

## WAKE COUNTY

- 1,239,000 people live in Wake County
- The population has increased by 21% over the past decade
- NC's population increased by 11% over the past decade

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Data sources, dashboard, and  
other counties at  
[NCBudget.org/Snapshots](https://NCBudget.org/Snapshots)

For media queries and other  
questions, contact us at  
[info@ncbudget.org](mailto:info@ncbudget.org)



\* Candidates include all people willing to work in the county, regardless of county of residence

\*\* A family of four is considered low-income if they make below 200% of the poverty level, or \$62,400 in 2023, the most recent year with available income data.

## Wake County communities thrive when ...



... people can meet  
their basic needs

- Rent is unaffordable for 47% of renters
- 8% of people don't have health insurance
- There is one mental health provider for every 250 residents



... good jobs are  
accessible to everyone

- There are 0.9 candidates for every job opening\*
- The number of unemployed people actively seeking work has decreased by 3% from Dec. 2023 to Dec. 2024



... the economy works  
for everyone

- 19% of residents are considered low-income (less than \$62,400 for a family of four)\*\*
- The richest 5% of households make an average of 23 times more than the poorest 20% of households

**Table 1: Poverty and Economic Hardship**

	County	State
<b>Living in poverty, 2019-2023</b>		
Percentage of people living in poverty	8%	13%
Black	13	20
White	5	9
Latine	14	21
Asian & Pacific Islander	6	9
American Indian	6	24
Percentage of children living in poverty	9	18

**Table 2: Employment**

	County	State
<b>Employment, December 2024</b>		
Unemployment rate	2.9%	3.4%
Number of unemployed people actively seeking work	18,700	178,000
Number of employed people	638,000	5,067,000
<b>Percent change in employment over the past year (December 2023 to December 2024)</b>		
Change in unemployed people actively seeking work	-3%	3%
Change in people employed	1%	0%

**Table 3: Educational Attainment**

	County	State
<b>High school graduation, 2024</b>		
High school graduation rate	91%	87%
Black	87	85
White	>95	90
Latine	83	83
Asian & Pacific Islander	>95	>95
American Indian	90	82
<b>College degrees, 2019-2023</b>		
Percentage of adults with a bachelor's degree or higher	56%	35%
Men	56	33
Women	56	36
Median earnings for men with a bachelor's degree <sup>†</sup>	\$98,200	\$77,900
Median earnings for women with a bachelor's degree <sup>†</sup>	\$61,600	\$52,700

<sup>†</sup> Does not include people who also have a graduate degree.

**Table 4: Income and Ability to Afford the Basics**

	County	State
<b>Living Income Standard, 2025</b>		
Living Income Standard annual income (1 adult, 2 kids) <sup>††</sup>	\$102,100	\$87,700
<b>Median earnings and income, 2019-2023</b>		
Median worker earnings	\$62,300	\$47,200
Median household income	\$101,800	\$69,900

<sup>††</sup> The Living Income Standard is a measure of what a family needs in order to cover basic expenses. See more at [NCbudget.org/LIS](https://NCbudget.org/LIS)

**Table 5: Access to Affordable Housing**

	County	State
<b>Rent burden, 2019-2023</b>		
Percentage of renter households paying more than 30% of income on rent	47%	48%
Percentage of renter households paying more than 50% of income on rent	22%	23%
<b>Fair market rent, 2025</b>		
Fair market monthly rent for a two-bedroom home	\$1,760	\$1,410
Number of work hours at minimum wage it takes to afford a two-bedroom home at fair market rent	187 hours per week	150 hours per week

**Table 6: Healthy Lives and Communities**

	County	State
<b>Health insurance, 2019-2023</b>		
Percentage of residents without health insurance	8%	10%
<b>Medicaid enrollment, February 2025</b>		
Percentage of residents enrolled in Medicaid	17%	28%
<b>Life expectancy, 2019-2021</b>		
Life expectancy in years	81	77
Black	77	73
White	82	77
<b>Mental health providers, 2023</b>		
Residents per mental health provider	250	320
<b>Food assistance, February 2025</b>		
Percentage of residents receiving SNAP	7%	13%

NA values indicate insufficient data for this county.

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