

2022 COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT



Accepted by Solid Ground's Board of Directors on November 2, 2022.

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Executive Summary

Solid Ground assesses the needs of individuals and families living on low incomes in our region by conducting a periodic Community Needs Assessment (CNA). This helps us identify barriers that limit our effectiveness and develop recommendations to better address challenges. For the purposes of this CNA, the greater King County area is our primary geographic range. The assessment includes qualitative and quantitative information collected from members of our community, as well as external research from partners and other institutions.

Key Findings

By gathering information from people interacting with our organization in a variety of service areas, we found common themes woven through the different service areas.

Money Matters

Low- and even middle-income people struggle to survive in our region. Housing, childcare, transportation, health care and other basic survival costs are beyond the reach of too many people. People need to earn much more money or have access to additional resources to live healthy, stable lives in our region. Economic issues disproportionately impact Black, Indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC) communities.

Location, Location, Location

Our region continues to attract additional residents from other parts of Washington State, the U.S., and other countries. Many are settling in our more affordable communities – especially in South King County – which typically don't have adequate access to basic infrastructure such as transportation, healthy food, and social and health services. In addition, newcomers displace low-income residents and drive up the cost of housing and other essentials in these communities. This pushes folks living on low incomes further away from access to jobs, services, resources, and community gathering points – although new virtual and non-place-based services have taken hold in response to pandemic gathering limits.

Searching for Hope

While hope lives in every human soul, people increasingly have trouble finding it. Community members need better access to mental health services, family counseling, and community connections to reinforce hope that everything can and will get better.

About Solid Ground

Our communities are stronger when we support stability and break down barriers to overcoming poverty. Solid Ground is a Community Action Agency (CAA) that does both. We combine direct services with advocacy to meet basic needs, nurture success, and spread change.

Each year, over 67,000 people in Seattle/King County take part in our programs and services. Through our programs, people gain stability and build skills that equip them to move forward in their lives. Through advocacy, we work to end racism and other oppressions embedded in our institutions, policies, and society that hold people back from succeeding. We bring the voices of people experiencing poverty into the political process, furthering social justice and supporting our entire community to reach its potential.

Methodology

The federal Office of Community Services, an Office of the Administration for Children and Families that oversees all Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) recipients, requires that grantees conduct periodic assessments of their communities to ensure maximum access to services and well-designed, quality programs. The goal of this CNA is to ensure CAA alignment with local needs.

CNA Process

In this report, we reference data from prior CNAs in conjunction with new data topics developed by a cross-departmental team. Team members represent programs across Solid Ground. They serve both as a data quality check and sources for data outside of that traditionally collected. Solid Ground's Community Accountability Council (CAC) also reviewed the CNA topics and survey. The CAC is made up of Solid Ground community members with lived experience navigating social services systems. The group provides participant input, recommendations, and ideas to Solid Ground programs and teams.

CNA Sources

This assessment used a variety of data collection methods to obtain a full picture of resident experiences and needs in our service area.

These include:

- ▶ Local, state, and national data and reports, including updated U.S. Census data
- ▶ Review of reports and studies relevant to Solid Ground service populations
- ▶ Data from the CNA survey conducted for this report

Survey Outreach and Distribution

Solid Ground translated our CNA Survey from English into Amharic, Persian, Chinese (Simplified), Spanish, Tigrinya, and Vietnamese. We posted it on our website and promoted it via social media. Print copies were available on request and distributed to all Solid Ground locations. In addition, our staff conducted direct outreach to residents and program participants.

Partners from a variety of social and community services also shared our survey with their participants. Outreach included school districts, nonprofits, community centers, faith-based organizations, libraries, governmental agencies, food banks, medical centers, and Head Start and Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) programs. Due to COVID precautions, most were unable to participate as survey host sites. However, those with the capacity to participate shared information on the survey via their social media, e-newsletters, and posted flyers.

Participant Incentives

The first 250 participants to submit completed surveys received a \$5 Fred Meyer gift card. All returned surveys were entered into a drawing for Fred Meyer or Safeway gift cards worth \$25, \$50, or \$100. In total, 250 gift cards were given to survey participants.

Report Format

The CNA uses guidelines from the National Association for State Community Services for its overall structure and method. In addition, the CSBG Organizational Standards have specific requirements for CNA reporting. Table 1 outlines these standards.

Table 1. 2021 CSBG Organizational Standards – Category 3: Community Assessment

Organizational Standard	Washington State Guidance
<p>Standard 3.1 The organization conducted a community assessment and issued a report within the past three years.</p>	<p>Community Action Agencies (CAAs) must provide a copy of the current Community Needs Assessment (CNA) that clearly shows publication within the past three years.</p>
<p>Standard 3.2 As part of the community assessment, the organization collects and includes current data specific to poverty and its prevalence related to gender, age, and race/ethnicity for their service area(s).</p>	<p>“Current” demographic data is defined as collected within the past five years, however CAAs should make an intentional effort to locate the most current and relevant statistical data.</p>
<p>Standard 3.3 The organization collects and analyzes both qualitative and quantitative data on its geographic service area(s) in the community assessment.</p>	<p>CAAs must provide evidence of both qualitative AND quantitative data to comply with this standard.</p>
<p>Standard 3.4 The community assessment includes key findings on the causes and conditions of poverty and the needs of the communities assessed.</p>	<p>Key findings sections should be clearly identified. There’s no minimum requirement regarding length of key findings.</p>
<p>Standard 3.5 The governing board formally accepts the completed community assessment.</p>	<p>Must include governing/advisory board minutes showing formal vote by the governing board to “accept” the Needs Assessment.</p>

Overview of Service Area

The service area overview provides a look at data from King County as a whole. This data provides a baseline understanding of all King County residents. Later sections of the report compare this data to the experiences of populations with low incomes and our survey respondents.

Employment

According to Washington State's Employment Security Department (ESD), as of October 2021, the unemployment rates in both King County and Washington State were **4%**. Unemployment in King County reached a three-year high of **15%** in April 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic began to affect the state.

Major Industries and Occupations

In November 2021, industry employment for the Seattle Metropolitan Service Area (MSA) was as follows.¹

Table 2. King County Industry Employment

Industry Title	November 2021
Total Nonfarm	1,454,000
Total Private	1,279,000
Construction	81,000
Education and Health Services	187,000
Financial Activities	76,000
Government	175,000
Information	140,000
Leisure and Hospitality	116,000
Manufacturing	93,000
Mining and Logging	0
Other Services	48,000
Professional and Business Services	253,000
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	285,000

¹ Washington State Employment Security Department, Labor Area Summaries

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics lists the major occupational groups and accompanying wages for Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue as compared to the United States average. As of May 2020, the highest wages were found in management positions, the lowest in food preparation and serving. See more information in Table 3.

Table 3. Seattle Metropolitan Area Major Occupational Groups and Wages

Occupation	% Total Employment		Mean Hourly Wage	
	United States	Seattle MSA	United States	Seattle MSA
Office and administrative support	13.3%	11.2%	\$20.38	\$24.21
Sales and related	9.4%	9.0%	\$22.00	\$27.15
Business and financial operations	6.0%	8.9%	\$38.79	\$44.02
Computer and mathematical	3.3%	8.9%	\$46.53	\$61.42
Food preparation and serving related	8.1%	7.4%	\$13.30	\$18.20
Transportation and material moving	8.7%	7.3%	\$19.08	\$25.19
Health care practitioners and technical	6.2%	5.2%	\$41.30	\$49.30
Production	6.1%	5.0%	\$20.08	\$25.29
Educational instruction and library	6.1%	4.8%	\$28.75	\$31.66
Construction and extraction	4.3%	4.7%	\$25.93	\$34.54
Healthcare support	4.6%	3.8%	\$15.50	\$19.32
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9%	3.6%	\$25.17	\$30.78
Architecture and engineering	1.8%	2.6%	\$43.41	\$50.98
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	2.9%	2.3%	\$15.75	\$20.46
Personal care and service	1.9%	2.0%	\$15.68	\$21.00
Protective service	2.4%	1.8%	\$25.11	\$30.33
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3%	1.8%	\$30.96	\$34.32
Community and social service	1.6%	1.6%	\$25.09	\$27.20
Life, physical, and social science	0.9%	1.2%	\$38.15	\$41.07
Legal	0.8%	0.8%	\$54.00	\$54.77
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3%	0.1%	\$16.02	\$20.10
Management	5.7%	– ²	\$60.81	\$71.69
Average Hourly Wage			\$27.07	\$35.74

² Estimate not released at the time of publication.

Housing

According to the Washington Center for Real Estate Research, the median cost to buy a home in King County in 2020 was **\$729,600** – a **6%** increase compared to 2018 prices. The U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates provide further detail into changes in housing and costs in King County over a three-year period from 2017 to 2019.

Table 4. Housing Characteristics – King County

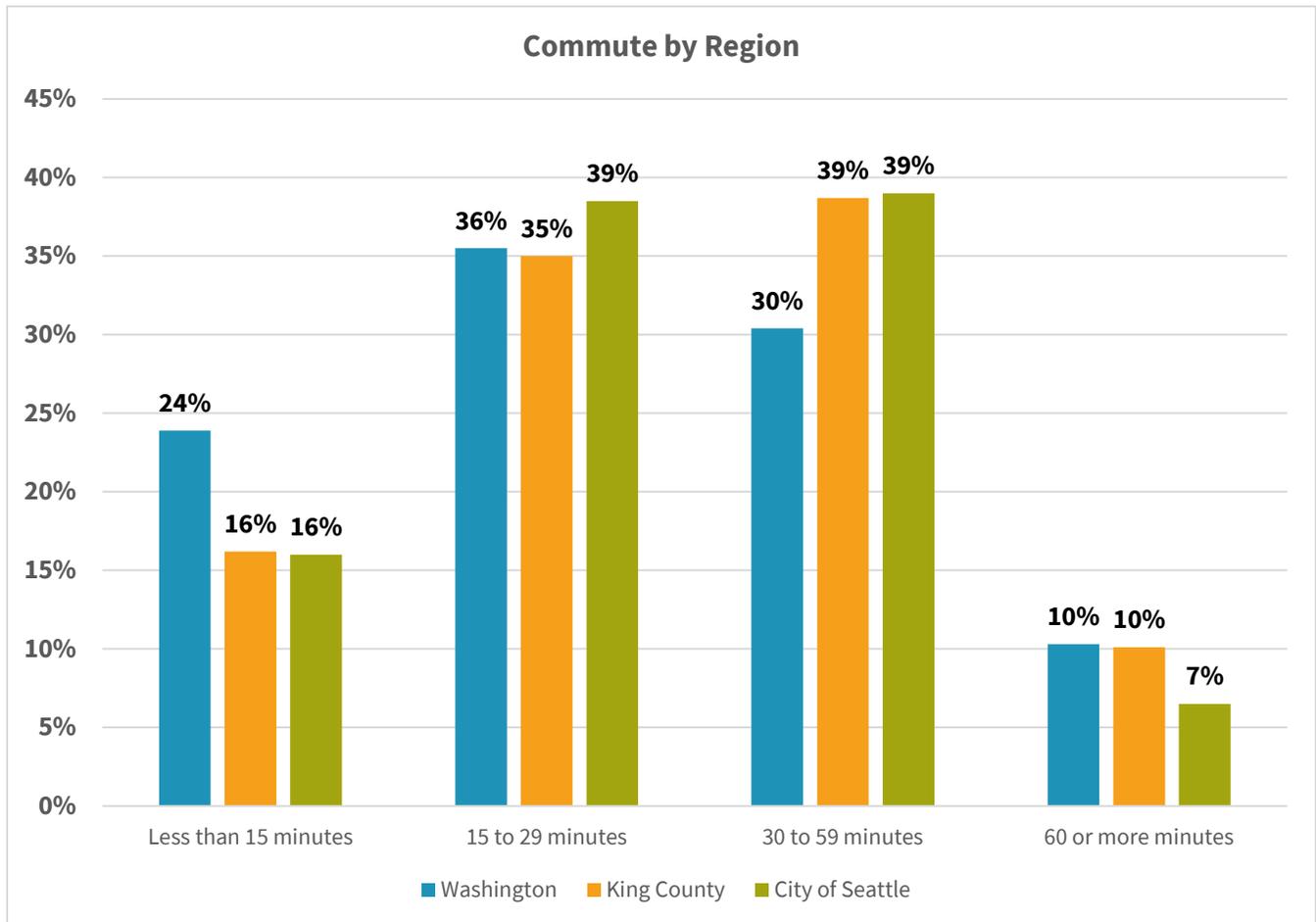
Housing Characteristics – King County	2017	2018	2019
Total housing units	902,107	917,904	935,471
Occupied housing units	851,077	865,627	882,028
Vacant housing units	51,030	52,277	53,443
Homeowner vacancy rate	1.1%	0.9%	1.0%
Rental vacancy rate	2.9%	3.0%	3.3%
Units that lack complete plumbing facilities	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
Units that lack complete kitchen facilities	1.0%	1.1%	1.1%
Median mortgage	\$2,271	\$2,372	\$2,477
Monthly owner costs > 30% of household income	30.4%	29.3%	28.7%
Median rent	\$1,379	\$1,494	\$1,606
Gross rent > 30% of household income	46.4%	45.6%	45.3%

Information from the 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimate on 882,028 housing units informs us of the types of households most found in King County. **Sixty percent** were family households, with **48%** of these a married household. Male-householders with no spouse present made up **4%**, and female householders with no spouse present made up **8%**. **Twenty-nine percent** were households with related children under 18 years old, and **7%** of those had children under 6 years old.

Transportation Use

King County residents endure a longer commute compared to commuters statewide, with **39%** of residents reporting commute times between 30 to 59 minutes compared to **30%** statewide. However, when looking at the City of Seattle, residents were less likely to report commute times of 60 minutes or more when compared to King County or the state.³

Figure 1. Travel to Work Time by Region



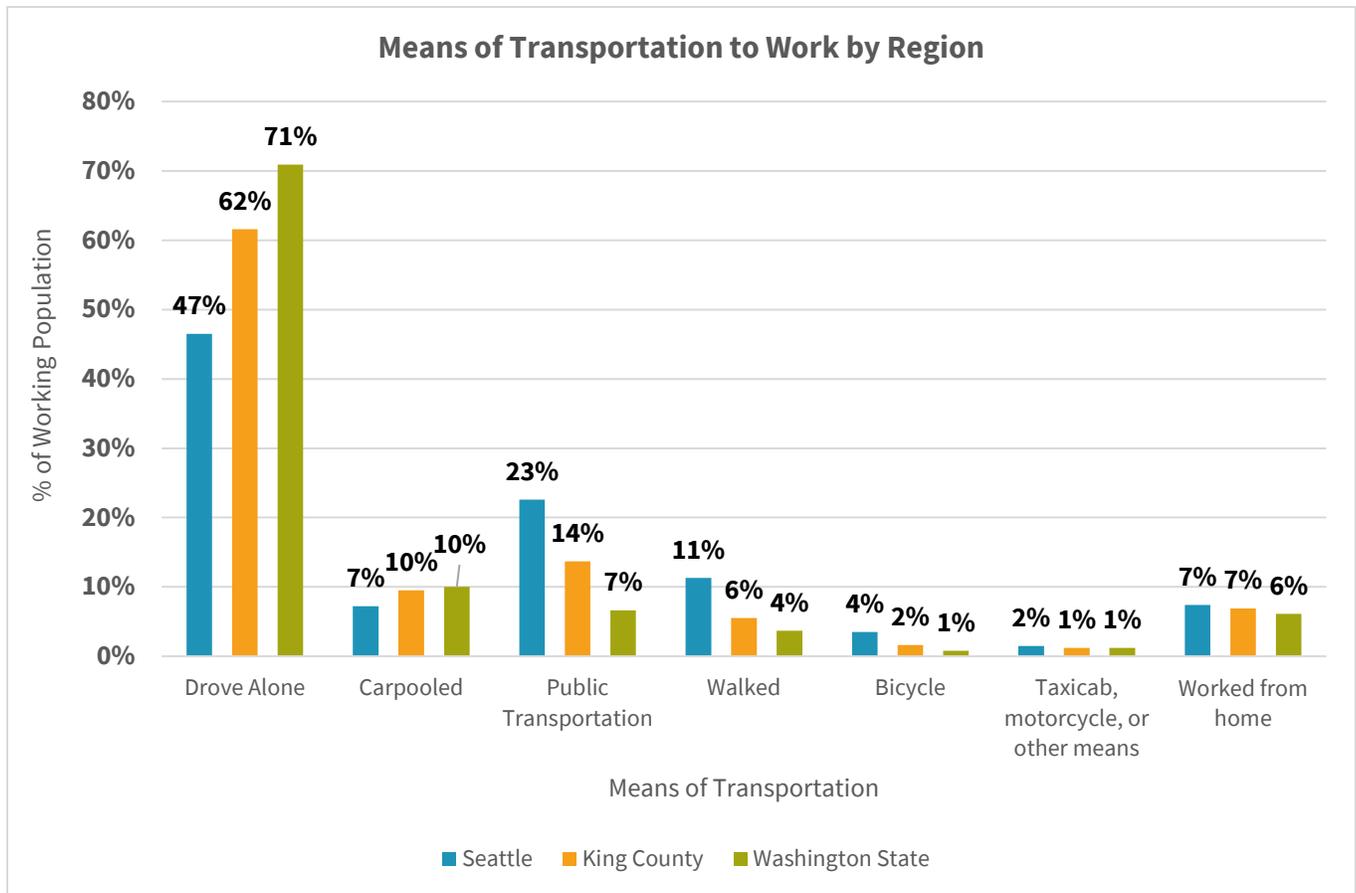
When looking at primary means of transportation to work, King County and the City of Seattle differ from patterns seen across the state, with a lower rate of driving alone (Washington State **71%** vs. King County **62%** and Seattle **47%**) and a higher rate of public transit use (Washington **7%** vs. King County **14%** and Seattle City **23%**). When comparing Seattle to King County commuters, King County commuters report higher rates of driving alone (**62%**) and are more likely to carpool (**10%**), while Seattle commuters walk to work (**11%**) and use public transit (**23%**) or another means such as bicycling, taxi, or motorcycle (**5%**) more frequently.⁴

Residents of Seattle (**7%**), King County (**7%**), and Washington (**6%**) report similar rates of working from home. Given the shift to remote work due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it will be interesting to see how these numbers shift in future data releases.

