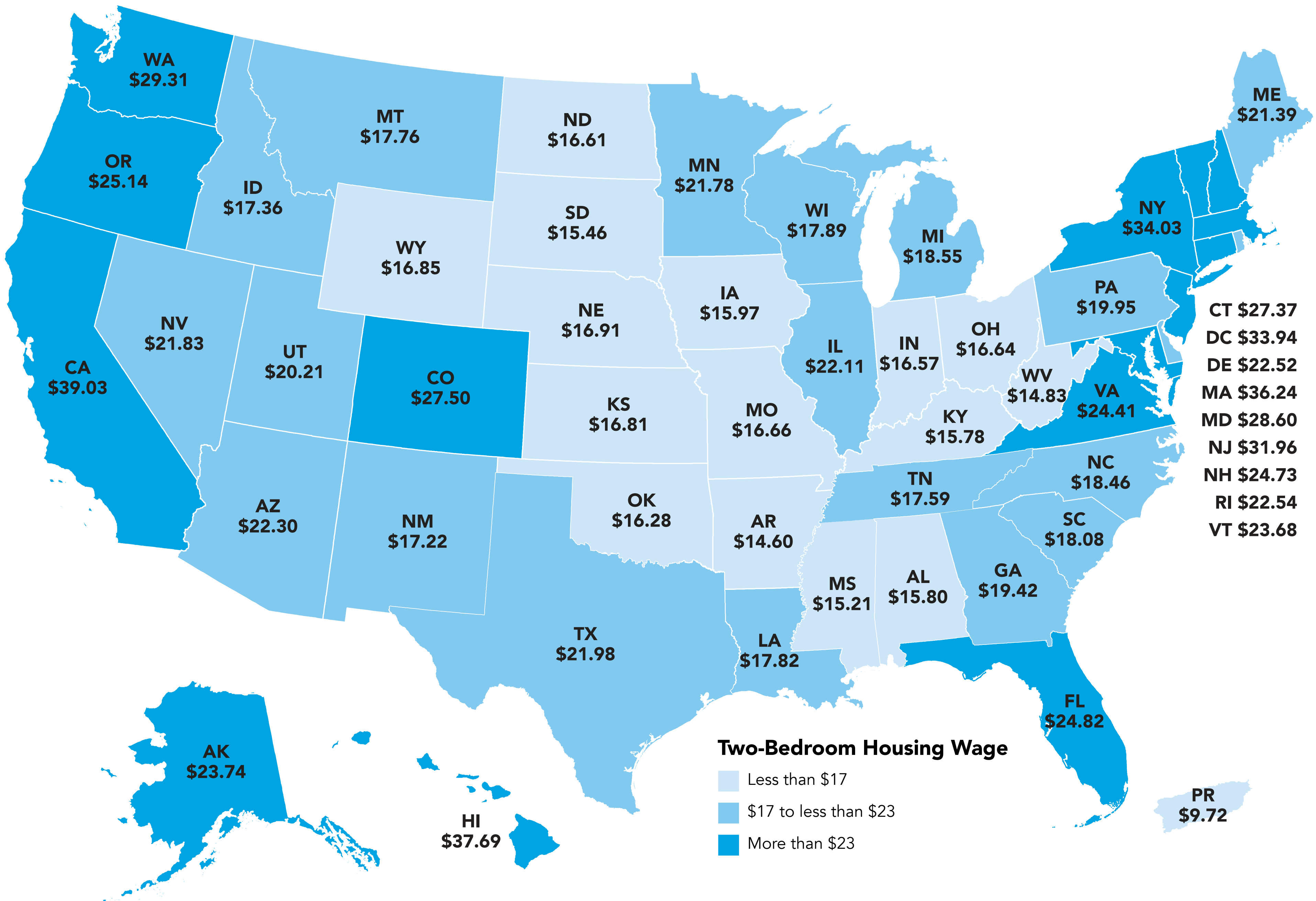
3: This calculation uses the higher of the county, state, or federal minimum wage, where applicable.

4: AMI = Fiscal Year 2021 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.

