



Community Assessment Report

2024-2026

Updated September 28, 2023

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2. Agency Description

LEO Inc. has been the anti-poverty community action agency for Lynn since its inception in 1965.¹ LEO currently serves Lynn, Lynnfield, Marblehead, Nahant, Saugus, Swampscott and Wakefield. Lynn is LEO's Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) designated service area. Traditionally, LEO has been the provider of the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) as well as Head Start: an early childhood education and care program for children from birth to age 5. Since 1965, LEO's early childhood education programs have prepared over 10,000 children for their educational journeys.² LEO's community services department serves over 6,000 individuals through home energy assistance, weatherization and conservation programs.

LEO has built a streamlined intake and referral process that ensures all clients have access to the full complement of services for which they qualify. LEO's programs have grown to include supplemental food distribution for seniors and families enrolled in Head Start, emergency rental, food and utility assistance; free Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and other programs that aid in improving community members' standard of living. Since 2020, LEO has distributed roughly \$5 million in COVID-19 emergency relief funds to benefit the most vulnerable residents of Lynn.

Throughout LEO's history as a community action agency, agency programs have evolved to meet the changing needs of a growing and increasingly diverse population. LEO's robust community engagement and volunteer recruitment efforts create a mutually beneficial working relationship with our neighbors and residents to increase participation in programs that maximize their potential. The 2022 home heating season saw a 20% increase in eligible households and that number is expected to rise again in 2023. LEO's community engagement and Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) team helped to increase the 2020 Census response rate for Lynn's hard to count census tracts to over 50%.

As demand for our services continues to rise, LEO's mission is to maintain our consistent and reliable service model and keep connecting our community members to the vital programs that help children, families and individuals to thrive.

Mission

LEO Inc.'s mission is to strengthen the Greater Lynn community through resources and services that provide opportunities for children, families and individuals to thrive.

Vision

We envision a future where all residents of Greater Lynn are educated, economically secure, and engaged in the community.

Education: Families will be more effective advocates for themselves and their children fostering school readiness, resilience and economic stability.

Health and Nutrition: Individuals and families will embrace whole-family, whole-body health through nutrition, activity and an established community of medical providers.

Safety and Well-Being: Families and individuals will live more securely through reliable home heating and home weatherization and energy efficiency referrals, utility solutions and supplemental food distribution.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Statement

LEO Inc. is committed to the principles and practices of diversity, equity and inclusion.

Founded in 1965 as the community action agency for Greater Lynn, our charge has always been to acknowledge and value the diverse human potential within our region and to establish equitable and inclusive programs and policies that promote economic opportunity for all people. LEO is dedicated to meaningful action that promotes social justice in partnership with our community.

At LEO, we:

- Foster an environment that welcomes and values different backgrounds, beliefs and life experiences.
- Work to incorporate those perspectives in ways that refresh and enrich our broader community.
- Partner with individuals and families to provide education and employment opportunities, food and housing security, utility and conservation resources.
- Believe that equity demands that each individual circumstance receives equal consideration to achieve desired goals.

By amplifying our core mission and values, we aspire to be an agency that reflects the diversity we see in our community – through our accessibility to the public, hiring practices, multi-generational approach to education, and leadership opportunities that promote stakeholders, including staff as thought leaders among their peers.

This work is fluid and requires thoughtful re-evaluation of our beliefs, attitudes and behavior, our policies, practices and systems, so that all people within our sphere of influence are genuinely valued, respected and heard.

3. Community Profile

Overview

LEO Inc. is the community action agency serving seven communities in Greater Lynn: Lynn, Lynnfield, Marblehead, Saugus, Swampscott, Nahant, and Wakefield. The total estimated population of LEO's service area is 208,848, comprised of disparately sized towns ranging from the tied-island community of Nahant (3,334 people) to the city of Lynn (101,253 people).³

Lynn is LEO's Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) designated service area. Lynn is the eighth largest city in Massachusetts. Historically, manufacturing has been the economic heart of the Greater Lynn community, with some communities also thriving off fishing and agriculture. Manufacturing in Essex County centered around Lynn, which was one of the three largest manufacturing centers in Massachusetts for most of the 19th and 20th centuries, due to being a transportation hub for the Eastern Railroad and one of the first American cities with telegraph service.⁴ Lynn is the most diverse city in LEO's catchment area with respect to race and ethnicity,⁵ as has been the historical trend. A perennial gateway city, Lynn is known for its vibrant immigrant communities, and now hosts a thriving arts and culture movement.

The one-page reports at the end of this section offer a glimpse into each of LEO's seven service areas. Included in these reports are brief narrative introductions followed by numerical data regarding basic statistics (population, average household size, etc.), income and employment, education, race, age structure, and poverty (by race, sex, and age). Additional data points from MySidewalk can be found in the Appendix.

Population Change and Poverty Rates by Geography

The Greater Lynn community has seen significant population fluctuations over time. The city of Lynn has been affected the most, with stark contrasts in the 20th century between a peak of over 100,000 residents in the 1930s to under 80,000 in the 1980s. The 2020 census marked the first time since the 1930s that Lynn saw a population count over 100,000 in the decennial census.⁶ Table 3.1 shows the estimated populations in Lynn, Lynnfield, Marblehead, Nahant, Saugus, Swampscott, and Wakefield in 2017 and 2021.

Table 3.1 - Population Change 2017-2021 by City/Town

City/Town	2017 Population ⁷	2021 Population ⁸	Population Change
Lynn	93,069	100,223	+ 7.7%
Lynnfield	12,732	12,874	+1.1%
Marblehead	20,393	20,397	+0.0%
Nahant	3,488	3,354	-3.8%
Saugus	28,037	28,521	+1.7%
Swampscott	14,563	15,043	+3.3%
Wakefield	26,823	27,041	+0.8%
Total	199,105	207,453	+ 4.2%

Lynn has an overall poverty rate of 15.7%, the highest rate in LEO's catchment area by a significant margin. The city also experiences wealth disparities across its zip codes (table 3.2).

Table 3.2 - Lynn Zip Code Poverty Rates by Age⁹

Zip Code	>18	18-64	65+	All
01901	49.5%	26.1%	56.0%	36.4%
01902	16.5%	15.2%	23.9%	16.6%
01904	15.2%	5.7%	2.9%	7.2%
01905	22.4%	13.1%	15.6%	15.7%

Table 3.3 - Poverty Rates by City/Town¹⁰

City/Town	Population*	People in Poverty	% Population in Poverty
Lynn	99,498	14,868	14.9%
Lynnfield	12,874	425	3.3%
Marblehead	20,290	565	2.8%
Nahant	3,310	132	4.0%
Saugus	28,241	2,193	7.8%
Swampscott	14,905	747	5.0%
Wakefield	26,676	1,355	5.1%
Total	205,794	20,285	9.9%

*The population for whom poverty status was calculated.

Employment Data

According to the estimated number of people in poverty within the last 12 months (table 3.3), Swampscott currently has the highest unemployment rate (6.0%), closely followed by the city of Lynn (5.7%). The full unemployment data for LEO’s service area is realized in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 - Civilian Labor Force and Employment by City/Town¹¹

City/Town	Civilian Labor Force (Age 16+)	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
Lynn	52,903	49,912	2,991	5.7%
Lynnfield	6,834	6,578	256	3.7%
Marblehead	11,240	10,846	394	3.5%
Nahant	2,036	1,957	79	3.9%
Saugus	16,181	15,612	569	3.5%
Swampscott	8,520	8,012	508	6.0%
Wakefield	15,565	15,042	523	3.4%
Total	113,279	107,959	5,320	4.7%

LEO Client Data

Tables 3.5 and demonstrate the participation in LEO’s Head Start and LIHEAP programs, broken down by the city/town in which clients reside. The vast majority of Head Start students hail from Lynn (Table 3.5). This occurrence is due in large part to the fact that children from Lynn consistently show the highest need based on LEO’s selection criteria. It is of note that this trend in need is consistent with Lynn exhibiting the highest poverty rate in any municipality in LEO’s catchment (14.9% according to Table 3.3).

Table 3.5 - Enrollment in Head Start Program(s) by City/Town, October 2022-March 2023

City/Town	Families Served	% of Total
Lynn	293	98.6%
Lynnfield	0	0%
Marblehead	0	0%
Nahant	0	0%
Saugus	4	1.4%
Swampscott	0	0%
Wakefield	0	0%
Total	297	100%

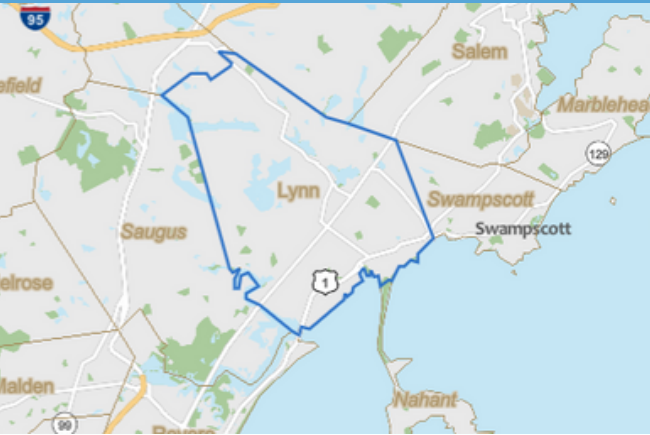
LEO’s LIHEAP program served clients from Lynn, Lynnfield, Nahant, Saugus, Swampscott, and Wakefield in the 2022 Home Energy season. In FY22, LIHEAP did not serve any clients from Marblehead. The majority (76.4%) of LEO’s Low Income Heat Assistance Program (LIHEAP) clients reside in Lynn, followed by Saugus at 10.6%.