³U.S. Census 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

⁴Ibid

Figure 2. Means of Transportation to Work by Region



Medical and Environmental Health Issues

According to [County Health Rankings & Roadmaps](#), a project of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, in 2021, King County ranked among the healthiest counties in Washington State for Health Outcomes and Health Factors. See a comparison of King County and Washington State Quality of Life Health Outcomes in Table 5.

Table 5. Health Outcomes – Quality of Life, King County vs. Washington State (2021)

Quality of Life Indicator	King County	Washington State
Population reporting poor or fair health	12%	15%
Poor physical health days per year	3.2	3.7
Poor mental health days per year	3.8	4.0
Uninsured	6%	7%

Further data from County Health Rankings & Roadmaps gives insight into the health behaviors of King County residents compared to Washington State. King County reports greater access to exercise opportunities and lower rates of physical inactivity than the state (97% and 13% compared to 86% and 16% respectively) as well as a lower rate of teen births (9 per 1,000 females ages 15-19 compared to 16 per 1,000 for the state).

Medicare and Medicaid Providers

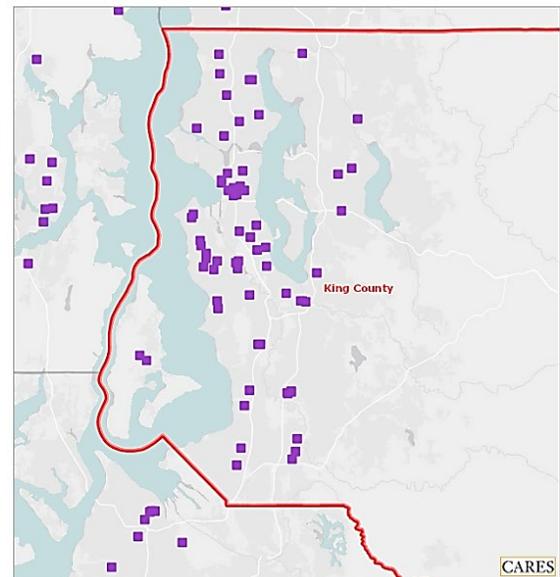
Residents' physical and mental health can be a help or a hindrance to the stability of daily life. Access to all forms of health care creates a healthier community. Medicare and Medicaid providers play an important part by delivering high-quality health care services to underserved populations. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, there were **283** active Medicare and Medicaid institutional service providers in King County in the third quarter of 2020. Table 6 details the number of each service type, as compared to Washington State and the nation.

Table 6. Medicare and Medicaid Service Providers

Report Area	Total Institutional Providers	Hospitals	Nursing Facilities	Federally Qualified Health Centers	Rural Health Clinics	Community Mental Health Centers
King County	283	34	49	70	2	0
Washington State	1,153	134	200	255	127	0
United States	77,398	7,292	15,269	10,382	4,894	129

According to data from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Regional Offices, there are **70** Federally Qualified Health Centers in King County. The map in Figure 3 shows their locations, with the majority following the I-5 corridor, and a large cluster in Seattle.

Figure 3. Federally Qualified King County Health Centers



Medicare and Uninsured

As of September 2020, in King County, there were **318,543** persons receiving Medicare. Of those, **288,190** were over 65 and **30,353** were disabled.⁵ According to the 2019 U.S. Census Bureau ACS, **6%** or 121,875 King County residents were uninsured compared to **7%** statewide.

Report Area	Insurance Population (2019)	# Insured	# Uninsured	% Uninsured
King County	2,195,502	1,819,459	121,875	6%
Washington	7,404,107	5,805,919	487,573	7%
United States	324,697,795	238,355,740	28,980,723	9%

⁵ U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services

Social and Economic Status

According to the 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates, **93%** of King County residents over 25 years of age had a high school degree or higher, and **53%** had a bachelor’s degree or higher. In inflation adjusted dollars, the mean earnings for King County residents 25 years and older in 2019 by educational attainment level were as follows.⁶

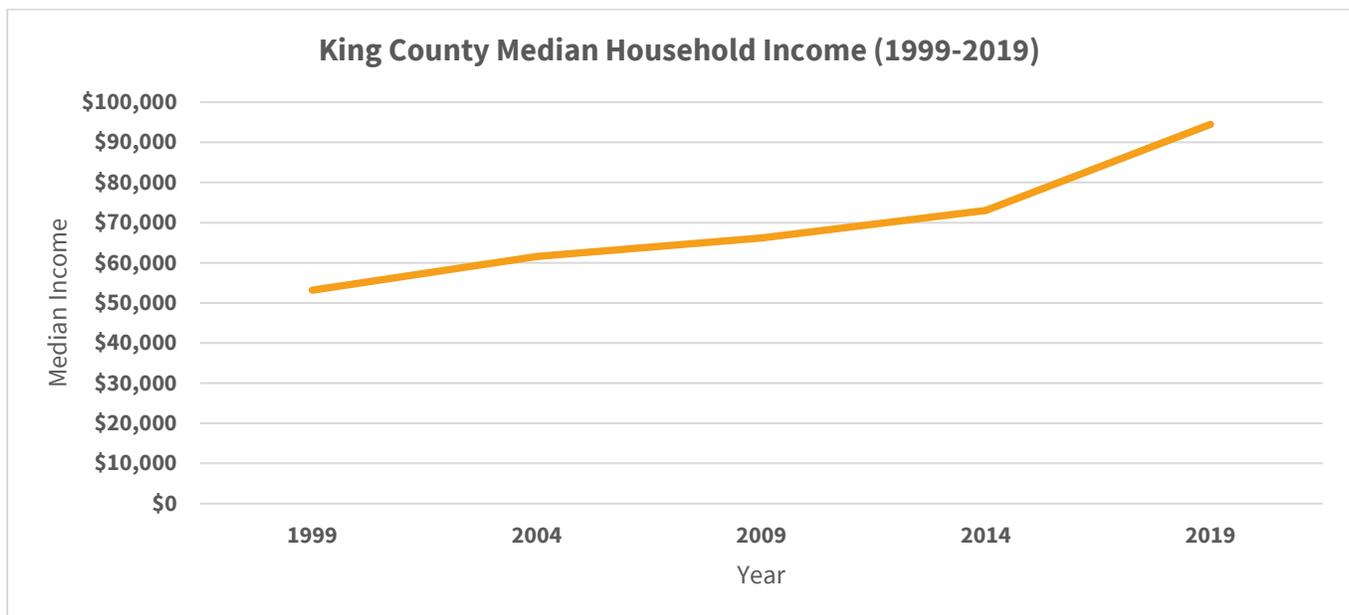
Table 7. Mean Earnings by Educational Attainment Level

Educational Attainment Level	Mean Earnings 2019
Less than high school graduate	\$29,198
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	\$36,199
Some college or associates degree	\$43,630
Bachelor’s degree	\$70,934
Graduate or professional degree	\$92,801

Household Income

The King County median household income in 1999 was **\$53,157**, and by 2019 it stood at **\$94,747**. This represents a **78%** increase over a 20-year period.⁷

Figure 4. King County Median Household Income (1999-2019)



The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that in 2019, **9%** of King County residents lived at or below the poverty level, a decrease from the **12%** recorded in 2014.⁸

⁶ U.S. Census Bureau – American Factfinder

⁷ U.S. Census Bureau – American Factfinder

⁸ U.S. Census – ACS 5-Year Estimates

Language

Though English is the language spoken at home by most residents, as King County continues to diversify, so do residents’ languages and cultural bases. While **72%** of King County residents only speak English at home, **28%** speak a language other than English at home. Of the latter, **38%** report that they speak English less than “very well.”⁹ Table 8 lists the languages spoken at home other than English and English proficiency.

Table 8. Languages Spoken at Home (Other than English) and English Proficiency

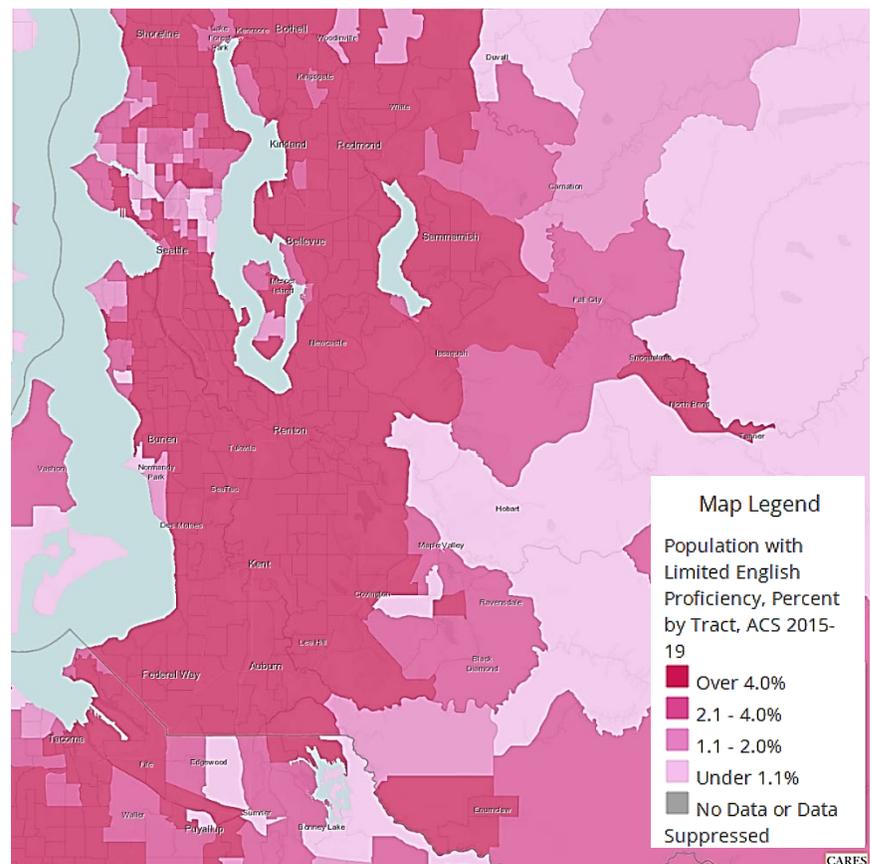
Language	% of Population	% Speak English “Very Well”	% Speak English Less Than “Very Well”
Spanish	7%	60%	40%
Other Indo-European languages	7%	74%	26%
Asian and Pacific Island languages	12%	56%	44%
Other languages	3%	62%	38%

Using the Center for Applied Research and Engagement Systems (CARES) Map Room tool, we can find census tracts with the highest levels of limited English proficiency as reported in ACS 2019. Apart from the International District, where **40%** of residents reported limited-English proficiency, the census tracts with the highest concentration of limited English proficiency are Beacon Hill, Industrial, Georgetown, and Rainier Valley – all reporting **30%** or greater limited proficiency.

Cultural Base

Cultural base refers to the cultural place of origin for King County residents. According to the 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates, **77%** of residents were U.S. natives and **23%** were foreign born. Of those, **53%** were not U.S. citizens. Table 9 on the next page lists the world region of birth of those residents born outside of the United States.

Figure 5. Population with Limited English Proficiency, Percent by Tract



⁹ U.S. Census – American Factfinder

Table 9. Foreign-born King County Residents' World Region of Birth¹⁰

Foreign-born Residents' World Region of Birth	% of Foreign-born Population
Africa	8%
Asia	56%
Europe	13%
Latin America	17%
Northern America	4%
Oceania	2%

Racial and Ethnic Characteristics

Table 10 lists the racial/ethnic demographics of King County residents according to the U.S. Census Bureau Demographic and Housing Estimates 2019 update. **Sixty-four percent** of King County residents identified as white, **18%** Asian, and **7%** Black or African American. **Ten percent** of King County residents identified as Hispanic or Latino (of any race).

Table 10. Race/Ethnicity of King County Residents

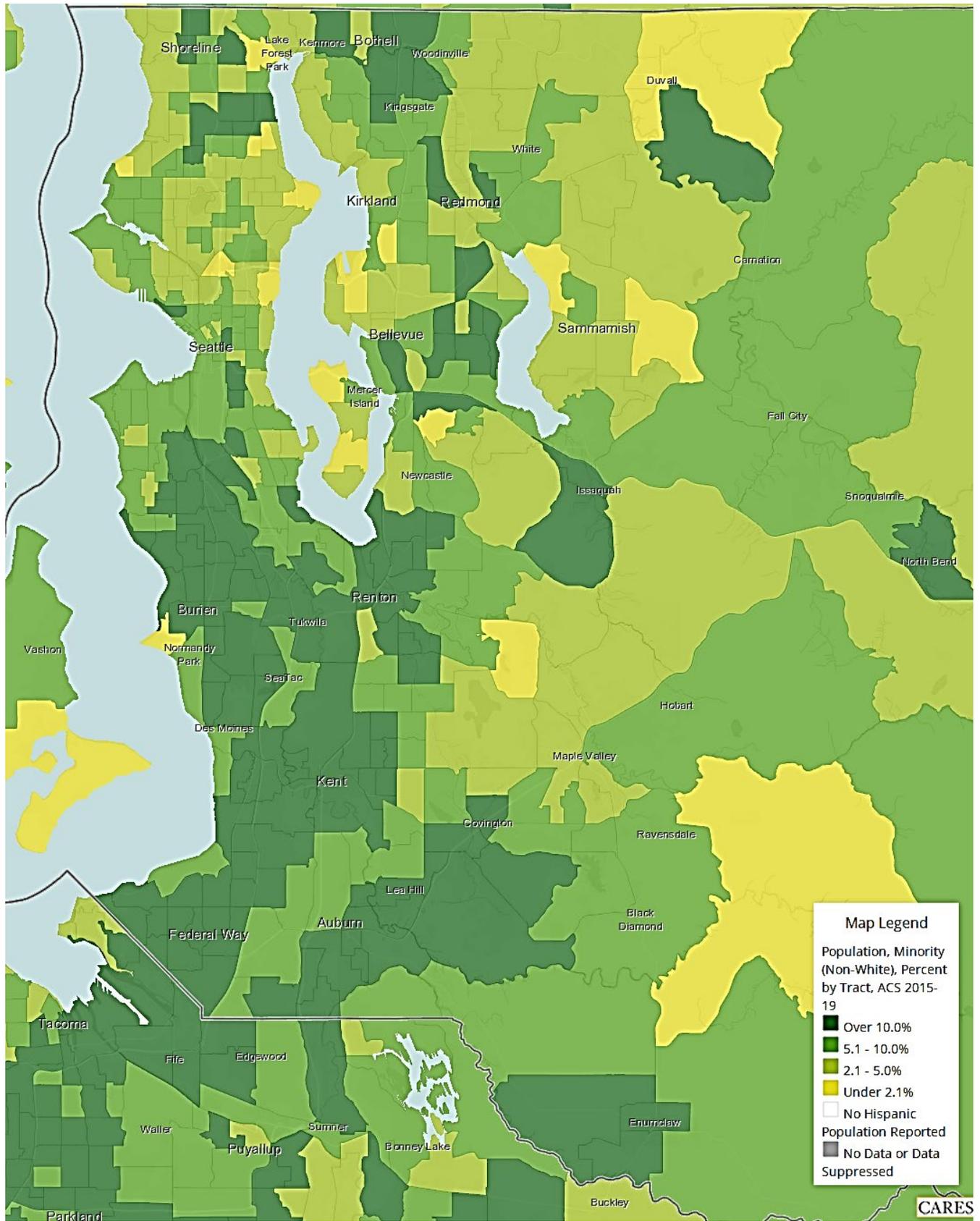
Race	Estimate	%
American Indian and Alaska Native	13,057	0.6%
Asian	386,404	17.6%
Black or African American	141,790	6.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	16,944	0.8%
Some other race	92,377	4.2%
Two or more races	140,606	6.4%
White	1,404,324	64%

Ethnicity	Estimate	%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	212,241	9.7%
Not Hispanic or Latino	1,983,8261	90.3%

Using ACS 2015-2019 data, Figure 6 on the next page shows the racial and ethnic diversity in King County by Census Block Group. Within Seattle city limits, the International District is the area with the largest population of non-white residents. Seattle neighborhoods of North Beacon Hill and Beacon Hill, Roxhill, and South Delridge followed. Outside of Seattle, White Center, Highline, Kent, and Census tracts in Des Moines, Auburn, and Renton had the highest percent of non-white residents.

¹⁰ ACS 2015-2019

Figure 6. Population, Minority (Non-White), Percent by Tract ACS (2015-2019)



Population Changes

The Office of Financial Management (OFM), Small Area Estimates Program tracks population changes from 2010-2020 by county. During this timeframe, OFM estimates that King County grew by 329,551 residents or **18%**. When looking at the population change over this same period, we see that **37%** came from natural increase (births and deaths) and **63%** from net-in migration (international and domestic).¹¹

The U.S. Census tells us more about the residents who have migrated to King County. About **2%** of residents moved to King County from another Washington county, **4%** from another state, and **2%** from abroad. See Table 11 for Race/Ethnicity information on those moving to King County from a different state or from abroad.

Table 11. King County Net-in Migration, Race, and Origin¹²

Race/Ethnicity	Total King County Population	% Moved from Different State	% Moved from Abroad
American Indian and Alaska Native	12,852	3.8%	0.4%
Asian	382,655	4.7%	4.2%
Black or African American	139,623	3.8%	1.3%
Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race)	208,486	3.7%	2.1%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	16,809	4.0%	1.2%
Some other race	90,860	3.2%	2.5%
Two or more races	134,224	4.3%	1.3%
White	1,390,616	3.5%	0.9%

Comparing data from the 2010 and 2020 U.S. Censuses, we can see how racial/ethnic groups have grown during that time. Those who identify as belonging to two or more races grew by **144%**, those identifying as Asian grew by **60%**, and those identifying as “Some other race” alone grew by **55%**. The white population of King County decreased by **4%** during this time.

¹¹ OFM – *Population and Components of Change, Residual Net Migration, 1960 – Present*

¹² 2019: ACS 5-Year Estimates – *S0701 Geographic Mobility by Selected Characteristics in the United States*

According to the 2019 and 2010 ACS 5-Year Estimates, those who identify as Hispanic/Latino of any race increased by 36%. Using Census data, Figure 7 and 8 compare the growth of racial/ethnic groups in King County to that of Washington State.