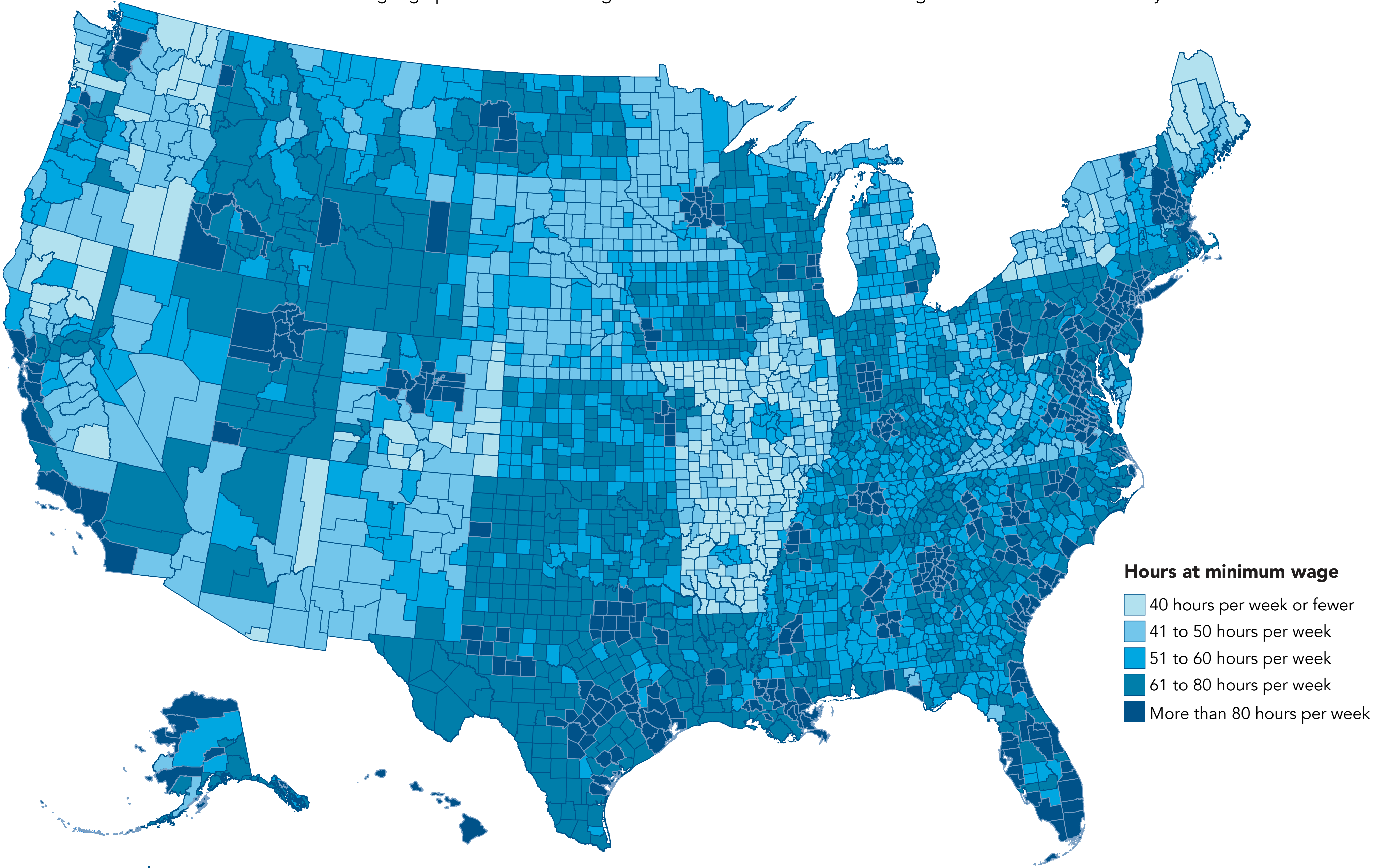
2021 TWO-BEDROOM RENTAL HOUSING WAGES

Represents the hourly wage that a full-time worker must earn (working 40 hours per week, 52 weeks per year) in order to afford Fair Market Rent for a **TWO-BEDROOM RENTAL HOME**, without paying more than 30% of income.



2021 HOURS AT MINIMUM WAGE NEEDED TO AFFORD A ONE-BEDROOM RENTAL HOME AT FAIR MARKET RENT

*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 sub-county jurisdictions with minimum wages higher than the standard state or federal minimum wage. No local minimum wages are 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.



