

THE ECONOMICS OF HOUSING IN HAMILTON COUNTY, OHIO

In 2018, 16.2% of Hamilton County residents were living in poverty. In the City of Cincinnati half of all children under 5 are living in poverty. 55% of the adult population does not have a college degree.

In Hamilton County, 7,036 people experienced homelessness in 2018. 25% of those experiencing homelessness were children under age 18 while another 9% were young adults under 18-25.

4187 families and individuals in need called the Central “CAP” Line for people experiencing homelessness in 2018. 56% were turned away without assistance and because space was not available for them. 544 families were placed in shelter and an additional 243 families received with Shelter Diversion services.

HOUSING COST BURDEN

Median rent was \$749/mo, requiring a full time wage of \$14.4/hour. In 2017, over one-third of Hamilton County households, more than 110,000, pay more than 30% of their income to pay rent or a mortgage. Low income families are worst off, with 76% of households paying more than they can afford for housing. Of the 44,500 extremely low income households in the county that are cost burdened or severely cost burdened, almost half are families, many with children, and 10,050 are seniors.

Average wage for a low-wage mother working full time annually vs. rent

Job (some typical jobs for women without college)	Hourly wage 2019	Affordable Rent	FAIR MARKET RENT HAMILTON COUNTY 2019 Median rent: \$749 1 Bedroom Apt \$670 2 Bedroom Apt \$884
Minimum Wage for Ohio	\$8.55/hr	\$444	
Home Health Aide	\$10.82/hr	\$562	
Teacher Assistant	\$12.65/hr	\$658	
Fast Food	\$9.44/hr	\$491	
NonWorking mothers			
Disabled with SSI	\$771/mo	\$231	
Ohio Works First/TANF (3 year limit)	\$406/mo for a family of 2	\$121	

DO GOVERNMENT BENEFITS MAKE UP THE DIFFERENCE? NO, THEY DON'T.

Subsidized Housing is not an entitlement; there is a limited supply not related to need or eligibility. In 2017 there were 23,500 subsidized units in Hamilton County for all income levels, and 55,600 households earning \$14,678 or less annually.

Other benefits are not enough to make up the gap. For example, consider a single mom with 2 young children, making \$12.65/hour = \$26,312/year. She is legally above the federal poverty line. She will receive Medicaid and state childcare benefits plus \$181 in food stamps. Assuming a 2 bedroom apartment @ \$884/month including utilities, buying bus fare, food, diapers, hygiene and cleaning items etc., her monthly income including benefits is \$2,374, her monthly expense is \$2,608, leaving her \$244 under budget.

Sources: Strategies to End Homelessness, LISC, Ohio Dept of Jobs and Family Services, National Low Income Housing Coalition: What it costs to rent housing in each state: <https://reports.nlihc.org/or>