Figure 7. King County and Washington State Population Growth by Race (2010-2020)¹³

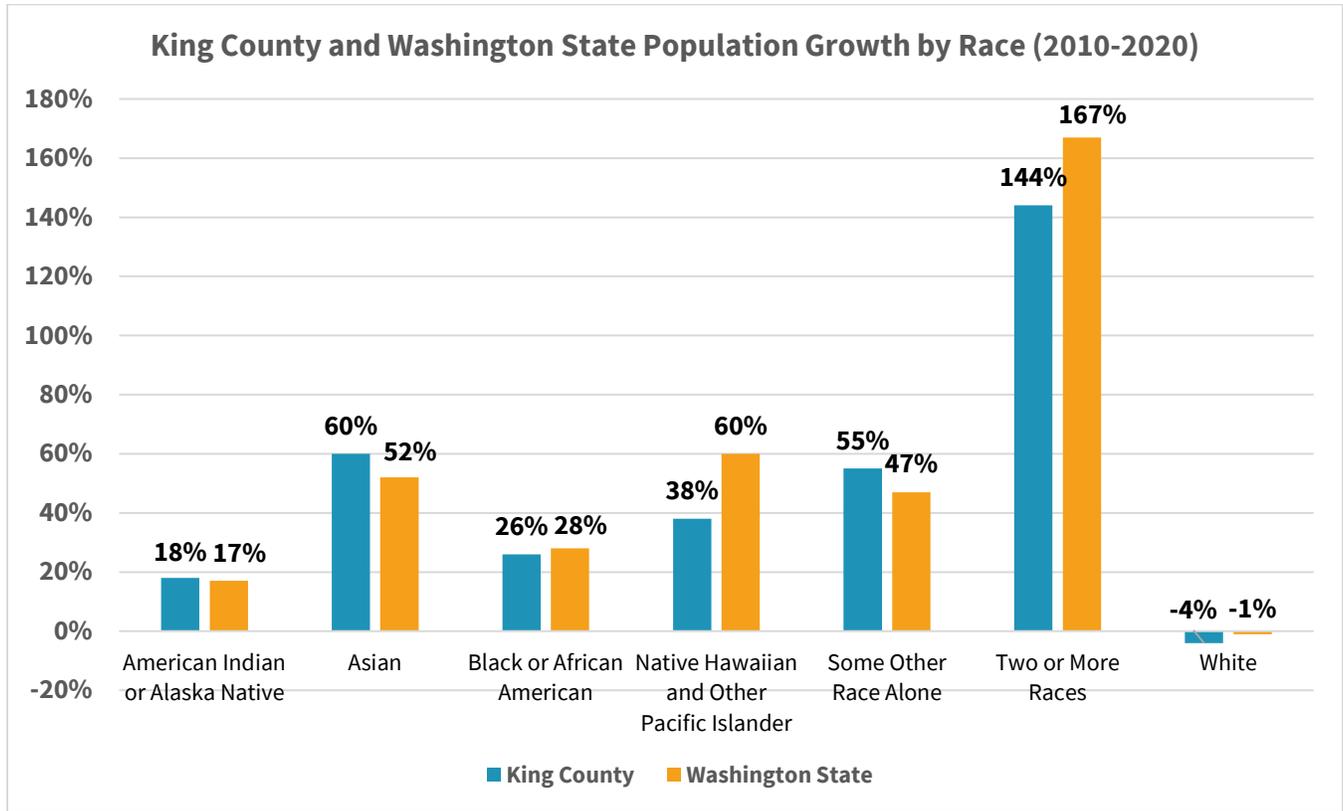
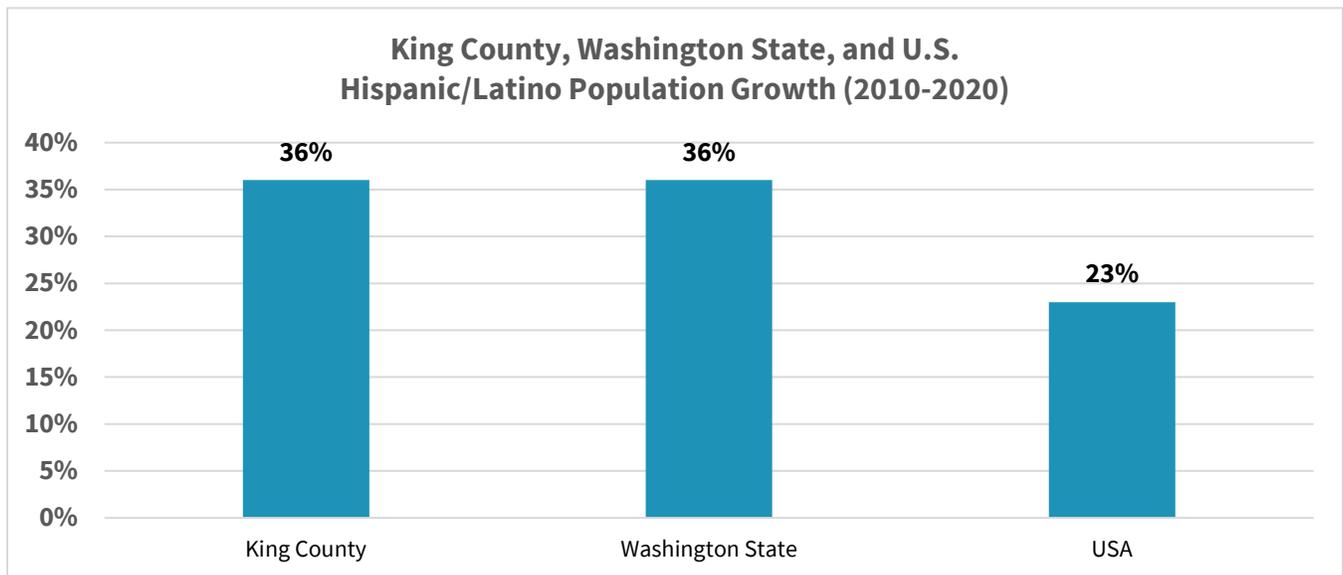


Figure 8. King County, Washington State, and U.S. Hispanic/Latino Population Growth (2010-2020)¹⁴



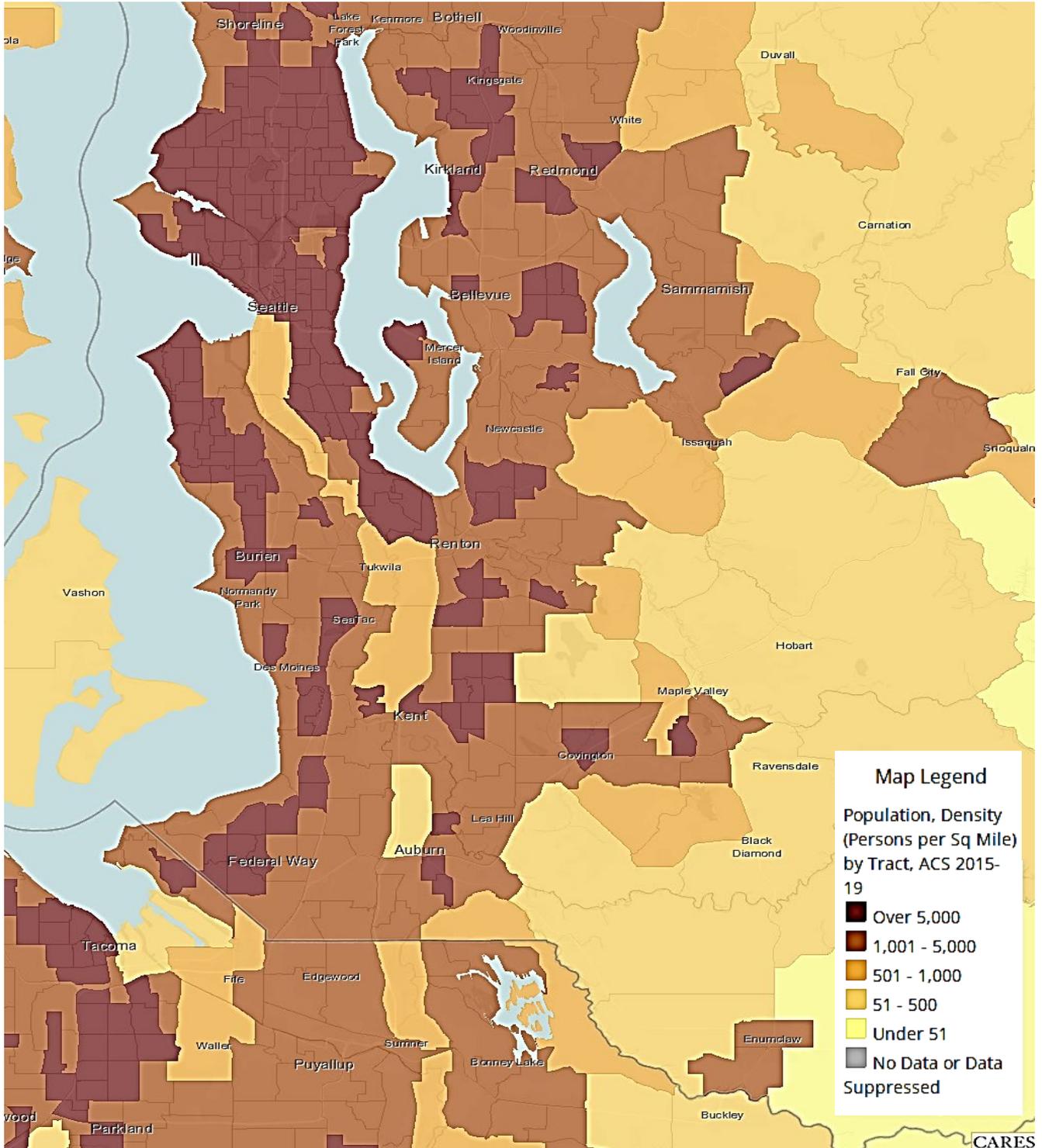
¹³ U.S. Census P1 Race 2010 and 2020: DEC Redistricting Data (PL 94-171)

¹⁴ ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates, 2010 and 2019

Projected Population Growth Areas

Metro Connects, the King County Metro Long-Range Plan, estimates that by 2040, King County will grow by about **360,000** people. Seattle, Bellevue, Renton, Redmond, and Kent are projected to absorb most of that growth. The Metro Connects report also projects that the highest growth will be in the Overlake area of Redmond, downtown Bellevue, downtown Seattle, Renton, Auburn, and Black Diamond. Using ACS 2015-2019 data, we can visualize current population density on a map as seen in Figure 9.

Figure 9. Population Density by Tract, ACS (2015-2019)



Childcare

For all families in need of childcare, affordability is a key issue. Data from Child Care Aware of Washington tells us about the cost of childcare in King County, where the annual median household income in 2019 was **\$89,881**. The following tables show the annual median price of unsubsidized full-time care for one child by age group and type of care (i.e., Childcare Center or Family Childcare). The cost of childcare for more than one child can be a huge part of a family budget, particularly for low- and moderate-income households. Care for an infant and a preschool child could cost a family **29-41%** of median income.

Table 12. Childcare Center Cost as Percent of Household Income¹⁵

Childcare Center	2019 Median Annual Cost for One Child	% of Median Household Income	At 50% of Median Household Income	At 30% of Median Household Income
Infant	\$19,500	22%	43%	65%
Toddler	\$17,364	19%	39%	58%
Preschool	\$15,480	17%	34%	52%
School Age	\$8,064	9%	18%	27%

Table 13. Family Childcare Cost as Percent of Household Income

Family Childcare	2019 Median Annual Cost for One Child	% of Median Household Income	At 50% of Median Household Income	At 30% of Median Household Income
Infant	\$14,136	16%	31%	47%
Toddler	\$11,784	13%	26%	39%
Preschool	\$10,608	12%	24%	35%
School Age	\$5,196	6%	12%	17%

Table 14. King County Disability Type (2014-2019)¹⁶

Disability Characteristic	Estimate	% of Population
Hearing difficulty	59,247	3%
Vision difficulty	34,013	2%
Cognitive difficulty	84,208	4%
Ambulatory difficulty	98,270	5%
Self-care difficulty	39,155	2%
Independent living difficulty	73,988	4%

Disabilities

The 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates show **206,381** individuals or **10%** of people in King County had a disability. The table at left compares data on categories of disabilities to show prevalence in our community.

¹⁵ *Childcare in King County, Child Care Aware of Washington, January 2021*

¹⁶ *U.S. Census Bureau – ACS*

Information and Demographics on Individuals and Families with Low Incomes

This section focuses on data about individuals and families with low incomes in King County. Though there are many data sets which could be reviewed, those presented here represent information commonly used in needs assessments, which allows us to make comparisons to the data provided in the Community Profile and the CNA survey response portions of this report.

Poverty Status

In 2021, a family of four making \$26,500 or less was at the federal poverty level. In King County, **193,063** people or **9%** of residents lived at or below this income level. Of those, **98,437** were at or below **50%** of the poverty level. Table 15 details the number of residents at different percentages of the poverty level up to **200%**.

Table 15. Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months – King County

Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months	# of Residents	% of King County Population
50% of poverty level	98,437	5%
125% of poverty level	245,518	11%
150% of poverty level	299,470	14%
185% of poverty level	382,169	18%
200% of poverty level	421,681	19%

Employment

Nationally, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) tracks the status of individuals classified as “working poor.” These are people who spent at least 27 weeks in the labor force (that is, working or looking for work) but whose incomes still fell below the official poverty level. Census data shown in Table 16 tells us about the employment characteristics of residents 16 years and over at or below the poverty level in King County. **Six percent** of residents at or below the poverty level worked full time, year-round in the past 12 months.

Table 16. Work Experiences of King County Residents at or Below the Poverty Level

Work Experience	All Residents	% All Residents	Below Poverty Level	% Below Poverty Level
Worked full time, year-round in past 12 months	853,776	48%	9,434	6%
Worked part time or part year in past 12 months	449,326	25%	59,144	39%
Did not work	466,322	26%	83,852	55%
Total	1,769,424		152,430	

TANF and WorkFirst

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program provides time-limited cash benefits for families in need. According to available DSHS reports, the local TANF caseloads were on a downward trend prior to the pandemic. In 2017, there were **24,420** TANF clients in King County, down from **38,655** in 2014, and **58,646** in 2011.¹⁷ More recent data on case counts is not available.

Some families who receive TANF participate in the WorkFirst program. WorkFirst “builds a stable foundation for employment, provides employment and training opportunities, and ultimately serves as a gateway to financial independence.” Families taking part in WorkFirst receive services in a variety of areas, including job search, removing barriers to employment, training, and community job opportunities.

When averaging the performance of the four King County WorkFirst local planning areas, in the last quarter of 2021, we find that:

- ▶ **41%** of participants exited the program with employment.
- ▶ **61%** of the participants who received job search services from WorkFirst ended up finding employment.
- ▶ **66%** of participants who received job training from WorkFirst found employment.
- ▶ **67%** of participants who took part in community jobs found employment.¹⁸

For the first quarter of 2022, the median wage of WorkFirst job seekers in King County who received job search strategies was **\$18.33**.¹⁹ For a full-time worker, this wage would bring the family annual income of **\$38,119**, which puts a family of three at **166%** of the 2022 federal poverty line.

Housing

According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition’s *Out of Reach, 2021* report, in King County, a household at minimum wage would need to work the equivalent of 107 work hours/week to afford a two-bedroom apartment at fair market rent.

Out of Reach, 2021 also reports the median income of a renter household in King County is **\$65,749**, while the annual income needed to afford a two-bedroom apartment is **\$76,240**. The median renter income is **64%** of the overall median King County income.

Adding to the housing strain for families and individuals with low incomes is the fact that affordable housing opportunities aren’t readily available. The King County Affordable Housing Committee dashboard reports that in 2019, “there was a significant gap between housing need and the supply of rental homes that are affordable and available to households with incomes at or below 80% AMI. This shortage is greatest among units affordable to extremely low-income households (0-30% AMI), where only **19,986** rental homes are both affordable and available, leaving a shortage of **54,600** affordable units.”²⁰

Put another way, there are only **27** units of affordable housing available for every **100** extremely low-income renter households.

¹⁷ WA state DSHS Research and Data Analysis, Client Data, Client Counts and Service Costs

¹⁸ WorkFirst Performance Indicators – Local Area Planning Report Prepared 3/2/2022

¹⁹ WorkFirst Performance Indicators – Local Area Planning Report Prepared 3/2/2022

²⁰ King County Affordable Housing Committee Dashboard

Social and Economic Status

According to the 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates:

- ▶ 10% of residents under 18 were below the poverty level, compared with 8% of people 65 years old and over.
- ▶ 7% of all families – and 20% of families with a female householder (no spouse present) – had incomes below the poverty level.

Educational Attainment

Education is often a determinant of income level. When looking at education level for residents over 25 for whom poverty status is determined, 21.5% had less than a high school graduate level, and 3.5% had a bachelor’s degree or higher. Table 17 displays more information on educational attainment status and poverty level.

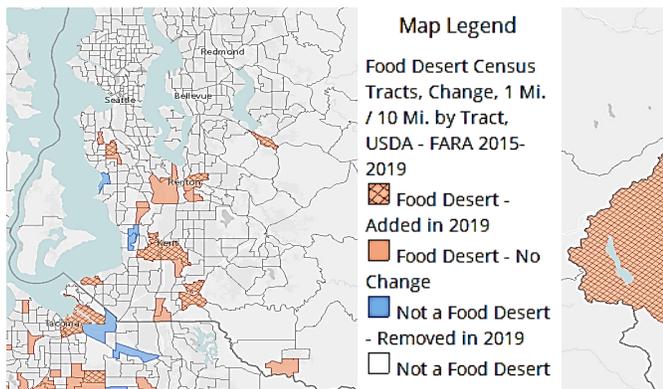
Table 17. Educational Attainment and Poverty Level

Educational Attainment	% at or Below Poverty Level
Less than high school graduate	22%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	12%
Some college or associate degree	9%
Bachelor’s degree or higher	4%

Food Access

According to Feeding America, in 2019, 190,320 people in King County experienced food insecurity. Feeding America defines food insecurity as limited or uncertain access to adequate food. According to the U.S. Census ACS 2019 5-Year Estimates, 9% of households in King County received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. For households at or below the poverty level, 40% received SNAP benefits. Of households with children under 18, 17% of two-parent households and 18% of single female households received SNAP.