MOST EXPENSIVE JURISDICTIONS

Metropolitan Areas	Housing Wage for Two-Bedroom FMR[1]
San Francisco, CA HMFA[3]	$68.33
San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, CA HMFA	$58.67
Santa Cruz-Watsonville, CA MSA[4]	$58.10
Oakland-Fremont, CA HMFA	$45.83
Santa Maria-Santa Barbara, CA HMFA	$45.65
Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA-NH HMFA	$44.92
Santa Ana-Anaheim-Irvine, CA HMFA	$44.83
San Diego-Carlsbad, CA HMFA	$40.85
Honolulu, HI HMFA	$39.87
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Glendale, CA HMFA	$39.58

Metropolitan Counties[2]	Housing Wage for Two-Bedroom FMR
Marin County, CA	$68.33
San Mateo County, CA	$68.33
San Francisco County, CA	$68.33
Santa Clara County, CA	$58.67
Santa Cruz County, CA	$58.10
Alameda County, CA	$45.83
Contra Costa County, CA	$45.83
Santa Barbara County, CA	$45.65
Orange County, CA	$44.83
San Diego County, CA	$40.85

State Nonmetropolitan Areas (Combined)	Housing Wage for Two-Bedroom FMR
Hawaii	$30.51
Massachusetts	$27.34
Alaska	$24.55
Connecticut	$23.50
California	$21.01
New Hampshire	$20.87
Colorado	$20.65
Vermont	$18.73
Oregon	$18.41
Maryland	$18.23

Nonmetropolitan Counties (or County-Equivalents)	Housing Wage for Two-Bedroom FMR
Nantucket County, MA	$38.90
Dukes County, MA	$38.00
Kauai County, HI	$36.58
Monroe County, FL	$33.54
Eagle County, CO	$32.98
Pitkin County, CO	$32.90
Bethel Census Area, AK	$31.04
Summit County, CO	$30.90
Aleutians West Census Area, AK	$30.67
Nome Census Area, AK	$29.50
Juneau City and Borough, AK	$28.50

1 FMR = Fair Market Rent.

2 Excludes metropolitan counties in New England.

3 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.

4 MSA = Metropolitan Statistical Area. Geographic entities defined by OMB for use by the federal statistical agencies in collecting, tabulating, and publishing federal statistics.

STATES RANKED BY TWO-BEDROOM HOUSING WAGE

States are ranked from most expensive to least expensive.

Rank[1]	State	Housing Wage for Two-Bedroom FMR[2]
1	California	$39.03
2	Hawaii	$37.69
3	Massachusetts	$36.24
4	New York	$34.03
6	New Jersey	$31.96
7	Washington	$29.31
8	Maryland	$28.60
9	Colorado	$27.50
10	Connecticut	$27.37
11	Oregon	$25.14
12	Florida	$24.82
13	New Hampshire	$24.73
14	Virginia	$24.41
15	Alaska	$23.74
16	Vermont	$23.68
17	Rhode Island	$22.54
18	Delaware	$22.52
19	Arizona	$22.30
20	Illinois	$22.11
21	Texas	$21.98
22	Nevada	$21.83
23	Minnesota	$21.78
24	Maine	$21.39
25	Utah	$20.21
26	Pennsylvania	$19.95
27	Georgia	$19.42

Rank[1]	State	Housing Wage for Two-Bedroom FMR[2]
28	Michigan	$18.55
29	North Carolina	$18.46
30	South Carolina	$18.08
31	Wisconsin	$17.89
32	Louisiana	$17.82
33	Montana	$17.76
34	Tennessee	$17.59
35	Idaho	$17.36
36	New Mexico	$17.22
37	Nebraska	$16.91
38	Wyoming	$16.85
39	Kansas	$16.81
40	Missouri	$16.66
41	Ohio	$16.64
42	North Dakota	$16.61
43	Indiana	$16.57
44	Oklahoma	$16.28
45	Iowa	$15.97
46	Alabama	$15.80
47	Kentucky	$15.78
48	South Dakota	$15.46
49	Mississippi	$15.21
50	West Virginia	$14.83
51	Arkansas	$14.60
	OTHER	
5	District of Columbia	$33.94
52	Puerto Rico	$9.72

