

Wilkes County

Wilkes County has a population of 70,490, an increase of 1.8% over the past decade.

We all thrive when we ...



Expand Access to Health Services

- 11.1% of people do not have health insurance.
- Life expectancy for white newborns is 76.6 years; life expectancy for Black newborns is 72.4 years.
- There is one mental health provider for every 531 residents.



Provide Affordable Housing for All

- Rent is unaffordable for 49% of renters.
- 23.3% of people spend more than half of their income on rent.
- The median hourly wage is only 69.1% of what's needed for 1 adult and 2 children to make ends meet (LIS*).



Address Structural Barriers to Equality

- 43.2% of residents are considered low-income (less than \$50,200 for a family of four).**
- The richest 5% of households make an average of 26 times more than the poorest 20% of households.

... make the investments needed to promote shared prosperity for everyone in every county in N.C.

Poverty and Economic Hardship			
	County	State	Year
Percentage of people living in poverty	18.9%	14.1%	2014-2018
Black	23.3%	23.5%	
White	18.2%	10.6%	
Latinx	39%	28.5%	
Asian	***	11.9%	
American Indian	36%	25.1%	
Child poverty rate	31.6%	20.2%	

Jobs and Ability to Afford the Basics			
	County	State	Year
Jobless worker : Job openings	1,174 : 761	182,598 : 283,392	Feb. 2020
Unemployment rate	3.6%	3.3%	2019
Change in number of people employed since December 2007	1,232 fewer	611,291 more	2007, 2019
Living Income Standard* wage (1 adult, 2 kids)	\$20.52	\$22.94	2019
Hourly median wage	\$14.18	\$17.19	2019
Change in median wage since 2009 recovery began	grew 58 cents	grew 38 cents	2009, 2019
Median Household Income	\$44,080	\$53,922	2018

Access to Affordable Housing			
	County	State	Year
Percentage of people paying more than 30% of income toward rent	49%	52.9%	2014-2018
Percentage of people paying more than 50% of income toward rent	23.3%	23.9%	2014-2018
Fair market rent for a two-bedroom unit	\$679	\$881	2019
Number of hours needed to work to afford a two-bedroom unit at fair market rate	72 hours a week	94 hours a week	2019

Healthy Lives and Communities			
	County	State	Year
Percentage of residents without health insurance	11.1%	11.1%	2014-2018
Life expectancy	76.3 years	77.6 years	2016-2018
Black	72.4 years	75.2 years	
White	76.6 years	78.4 years	
Mental health provider : residents	1 : 531	1 : 409	2019
Percentage of residents receiving SNAP	14.5%	12.1%	2019

Educational Attainment			
	County	State	Year
Graduation rate	88.2%	86.5%	2018-2019
Black	94.7%	83.7%	
White	86.3%	89.6%	
Latinx	94.7%	81.1%	
Asian	***	94.5%	
American Indian	***	81.2%	
Percentage of adults with Bachelor's degrees	15.9%	29.5%	2014-2018
Bachelor's degree, men	13.8%	26.4%	
Bachelor's degree, women	17.9%	32.7%	
Median salary, men with at least a Bachelor's	\$53,603	\$61,426	
Median salary, women with at least a Bachelor's	\$41,286	\$41,197	

* The Living Income Standard is a measure of what a family needs in order to cover the basic expenses. See more at NCJustice.org/LIS.
 ** A family of four is considered low-income if they make below 200% of the federal poverty line, or \$50,200 in 2018.
 *** Insufficient data

Note: This County Snapshot provides a pre-COVID-19 economic picture of counties throughout North Carolina.

For data sources or other counties, visit NCJustice.org/snapshots