Figure 10. Food Desert Census Tracts for King County



In addition to being able to afford food, a household must be able to access it. For residents living in food deserts, this can lead to poor health outcomes. [CommunitiesCount.org](https://www.comunitiescount.org) defines food deserts as “... either urban areas lacking access to a supermarket within one mile, or rural areas lacking similar access within 10 miles.” In King County, food deserts exist in South Seattle and South King County.²¹ Using Community Commons CARES mapping tools, we can see areas of King County where low-income populations live with limited food access.

The Seattle & King County Public Health Department’s Health Food Availability & Food Bank Network Report from February 2019 found that in the City of Seattle, priority areas for increasing access to healthy food were “clustered near the southern boundary around the Duwamish waterway (including Georgetown, South Park, Delridge, and High Point) ... and pockets throughout Seattle including neighborhoods in the north end, where ... low-income residents – especially those who rely on public transportation – may face challenges in accessing healthy food.”

²¹ [CommunitiesCount.org/food-deserts](https://www.comunitiescount.org/food-deserts)

Languages and Cultures

Language fluency can be a determinant of the number of barriers faced by individuals when looking for work and housing or navigating day-to-day social interactions. Table 18 at right shows the primary languages spoken at home for youth ages 5-17 and adults 18 and over at or below the poverty level in King County.

In King County, **12%** of foreign-born residents and **11%** of foreign-born families were at or below the poverty level.²² Further characteristics listed in Table 19 and Table 20 tell us more about this population.

Table 18. Primary Language Spoken at Home by Individuals at or Below the Poverty Level¹

Language Spoken at Home	5-17 Years	18 & Over
Asian and Pacific Island languages	4%	15%
English only	53%	63%
Other Indo-European languages	12%	7%
Spanish	27%	9%
Other languages	5%	6%

Table 19. Poverty Status of U.S. and Foreign-born Residents²³

Poverty Status in the Last 12 Months	Total	U.S. Citizen	Foreign Born	Foreign Born; Naturalized Citizen	Foreign Born; Not a U.S. Citizen
Population for whom poverty status is determined	2,165,562	1,662,384	503,178	237,805	265,373
Below 100% of the poverty level	9%	8%	12%	9%	14%
100-199% of the poverty level	11%	10%	13%	11%	15%
At or above 200% of the poverty level	81%	82%	75%	80%	71%

Table 20. Poverty Status of U.S. and Foreign-born Residents by Family Type²⁴

Family Type	U.S. Citizen	Foreign Born	Foreign Born; Naturalized Citizen	Foreign Born; Not a U.S. Citizen
All families with related children under 18 years only	6%	11%	9%	13%
Married couple with related children under 18 years only	2%	7%	5%	8%
Female householder, no spouse present, with related children under 18 years only	21%	34%	29%	39%

²² 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Table B06012

²³ 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Table S0501

²⁴ Ibid

Racial and Ethnic Characteristics

The U.S. Census ACS tells us about the race/ethnicity of King County residents at or below the federal poverty level. Tables 21 – 23 detail the racial and ethnic characteristics of individuals and families experiencing poverty.

Through this data we can see:

- ▶ 14% of American Indian and Alaska Native residents earn less than 50% of the poverty level – the highest rates of extreme poverty in King County.
- ▶ 24% of Black/African American residents are below the poverty level – the largest proportion of the racial/ethnic groups measured.
- ▶ 7% of King County’s 87,480 white residents are below the poverty level.

Table 21. Race/Ethnicity of King County Residents at or Below Poverty Level²⁵

Race/Ethnicity of King County Residents	% of Total Population	% Below Poverty Level
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	1%	19%
Asian alone	18%	9%
Black or African American alone	6%	24%
Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race)	10%	14%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander alone	1%	14%
Some other race alone	4%	16%
Two or more races	6%	11%
White alone	64%	7%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	60%	6%

Table 22. Race/Ethnicity of Individuals at Specific Poverty Levels²⁶

Race/Ethnicity of Individuals	Less Than 50% Poverty Level	Less Than 100% Poverty Level	Less Than 150% Poverty Level
American Indian and Alaska Native	14%	19%	25%
Asian	4%	8%	10%
Black or African American	6%	19%	29%
Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race)	5%	10%	14%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	1%	2%	3%
Some other race	5%	10%	16%
Two or more races	6%	9%	14%
White	3%	6%	7%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	3%	6%	7%

²⁵ 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Table S1701

²⁶ 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Table S1703

Table 23. Race/Ethnicity of Family Householders by Type at or Below Poverty Level²⁷

Race/Ethnicity of Family Householder	All Families, % Below Poverty Level	Married Couples, % Below Poverty Level	Female Householder, No Spouse Present, % Below Poverty Level
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	14%	2%	27%
Asian alone	6%	4%	16%
Black or African American alone	20%	12%	35%
Hispanic or Latino origin (any race)	12%	6%	31%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	12%	9%	20%
Some other race	15%	9%	33%
Two or more races	10%	3%	25%
White alone	3%	2%	13%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	3%	2%	11%

Recent Population Changes

In King County, the areas with the largest percentage of low-income populations are in South Seattle along the I-5 corridor toward Kent. As mentioned earlier, these areas will absorb the most growth in the upcoming years.

According to the 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates, **148,716** residents moved to King County from outside of the county. **Seventeen percent** of these new residents were at or below **100%** of the poverty level.

Of those:

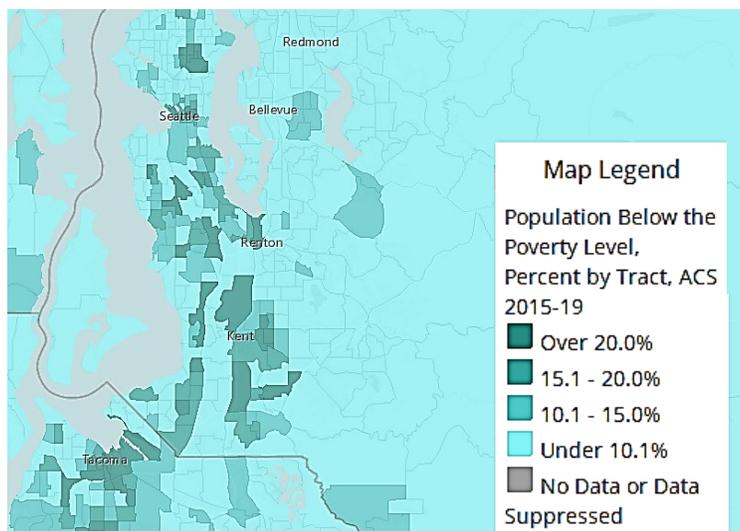
- ▶ 24% moved here from another county in Washington State
- ▶ 45% moved here from a different state
- ▶ 31% moved here from abroad

Table 24 details the poverty status of these new residents and their points of origin.

Table 24. Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months for New King County Residents²⁸

Poverty Level	Moved from Another WA State County	Moved from a Different State	Moved from Abroad
Below 100% of poverty level	24%	45%	31%
100 to 149% of poverty level	31%	43%	27%
At or above 150% of poverty level	24%	56%	20%

Figure 11. Population Below the Poverty Level, % by Tract, ACS (2015-2019)



²⁷ 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Table S1702

²⁸ 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Table B07012

Solid Ground Community Needs Assessment Survey Responses

For this CNA, Solid Ground conducted a community survey to collect information on the needs and experiences of residents within our service area. The survey was promoted through partner social services agencies and to Solid Ground program participants. For the purposes of this report, responses from **227 individuals** with zip codes from King County (or within a reasonable distance) were used for final data analysis.

Survey Respondent Demographics

Household Demographics

Of the 227 survey respondents:

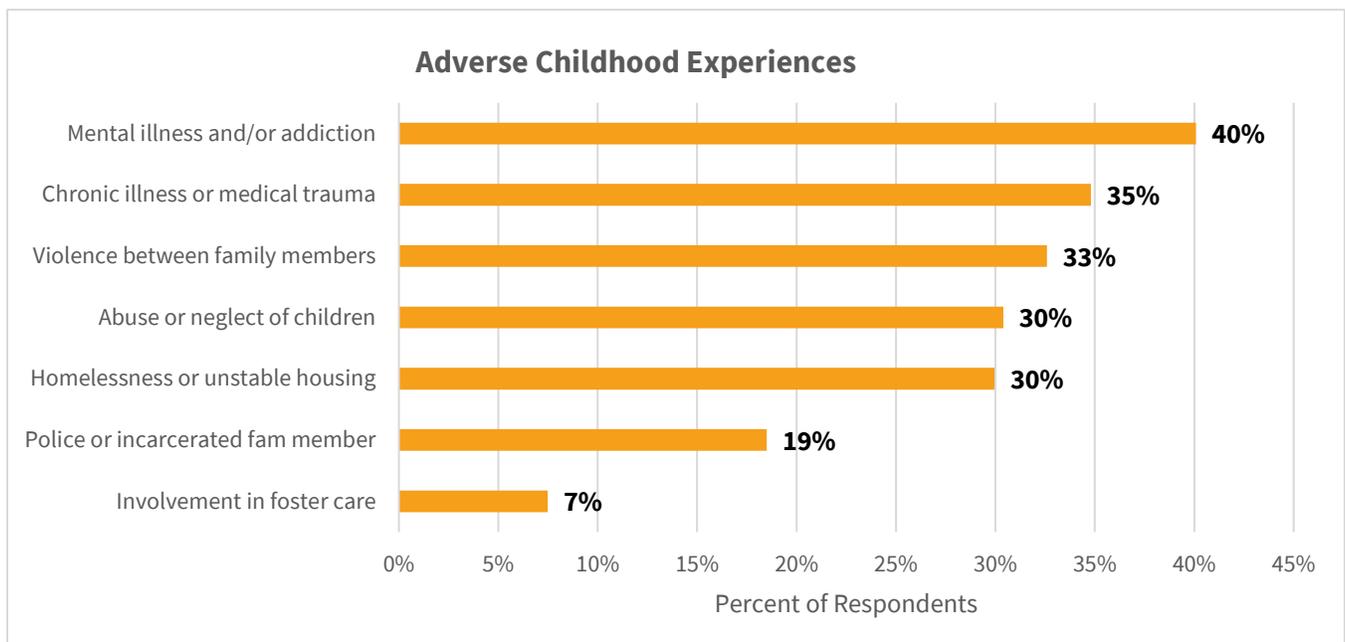
- ▶ The majority were between **18-59** years old.
- ▶ The average household size was **three**.
- ▶ They represented over **600** individuals living in the Solid Ground service area.
- ▶ The largest household had over **eight** individuals.
- ▶ The mean age for the population was **43**, the youngest respondent being **19** and the oldest **86** years old.
- ▶ **21%** said that either they or a member of their household had served in the military.
- ▶ **31%** reported earning less than **\$10,000** in the last year, and **78%** were **below 30%** the average median income (AMI) for a family of three.

Household Experiences

As part of the survey, respondents reviewed a list of situations which may have affected their households when they were growing up, including indicators of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and generational poverty. Respondents reported the following household impacts:

- ▶ **40%** mental illness and/or addiction
- ▶ **35%** chronic illness or medical trauma
- ▶ **33%** violence between family members
- ▶ **30%** abuse or neglect of children
- ▶ **30%** homelessness or unstable housing

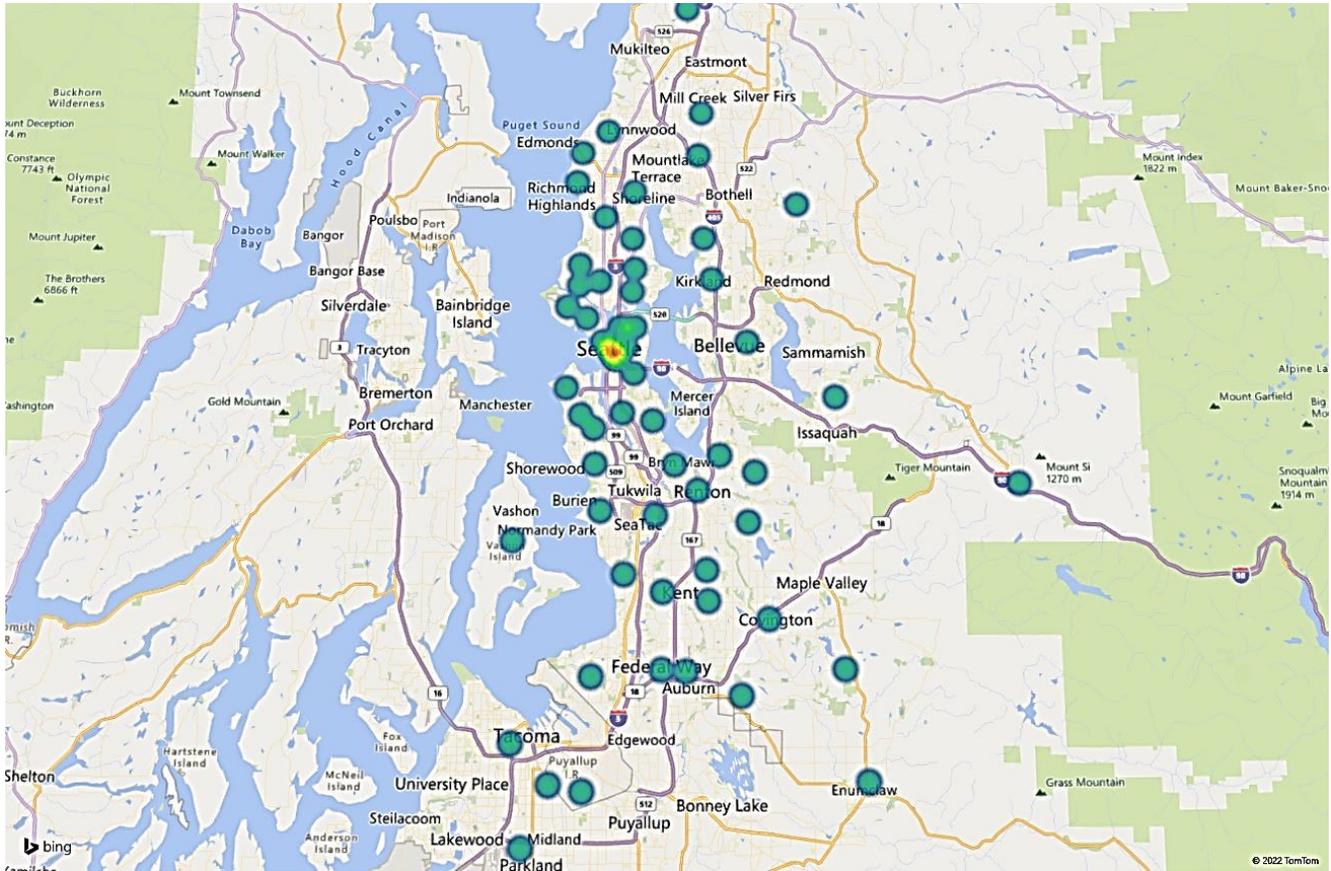
Figure 12. SG Survey Respondents – Adverse Childhood Experiences



Residency

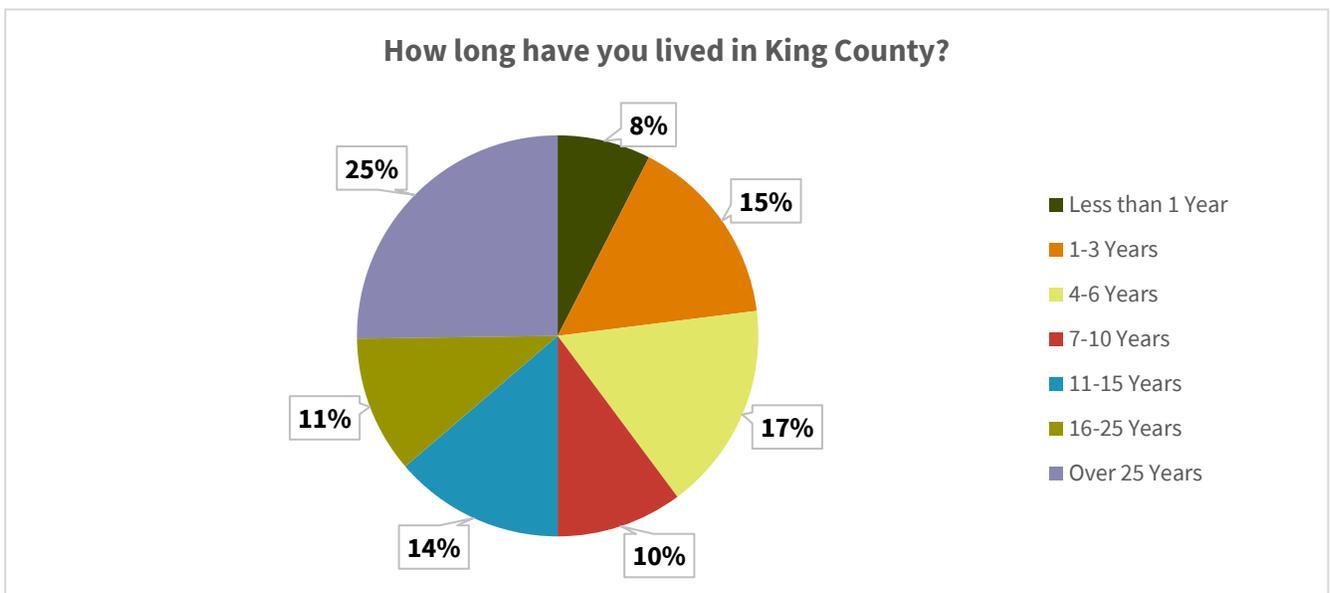
Most respondents lived in Seattle (73%), followed by Auburn (5%) and Renton (5%). The heat map below shows the distribution of responses across King County. A few responses came from outside King County.