1 Includes District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

2 FMR = Fair Market Rent.

STATE SUMMARY

	FY21 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 2 BR FMR	Annual AMI[4]	Monthly rent affordable at AMI[5]	30% of AMI	Monthly rent affordable at 30% of AMI	Renter households (2015-2019)	% of total households (2015-2019)	Estimated hourly mean renter wage (2021)	Monthly rent affordable at mean renter wage	Full-time jobs at mean renter wage needed to afford 2 BR FMR
Alabama	$15.80	$822	$32,862	2.2	$67,287	$1,682	$20,186	$505	583,145	31%	$13.62	$708	1.2
Alaska	$23.74	$1,235	$49,382	2.3	$96,079	$2,402	$28,824	$721	90,350	36%	$20.23	$1,052	1.2
Arizona	$22.30	$1,160	$46,387	1.8	$73,624	$1,841	$22,087	$552	914,512	36%	$18.12	$942	1.2
Arkansas	$14.60	$759	$30,372	1.3	$61,881	$1,547	$18,564	$464	398,616	34%	$14.36	$747	1
California	$39.03	$2,030	$81,191	2.8	$94,162	$2,354	$28,249	$706	5,889,686	45%	$24.89	$1,294	1.6
Colorado	$27.50	$1,430	$57,208	2.2	$94,999	$2,375	$28,500	$712	747,259	35%	$20.42	$1,062	1.3
Connecticut	$27.37	$1,423	$56,922	2.3	$104,545	$2,614	$31,363	$784	465,065	34%	$18.23	$948	1.5
Delaware	$22.52	$1,171	$46,846	2.4	$84,986	$2,125	$25,496	$637	104,542	29%	$18.11	$942	1.2
Florida	$24.82	$1,290	$51,619	2.9	$70,950	$1,774	$21,285	$532	2,677,470	35%	$17.69	$920	1.4
Georgia	$19.42	$1,010	$40,398	2.7	$75,452	$1,886	$22,636	$566	1,381,025	37%	$18.00	$936	1.1
Hawaii	$37.69	$1,960	$78,401	3.7	$100,068	$2,502	$30,020	$751	189,047	41%	$17.56	$913	2.1
Idaho	$17.36	$903	$36,116	2.4	$68,852	$1,721	$20,656	$516	189,292	30%	$13.62	$708	1.3
Illinois	$22.11	$1,150	$45,986	2	$86,811	$2,170	$26,043	$651	1,643,419	34%	$18.23	$948	1.2
Indiana	$16.57	$862	$34,474	2.3	$73,294	$1,832	$21,988	$550	794,237	31%	$14.58	$758	1.1
Iowa	$15.97	$831	$33,224	2.2	$79,931	$1,998	$23,979	$599	366,250	29%	$13.76	$716	1.1
Kansas	$16.81	$874	$34,975	2.3	$75,840	$1,896	$22,752	$569	381,104	34%	$14.62	$760	1.2
Kentucky	$15.78	$821	$32,824	2.2	$66,024	$1,651	$19,807	$495	568,587	33%	$14.25	$741	1.1
Louisiana	$17.82	$927	$37,062	2.5	$66,040	$1,651	$19,812	$495	598,292	34%	$14.54	$756	1.2
Maine	$21.39	$1,112	$44,488	1.8	$76,460	$1,912	$22,938	$573	155,126	28%	$12.90	$671	1.7
Maryland	$28.60	$1,487	$59,480	2.4	$111,309	$2,783	$33,393	$835	730,055	33%	$18.42	$958	1.6
Massachusetts	$36.24	$1,885	$75,382	2.7	$107,985	$2,700	$32,395	$810	971,726	38%	$22.56	$1,173	1.6
Michigan	$18.55	$964	$38,575	1.9	$75,937	$1,898	$22,781	$570	1,132,342	29%	$15.62	$812	1.2
Minnesota	$21.78	$1,133	$41,301	2.2	$93,854	$2,346	$28,156	$704	620,733	28%	$16.56	$861	1.3
Mississippi	$15.21	$791	$31,645	2.1	$58,510	$1,463	$17,553	$439	351,553	32%	$12.23	$636	1.2
Missouri	$16.66	$867	$34,662	1.6	$74,771	$1,869	$22,431	$561	802,535	33%	$15.62	$812	1.1
Montana	$17.76	$923	$36,931	2	$72,450	$1,811	$21,735	$543	136,400	32%	$13.40	$697	1.3
Nebraska	$16.91	$879	$35,175	1.9	$79,768	$1,994	$23,930	$598	257,497	34%	$14.04	$730	1.2