Table 3.6 - LEO LIHEAP Clients by City/Town, October 2021-September 2022

City/Town	Households Served	% of Total
Lynn	2066	76.4%
Lynnfield	50	1.8%
Marblehead	0	0%
Nahant	32	1.2%
Saugus	288	10.6%
Swampscott	124	4.6%
Wakefield	146	5.4%
Total	2,706	100%

Lynn - CSBG Designated Service Area

Lynn is the largest city in Essex County and the 8th largest city in Massachusetts. Although historically Lynn was a manufacturing city, it is now known for its contemporary public art, vibrant immigrant population, historic architecture and public parks.¹²



KEY FACTS

101,253

Population¹³

36.3

Median Age¹⁴

2.74

Average Household Size¹⁵

INCOME & EMPLOYMENT¹⁶

5.7%

Unemployment Rate



\$75,627

Median Household Income

14.9%

Individuals Below Poverty Level



\$29,541

Per-Capita Income

EDUCATION¹⁷

31.2%

High School (or GED)

16.8%

Some College

21.0%

Bachelor's/Graduate/Professional Degree

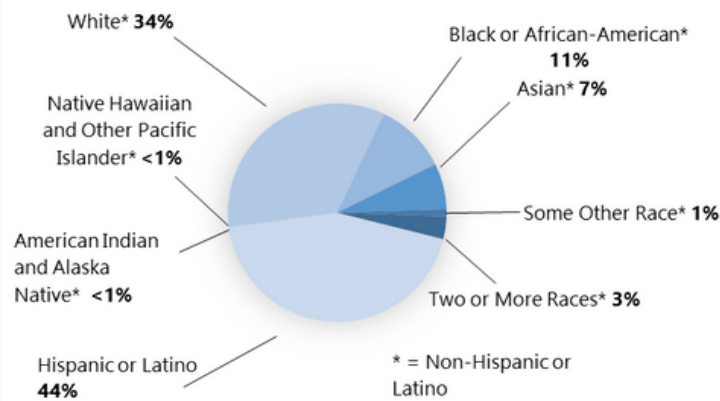
14.0%

Less than 9th Grade

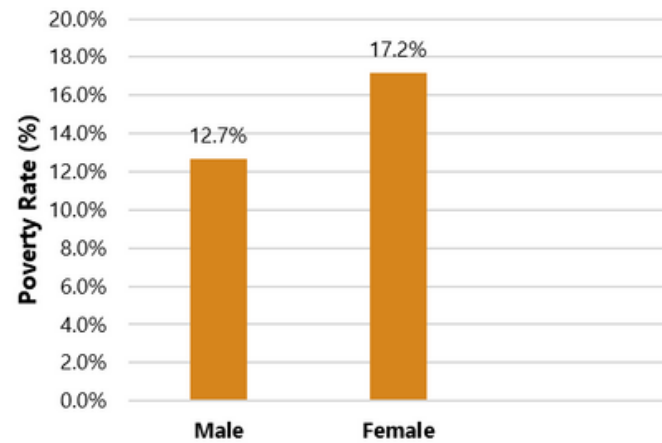
8.7%

9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma

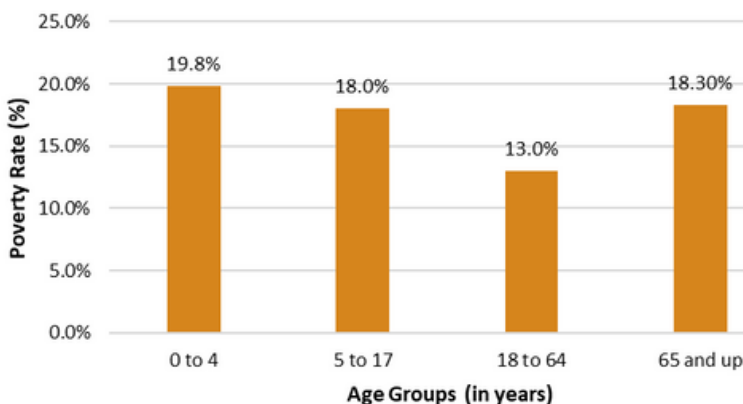
Lynn - Population by Race & Ethnicity¹⁸



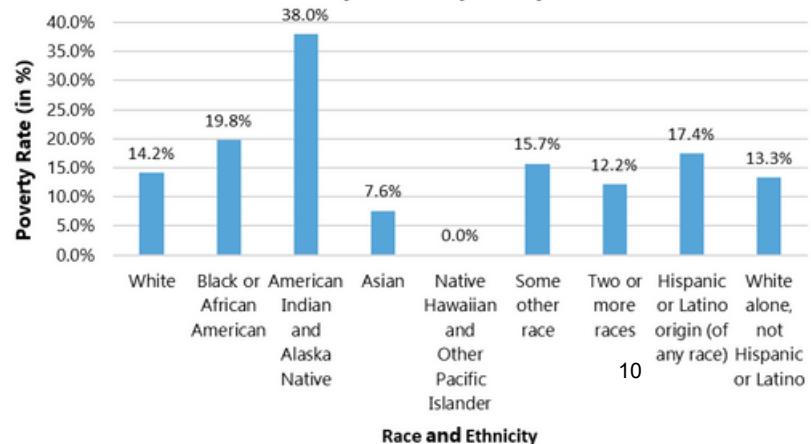
Lynn - Poverty Rate by Sex¹⁹



Lynn - Poverty Rate by Age²⁰

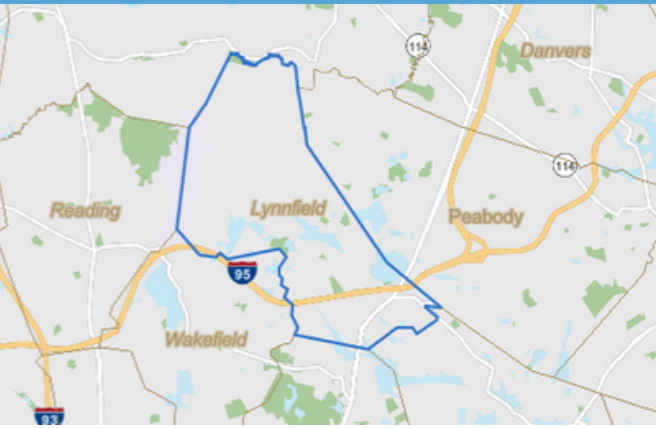


Lynn - Poverty Rate by Race²¹



Lynnfield - Service Area

Lynnfield is town in southwestern Essex County, bordered by Wakefield, Saugus and Reading. Lynnfield was a largely an agrarian economy until the late 40s. Still largely rural, it is chiefly a suburb of Boston and home to one still functioning dairy.²²



KEY FACTS

13,000

Population²³

40.2

Median Age²⁴

2.83

Average Household Size²⁵

INCOME & EMPLOYMENT²⁶

3.7%

Unemployment Rate

3.3%

Individuals Below Poverty Level

\$147,237

Median Household Income

\$67,303

Per-Capita Income

EDUCATION²⁷

18.0%

High School (or GED)