Figure 13. SG Survey Respondents – Geographical Distribution



Twenty-five percent of respondents reported living in King County for over 25 years, 23% less than three years.

Figure 14. SG Survey Respondents – Length of King County Residence



Gender Identity

Most respondents identified as female (65%), 33% as male, and 2% as a gender other than singularly female or male. Five percent of respondents identified as transgender.

Sexual Orientation

Survey respondents were asked to choose from multiple options to indicate their sexual orientation.

They identified as follows:

- ▶ 73% straight
- ▶ 12% bisexual
- ▶ 7% gay or lesbian

Figure 15 shows further detail on the diversity of responses.

Figure 15. SG Survey Respondents – Sexual Orientation

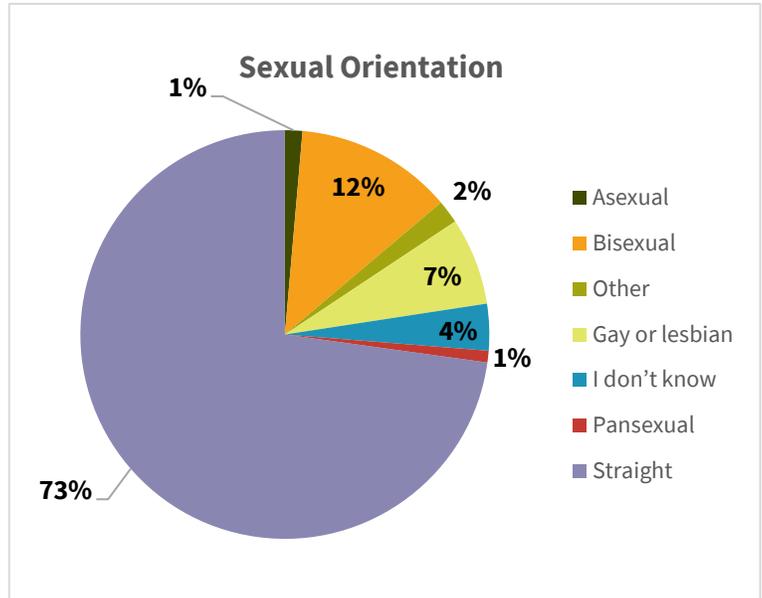


Table 25. SG Survey Respondents – Race and Ethnicity

Respondents' Race & Ethnicity	%
African American or Black	21%
Asian	9%
Biracial	6%
Hispanic or Latino/a/x	7%
Native American or Alaskan Native	5%
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	1%
Other	1%
White	49%

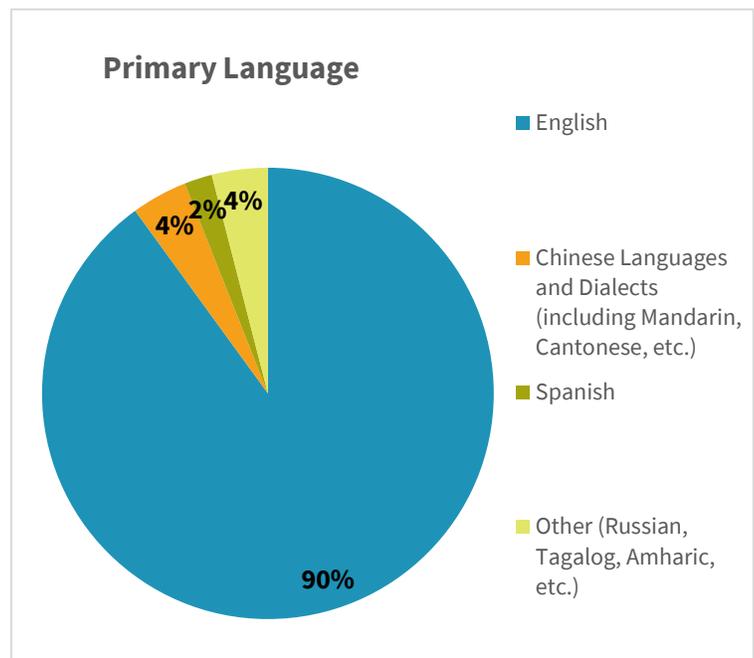
Racial and Ethnic Diversity

Solid Ground's survey respondents have greater racial and ethnic diversity than the King County population, with 51% of responses coming from people of color. Table 25 at left shows further detail on the racial and ethnic diversity of survey respondents.

Language

Our CNA Survey was translated from English and available in Amharic, Chinese (Simplified), Persian, Spanish, Tigrinya, and Vietnamese, the languages most often spoken by Solid Ground participants. Ninety percent spoke English as their primary language, 4% a language or dialect spoken in China (including Mandarin, Cantonese, etc.), 2% Spanish, and 4% a language other than those listed above, including Russian, Tagalog, Amharic, Somali, Arabic, Portuguese, Vietnamese, or French.

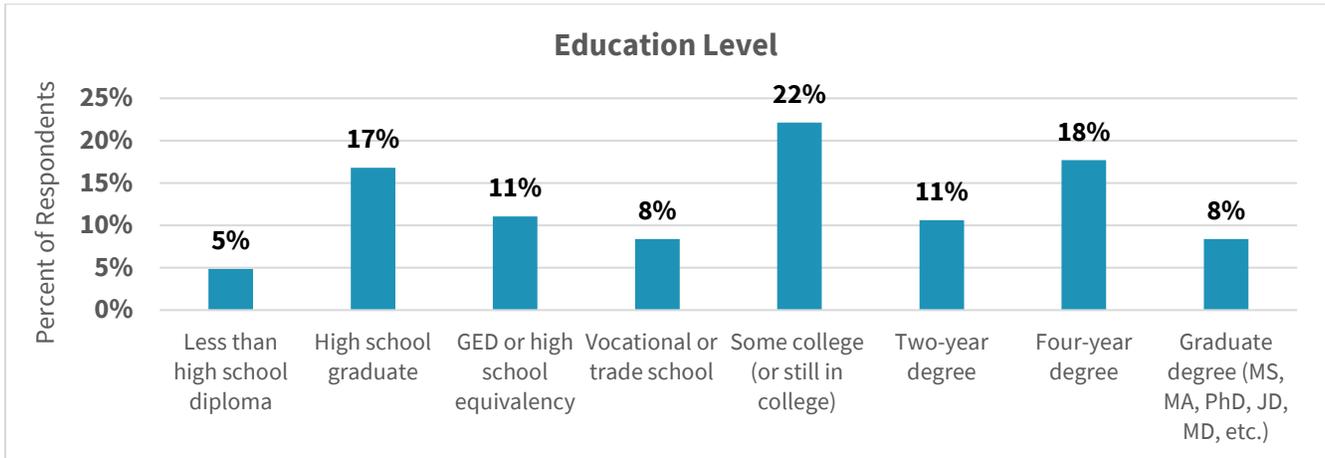
Figure 16. SG Survey Respondents – Primary Language



Education Level

Most respondents (59%) have some higher education, either having attended or still attending college (22%), or having a two-year (11%), four-year (18%), or graduate degree (8%). **Seventeen percent** of respondents finished their education with a high school diploma, 11% a GED or high school equivalency, and 5% less than a high school education.

Figure 17. SG Survey Respondents – Education Level

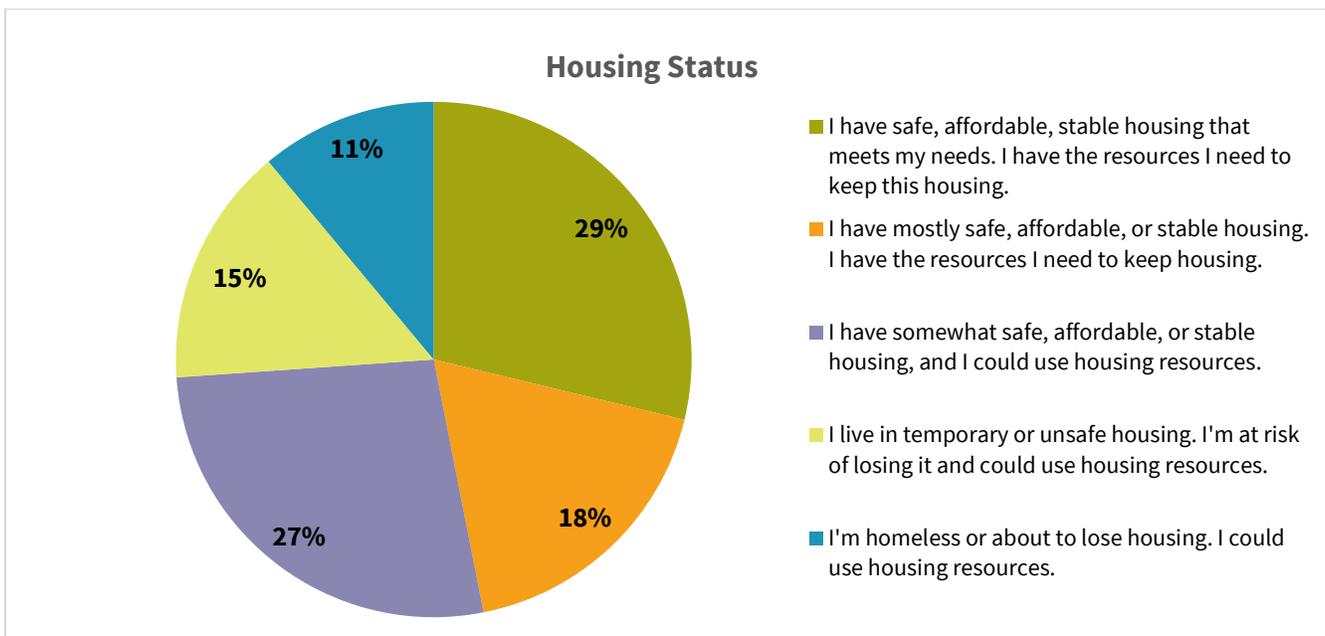


Housing

Housing Status

The largest group of survey respondents (29%) report having safe, affordable housing that meets their needs as well as the resources to keep that housing. Many others report somewhat safe, affordable, or stable housing but need resources to maintain it (27%). **Fifteen percent** of respondents report being at risk of losing their housing, and 11% report experiencing or being on the verge of homelessness.

Figure 18. SG Survey Respondents – Housing Status

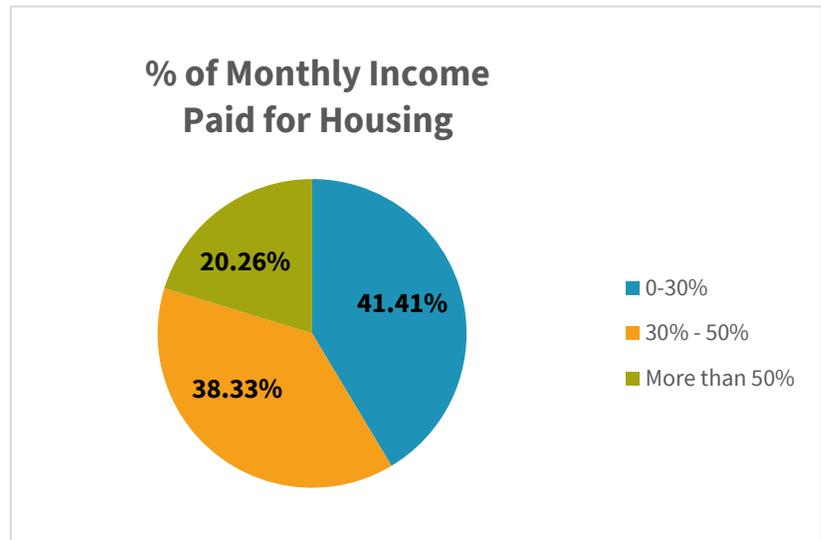


Cost-burdened Households

HUD defines cost-burdened families as those “who pay more than **30%** of their income for housing.” Cost-burdened households may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care. Additionally, HUD defines severe rent burden as paying more than **50%** of one's income on rent.

Most survey respondents (**59%**) spend more than **30%** of their monthly income on housing, while **20%** pay more than **50%**, indicating a high-cost burden among this survey population.

Figure 19. SG Survey Respondents – Cost-burdened Households

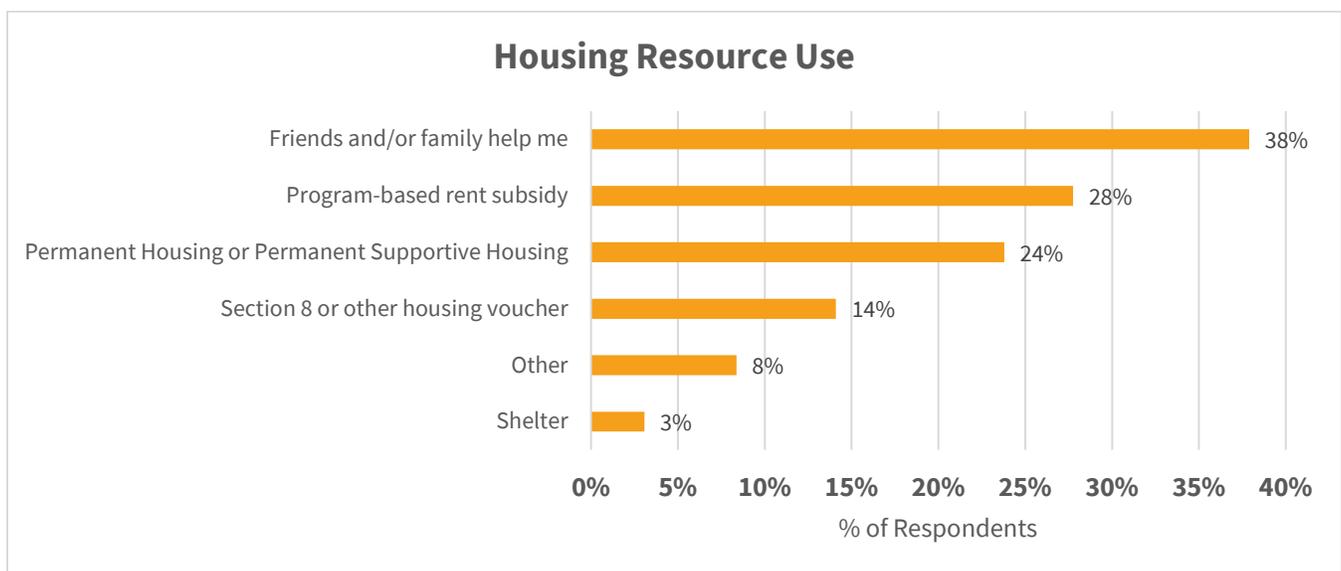


Housing Resources

To address this cost burden, households may rely on housing resources to close gaps and keep stable housing. Programs such as Section 8²⁹ or Solid Ground’s permanent housing and rental subsidies play a vital role in maintaining housing stability in our community. **Ninety-two percent** of survey respondents used a housing resource in the last year. More specifically, **24%** used Permanent Housing or Permanent Supportive Housing, **28%** relied on a program-based rent subsidy, and **14%** used Section 8 or another housing voucher.

An informal social safety net can be a source of stability for residents in our community. Survey respondents most often report turning to friends and family in times of need (**38%**). **Three percent** report staying at a shelter at some time during the last 12 months.

Figure 20. SG Survey Respondents – Housing Resource Use



²⁹ Section 8 is a housing choice voucher program. It’s the federal government’s major program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market.

What do we need to know about housing?

When asked, “What do you want us to know about your current housing situation?”, 148 of 227 survey respondents answered. The top themes focus on:

Housing Type

Respondents discuss their current housing situation, either living in temporary or transitional housing, couch surfing, experiencing homelessness, or having general housing concerns.

Needed Resources

Respondents often express the need for more resources to get housing, cover the costs of basic needs, or address health or mental health issues. They also expressed a desire for a program that would help residents work toward homeownership.

Cost of Housing

The rising cost of housing is a key concern for respondents. They express being unable to find housing that meets their needs due to cost or being priced out of current housing.

Key Quotes

“I am a single mom with three children, including one child with special needs. I cannot work full time because of [my] special needs child. I’m in desperate need of affordable, adequate housing for me and my children.”

“I need rental assistance. I am very poor, and I want to work more, but I don't want to risk losing my benefits. If I knew my rent was covered, I would be willing to pursue work more freely.”

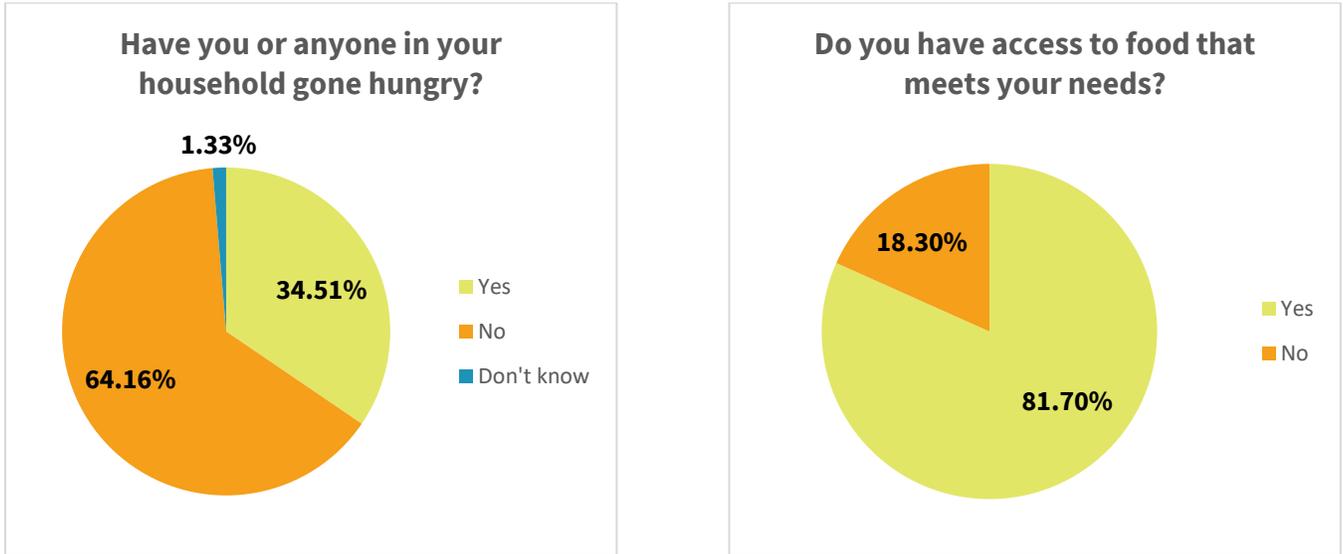
“Notified my rent is increasing from \$550 to \$1,343 in 45 days. ... This will put me on the streets again so have been contacting any/everyone to try and get help. I have rented here for more than 10 years and have a great history as a tenant ... but since I don't make enough (\$1,397 a month SSDI), they won't consider me for a new place. As it stands, I will have nowhere to go come July 1st.”

