Faces of Poverty 2015
Montgomery County MD

The Montgomery County Community Action Board

The Community Action Board (CAB), the County's federally designated antipoverty group, advises the County about poverty and the needs of low-income people. CAB provides oversight for the Community Action Agency's federal grants and the agency's services.

Montgomery County at a Glance:

- Approximately 1 million residents
- The highest population density in the state behind Baltimore City
- Between 2010 and 2012, the County saw the largest increase in overall population in Maryland (an increase of 32,932 residents)

Demographics:

- In 2010, the County became a "majority-minority" county. Today, Non- Hispanic Whites make-up 46.7% of the county's population.
- 17.5% of the population is African American, 14.4% of the population is Asian, and 18.3% of the population is Hispanic or Latino
- 33% of County residents were born outside of the United States
- 135,000 County residents are Limited English Proficient

Poverty in Montgomery County:

- 6.9% of the population (69,376 people) live below the Federal Poverty Line
- 18.3% of the population (184,759 people) live below 200% of the Federal Poverty Line
- 14% of female-headed households live in poverty
- Female-headed households comprise 56.9% of households with children under 18, living in poverty
- 57.7% of all County residents living in poverty speak a language other than English in the home
- 43% of individuals living below the poverty line were born outside of the United States
- The Federal Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) caseload in the County increased significantly during the recession
    - TCA caseload in April 2007 – 644
    - TCA caseload in April 2015 – 1,006

Children:

- The poverty rate for children in the County is 9.4% (22,289 children)
- 38% of children under age 5 live below 300% of the Federal Poverty Level (29,195 children)
- 54,565 children in Montgomery County Public Schools participate in the Free and Reduced Meals Program (35.2% of all students)

Seniors:

- Between 1990 and 2013, seniors (age 65 and over) increased from 10.2% of the population to 13.3% of the population
- 25.8% of seniors live below 300% of the poverty level
- In 2012, 23.1% of senior homeowners in the County were “housing burdened” (spending 35% or more of income on housing) and 62% of senior renters were “housing burdened”

Self-Sufficiency in Montgomery County:

- According to the 2012 Self- Sufficiency Standard, it costs about $83,000 for a four-person family with two working parents, a preschooler and a school-age child, to afford the basic necessities in the County, **four times** the Federal Poverty Level
- The Self-Sufficiency wage is higher in Montgomery County than in large metropolitan areas such as San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia.

Poverty vs. Self-Sufficiency:

- The Federal Poverty guidelines are based on the total number of people in a household, regardless of age, while the Self-Sufficiency Standard takes into account the number of adults and children in a household and the age of the household members.
- The Federal Poverty Level is the same for all 48 contiguous states. The Self-Sufficiency Standard is based on the cost of living in a specific area.

	1 single adult (annual household income)	**1 adult + 1 infant + 1 preschooler (annual household income)**	**2 adults + 1 preschooler + 1 school-age child (annual household income)**	**2 adults + 1 infant + 1 preschooler + 1 teenager (annual household income)**
2015 Federal Poverty Level	$11,770	$20,090	$24,250	$28,410
New County Minimum Wage*	$17,472	$17,472	$34,944	$34,944
2012 Self-Sufficiency Standard	$36,060	$85,926	$82,877	$100,725

*The County's minimum wage increased to $8.40/hour on October 1, 2014.

Earned Income Tax Credit:

- 53,183 County households received the Federal Earned Income Tax Credit in TY 2012
- The median adjusted gross income of EITC eligible households in Montgomery County is $12,595
- 121,886 County residents live in EITC eligible households, including 49,403 children

Household Wealth & Financial Access:

- In 2011:
    - Asset poverty: 16.2% of Montgomery households were without sufficient net worth to subsist at the poverty level for three months in the absence of income
    - Liquid Asset Poverty: 27.7% of Montgomery households were without sufficient liquid assets to subsist at the poverty level for three months in the absence of income
    - Unbanked: 4.3% of Montgomery households had neither a checking nor savings account
    - Underbanked: 17.7% of Montgomery with a checking and/or a savings account used alternative financial services in the past 12 months

Health Insurance:

- 11.1% of the County's population lacks health insurance
- 11.3% of the County's population is covered by Medicaid
- 14.9% of African Americans and 13.2% of Asians are uninsured, compared with 6.2% of white residents
- 26.6% of Hispanic residents are uninsured, compared with 3.3% of non-Hispanic white residents
- 24.5% of foreign born residents and 39.2% of non-citizens in the County are uninsured
- 38.2% of residents with less than a high school education are uninsured
- 36.9% of unemployed County residents are uninsured

Housing:

- Housing burden:
  - **20.8% of homeowners** spend 35% or more of their income on housing costs
  - **40.5% of renters** spend 35% or more of their income on housing costs
  - 80% of County households with incomes less than $35,000 spend more than 30% of their income on housing alone
- The Self-Sufficiency Standard indicates that the cost of housing in the County has increased by 62% since 2001 (vs. 50% statewide) while wages only increased by 17%
- In March 2015:
  - 1,777 households received subsidy through the Rental Assistance Program (15-month high)
  - 2,475 applicants pending for Rental Assistance Program waiting list
  - 212 households received Emergency Services grants to prevent eviction or homelessness
  - 33 families served in family shelters and 21 families remained on the waiting list for a shelter placement

Food/Hunger:

- 7.9% of the County's population (77,780 people) is food insecure
- More children in Montgomery County (15.8% or 37,150 children) are food insecure than any other County in the state
- In February 2015, 74,421 County residents participated in the Food Supplement Program (a five-year increase of 73.7%)
- The SNAP benefit for a family of four is just $632 per month, a reduction of $36 from the benefit prior to November 1, 2013
- Food Stamps caseload in the County has grown dramatically:
  - April 2007 – 11,086
  - April 2015 – 34,422

Child Care:

- Child care costs in Montgomery County are the highest in the state at an average cost of approximately $12,452* for an infant and $13,451** for a preschooler
- Parents using family day care and child care centers spend over 20% of income on child care fees alone
- For an average single Montgomery County parent with two children who is receiving a Working Parents Assistance Program subsidy, 60% of gross income is spent on child care costs alone

References

American Community Survey http://www.census.gov/acs/www/

Brookings Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Interactive and Resources http://www.brookings.edu/research/interactives/eitc

Corporation for Economic Development's Assets and Opportunities Local Data Center http://assetsandopportunity.org/localdata/

Feeding America http://feedingamerica.org/

The Literacy Council of Montgomery County http://www.literacycouncilmcmd.org/who-we-are/infographic/

Maryland Department of Planning *Maryland Statistical Handbook* August 2013 http://www.mdp.state.md.us/msdc/md_statistical_handbook12.pdf

Maryland Family Network Child Care Demographics 2015 for Montgomery County http://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/MNF_Demographics_all.pdf

*Child care cost for infant based on average annual cost for full-time family child care home.

** Child care cost for preschooler based on average annual cost for full-time care in a child care center.

Maryland Hunger Solutions http://www.mdhungersolutions.org/

Maryland Self-Sufficiency Standard http://www.selfsufficiencystandard.org/docs/Maryland2012.pdf

Montgomery County Commission on Child Care Annual Report 2013-2014 http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/Resources/Files/CYF%20Docs/CCC/CCC%20Annual%20Report%2013-14%20Final.pdf

Montgomery County Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DHCA/Resources/Files/community/grants/consolidated_plan/fy15_exec_sum_and_section_1.pdf

Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services Statistics http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/hhs/

Montgomery County Planning Department http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/

United States Department of Health and Human Services Federal Poverty Guidelines http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/15poverty.cfm#guidelines

The Montgomery County Community Action Agency
Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Community Affairs

The Montgomery County Community Action Agency seeks to reduce poverty and improve the self-sufficiency of low-income residents. Community Action manages $5 million in federal and state Head Start and Community Services Block Grant funding. The agency provides comprehensive early childhood services through Head Start, delivers social services at the Takoma-East Silver Spring Center (TESS), and increases asset development through its Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) partnership. Throughout the County, nonprofits with contracts monitored by CAA staff – totaling nearly $3 million – deliver emergency food, clothing, and social services; legal assistance; employment training; and education to Montgomery County's diverse low-income residents and facilitate community engagement.

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