11.6%

Some College

61.4%

Bachelor's/Graduate/Professional Degree

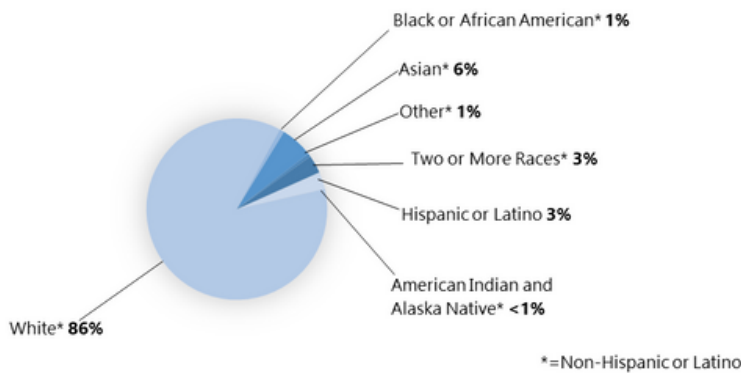
1.1%

Less than 9th Grade

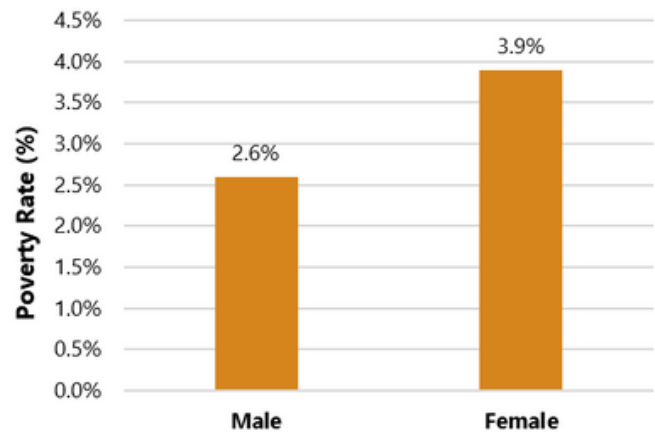
1.5%

9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma

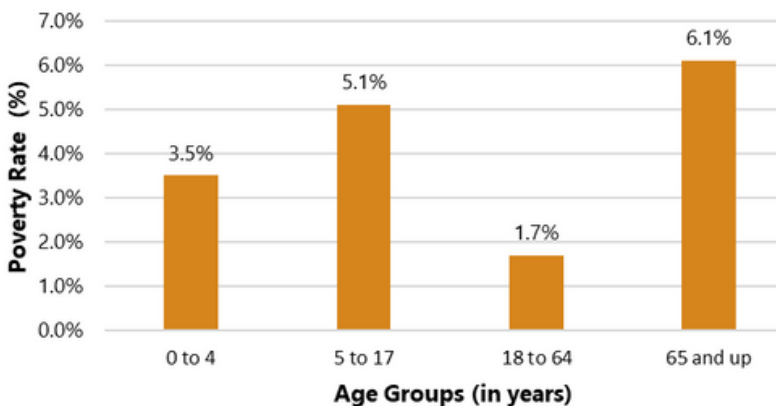
Lynnfield - Population by Race & Ethnicity²⁸



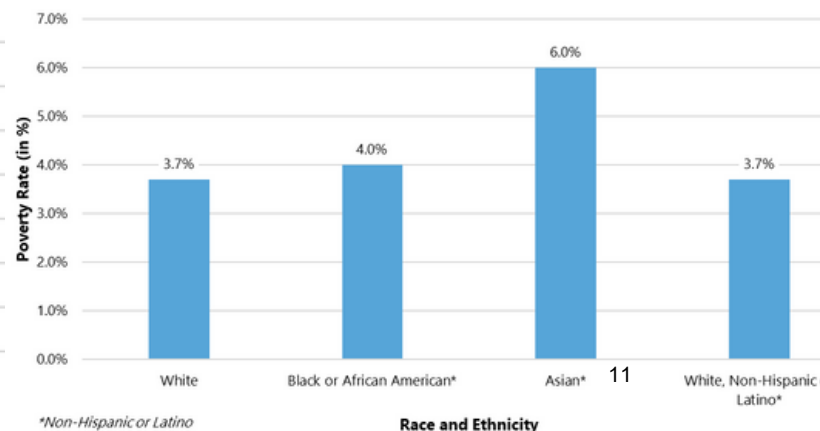
Lynnfield - Poverty Rate by Sex²⁹



Lynnfield - Poverty Rate by Age³⁰



Lynnfield - Poverty Rate by Race³¹



Marblehead- Service Area

Marblehead is a coastal town in Essex County with roots in commercial fishing and yachting. Marblehead still has a working waterfront that combines fishing and lobstering with recreational and sporting pursuits.³²



KEY FACTS

20,441

Population³³

48.1

Median Age³⁴

2.51

Average Household Size³⁵

INCOME & EMPLOYMENT³⁶

3.5%

Unemployment Rate



\$154,049

Median Household Income

2.8%

Individuals Below Poverty Level



\$81,072

Per-Capita Income

EDUCATION³⁷

8.1%

High School (or GED)

8.2%

Some College

77.2%

Bachelor's/Graduate/Professional Degree

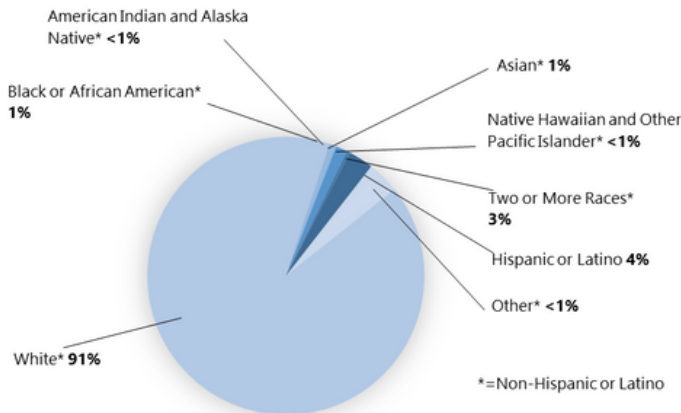
0.2%

Less than 9th Grade

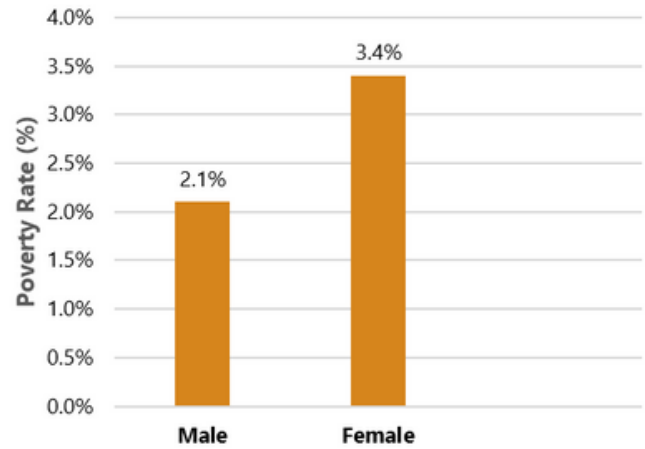
0.6%

9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma

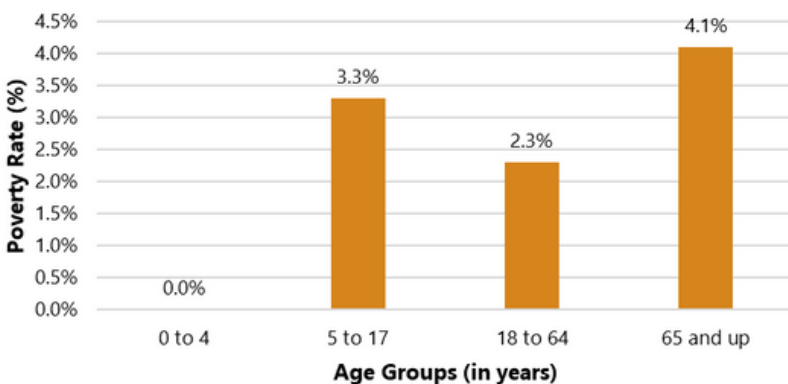
Population by Race & Ethnicity³⁸



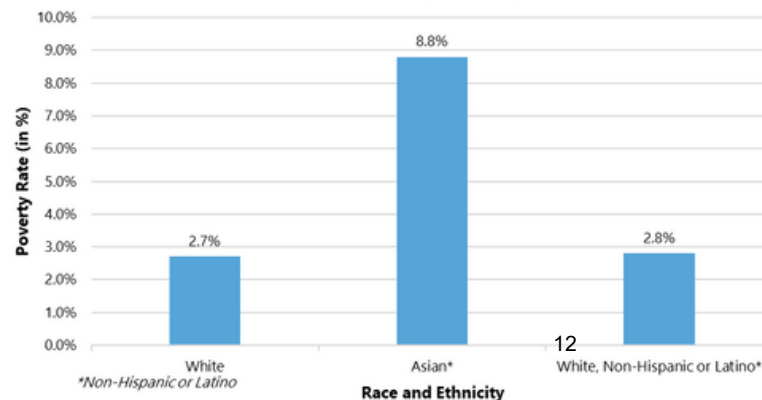
Marblehead - Poverty Rate by Sex³⁹



Marblehead - Poverty Rate by Age⁴⁰

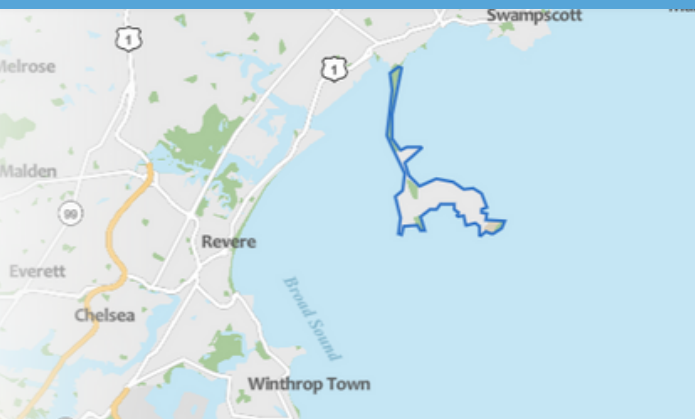


Marblehead - Poverty Rate by Race⁴¹



Nahant- Service Area

Nahant is the smallest municipality in Essex County with just 1.0 square mile of land area. Nahant is a tied island connected to the mainland by a causeway to the city of Lynn. The town is divided into two distinct land areas, Nahant and Little Nahant.⁴²



KEY FACTS

3,334

Population⁴³

58.4

Median Age⁴⁴

1.97

Average Household Size⁴⁵

INCOME & EMPLOYMENT⁴⁶

3.9%

Unemployment Rate



\$99,456

Median Household Income

4.0%

Individuals Below Poverty Level



\$73,957

Per-Capita Income

EDUCATION⁴⁷

17.3%

High School (or GED)

8.8%

Some College

65.0%

Bachelor's/Graduate/Professional Degree

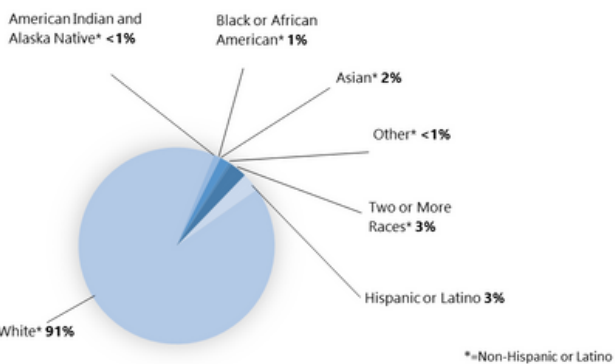
0.6%

Less than 9th Grade

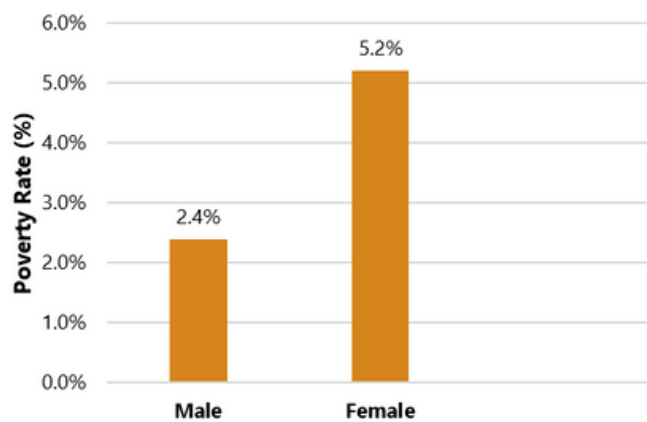
1.5%

9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma

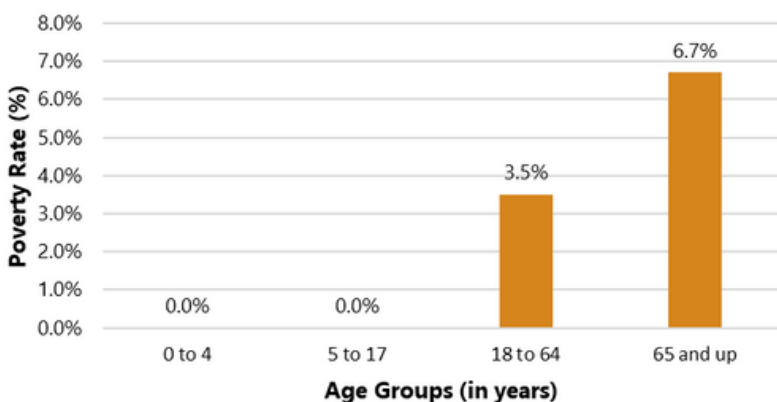
Nahant - Population by Race & Ethnicity⁴⁸



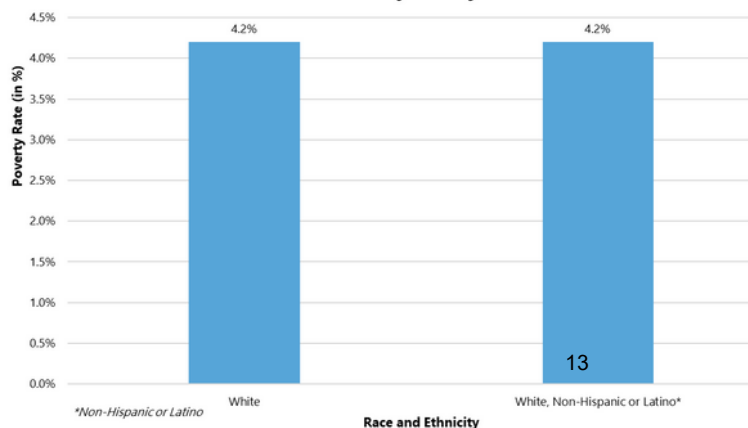
Nahant - Poverty Rate by Sex⁴⁹



Nahant - Poverty Rate by Age⁵⁰

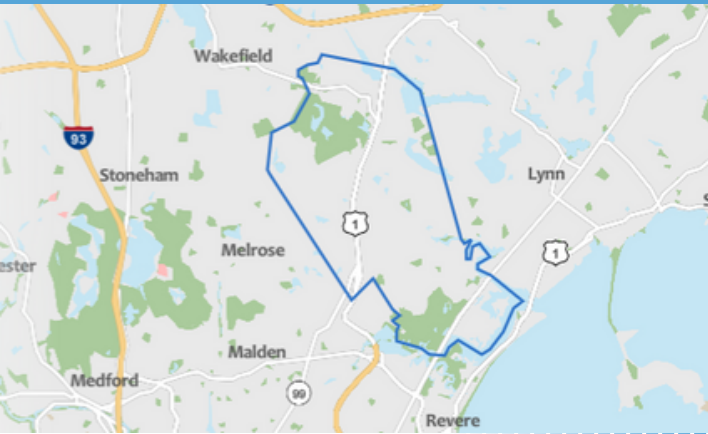


Nahant - Poverty Rate by Race⁵¹



Saugus - Service Area

Saugus is a town in southwestern Essex County just inland from Massachusetts Bay, bisected by US route 1. Saugus has been a base for manufacturing in Massachusetts for over a century but is now mostly known for its state parks.⁵²



KEY FACTS

28,619

Population⁵³

43.6

Median Age⁵⁴

2.67

Average Household Size⁵⁵

INCOME & EMPLOYMENT⁵⁶

3.5%

Unemployment Rate

7.8%

Individuals Below Poverty Level

\$93,737

Median Household Income

\$43,997

Per-Capita Income

EDUCATION⁵⁷

34.0%

High School (or GED)

16.9%

Some College

31.7%

Bachelor's/Graduate/Professional Degree

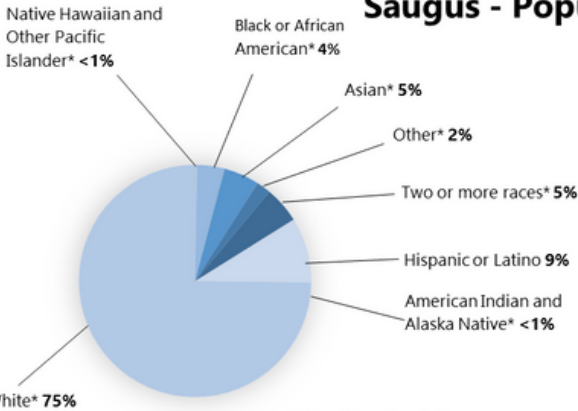
2.6%

Less than 9th Grade

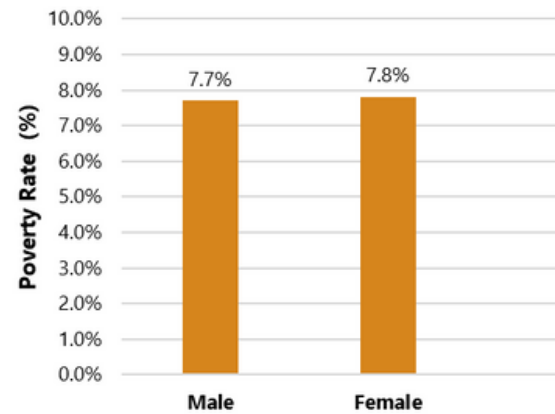
5.9%

9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma

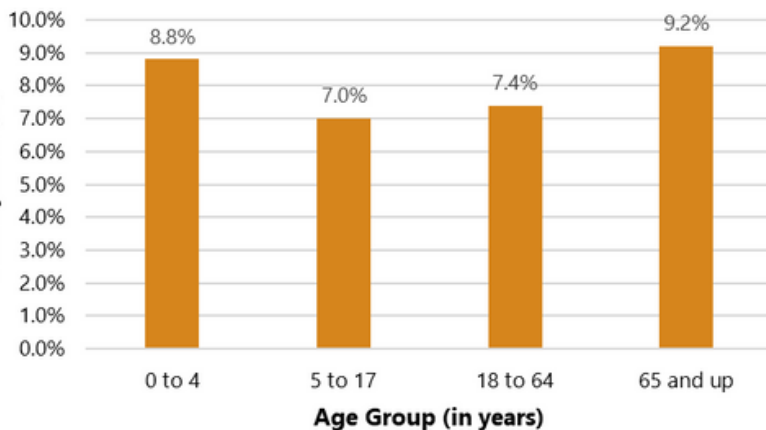
Saugus - Population by Race & Ethnicity⁵⁸



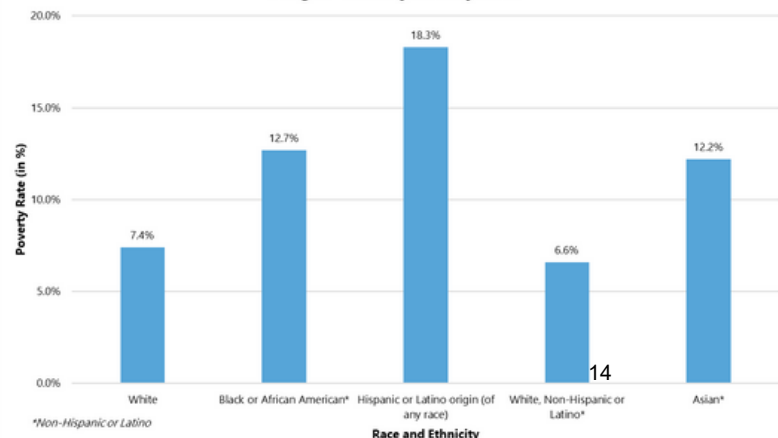
Saugus - Poverty Rate by Sex⁵⁹



Saugus - Poverty Rate by Age⁶⁰



Saugus - Poverty Rate by Race⁶¹



Swampscott - Service Area

Swampscott, in southeastern Essex County was originally settled as the eastern part of Lynn and western parts of Salem but was set apart and incorporated in 1852. Swampscott was a former resort town on Massachusetts Bay and is now a mostly residential community.⁶²



KEY FACTS

15,111

Population⁶³

45.0

Median Age⁶⁴

2.45

Average Household Size⁶⁵

INCOME & EMPLOYMENT⁶⁶

6.0%

Unemployment Rate



\$114,086
Median Household Income

5.0%

Individuals Below Poverty Level



\$63,595
Per-Capita Income

EDUCATION⁶⁷

14.5%

High School (or GED)

12.8%

Some College

62.2%

Bachelor's/Graduate/Professional Degree

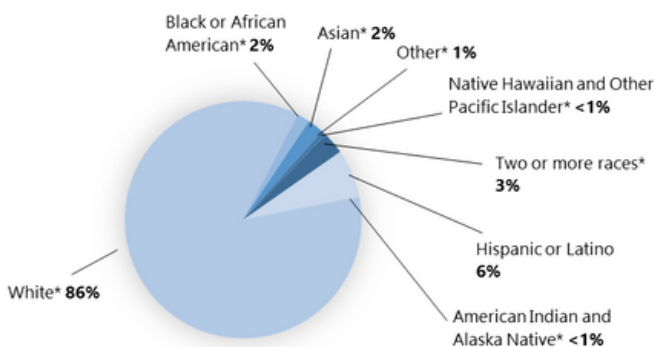
1.2%

Less than 9th Grade

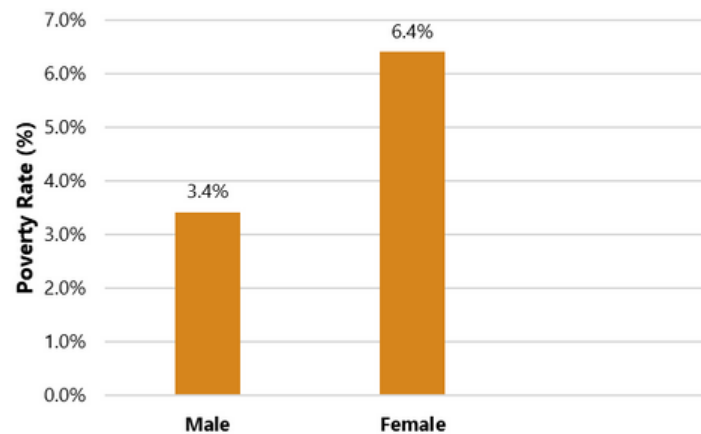
1.3%

9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma

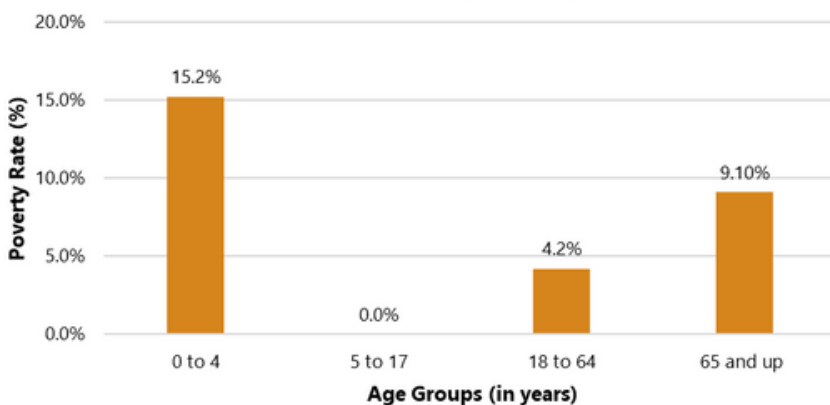
Swampscott - Population by Race & Ethnicity⁶⁸



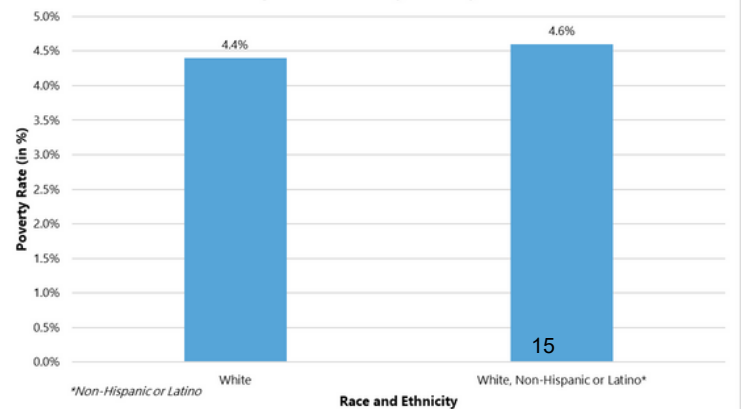
Swampscott - Poverty Rate by Sex⁶⁹



Swampscott - Poverty Rate by Age⁷⁰

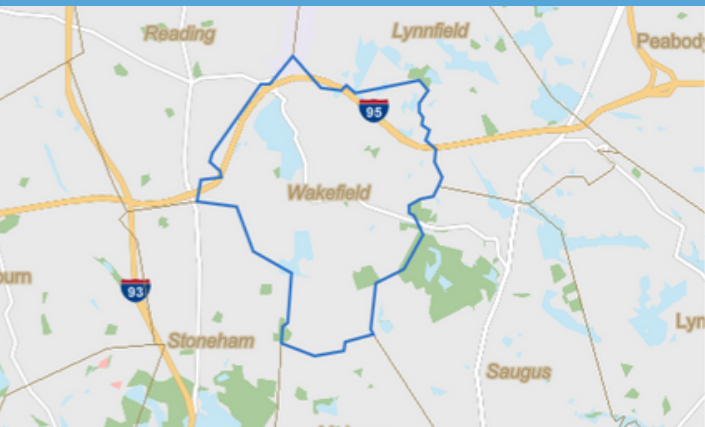


Swampscott - Poverty Rate by Race⁷¹



Wakefield - Service Area

Wakefield is a scenic town in Middlesex County. Wakefield is recognized for its strong community and business networks, quality school system, public library and Lake Quannapowitt, which is a popular recreation destination.⁷²



KEY FACTS

27,090

Population⁷³

43.8

Median Age⁷⁴

2.45

Average Household Size⁷⁵

INCOME & EMPLOYMENT⁷⁶

3.4%

Unemployment Rate



\$110,372

Median Household Income

5.1%

Individuals Below Poverty Level



\$57,906

Per-Capita Income

EDUCATION⁷⁷

20.4%

High School (or GED)

13.3%

Some College

54.4%

Bachelor's/Graduate/Professional Degree

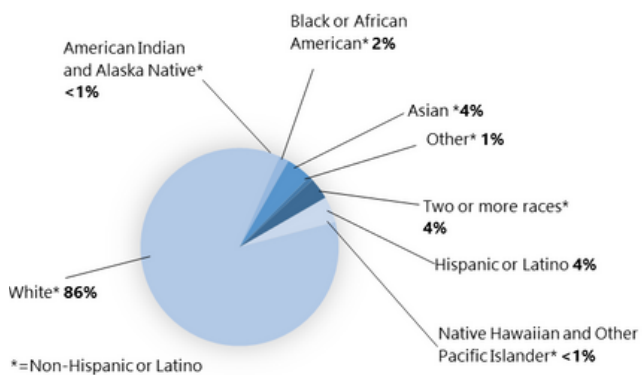
1.3%

Less than 9th Grade

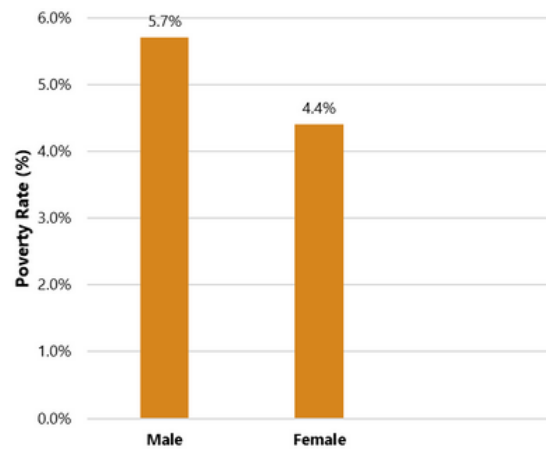
2.8%

9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma

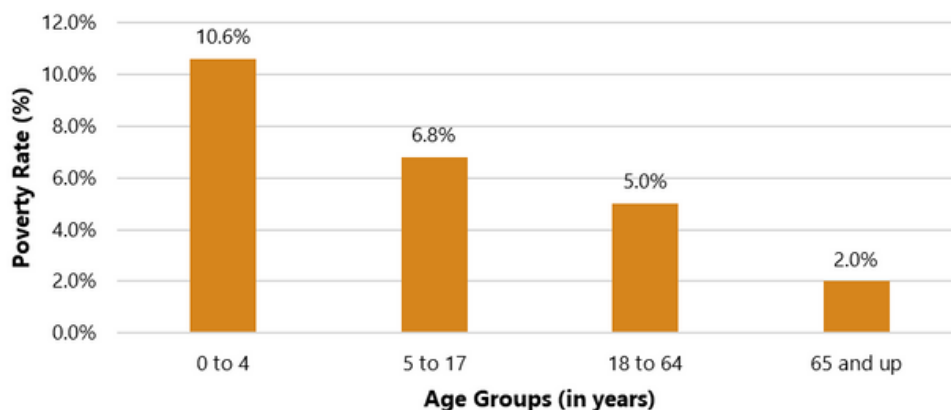
Wakefield - Population by Race & Ethnicity⁷⁸



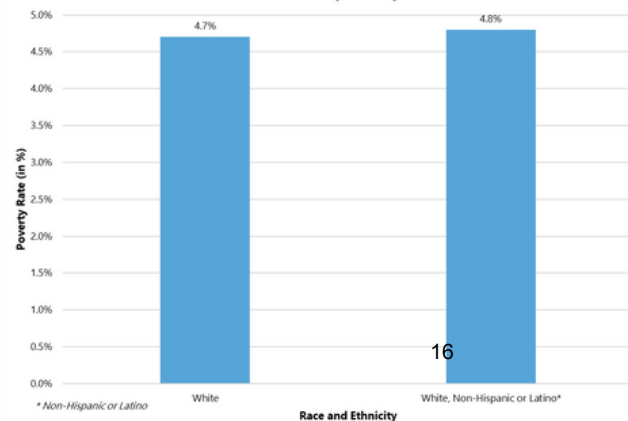
Wakefield - Poverty Rate by Sex⁷⁹



Wakefield - Poverty Rate by Age⁸⁰



Wakefield - Poverty Rate by Race⁸¹



4. Community Assessment Process

Overview and Preparation

The 2024-2026 Community Assessment process consisted of surveys, focus groups, and study of key data from the American Community Survey (ACS) and Decennial Census. During September 2022, LEO Inc.'s CARSP team formed the survey questions for the 2024-2026 CARSP Cycle. The team reviewed the questions from the previous CARSP cycle and considered how those questions might need to be adapted to fit the changing needs and challenges faced by the Greater Lynn community.

Ultimately, the 2024-2026 CARSP survey contained 26 questions. Many of the questions were sourced from MASSCAP's CARSP Common Community Needs Survey Questions (i.e., the network's agreed upon questions).⁸² Within these 26 questions included multiple choice questions with optional narrative follow-ups. Some of the multiple-choice questions allowed respondents to select multiple answers (e.g., the question about top community needs, as explained in section 5. Most of the survey questions the same from the 2021-2023 CARSP cycle, as the team felt that this would allow for more like comparison community needs over time. Questions specific to the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuing economic crisis were scaled back from this round of the CARSP, as those topics were realized in detail on the 2021-2023 CARSP, but the topic was breached through the opened-ended question "Compared with three years ago, are you and your family better off, worse off, or about the same?" The customer satisfaction questions were included at the end of the survey and will be fully analyzed upon the completion of LEO's Strategic Plan.

LEO's CARSP team also made use of the project management software Smartsheet for the first time to promote ongoing institutional knowledge of LEO's CARSP process.

Survey Administration

Surveys were administered from October of 2022 to mid-April 2023, with most survey collectors closing on March 31, 2023. Respondents were given the opportunity to answer the survey in English or Spanish and in the electronic or paper format. The Community Engagement team set the goal to obtain 1,000 survey responses.

All electronic surveys were administered via Survey Monkey. There were separate Survey Monkey links for Spanish and English, which were made publicly available on LEO Inc.'s website (leoinc.org). In addition to these survey collectors, surveys in both languages were further divided into smaller collector groups. These groupings consisted of both internal subdivisions of the LEO community (e.g., Head Start sites) and external community partners who were given

individual collectors upon request (see below). This year, individual collectors featured include Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), LEO's Community Services Desk, Lynn Public Schools, National Grid, the Food Project's Lynn Winter Farmer's Market, LEO's Jack Robinson Child Care Center, LEO's Early Head Start Sites, North Shore Community College, Lynn Community Health, and KIPP Academy Lynn.

The survey was promoted internally via LEO's weekly email update, and externally pushed to community partner email lists via Constant Contact. A flyer was made that included a QR code linking to the survey. The flyer appeared frequently on LEO's social media (Facebook and Instagram) during survey promotion. Paper surveys and survey flyers with the QR code were brought to local businesses in the community and to community events such as the Lynn Winter Farmer's Market in January and the REAL Library Book Crawl Event in March. These outreach events were critical in spreading the survey outside of LEO's existing client base.

In addition, Board members interviewed key stakeholders, partner agencies collected surveys from their clients including Lynn Housing Authority and Neighborhood Development (LHAND), Lynn Public Schools, North Shore Community College (NSCC), Demakes Family Y.M.C.A., and local Churches.

Figure 4.1 - Number of Survey Responses by Sector Engaged

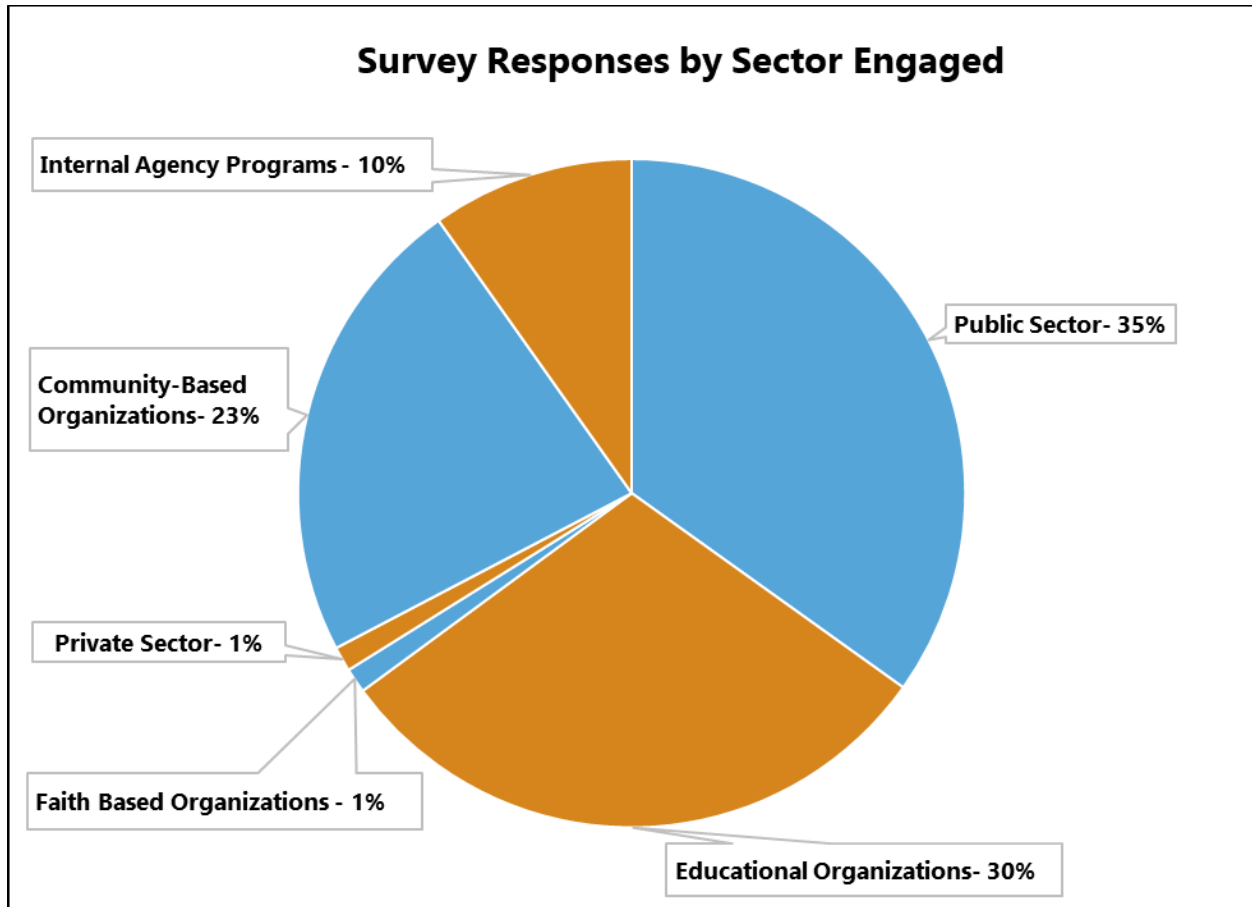


Figure 4.1. The distribution of survey responses by sector.

Community-Based Organizations- 114 community surveys, three stakeholder interviews
Educational Organizations- 150 community surveys, one stakeholder interview
Faith-Based Organizations- 6 community surveys, one stakeholder interview
Internal Agency Programs- 49 community surveys
Private Sector- 6 community surveys, one stakeholder interview
Public Sector- 174 community surveys

Although LEO’s partners were given the option for personalized survey links, many referred clients to LEO’s website to complete the survey, skewing results across sectors.

Focus Groups

Following the closure of surveys, LEO conducted four focus groups on April 24, 25, 26, and 27, 2023. The purpose of these focus groups was to delve deeper into select survey questions and

top needs identified that were not elaborated on beyond the multiple-choice section of the CARSP.

The select groups included LEO's Head Start Male Involvement Group, mothers from LEO's Blossom Street Head Start Center, a Working Families Group, and senior Group from Lynn Senior Center. The male involvement group sought to get more qualitative data from men, who were underrepresented by the survey data. Of those who responded to the question indicating gender, 21% identified as male versus 77% of respondents who identified as female. The Blossom Mothers and Working Families groups were identified in response to the growing need for jobs and job training, as well as childcare needs within the community. Lastly, the Senior Group from Lynn Senior Center assisted LEO and Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) in further understanding specific challenges facing the aging population in Lynn.

Figure 4.2 - Gender Distribution in CARSP Survey Responses

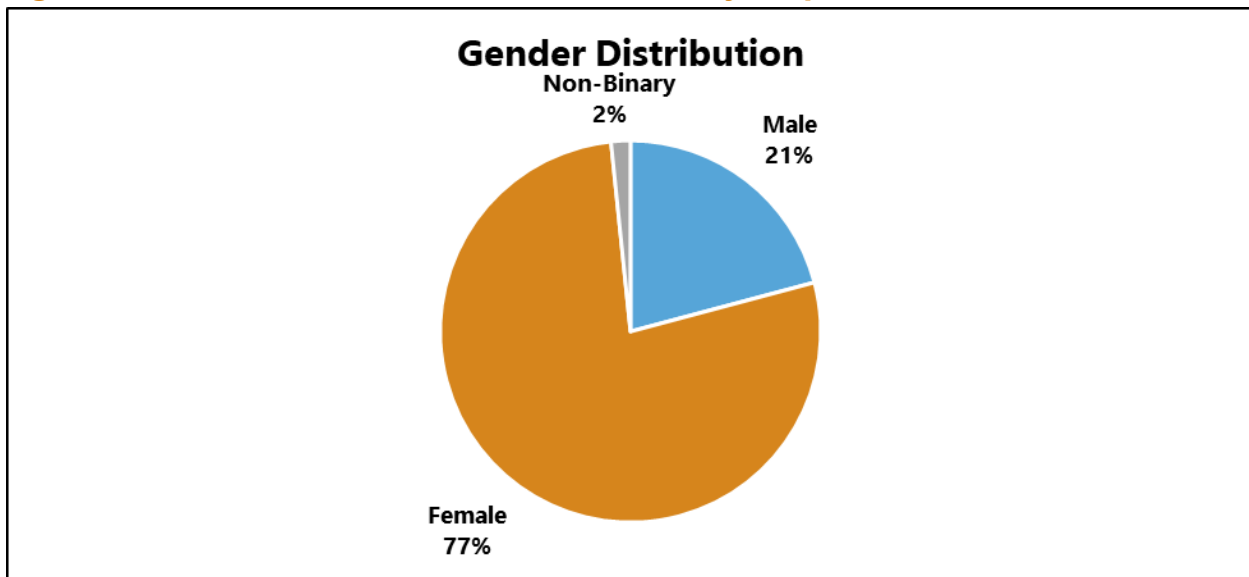


Figure 4.2. The distribution of responses to the "What is your gender?" question on the CARSP survey.

CARSP Engagement

Engaging LEO staff in the CARSP began at the Annual Meeting held on September 6, 2022. There, new staff were informed about the upcoming CARSP cycle. Staff got continual reminders about the survey through LEO's internal Friday updates as well as meetings with their managers. The Community Engagement Team invited staff to a meeting in the spring wherein the team presented the key takeaways from the survey data and encouraged staff to participate in ongoing Strategic Plan conversations. To maximize the accessibility and inclusivity of the meeting, it was held on Zoom at 2pm so that Head Start teachers would be able to attend after their classes.

Board engagement followed suit with an outline of the CARSP process and organizational standards delivered to the Board of Directors (BOD) on the October 19, 2022 CARSP Kickoff meeting.

In addition to the Board of Directors, LEO received valuable insight from members of the Head Start Policy Council. The Policy Council consists of current and former Head Start parents who help shape agency policy. Similar to the BOD, the Policy Council was introduced to the CARSP process during an October kickoff meeting. From there, policy council members helped Head Start parents fill out the survey, making themselves available during student morning drop off times and parent meetings.

LEO also made efforts to engage low-income individuals as much as possible in the CARSP process. As in LEO's other outreach efforts, the agency strove to "meet people where they are at." For surveys, this meant offering paper versions at the front desk and at outreach events for those who may be less comfortable or literate with technology. Meeting people where they are at also took on its literal meaning during outreach efforts where LEO's CARSP team visited small businesses in downtown Lynn to raise the visibility of LEO in the community and to remind them of the importance of their voices and the impact direct engagement can have on future decisions affecting them and their city. The focus groups also included low-income individuals.

Collaborations

LEO also made sure to collaborate consistently with community partners throughout the assessment process. LEO's Community Engagement team reached out to partner organizations and offered them the opportunity to have individual survey collectors. With these collectors, LEO offered partner organizations access to their data and mini reports extracted from their surveys. This practice creates and solidifies mutually beneficial partnerships further by sharing useful data used to shape future community wide solutions and promote economic and social revitalization.

LEO invited the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to attend the three CARSP focus groups. MAPC is currently conducting a Community Health Assessment (CHA), which includes some overlapping themes with LEO's CARSP. MAPC was given the opportunity to contribute additional questions to the group both before and after. In turn, MAPC shared some of their health data with LEO and invited LEO to participate in one of their April focus groups with a senior center in Lynn.

LEO Inc.'s CARSP team also made frequent use of feedback from the MASSCAP Planners meetings to influence the CARSP process. For example, Making Opportunity Count (MOC)

mentioned in MASSCAP's September 8, 2022, meeting that their agency had added a demographic question regarding household disability. LEO then incorporated this question into the 2024-2026 CARSP surveys.

The Massachusetts Community Action network is known for its strong collaborative spirit. Through our statewide association, MASSCAP, representatives from member organizations meet regularly as part of nearly a dozen Communities of Practice: Planners, Human Resources, CFO/Fiscal, Communications & Development, New(er) EDs, VITA, EDs Friday Conversations, IT, SMC User Group, DEI Roundtable, and Food Insecurity.

