



Poverty in California

Despite California now being the 8th largest economy in the world, California's poor and working people are suffering more than ever. With the increasing cost of housing, electricity, and health care along with the cutting of thousands of jobs, it is becoming harder and harder for people to afford to get by.

The Hard Facts

- In recent years, California has maintained a substantially higher poverty rate than the rest of the nation: 16.1% compared to 12%. Only New York and Washington D.C. possess higher poverty rates once living costs are factored in.
- Poverty in California is higher among women, 16%, than men, 14%, and highest among children, as a staggering 21% of California's children live in poverty.
- In 1969, 12% of poor families had a member who worked full-time. Today, over 34% of poor families in California have a full-time worker and an additional 39% have a part-time worker. Poverty, more than ever, is tied to working people.

Health Care

- Today, there are 6.5 million, or one out of five Californians living without health insurance. Throughout the year, almost 25% of California adults will go without insurance at some point.
- Two thirds of uninsured people in the U.S. are citizens contrary to popular belief.
- California is in the bottom seventh rankings for women without health insurance. With 21% of women uninsured, it has close to the highest percentage uninsured of any state in the U.S.

The High Cost of Living

- In 2008, \$24.01 per hour is the wage determined by the National Low-Income Housing Coalition necessary to rent the average two-bedroom apartment in California. California's minimum wage stands in stark contrast at \$8 an hour.
- The average annual cost for full-time child care for one child aged two to five in California is \$7,485, a cost which represents almost 40% of the poverty threshold for a family of four.

Hunger

- In California, over 5 million people suffer from hunger pains or live in fear of going hungry.
- Food banks in California have had a 59% reduction in pounds of food available from 2002-2007 which means 44.7 million fewer meals are now provided statewide.

Alameda County

- 11% of Alameda County's population lives at or below the federal poverty line while almost 18% of Alameda County residents do not have health insurance all or part of the year.
- To meet their basic needs, a family of four living in Alameda County would require about \$6,400 per month. A minimum wage, full-time worker would earn \$1,280 per month. The majority of workers earning minimum wage are adults.
- In the 2006 Alameda County Community Food Bank study, 47% of client households had to choose between paying their rent and paying for food.
- 35% of all individuals receiving emergency food assistance in Alameda County are children under 18 years of age.

Tulare County

- 21% of people live in poverty in Tulare County, the highest ranking in California's counties.
- 27% of children eligible for school lunch program in Tulare county don't receive it. That's over 17,000 children going hungry each day.



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