



POVERTY

Overview

Poverty rates in MetroWest and across the state remain statistically stable over the latter part of the past decade at just under 10%. This report describes the population of 600,000-650,000 Massachusetts residents living under the federal poverty level and indicates that general economic improvement has not seemed to make any significant changes to this population.

Report of the Special Commission Relative to Ending Homelessness in the Commonwealth, December 28, 2007

- **Geography:** State
- **Year:** Issued December 28, 2007
- **Website:** <http://www.chapa.org/pdf/ReportEndingHomelessness.pdf>

Key Findings

- Approximately 8% of families and 10% of individuals in Massachusetts are living below the federal poverty level of \$17,170 for a family of three and \$10,210 for an individual. In 2004, of approximately 6.5 million people in Massachusetts, one out of every four lives in a family whose income is less than \$28,000 (compared to the family median of \$59,600).

Facts at a Glance: Census Bureau Shows No Change in Poverty Rate in Massachusetts, Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center

- **Geography:** State
- **Year:** Released August 26, 2008
- **Website:** http://www.massbudget.org/documentsearch/findDocument?doc_id=620

Key Findings

- According to the American Community Survey (ACS), the total poverty rate for Massachusetts for 2007 remains at 9.9 percent, the same level as 2006.
- The Census Bureau's data indicate that, six years in to an economic recovery, **poverty rates have not declined in Massachusetts**. In 2000, the poverty rate, as measured by the ACS, was 9.6 percent. In 2007, the most recent period for which the Bureau has released data, the Massachusetts poverty rate stood at 9.9 percent.

Facts at a Glance: Census data show no rise in poverty rate for Massachusetts in 2008, Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center

- **Geography:** State
- **Year:** Released September 29, 2009
- **Website:** http://www.massbudget.org/documentsearch/findDocument?doc_id=689

Key Findings

- Today, the U.S. Census Bureau released its annual update of state-level poverty rates from the American Community Survey (ACS). It indicates no statistically significant change in the overall poverty rate in Massachusetts from 2007 to 2008.

- Despite the appearance of a small rise (0.1 percent) in the overall poverty rate in Massachusetts in 2008, the new figure (10.0 percent) is statistically indistinguishable from 2007 levels of 9.9 percent.
- The new ACS data indicate that 600,000 to 650,000 people in Massachusetts lived in households that fell below the federal poverty threshold in 2008 (which is \$21,834 for a four-person family with two children).
- According to ACS data, in 2008, Massachusetts continued to have an overall poverty rate substantially below that of most other states. Massachusetts ranked 41st among all states. Mississippi was the state with the highest rate of overall poverty at 21.2 percent.