

Demographic Facts: Residents Living in Public Housing

The following demographic information was obtained from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Resident Characteristics Report as of July 31, 2022. ¹

GENERAL INFORMATION



- Across the nation there are over 1.5 million residents living in public housing and over 4 million receive voucher funded assistance. Of those receiving voucher funded assistance, a little over 388,000 live in combined project-based certificate and project-based voucher programs.
- About 696,425 residents between the ages of 18 and 61 (45%) live in public housing, with 1.9 million residents receiving voucher funded assistance (45%).
- The average household size for residents of public housing is 2.0 people and 2.2 for residents receiving voucher funded assistance.
- 55% of residents remain in public housing more than 5 years and 57% of residents remain in voucher funded assistance more than 5 years.

FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN



- Approximately 540,154 children (ages 0-17) live in public housing representing 36% of residents living in public housing. Over 1.7 million children live in voucher funded assisted households, representing 40% of residents receiving voucher funded assistance.
- 32% of public housing and 36% of people living in voucher funded assisted housing households are female headed with children.

SENIORS



- Nearly 292,443 or 19% of residents in public housing are seniors (age 62 and above), and approximately 674,411 or 16% of residents receiving voucher funded assistance for housing are seniors.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



Percentage of **Public Housing** households that include a member who is disabled:

38%

Percentage of households who are receiving **voucher funded assistance** that include a member who is disabled:

46%

INCOME



- Social Security payments are the primary source of income for approximately 56% of seniors in public housing and 59% of seniors receiving voucher funded assistance.
- The primary source of income for 31% of public housing resident households and 30% of residents receiving voucher funded assistance is through wages. However, despite the efforts of this working population, approximately 23% of public housing residents fall into HUD's "Very Low Income" category, with an income of less than 50% of the national median.
- The average annual household income of a household for residents of public housing is \$16,302 and \$15,749 for households receiving voucher funded assistance. This falls well below the federal poverty line, which in 2018 for a household of two was \$17,420, and for a household of three was \$21,960.

HEALTH STATUS



- Residents face several barriers to health. For example, safety concerns cause residents to spend more time indoors, reducing activity levels, and amplifying obesity and related issues.²
- Additionally, where public housing is typically located in isolated areas, poor access to healthcare, social services and high-quality fresh foods are contributors to substandard health.³

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION

The following chart shows Housing authorities across the country with the largest number of public housing and Section 8 units. This gives an estimate of locations with the largest number of public housing and Section 8 residents.⁴

	Housing Authority Name:	Public Housing Units	Section 8 Units
1	New York City Housing Authority	162,559	109,076
2	Puerto Rico Public Housing Administration	54,187	12,558
3	Chicago Housing Authority	20,093	58,689
4	Philadelphia Housing Authority	13,001	22,883
5	Boston Housing Authority	10,179	16,092
6	D.C. Housing Authority	9,176	16,248
7	Newark Housing Authority	7,890	7,328
8	San Antonio Housing Authority	7,886	14,175
9	Miami-Dade Housing Authority	7,780	19,795
10	Housing Authority of Baltimore City	7,186	20,516
11	Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority	6,767	15,682

	Housing Authority Name:	Public Housing Units	Section 8 Units
12	Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles	6,727	51,555
13	Seattle Housing Authority	6,466	11,937
14	Minneapolis Public Housing Authority	6,136	6,544
15	Atlanta Housing Authority	5,790	21,227
16	Birmingham Housing Authority	5,107	6,233
17	Housing Authority of New Orleans	4,861	18,164
18	Memphis Housing Authority	3,729	8,231
19	Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh	3,380	7,467
20	San Francisco Housing Authority	1,591	15,243

SOURCES

- 1 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Resident Characteristic Report available at: <https://pic.hud.gov/pic/RCRPublic/rcrmain.asp>
- 2 Carlos A. Manjarrez, Susan J. Popkin & Elizabeth Guernsey, Poor Health: Adding Insult to Injury for HOPE VI Families, The Urban Institute, Brief No. 5, June 2007, 3.
- 3 Kathie Culhand-Pera, MD, Dillard Ellmore, DO, & Lois A. Wessel, RN, CFNP, Primary Care in Public Housing: Voices of Clinicians, Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved No. 18, November 2007, 4.
- 4 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Public Housing Agency Profiles available at: https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/systems/pic/haprofiles

ABOUT US

The National Center for Health in Public Housing (NCHPH) provides a range of services to help federally qualified health centers promote health and wellness, reduce health disparities, expand access to care and treatment and improve clinical organizational and management systems.

DISCLAIMER

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