

Watauga County

Watauga County has a population of 56,145, an increase of 12% over the past decade.

Our communities thrive when we ...



Provide Jobs and Opportunities

There were 1,156 people looking for work compared to 1,320 job openings.

In the past year, the county's unemployment rate has gone from 3.5% to 3.3%.



Ensure Access to Affordable Housing and Health Services

Rent was unaffordable for 63.7% of renters.

9.4% did not have health insurance.

There are 252 residents for every mental health provider.



Address Structural Barriers to Equality

45% of residents are low-income (\$49,200 or less for a family of four).

The richest 5% of households have an average income 50 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	20.5%	14.7%	2013-2017
Black	28.2%	24.9%	
White	26.5%	11.1%	
Latinx	58.7%	30.1%	
Asian	52.5%	12.7%	
American Indian	53.8%	26.2%	
Child poverty rate	16.8%	21%	2017

Healthy Lives and Communities			
	County	State	Year
Percentage of residents without health insurance	9.4%	12.1%	2013-2017
Life expectancy	81.7 years	77.6 years	2015-2017
Black	***	75.3 years	
White	81.8 years	78.4 years	
Mental health provider : residents	1 : 252	1 : 439	2019
Percentage of residents receiving SNAP	4.8%	13%	2018

Jobs and Ability to Afford the Basics			
	County	State	Year
Jobless worker : Job openings	1,156 : 1,320	202,412 : 302,886	March 2019
Unemployment rate	3.3%	3.7%	Dec. 2018
Change in number of people employed since December 2007	4,452 more	489,823 more	2018
Living Income Standard* wage (1 adult, 2 kids)	\$21.04	\$22.94	2019
Hourly median wage	\$14.44	\$17.19	2019
Change in median wage since the recovery began	fell 10 cents	grew 38 cents	2009, 2019
Median Household Income	\$48,417	\$52,797	2017

Educational Attainment			
	County	State	Year
Graduation rate	89.6%	86.3%	2017-2018
Black	***	83.2%	
White	90.1%	89.6%	
Latinx	80%	79.9%	
Asian	***	93.4%	
American Indian	***	84.4%	
Percentage of adults with Bachelor's degrees	41.7%	29.9%	2013-2017
Bachelor's degree, men	41.1%	28.9%	
Bachelor's degree, women	42.2%	30.7%	
Median salary, men with at least a Bachelor's	\$40,487	\$60,022	
Median salary, women with at least a Bachelor's	\$31,652	\$40,260	

Access to Affordable Housing			
	County	State	Year
Percentage of people paying more than 30% of income toward rent	63.7%	48.7%	2013-2017
Fair market rent for a two-bedroom unit	\$925	\$850	2018
Two-bedroom housing wage (Number of hours/week a minimum wage worker would need for a two-bedroom unit)	\$17.79	\$15.79	2018

*The Living Income Standard is a measure of what a family needs in order to cover the basic expenses. *** Insufficient data

For data sources, visit NCJustice.org/snapshots