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DC Poverty Demographics

The District has seen job growth, a boom in the real estate market, and improvement of overall economic conditions over the past decade. Yet poverty rates continue to be persistently high in DC. Some 109,000 DC residents — or almost one in five — lived below poverty in 2012 according to Census data. For a family of three, that means living on less than \$19,090. One in ten residents lived in extreme poverty, or below half of the poverty line.

Poverty levels in the District can be broken down by demographics such as age, race/ethnicity, and work status. These distinctions reveal the variations in poverty among different groups of DC residents. (See **Table 1** on the following page.) For example:

- Children under the age of 18 are much more likely to live below the poverty level than adults — 27 percent vs. 17 percent.
- Just over 7 percent of white, non-Hispanic, District residents lived below poverty, compared with 26 percent of Black District residents and 22 percent of Hispanic residents.
- DC has an extremely high rate of poverty among female-headed households — 32 percent.
- DC residents with low levels of educational attainment are more likely to be poor than their counterparts with high school or college degrees. Just over five percent of residents with a bachelor's degree or higher lived below the poverty level, compared to nearly 35 percent of residents who did not have a high school diploma or equivalent.

**Table 1
DC Poverty Demographics (2012)**

Demographic	Population Size	Less than 50% Federal Poverty Level	Less than 100% Federal Poverty Level	Less than 125% Federal Poverty Level
District-wide	598,151	10.4%	18.2%	22.3%
Age				
Children under 18	107,877	15.8%	26.5%	32.5%
Adults 18 to 64 years	420,466	10.0%	17.1%	20.6%
Adults 65 years and older	69,808	3.9%	11.9%	17.1%
Race/Ethnicity				
Black or African American	298,073	14.5%	25.7%	31.8%
White (non-Hispanic)	209,392	5.2%	7.4%	8.3%
Hispanic/Latino	61,358	10.2%	22.1%	29.3%
Living Arrangement				
Family households	378,177	9.4%	17.2%	21.6%
Married couple	193,597	2.2%	5.2%	6.8%
Female household/no husband present	152,497	18.5%	31.9%	39.9%
Other living arrangement	219,974	12.0%	19.9%	23.6%
Educational Attainment				
<i>Total population 25 years and over</i>	431,807	6.9%	13.3%	16.7%
Less than high-school degree	47,558	16.8%	34.5%	43.7%
High school degree (or equivalent)	78,103	10.2%	22.8%	29.0%
Some college or associate's degree	73,972	8.4%	15.6%	20.3%
Bachelor's degree or higher	232,174	3.3%	5.1%	5.9%
Disability Status				
With any disability	69,158	16.2%	32.9%	40.1%
Without disability	527,064	9.6%	16.3%	20.1%
Work Status				
<i>Total population aged 16 to 64</i>	430,906	10.3%	17.4%	21.1%
Worked full-time, year-round	236,177	0.4%	2.0%	3.1%
Worked less than full-time, year-round	100,872	14.4%	25.0%	31.4%
Did not work	93,857	30.8%	48.1%	55.5%
Citizenship Status				
Native	511,112	10.8%	18.8%	22.8%
Foreign born	87,039	7.9%	14.5%	20.0%
Naturalized citizen	35,284	4.3%	9.4%	11.7%

Source: US Census Bureau 2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates