

## COUNTY WAGE PROFILE: Forsyth County

*These County Profiles provide a look at how workers in North Carolina counties are faring in North Carolina's low-wage economy. Forsyth County is a Tier 3 county and has a working-age population of 232,936.<sup>1</sup>*

### POVERTY

21.2 percent of the county's residents (73,689) lived in poverty in 2012; the state poverty rate was 18 percent.<sup>3</sup>

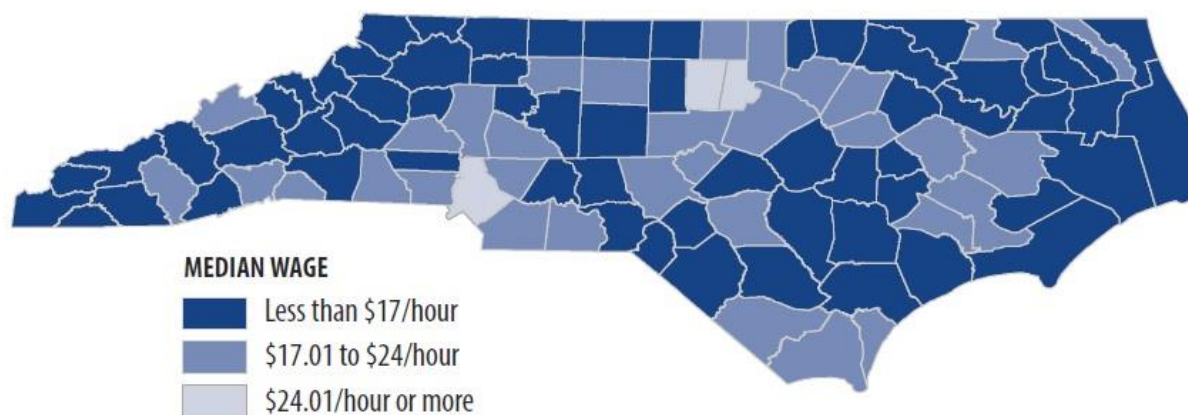
Poverty for people of color is significantly higher than for whites and for Asian Americans: 29 percent of African Americans and 41 percent of Hispanics live in poverty, while 13 percent of Asians and just 9 percent of whites live in poverty.

40 percent of the county's residents were low-income on average from 2010 to 2012, meaning their incomes were less than twice the federal poverty level (\$46,100 for a family of four in 2012).<sup>4</sup>

10 percent of working-age people in the county live below the poverty line (\$23,500 for a family of four), while 14 percent are considered near-poor—they earn 125 percent of the poverty line.

### WAGES & INCOME

The county's median hourly wage, the wage of the worker in the middle of the distribution of all workers in Forsyth County, is \$16.20.



Source: Estimated Median Wage from Occupational Employment and Wages in North Carolina, 2013

Median household income in the county was \$43,049, which equaled 95 percent of the statewide household income of \$45,195 in 2012.<sup>6</sup>

The richest 5% of the county's households had an average income that was almost 30 times greater than that of the poorest fifth of households and almost 7 times greater than that of the middle fifth of households on average from 2010 to 2012.<sup>7</sup>

### WORK

The number of employed persons in the county increased by 204 persons from January 2013 to January 2014.

The percentage of working-age people with jobs—a better measure of the availability of work than the unemployment rate—is 71.4 percent in Forsythe County, which is 3.7 points above the state average.

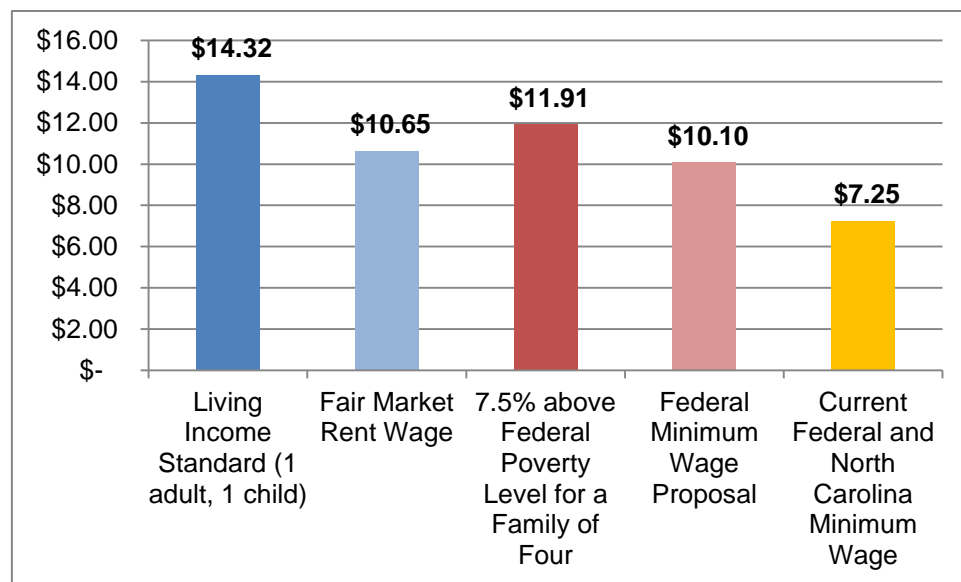
28 percent of occupations pay an average wage below the Living Income Standard for one adult, one child of \$14.32.

From 2012 to 2013, the following industries showed the fastest growth.

Industry Name	Job growth 2012-2013	Average Annual Wage	Average Hourly Wage
Support Activities for Air Transport	149	\$51,740	\$24.88
Warehousing and Storage	178	\$37,336	\$17.95
Medical and Diagnostic Laboratories	203	\$46,332	\$22.28
Elementary and Secondary Schools	218	\$36,088	\$17.35
Software Publishers	220	\$77,532	\$37.28
Specialty Food Stores	230	\$38,064	\$18.30
Offices of Dentists	267	\$64,636	\$31.08
Performing Arts and Sports Promoters	300	\$5,408	\$2.60
Restaurants & other eating places	371	\$14,664	\$7.05
Offices of Physicians	505	\$83,200	\$40.00
General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	900	\$47,580	\$22.88

### LIVING WAGE MEASURES

There are various measures that seek to capture what it takes to make ends meet for working families. The figure below demonstrates that many of the current measures being used fail to adequately provide a wage that allows a family to meet their basic needs in Forsyth County as measured by the Living Income Standard.



*Data included in this profile is from publicly available sources including the U.S. Census Bureau, the Occupational Employment and Wages Survey from the Department of Labor and others. A full list of data sources can be found at [www.ncjustice.org/countydata](http://www.ncjustice.org/countydata)*