

Watauga County

Watauga County has a population of 54,094, an increase of 15.9% over the past decade.

Our communities thrive when we ...



Provide Jobs and Opportunities

There were 1,141 people looking for work compared to 1,247 job openings.

In the past year, the county's unemployment rate has gone from 4.4% to 3.7%.



Ensure Access to Affordable Housing and Health Services

Rent was unaffordable for 71.6% of renters.

10.4% did not have health insurance.

There are 253 residents for every mental health provider.



Address Structural Barriers to Equality

47.8% of residents are low-income (\$48,600 or less for a family of four).

The richest 5% of households have an average income 52 times greater than the poorest fifth and 7 times the typical household.

... make the investments needed to power prosperity for more people and places in our state.

Poverty and Economic Hardship			
	County	State	Year
Percentage of people living in poverty	24.3%	15.4%	2012-2016
Black	39.4%	26.1%	
White	29.8%	11.5%	
Latinx	53.9%	31.5%	
Asian	48.2%	12.9%	
American Indian	56.9%	28.1%	
Child poverty rate	19.5%	21.7%	2016

Healthy Lives and Communities			
	County	State	Year
Percentage of residents without health insurance	10.4%	13.2%	2012-2016
Life expectancy	82 years	78 years	2014-2016
Black	***	75.6 years	
White	82.1 years	78.8 years	
Mental health provider : residents	1 : 253	1 : 464	2017

Jobs and Ability to Afford the Basics			
	County	State	Year
Jobless worker : Job openings	1,141 : 1,247	150,919 : 141,253	Jan. 2018
Unemployment rate	3.7%	4.3%	Dec. 2017
Change in number of people employed since December 2007	4,053 more	422,055 more	2016
Living Income Standard* wage (1 adult, 2 kids)	\$23.99	\$21.95	2016
Hourly median wage	\$13.74	\$16.31	2016
Change in median wage since the recovery began	fell 45 cents	fell 15 cents	2009, 2016
Median Household Income	\$44,014	\$50,595	2016

Educational Attainment			
	County	State	Year
Graduation rate	91.2%	86.5%	2016-2017
Black	***	83.9%	
White	91%	89.3%	
Latinx	95%	80.5%	
Asian	***	93.8%	
American Indian	***	84.3%	
Percentage of adults with Bachelor's degrees	38.9%	29%	2012-2016
Bachelor's degree, men	39.1%	28.2%	
Bachelor's degree, women	38.7%	29.8%	
Median salary, men with at least a Bachelor's	\$40,460	\$57,765	
Median salary, women with at least a Bachelor's	\$31,474	\$38,851	

Access to Affordable Housing			
	County	State	Year
Percentage of people paying more than 30% of income toward rent	71.6%	50.6%	2012-2016
Fair market rent for a two-bedroom unit	\$887	\$821	2017
Two-bedroom housing wage (Number of hours/week a minimum wage worker would need for a two-bedroom unit)	\$17.06	\$15.79	2017

Work and Income Supports to Avoid Poverty			
	County	State	Year
Percentage of residents receiving SNAP	4.9%	13.5%	Dec. 2017
Number of people eligible for state Earned Income Tax Credit**	2,913	1,204,039	2013

* The Living Income Standard is a measure of what a family needs in order to cover the basic expenses. ** Lawmakers allowed the state EITC to expire in 2013. *** Insufficient data