1 BR = Bedroom.
2 FMR = Fiscal Year 2021 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 2021 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

	FY21 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 2 BR FMR	Annual AMI[4]	Monthly rent affordable at AMI[5]	30% of AMI	Monthly rent affordable at 30% of AMI	Renter households (2015-2019)	% of total households (2015-2019)	Estimated hourly mean renter wage (2021)	Monthly rent affordable at mean renter wage	Full-time jobs at mean renter wage needed to afford 2 BR FMR
Nevada	$21.83	$1,135	$45,416	2.2	$74,544	$1,864	$22,363	$559	479,997	44%	$17.52	$911	1.2
New Hampshire	$24.73	$1,286	$51,441	3.4	$97,178	$2,429	$29,154	$729	153,859	29%	$16.17	$841	1.5
New Jersey	$31.96	$1,662	$66,468	2.7	$105,344	$2,634	$31,603	$790	1,167,634	36%	$19.38	$1,008	1.6
New Mexico	$17.22	$895	$35,814	1.6	$61,900	$1,548	$18,570	$464	252,353	32%	$14.37	$ 747	1.2
New York	$34.03	$1,770	$70,782	2.7	$90,280	$2,257	$27,084	$677	3,385,432	46%	$26.67	$1,387	1.3
North Carolina	$18.46	$960	$38,400	2.5	$71,821	$1,796	$21,546	$539	1,379,548	35%	$16.37	$851	1.1
North Dakota	$16.61	$864	$34,552	2.3	$88,956	$2,224	$26,687	$667	119,840	38%	$17.64	$917	0.9
Ohio	$16.64	$865	$34,608	1.9	$75,761	$1,894	$22,728	$568	1,587,312	34%	$14.84	$772	1.1
Oklahoma	$16.28	$847	$33,865	2.2	$67,936	$1,698	$20,381	$510	508,939	34%	$15.42	$802	1.1
Oregon	$25.14	$1,307	$52,296	2.0	$82,412	$2,060	$24,724	$618	606,086	38%	$17.30	$900	1.5
Pennsylvania	$19.95	$1,037	$41,494	2.8	$82,911	$2,073	$24,873	$622	1,572,128	31%	$16.43	$854	1.2
Rhode Island	$22.54	$1,172	$46,885	2.0	$87,905	$2,198	$26,372	$659	160,997	39%	$14.24	$741	1.6
South Carolina	$18.08	$940	$37,598	2.5	$69,180	$1,730	$20,754	$519	588,023	31%	$13.97	$726	1.3
South Dakota	$15.46	$804	$32,159	1.6	$75,887	$1,897	$22,766	$569	110,790	32%	$13.15	$684	1.2
Tennessee	$17.59	$915	$36,587	2.4	$68,613	$1,715	$20,584	$515	875,045	34%	$16.20	$843	1.1
Texas	$21.98	$1,143	$45,714	3.0	$76,812	$1,920	$23,044	$576	3,686,845	38%	$20.25	$1,053	1.1
Utah	$20.21	$1,051	$42,036	2.8	$86,186	$2,155	$25,856	$646	291,614	30%	$15.66	$814	1.3
Vermont	$23.68	$1,231	$49,258	2.0	$82,044	$2,051	$24,613	$615	76,030	29%	$13.83	$719	1.7
Virginia	$24.41	$ 1,269	$50,767	2.6	$94,743	$2,369	$28,423	$711	1,063,334	34%	$19.18	$997	1.3
Washington	$29.31	$1,524	$60,966	2.1	$95,767	$2,394	$28,730	$718	1,055,157	37%	$22.94	$1,193	1.3
West Virginia	$14.83	$771	$30,852	1.7	$62,217	$1,555	$18,665	$467	196,432	27%	$12.69	$660	1.2
Wisconsin	$17.89	$930	$37,202	2.5	$81,313	$2,033	$24,394	$610	777,217	33%	$14.76	$767	1.2
Wyoming	$16.85	$876	$35,041	2.3	$82,333	$2,058	$24,700	$617	68,129	30%	$15.72	$817	1.1
OTHER													
District of Columbia	$33.94	$1,765	$70,600	2.2	$129,000	$3,225	$38,700	$968	166,019	58%	$30.13	$1,567	1.1
Puerto Rico	$9.72	$506	$20,225	1.3	$26,086	$652	$7,826	$186	380,029	32%	$7.53	$391	1.3

1 BR = Bedroom.
2 FMR = Fiscal Year 2021 Fair Market Rent.
3 This calculation uses the higher of the county, state, or federal minimum wage, where applicable.
4 AMI = Fiscal Year 2021 Area Median Income
5 Affordable rents represent the generally accepted standard of spending no more than 30% of gross income on rent and utilities.

APPENDIX A: LOCAL MINIMUM WAGES

Locality	Local Minimum Wage (as of 7/1/21)	1 BR Housing Wage	2 BR Housing Wage
Alameda, CA	$15.00	$37.19	$45.83
Albuquerque, NM (1)	$10.50	$14.81	$18.08
Belmont, CA	$15.90	$56.21	$68.33
Berkeley, CA	$16.32	$37.19	$45.83
Burlingame, CA	$15.00	$56.21	$68.33
Chicago, IL (2)	$15.00	$21.58	$24.98
Cook County, IL	$13.00	$21.58	$24.98
Cupertino, CA	$15.65	$49.19	$58.67
Daly City, CA	$15.00	$56.21	$68.33
Denver, CO	$14.77	$25.08	$30.87
El Cerrito, CA	$15.61	$37.19	$45.83
Emeryville, CA	$17.13	$37.19	$45.83
Flagstaff, AZ	$15.00	$20.42	$25.29
Fremont, CA (3)	$15.25	$37.19	$45.83
Half Moon Bay, CA	$15.00	$56.21	$68.33
Hayward, CA (4)	$15.00	$37.19	$45.83
Las Cruces, NM	$10.50	$11.60	$14.12
Los Altos, CA	$15.65	$49.19	$58.67
Los Angeles, CA	$15.00	$30.87	$39.58
Los Angeles County, CA	$15.00	$30.87	$39.58
Malibu, CA	$15.00	$30.87	$39.58
Menlo Park, CA	$15.25	$56.21	$68.33
Milpitas, CA	$15.65	$49.19	$58.67
Minneapolis, MN (5)	$14.25	$20.27	$25.15
Montgomery County, MD (6)	$15.00	$29.77	$33.94
Mountain View, CA	$16.30	$49.19	$58.67

1. Minimum wage is $10.50 if employer does not provide benefits, $9.50 if the employer provides benefits.
2. Minimum wage for firms with more than 20 employees. Minimum wage for firms with fewer employees is $14.00.
3. Minimum wage for firms with more than 25 employees. Minimum wage for firms with fewer employees is $15.00.
4. Minimum wage for firms with more than 25 employees. Minimum wage for firms with fewer employees is $14.00.
5. Minimum wage for firms with more than 100 employees. Minimum wage for firms with fewer employees is $12.50.
6. Minimum wage for firms with more than 50 employees. Minimum wage is $14.00 for firms with 11-50 employees and nonprofits, $13.50 for firms with fewer employees.

Locality	Local Minimum Wage (as of 7/1/21)	1 BR Housing Wage	2 BR Housing Wage
Novato, CA (7)	$15.24	$56.21	$68.33
Oakland, CA	$14.36	$37.19	$45.83
Palo Alto, CA	$15.65	$49.19	$58.67
Pasadena, CA	$15.00	$30.87	$39.58
Petaluma, CA	$15.20	$29.21	$38.38
Redwood City, CA	$15.62	$56.21	$68.33
Richmond, CA	$15.21	$37.19	$45.83
Saint Paul, MN (8)	$12.50	$20.27	$25.15
San Carlos, CA	$15.24	$56.21	$68.33
San Diego, CA	$14.00	$31.58	$40.85
San Francisco, CA	$16.32	$56.21	$68.33
San Jose, CA	$15.45	$49.19	$58.67
San Leandro, CA	$15.00	$37.19	$45.83
San Mateo, CA	$15.62	$56.21	$68.33
Santa Clara, CA	$15.65	$49.19	$58.67
Santa Fe, NM	$12.32	$18.08	$20.60
Santa Fe County, NM	$12.32	$18.08	$20.60
Santa Monica, CA	$15.00	$30.87	$39.58
Santa Rosa, CA	$15.20	$29.21	$38.38
SeaTac, WA (9)	$16.57	$30.75	$36.65
Seattle, WA (10)	$16.69	$30.75	$36.65
Sonoma, CA (11)	$15.00	$29.21	$38.38
South San Francisco, CA	$15.25	$56.21	$68.33
Sunnyvale, CA	$16.30	$49.19	$58.67
Washington D.C.	$15.20	$29.77	$33.94

7. Minimum wage for firms with more than 100 employees. Minimum wage is $15.00 for firms with 26-99 employees, $14.00 for firms with fewer employees.
8. Minimum wage for firms with over 10,000 employees, and city government workers. Minimum wage is $12.50 for firms with 100-9,999 employees, $11 for firms with 6-100 employees, and $10 for firms with fewer employees.
9. Minimum wage for firms in hospitality and transportation industries.
10. Minimum wage for firms with more than 500 employees. Minimum wage is $16.69 for firms with fewer than 500 employees and no employer coverage of benefits, $15.00 for firms with fewer than 500 employees and employer coverage of benefits.
11. Minimum wage for firms with more than 25 employees. Minimum wage for firms with fewer employees is $14.00.

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.

In FY06, HUD's FMR areas incorporated OMB's 2003 overhaul of metropolitan area boundaries. HUD used OMB's new boundaries but modified them if a county (or town) to be added to an FMR area under OMB's definitions had rents or incomes in 2000 that deviated more than 5% from the newly defined metropolitan area. HUD (and *Out of Reach*) refers to unmodified OMB-defined areas as Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) and HUD-modified areas as HUD Metro FMR Areas (HMFAs). OMB's subsequent changes to metropolitan boundaries through 2009 were incorporated into HUD's subsequent FMR areas.

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.

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 FY21 FMRs are based on five-year 2014-2018 American Community Survey (ACS) data, supplemented with one-year 2018 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 2014-2018 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 FY21 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 FY21, which for a nonmetropolitan county would be the state nonmetropolitan area.

A recent mover adjustment factor is applied to the base rent. This factor is calculated as the percentage change between the five-year 2014-2018 40th percentile standard quality two-bedroom gross rent, and the one-year 2018 40th percentile recent mover two-bedroom gross rent. The one-year recent mover two-bedroom gross rent is reliable if its margin of error is less than 50% of the estimate and is based on at least 100 observations. If the one-year recent mover two-bedroom gross rent estimate is not reliable, the one-year recent mover gross rent for all-sized units is used. If that is not reliable, the estimate for the next largest geographic area is used. HUD does not allow recent mover factors to lower the base rent.

Statistically reliable local rent surveys are used to estimate rents when their estimates are statistically different from the ACS-based rents. For FY21, the ACS is not used as the base rent or recent mover factors in 21 FMR areas. 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.

A local or regional CPI update factor is applied to the ACS base rent to adjust for inflation through 2019. A trend factor is then applied to trend the gross rent forward to FY 2021, using local and regional forecasts of the CPI gross rent data.

While the *Out of Reach* report highlights the one-bedroom and two-bedroom FMR, 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 ones.

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

HUD's Federal Register notices for FY21 FMRs are available at

https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/fmr.html#2021_documents

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 2015-2019 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."[1]

AREA MEDIAN INCOME (AMI)

This edition of *Out of Reach* uses HUD's FY21 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.

HUD used special tabulations of five-year 2014-2018 ACS data to calculate the FY21 AMIs. In areas with a statistically reliable estimate from one-year 2018 ACS data, HUD incorporated the one-year data. HUD's standard for a reliable estimate is a margin of error of less than 50% of the estimate and at least 100 observations on which the estimate is based.

Where a statistically reliable estimate from five-year data is not available, HUD checks on whether the area has a minimally reliable estimate (margin of error is less than 50% of the estimate) from any of the past three years. If so, the average of these years, is used.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) projection of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) was used by HUD to inflate the ACS estimate from 2018 to the mid-point of FY21.

Applying the assumption that no more than 30% of 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. This is a straight percentage and does not include HUD's adjustments to income limits for federal housing programs.

1 The Housing and Urban-Rural Recovery Act of 1983 made the 30% "rule of thumb" applicable to rental housing assistance program.

The median incomes for states and state combined nonmetropolitan areas reported in *Out of Reach* reflect the weighted average of county AMI data weighted by the total number of households from the 2015-2019 ACS.

FY21 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, 2021. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the District of Columbia and 30 states have a state 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 municipalities have a minimum wage that is higher than the prevailing federal or state rate, but local rates associated with sub-county jurisdictions are not fully 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. 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.

If the reader would like to calculate the same statistics using a different wage such as a higher local minimum wage, a simple formula can be used for the conversion:

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

For example, one would have to work nearly 107 hours per week to afford the two-bedroom FMR in Seattle, WA, if the local minimum wage was equivalent to the State of Washington's rate of $13.69. However, the same FMR would be affordable with 87.8 hours of work per week under the higher local minimum wage of $16.69[2] (107.1 * $13.69 / $16.69). For further guidance, see "Where the Numbers Come From" or contact NLIHC research staff.

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.[3]

The estimated mean renter hourly wage is based on the average weekly earnings of private (non-governmental) employees working in each county.[4] Renter wage information is based on 2019 data reported by the BLS in the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. For each county, mean hourly earnings are multiplied by the ratio of median renter household income to median household income from the five-year 2015-2019 ACS to arrive at an estimated average renter wage. In 22 counties nationwide, the median renter household income exceeds the median household income. Nationally, median renter household income was 64% of the median household income.

An inflation factor was applied to the estimated mean renter hourly wage to adjust from 2019 to FY21. The inflation factor (262.509 ÷ 255.65) was based on the CBO February 2021 forecast of the national CPI for FY21.

In approximately 14% 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

2 National Employment Law Project (2020). *Raises from Coast to Coast in 2021*.

3 Please note 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.

4 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.

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 www.bls.gov/cew/home.htm.

MEDIAN RENTER HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Median renter household income is from the 2015-2019 ACS projected forward to FY21 based on the CBO February 2021 forecast of the national CPI for FY21.

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 lay-offs, job changes, and other leave prevent many individuals from maximizing their earnings throughout the year. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, as of April 2021, the average wage earner in the U.S. worked 35.0 hours per week.[5]

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.

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 2021, which is $794 per month. *Out of Reach* calculations for states include state supplemental payments that benefit all individual SSI recipients in 22 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. The only four states that do not supplement federal SSI payments are Arizona, Mississippi, North Dakota, and West Virginia. 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.

The Technical Assistance Collaborative, Inc., publishes *Priced Out*, which compares FMRs with the incomes of SSI recipients. The most recent edition can be found at http://www.tacinc.org/knowledge-resources/priced-out-v2/

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.

5 Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2021). *The employment situation – April 2021*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor.

ADDITIONAL LOCAL DATA CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT WWW.NLIHC.ORG/OOR

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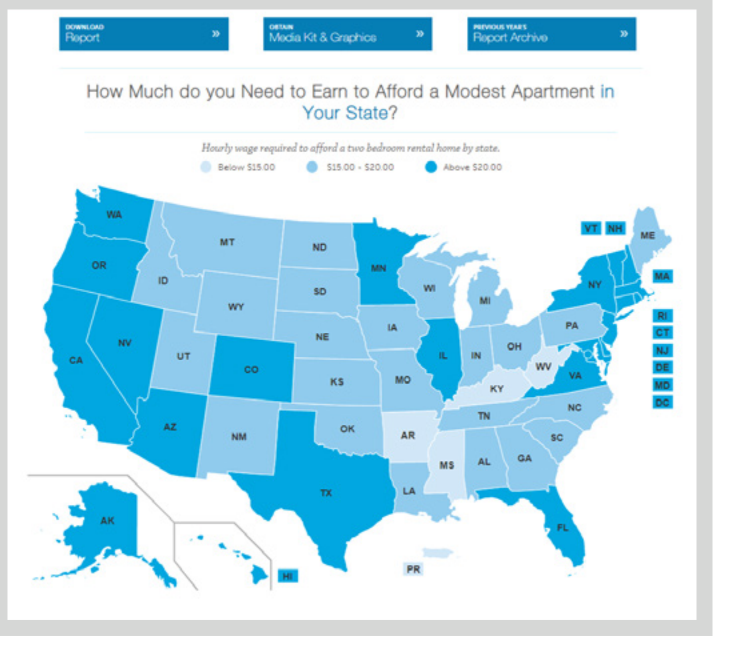

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Data for other states, metropolitan areas, counties, and zip codes can be found at

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2021

OUT of REACH

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