Food and Nutrition

Nutrition

Access to quality food and nutrition is another integral part of day-to-day stability. **Thirty-one percent** of respondents say that someone in their household went hungry in the last 12 months, and **18%** say they didn't have access to enough food to meet their needs.

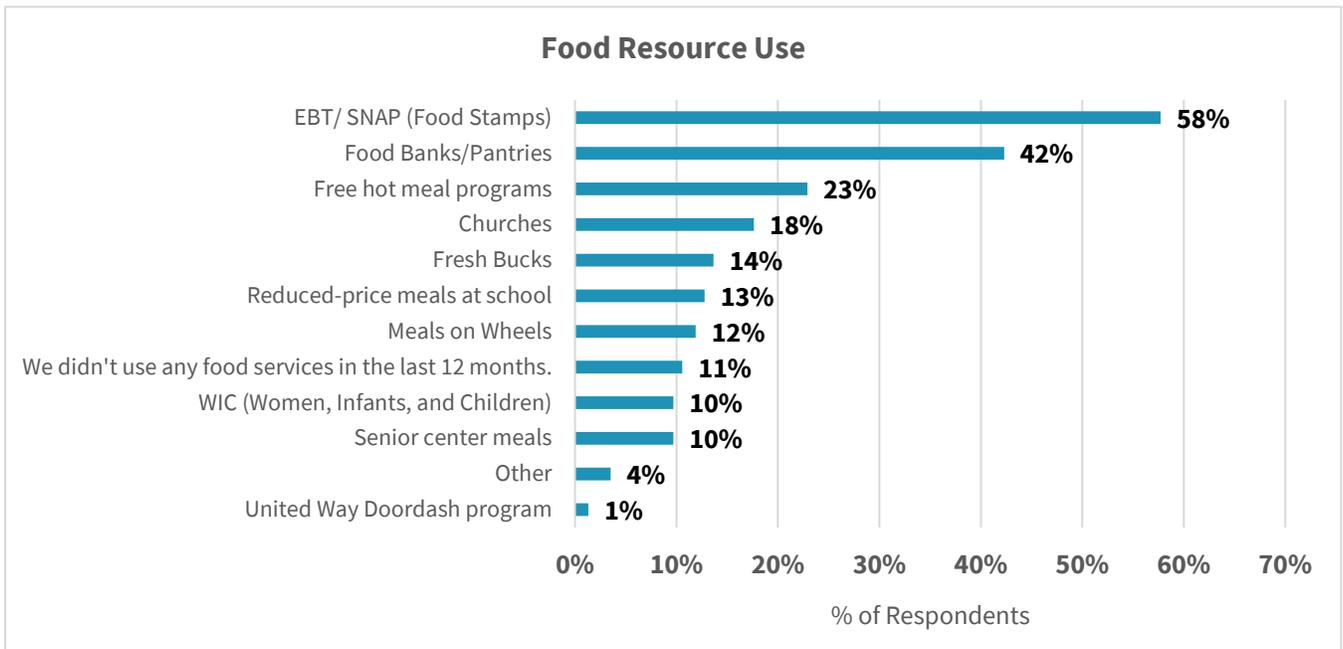
Figure 21. SG Survey Respondents – Hunger and Food Access



Food Services

From a list of common food services available in our community, respondents were asked to choose which ones they accessed during the last 12 months. The most often reported were EBT/SNAP (58%) benefits, food banks or pantries (42%), and free hot meal programs (23%). Only 11% of respondents didn't use any food resources. Figure 22 shows a complete list of food resources and frequency of use.

Figure 22. SG Survey Respondents – Food Resource Use



Food Accessibility Barriers

Of 227 CNA respondents, 35 answered the question, “What prevents you from having the food you need?” The top themes focused on the following:

Cost

Most report the cost of food as the main barrier preventing them from having the food they need. Also, EBT/Food Stamps do not do enough to close the gap, and dietary restrictions contribute to the cost of needed food.

Transportation

Unreliable transportation is a barrier. This includes transportation to grocery stores, food banks, and other food resources.

Lack of Cooking Space Due to Homelessness

For those experiencing homelessness, the lack of a safe, dedicated place to store, prep, and cook food is a barrier, including for those living out of a vehicle.

Quality of Food

The quality of food available to respondents is a barrier; food banks either don't have quality food or run out of food before they arrive. Others discuss only having food accessible at gas stations. And finally, dietary restrictions play a part in access to quality food.

Accessibility of food resources

Finally, respondents mention not having the time or ability to wait in line at food banks, that food banks are too far away, or that it takes too long to apply for food benefits.

Key Quotes

“Food banks and SNAP benefits do not provide enough for my household. My son has sensory issues that limit his diet, and our funds do not go far enough for both of us to have adequate food. In the past three months, each of us has lost close to 20 pounds, without trying, due to inflation of prices and the limitations I addressed above.”

“Bad shelter food, no place to cook or store healthier foods; we could stretch our food stamps more and eat better if we could cook and refrigerate.”

“Money, I do my best, but I find that eating only ramen is sometimes the only choice.”

Health

Health and Mental Health Status

When asked to self-report current health status, **16%** indicated Excellent, **42%** Good, **29%** Fair, and **13%** Poor. Respondents were also asked to describe their mental health. The majority reported Excellent (**22%**) or Good (**37%**), and **14%** reported poor mental health.

Figure 23. SG Survey Respondents – Self-Reported Health Status

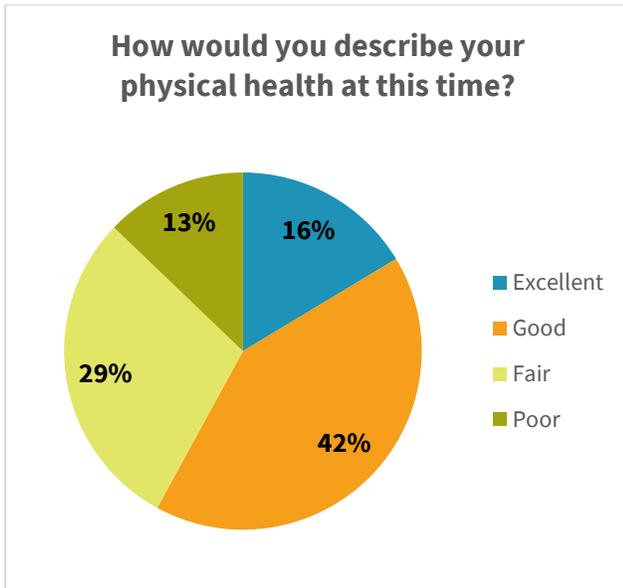
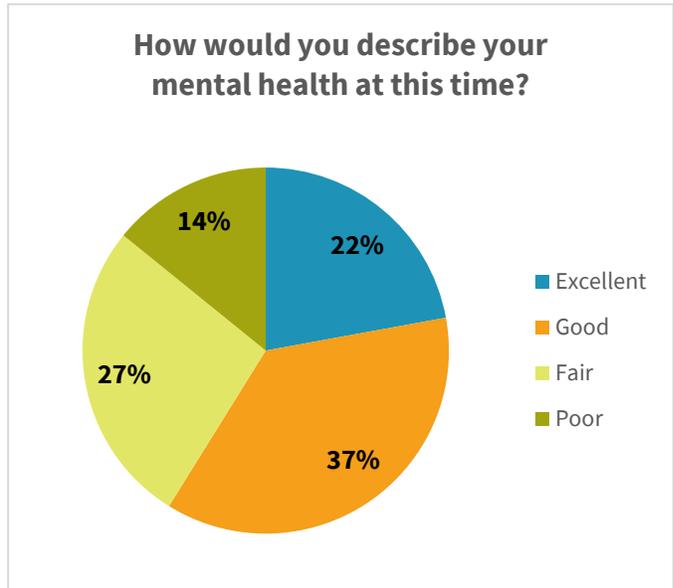


Figure 24. SG Survey Respondents – Self-Reported Mental Health Status



Barriers to Care

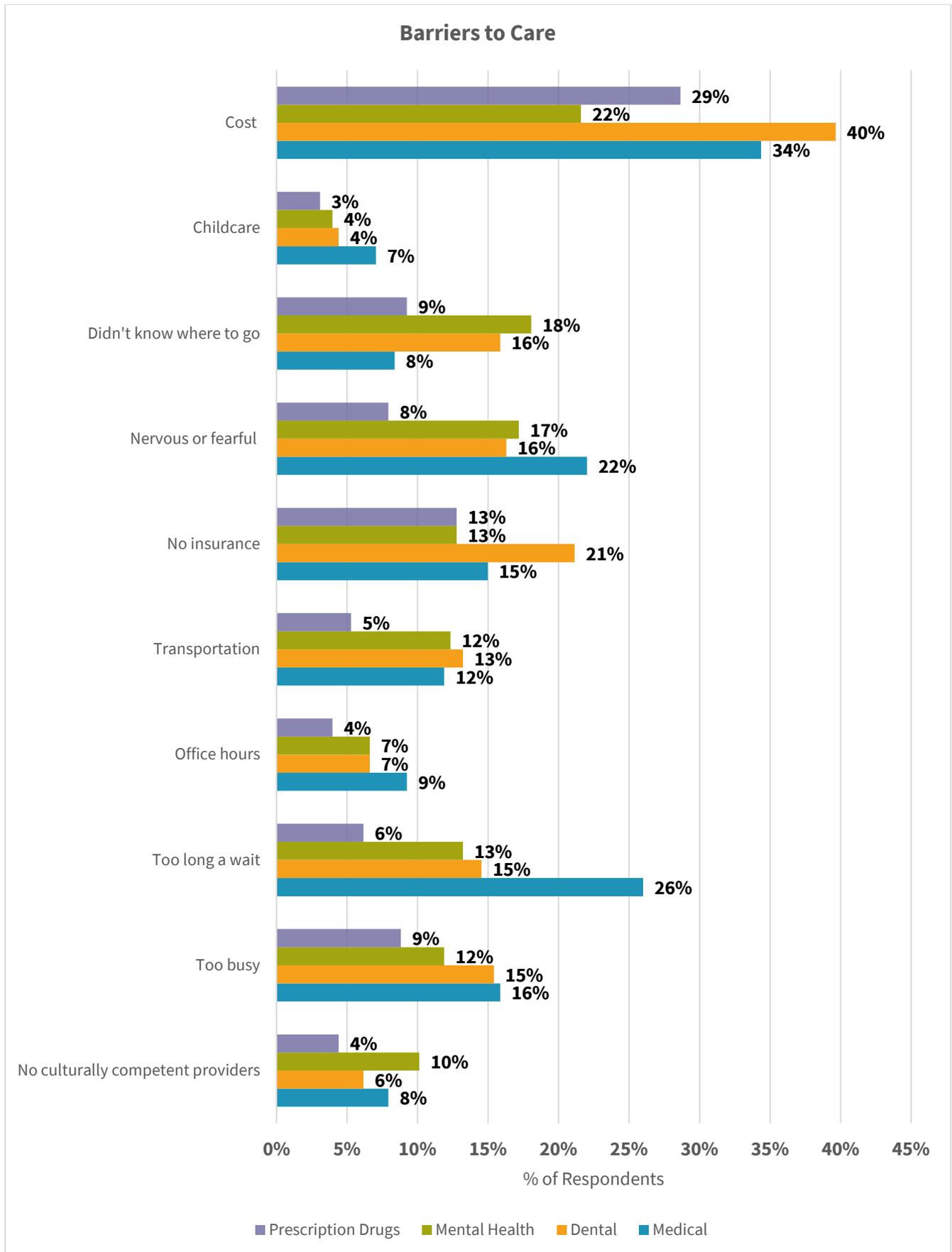
Respondents were asked to choose from a list of common barriers people face when accessing medical care, dental care, mental health services, or prescription drugs. Respondents could choose more than one barrier for each category, allowing us to see the frequency of these barriers within these four health care domains.

Cost is the most-frequently reported barrier across all four domains: 34% medical, 40% dental, 22% mental health, and 29% prescription care.

- ▶ For medical care, the time it takes to get an appointment (**26%**) and being nervous or fearful of the experience were (**22%**) were the most reported barriers.
- ▶ For dental care, the lack of insurance is the second-most reported barrier (**21%**).
- ▶ For mental health care, the second- and third-most reported barriers were not knowing where to go for help (**18%**) and being nervous or fearful of the experience (**17%**).
- ▶ For prescription drugs, after cost, not having insurance is the second-most reported barrier (**13%**).

Figure 25 on the next page shows further detail on barriers across these service areas.

Figure 25. SG Survey Respondents – Barriers to Prescription Drugs and Medical, Dental, and Mental Health Care



Employment and Income

The largest percentage of survey respondents (30%) earned less than \$10,000 in the last year. For the employed, 43% worked one job and 17% worked two or more jobs. **Forty percent** were unemployed, which may include those who are retired.³⁰

For those working, when asked about common categories to describe their current employment, 26% report that either their current job doesn't pay enough for their experience/skill level or that they've taken a job just to get by. **Twenty percent** report that they weren't working the number of hours they'd prefer.

Figure 26. SG Survey Respondents – Jobs Worked

How many jobs are you currently working?

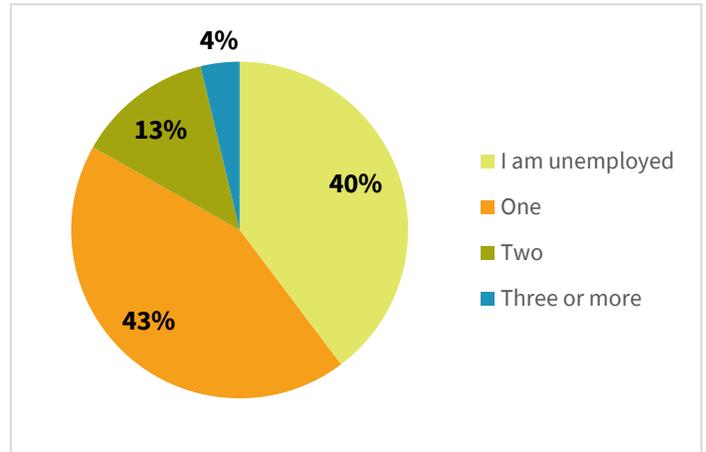
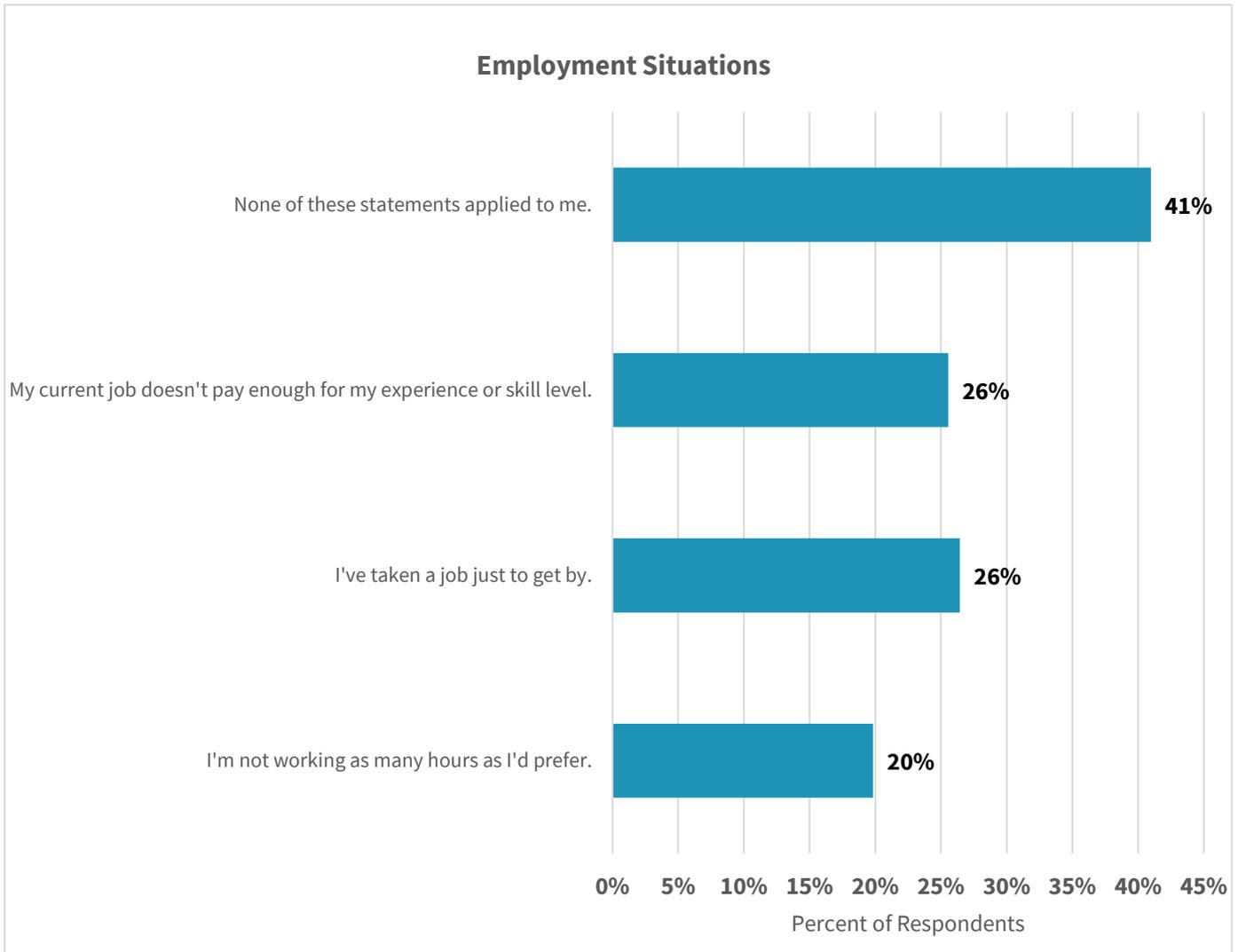


Figure 27. SG Survey Respondents – Employment Situations

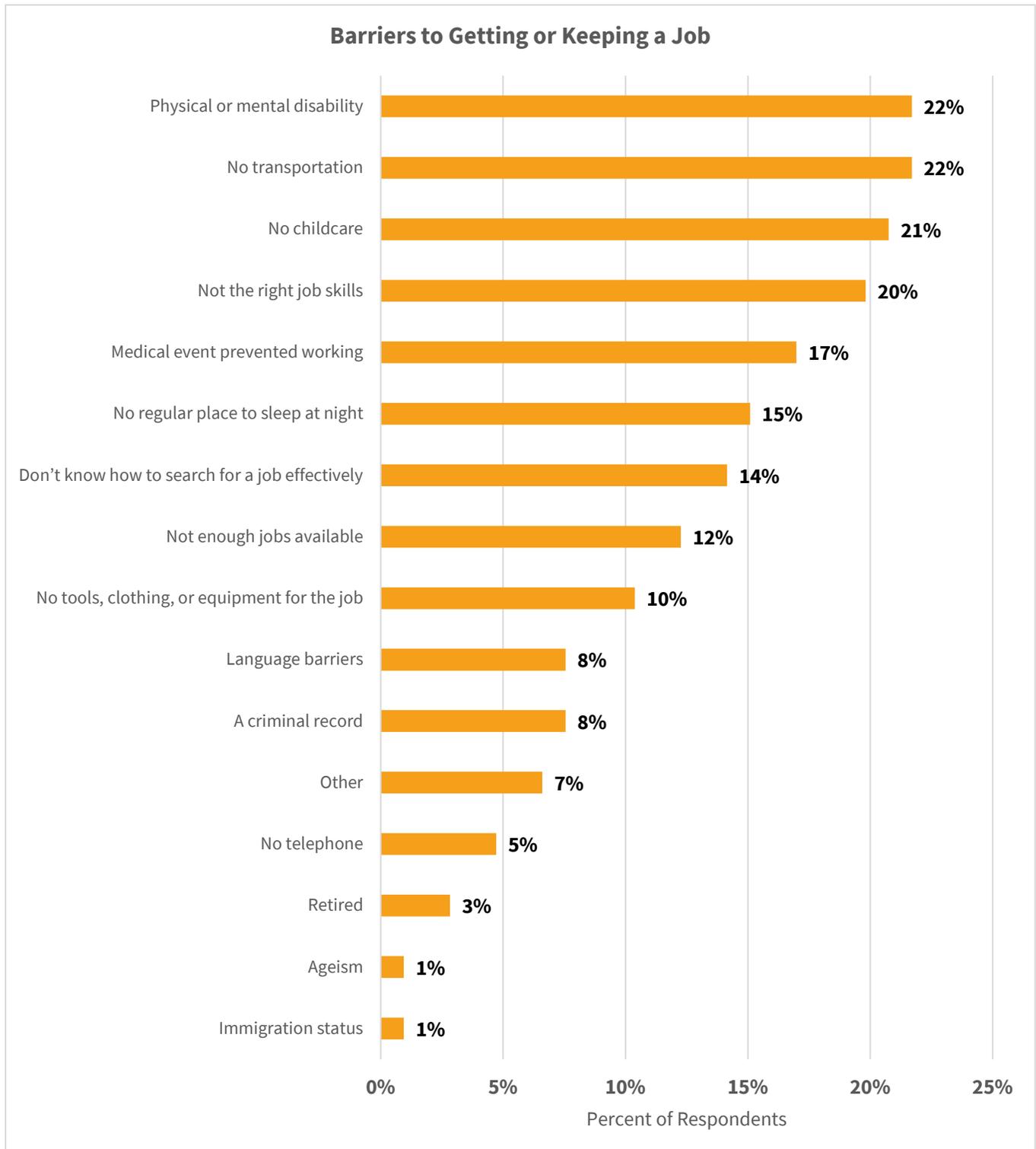


³⁰ This survey did not list retirement as an employment status; future versions of the survey will do so.

Employment Barriers

Getting or keeping a good job was hard for **51%** of respondents (or someone in their home) during the past 12 months. For those seeking work, the most-often reported employment barriers were a physical or mental disability (**22%**), lack of transportation (**22%**), no childcare (**21%**), and not having the right job skills (**20%**). Figure 28 shows further detail on barriers faced by job seekers in this population.

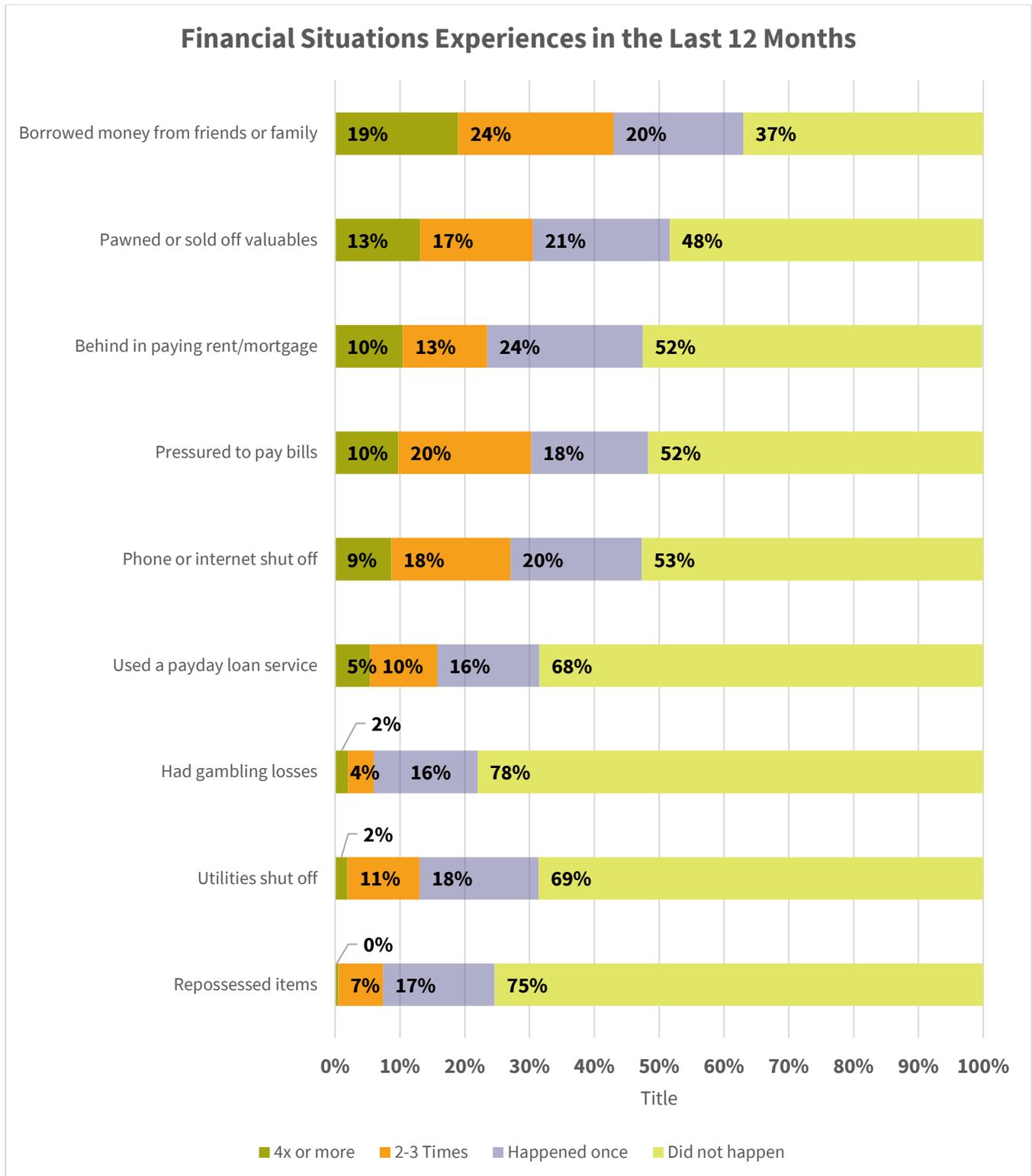
Figure 28. SG Survey Respondents – Barriers to Getting or Keeping a Job



Financial Situations

When looking at situations which may cause financial hardship or stress, respondents report borrowing money from friends or family (63%), pawning or selling off valuables to make ends meet (51%), and being pressured to pay bills (48%) as the situations most frequently experienced in the last 12 months.

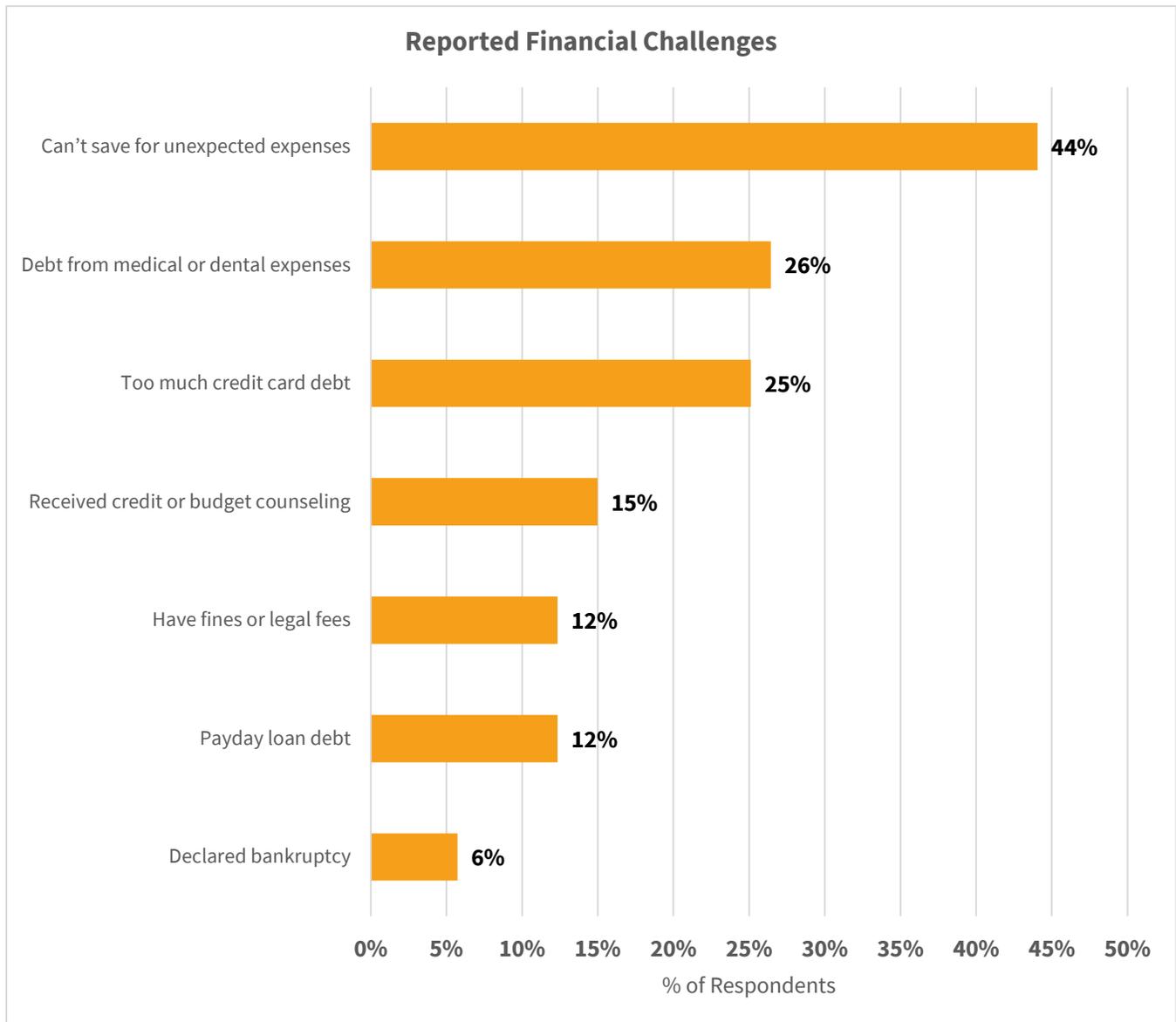
Figure 29. SG Survey Respondents – Financial Situations Experienced in the Last 12 Months



Financial Challenges

The situations detailed in Figure 29 can lead a person to take on debt to make ends meet. Figure 30 lists the reported reasons for going into debt and challenges respondents face.

Figure 30. SG Survey Respondents – Financial Challenges

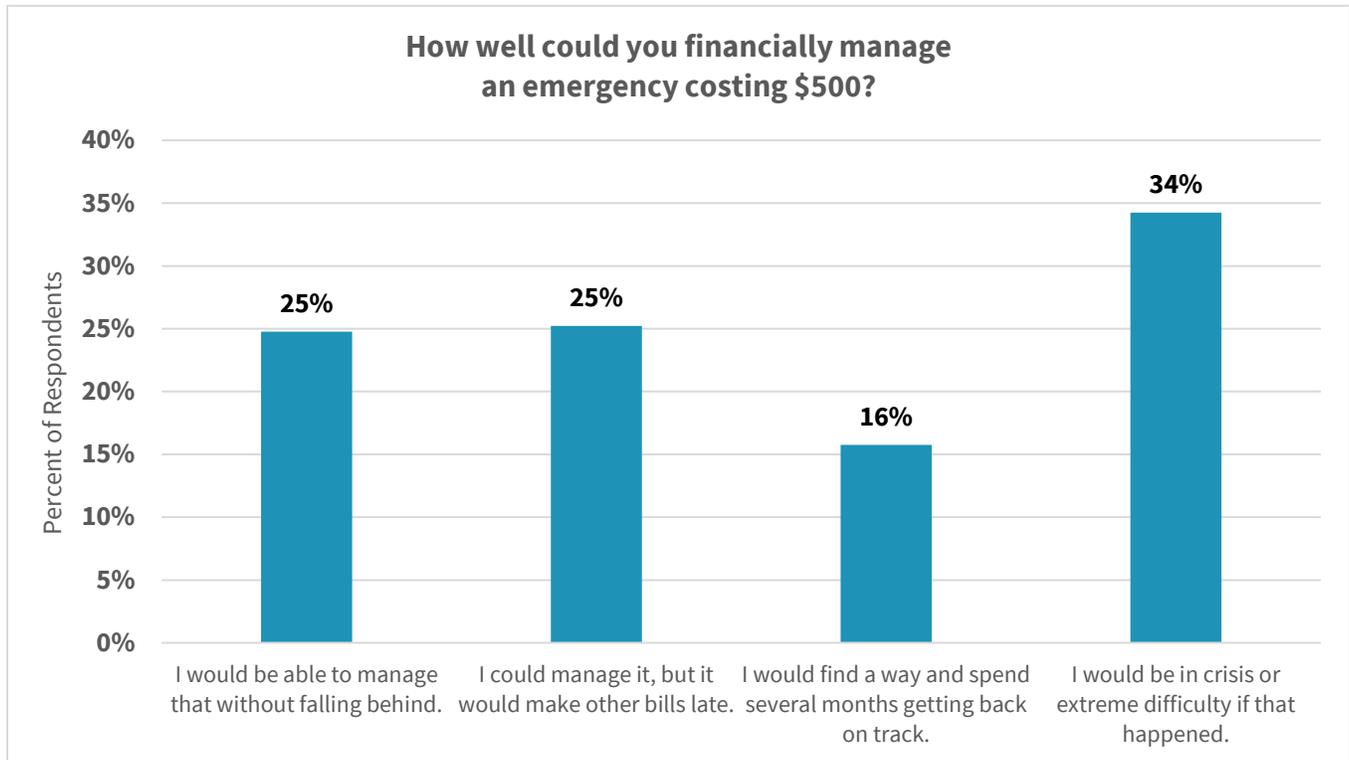


Unexpected Expenses

The inability to save for an unexpected expense can have huge implications for financial stability. As seen in Figure 30, **44%** of survey respondents report this as a financial challenge currently facing their household.

To gain further insight into this challenge, we asked: “How well could you financially manage an emergency costing \$500?” A little over one third (**34%**) say that a financial emergency of this nature would put them in crisis or extreme difficulty. **Forty-one percent** say that while they could manage this, for some it would make other bills late – and it would take them several months to get back on track.

Figure 31. SG Survey Respondents – Financial Emergency



What do we need to know about employment and income?

We asked, “What do you want us to know about employment and income in our community?” The top themes of the 118 out of 227 respondents focused on the following:

Living Wage

Respondents often report that the job they have doesn’t pay enough to allow them to keep housing and meet other basic needs. Even though they may be working full time or multiple jobs, they make just enough to get by, if that. There were frequent comments about wages not keeping up with inflation, as well as being priced out of the area.

Current Employment

Respondents are looking for work to pay enough for them to thrive rather than survive, part-time work for seniors, or work that accommodates people with disabilities.

Job Readiness

Respondents need help searching for jobs and writing resumes and have concerns about employability due to a disability or gaps in work history due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Disability

Respondents report not working due to a disability or being unable to find steady work that can accommodate their disability.

Key Quotes

“I have a good job, but the bills are going up faster than my pay. I might need to get a second job just to keep up with the rent increases.”

“For regular people, there are rarely any living wage jobs one can find that will allow you to make enough to afford housing, etc. Washington is basically pushing low-moderate and low-income residents out onto the streets or out of the state completely with the out-of-control cost of homes and rentals.”

“Wages need to rise to meet the basic cost of living here ... and not in poverty! It's ridiculous! I'm working three jobs and am still broke and stressed about living paycheck to paycheck. If my car breaks down, God forbid, we are screwed, because I also share transportation, my car, with my boyfriend. We are either working together or alternating our time schedules to make things work. It's still not working!”

Services

Survey respondents rated both the importance and the availability of the following 15 categories of services to their own household:³¹

- ▶ Access to living-wage jobs/job skills/education
- ▶ Affordable childcare
- ▶ Affordable dental care
- ▶ Affordable medical care
- ▶ Basic Education/English (ESL)/GED
- ▶ Domestic violence shelter and/or counseling services
- ▶ Drug/alcohol treatment and counseling
- ▶ Food (help getting enough food)
- ▶ Help with heating and electric bills
- ▶ Help with life skills (such as budgeting, preparing meals, time management, etc.)
- ▶ Housing help (affordable housing/rental assistance/eviction prevention)
- ▶ Legal help
- ▶ Mental health services or family counseling
- ▶ Technology access (cellphone/laptop/internet/tablet)
- ▶ Transportation

³¹ The importance scale ranged from 1 for “not important” to 4 for “extremely important.” The availability scale ranged from 1 for “extremely easy to access” to 4 for “very hard to access.” Respondents could also rate items as “Don’t know,” which did not receive a score.

Service Importance

The following services ranked “Extremely Important” to households:

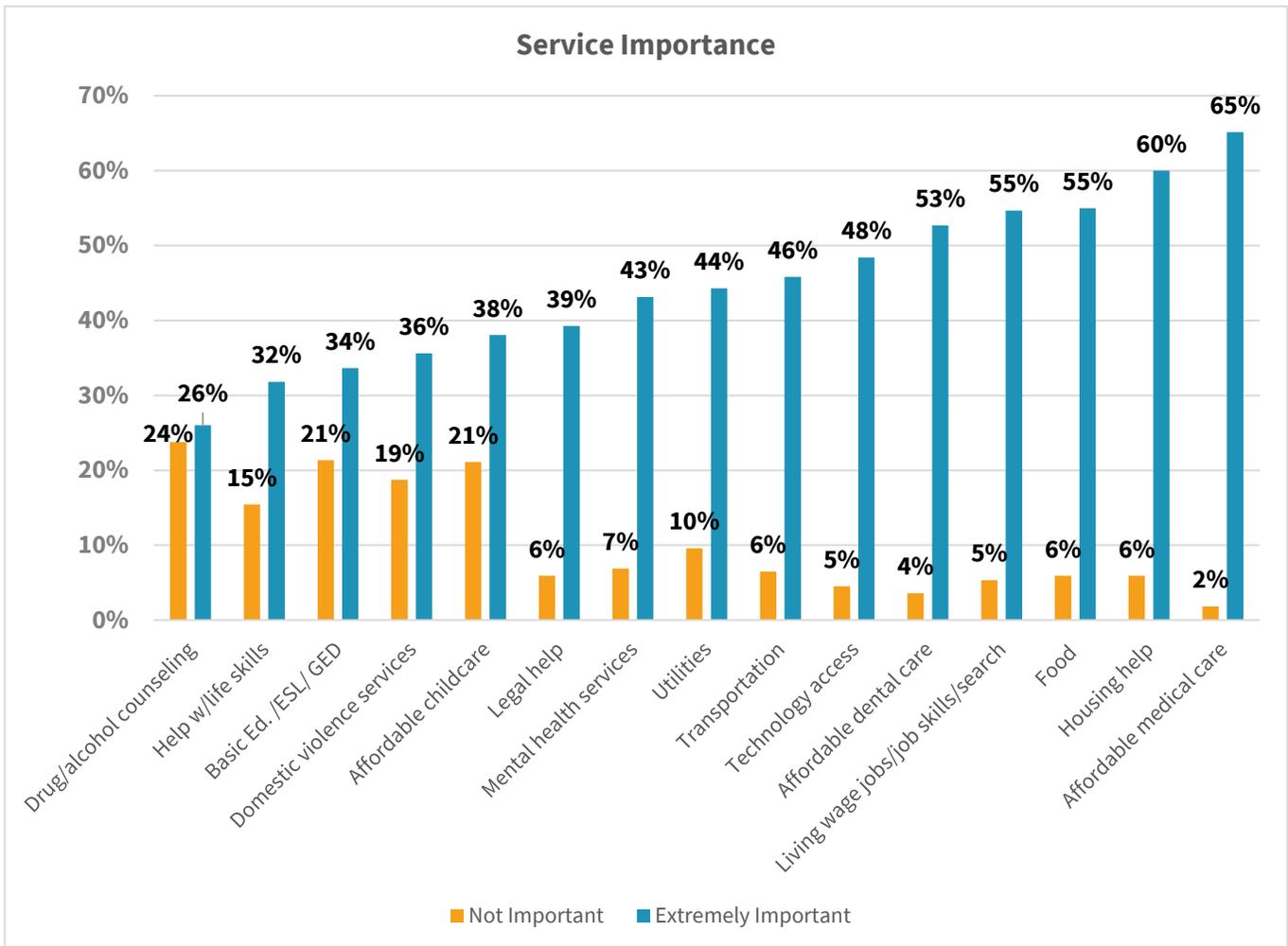
- ▶ 65%: Affordable medical care
- ▶ 60%: Housing help
- ▶ 55%: Food access
- ▶ 55%: Living wage jobs
- ▶ 53%: Affordable dental care

These services ranked “Least Important” to households:

- ▶ 24%: Drug/alcohol treatment and counseling
- ▶ 21%: Basic education/ESL/GED
- ▶ 21%: Affordable childcare

Figure 32 shows the full respondent rankings of service importance.

Figure 32. SG Survey Respondents – Service Importance



Service Availability

“Extremely Easy to Access” services include:

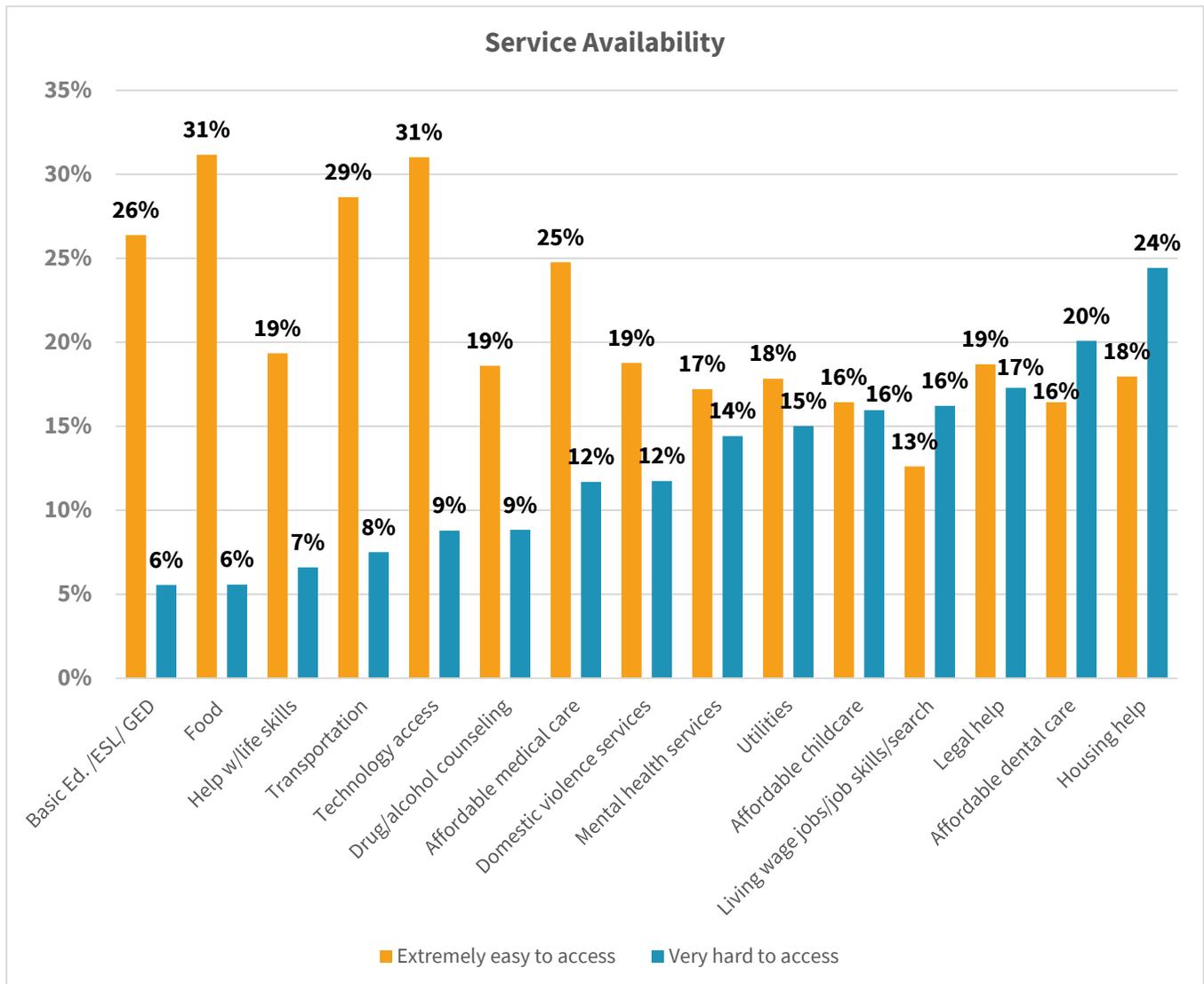
- ▶ 31%: Food assistance
- ▶ 31%: Technology help
- ▶ 29%: Transportation

“Very Hard to Access” services include:

- ▶ 24%: Housing help
- ▶ 20%: Affordable dental care
- ▶ 17%: Legal help

Figure 33 shows the full detail of service availability respondent rankings.

Figure 33. SG Survey Respondents – Service Availability



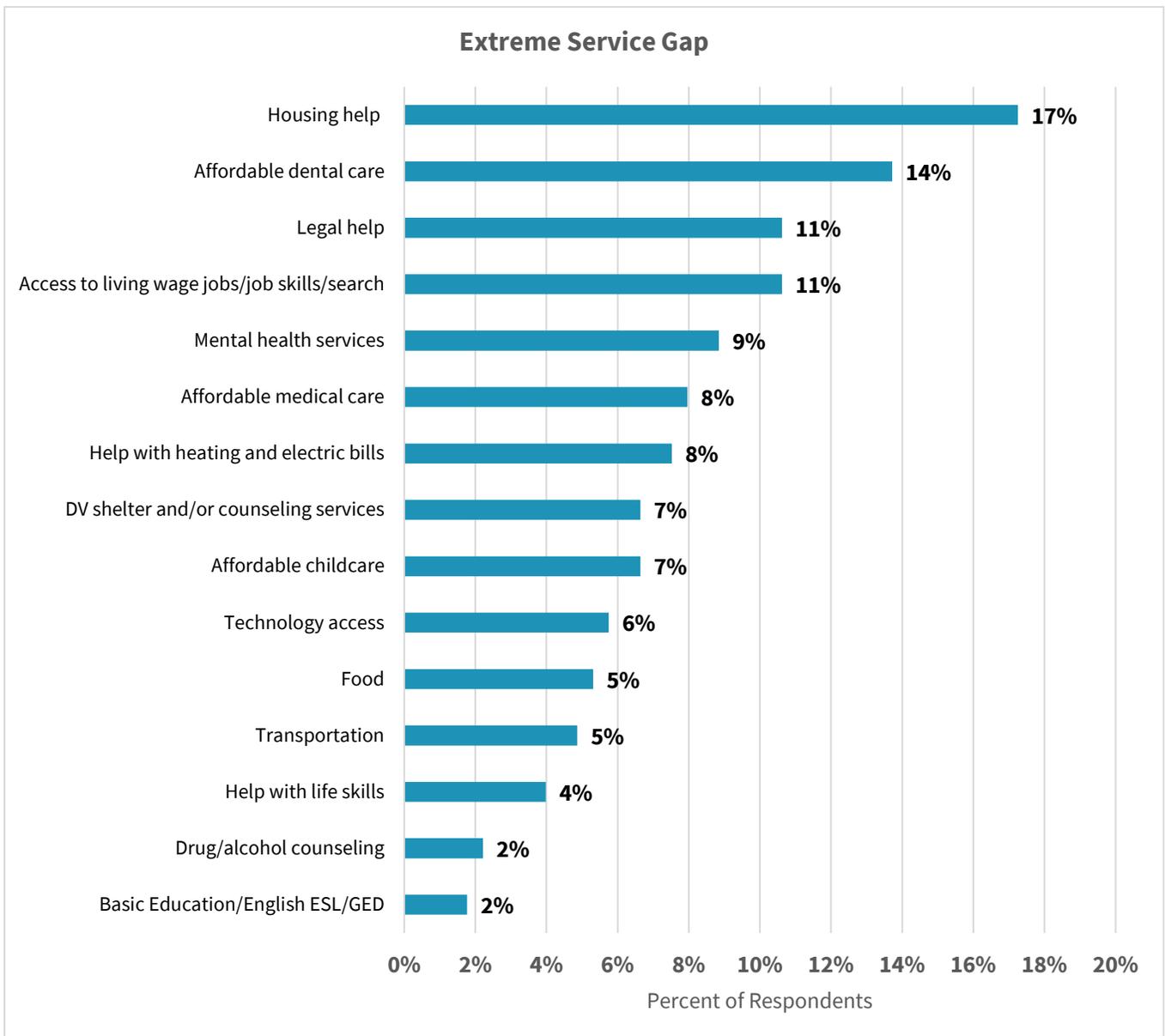
Service Gaps

From an individual household’s perspective, if a social or health service is both “extremely important” to their household and “very hard to get,” there’s a perceived extreme service gap for that service. Figure 34 presents the proportion of survey respondents who perceive an extreme service gap for each of the 15 services.

Services most often perceived as having an “Extreme Service Gap” are:

- ▶ 17%: Housing help
- ▶ 14%: Affordable dental care
- ▶ 11%: Legal help
- ▶ 11%: Access to living wage jobs

Figure 34. SG Survey Respondents – Extreme Service Gaps



High Importance and Low Availability

Because survey respondents rate these services on four-point scales, another way to analyze this is to calculate the average importance and availability scores for each service. This forms the basis of an “importance-availability” coordinate rating system. From there, we can plot the average importance and availability ratings on a graph as seen in Figure 35.

The lines making up the “crosshairs” of the graph represent the average importance and average availability scores for each group of survey respondents³² and divide the importance-availability chart into quadrants that rate the services as follows:

Quadrant 1: Below average in importance and above average in availability

Quadrant 2: Above average in importance and availability

Quadrant 3: Below average in importance and availability

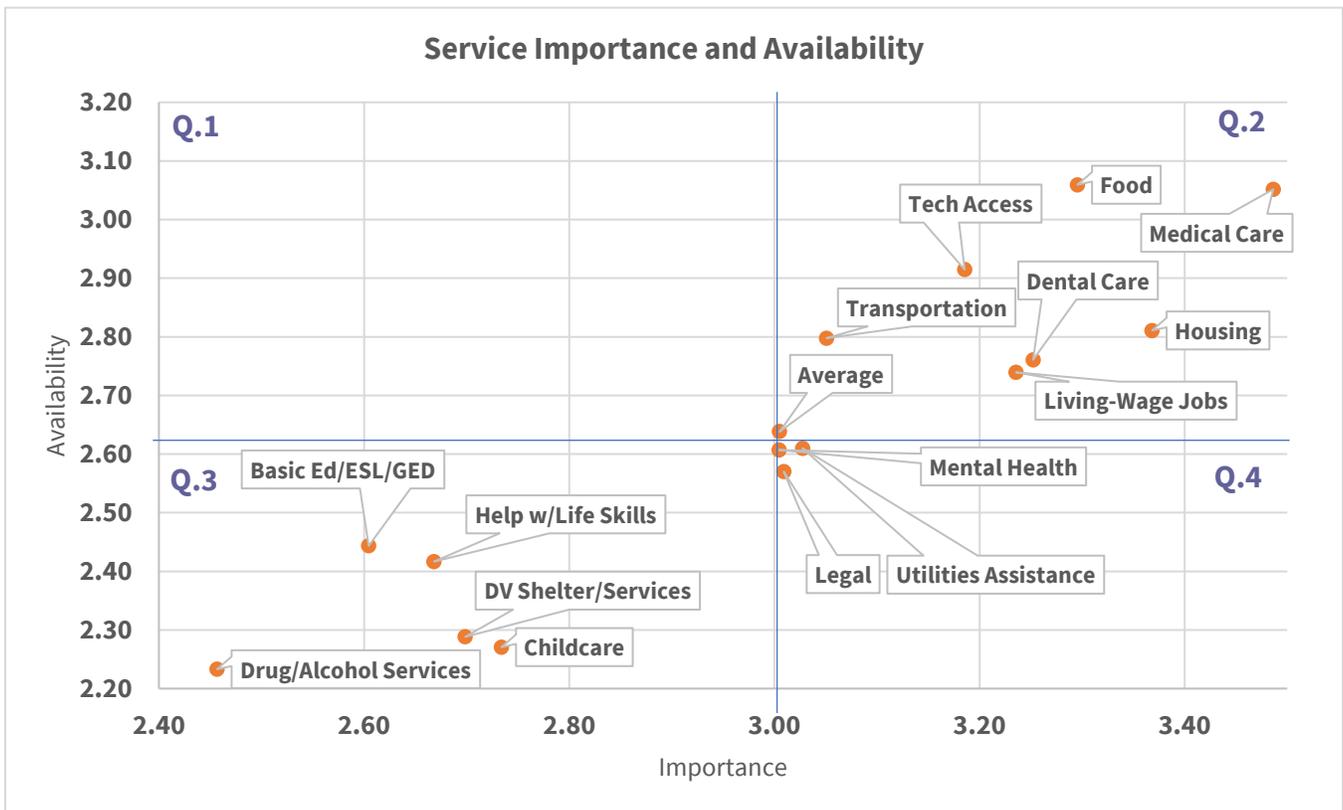
Quadrant 4: Above average in importance and below average in availability

Services in Quadrant 4 are, on average, important to survey respondents yet hard for them to access.

These include:

- ▶ Help with heating and electric bills
- ▶ Legal help
- ▶ Mental health services or family counseling (just on the border)

Figure 35. SG Survey Respondents – Service Importance and Availability



³² Technical note about these figures: The quadrants for the “importance-availability” chart are of distinct size because the “crosshairs” that identify the quadrants are positioned at the average importance and availability scores for survey respondents.