The Planners' COP is long standing and has been a source of ongoing best practice sharing. Over the last year, in preparation for the 2024-2026 Community Needs Assessment Report & Strategic Plan (CARSP), the Planners' CoP has focused on CSBG compliance with Organizational Standards related to the ROMA cycle, Community Needs Assessment, and Strategic Planning. Specifically, the Planners' COP has collaborated in three primary ways to prepare partner organizations for success in the CARSP process:

- 1) In fall of 2022, the MASSCAP Planners' COP collaborated to develop and refine a list of standardized survey questions to assess community needs. The Community Needs Survey is intended to capture feedback from a wide range of stakeholders on the most pressing needs facing residents. The standardization of the survey tool throughout the network allows for aggregation of data collected across the Commonwealth, creating a more complete picture of state-wide needs as well as a comparison of needs between different geographical regions.
- 2) Also in the fall of 2022, a subgroup of the MASSCAP Planner's COP worked with representatives from MySidewalk, a data curating and visualization tool, to create a common framework for presenting key indicators of the causes and conditions of poverty in Massachusetts. The result was a set of service-area specific dashboards representing key indicators in the domains of Demographics, Poverty, Education, Employment, Health, Social & Behavioral Development, Housing, Income, Infrastructure & Asset Development, and Transportation. These dashboards give each agency easy access to important secondary data for their own Community Needs Assessment Reports and provide a consistent framework through which to look at poverty across the Massachusetts community action network.
- 3) As a team, the MASSCAP Planners' COP determined an efficient methodology for capturing both statewide and regional information about needs, existing services, and gaps. Thus, in early March 2023, MASSCAP facilitated a series of Focus Groups with

Planners who attended the regularly scheduled COP meeting. The Focus Groups were broken out by top needs areas identified through the common Community Needs Survey process. At that time top needs were, DEI/Immigrant Services, Mental Health & Health Care, Inflation/Cost of Living & Basic Needs, and Housing. Findings from this series of Focus Groups were shared with all CAAs for incorporation into the Community Needs Assessment Report as deemed relevant by individual agencies.

Challenges

The most significant challenge LEO faced in the 2024-2026 CARSP cycle was getting sufficient survey responses. Beyond a staffing shortage on the Community Engagement team, Lynn area residents expressed a sense of survey fatigue. Meaning, multiple city agencies have been conducting surveys in recent years, sometimes simultaneously, causing residents to feel overwhelmed with requests for their opinions and feedback.

LEO also experienced challenges in the data entry and cleaning process. Through data entry, the CARSP team observed a misalignment in how select questions were intended and how participants responded. For example, on the question of whether one has received LEO services, many responded no but gave feedback on the remainder of the client satisfaction section, including narrative feedback. Similarly, some who filled out paper surveys selected more than one primary language when the virtual collector only allowed for one selection. Contributing factors to this challenge are further explained in Key Findings. To keep the data as clean as possible, LEO wrote a series of guidelines for data entry allowing staff and volunteers to maintain the integrity of the data recorded. A digital discrepancy log was also maintained. These challenges will be taken into account when the agency conducts the 2027-2029 CARSP.

5. Key Findings

LEO's Community Needs Assessment Survey asked respondents to identify prevalent poverty-related issues affecting them personally (individual/family-level), as well as the top issues impacting the Greater Lynn area (community-level). Review of the survey data included analysis of responses by various demographic indicators such as income, age, sex and race. In total, 499 individuals responded to LEO's Community Assessment and Satisfaction Surveys, with 358 respondents from Lynn and 67 responses from the other six service towns (Lynnfield, Marblehead, Nahant, Saugus, Swampscott, and Wakefield). This year's response count was markedly lower than the past two survey cycles, coming in well under the goal of 1,000 responses, the lowest response rate since 2017. The low response rate is attributed to a shortage of community engagement staff and a shift to online surveys. In previous survey cycles, outreach to collect survey responses was primarily done in person, using paper surveys. Surveys were offered in both English and Spanish, but literacy issues may have contributed to unanswered or misinterpreted questions.

Top Needs Identified

LEO identified the following individual-level needs:

Lack of Education and Training: The lack or low level of education prevents individuals from securing employment with wages that can support high living expenses.

Economic Insecurity: Economic insecurity, driven by low wages, fixed incomes, and limited financial literacy, is leading to increasing debt and individual stress within our community

LEO identified the following community-level needs:

Lack of Affordable Housing: Lynn's current market rates of the housing stock burdens families who are trying to find safe and affordable housing.

Lack of Jobs: Lack of variety in employment opportunities prevents community members from securing employment that meets their skills.

Childcare, Afterschool/Summer Programs: A lack of safe and affordable childcare resources is barrier for families to maintain work and pursue educational and workforce training opportunities.

Q22: In the past year, have you or anyone in your household received services from LEO?

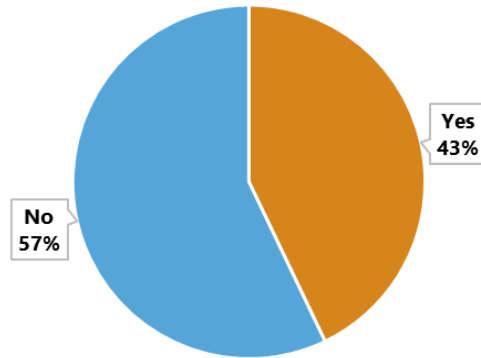


Figure 5.1. The percentage breakdown of respondents who did and did not receive LEO services over the past year.

Participants were asked if they or someone in their household had received LEO services in the past year. The "past year" is relative to when the participant took the survey. The survey cycle is defined in Section 4. Out of those who answered the question, 57% indicated they did not receive LEO services while 43% indicated they did.

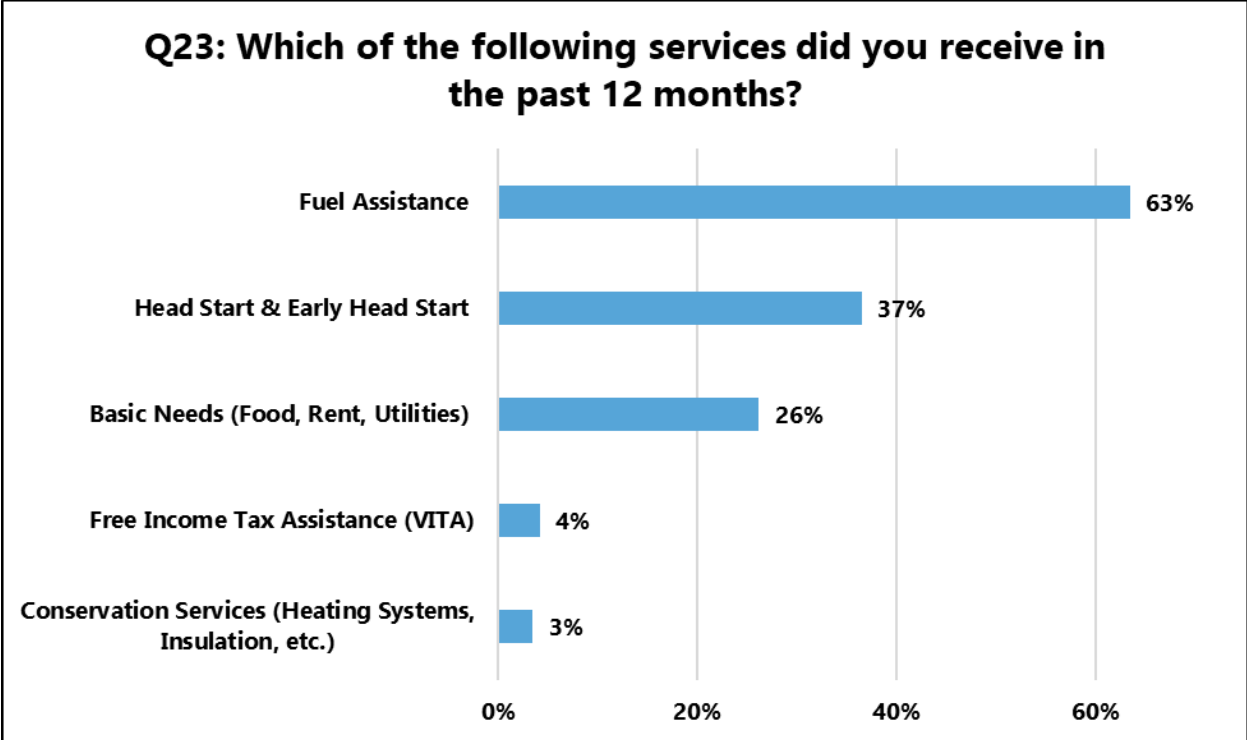


Figure 5.2. The percentage breakdown of the types of LEO services received by respondents who indicated receiving LEO services in the past year.

The data LEO collected, combined with free response questions, input from focus groups, community stakeholder interviews, and The American Community Survey data, were used to identify the top needs. “Ability to pay heating or utility bills” was identified as the top community need, with 59% of respondents choosing that need as an option (Figure 5.4). That finding is supported above in Figure 5.2, with 63% of those who indicated they received LEO services receiving fuel assistance (via LIHEAP).

This indicates that LEO’s LIHEAP program is addressing one of the top needs in the community for more than half the respondents who utilize LEO’s services. