



BTC Brief

BUDGET & TAX CENTER

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ECONOMIC SNAPSHOT: NORTH CAROLINA

The Budget and Tax Center's Economic Snapshots provide a look at how well counties in North Carolina are faring across key indicators of economic well-being and opportunity.

The state has a population of 10,054,498.¹

UNEMPLOYMENT²

- The state's unemployment rate was 5.9% in January 2015, down from 7% in January 2014.
- There are 83,593 more employed persons in NC today than there were in 2007 but still a lower level of employment given population growth.
- 4,636,367 workers were a part of the state's labor force in January 2015. This is a -0.1% change since January 2014.

POVERTY

- 17.8% of the state's residents (1,711,331 people) lived in poverty in 2013; the state poverty rate was 18%.³
- 39.2% of the state's residents were low-income on average from 2011 to 2013, meaning their incomes were less than twice the federal poverty level (\$46,100 for a family of four in 2013).⁴

WAGES & INCOME

- The state's hourly median wage was \$15.63 in 2015 and 96.4% of the living income standard for the state.⁵
- Median household income in the state was \$45,195.⁶
- The richest 5% of the state's households had an average income that was 25.8 times greater than that of the poorest fifth of households and 3.4 times greater than that of the middle fifth of households.⁷

MEDIA CONTACT:

TAZRA MITCHELL

919/861-1451

tazra@ncjustice.org

Budget & Tax Center

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north carolina

JUSTICE CENTER

P.O. Box 28068

Raleigh, NC 27611-8068

www.ncjustice.org

HOUSING⁸

- 50% of renters in NC were unable to afford the fair market rent for a 2 bedroom housing unit.
- The minimum wage falls far short of what's needed to afford the fair market rent for a 2-bedroom housing unit in this county—the housing wage needed is 198.3% of the minimum wage.

HEALTH

- 16.6% of all North Carolinians on average from 2011 to 2013.⁹
- The life expectancy rate for an African-American child born in NC is 75.9 whereas the rate is 78.9 for a white child. The average life expectancy for all children born in NC is 78.3.¹⁰
- There are 7.6 primary care physicians per 10,000 people on average in North Carolina.¹¹

EDUCATION

- The 4-year cohort graduation rate in the 2013-2014 school year for NC was 83.9%.¹²
- The 4-year cohort graduation rate in 2013-2014 for African-Americans in this county was 79.9% compared to 77.4% for Hispanics and 87.1% for whites.¹³
- 27.3% of adults in NC had a Bachelor's degree or higher on average from 2009 to 2013.¹⁴

SUPPORTS FOR WORKING FAMILIES

- 923,151 of the state's residents received assistance from the food and nutrition (or food stamp) program in December 2007 when the Great Recession began. By December 2013, the number increased by 80.0% to 1,661,672 and the share of residents receiving assistance reached 16.5%.¹⁵
- In 2013, 927,029 tax filers in the state claimed the state Earned Income Tax Credit, which expired that year and was a tax credit that goes to people that work but earn low wages. The benefits totaled \$100,761,405—these were dollars that supported local businesses and helped workers make ends meet, allowing them to keep more of what they earned and support their children.¹⁶
- 1,815,651 people in the county were eligible for Medicaid in December 2014, an increase of 45.6% since December 2007.¹⁷ Estimates suggest that nearly 500,000 North Carolinians would benefit from Medicaid Expansion.¹⁸

For a full list of data notes and sources visit www.ncjustice.org/countydata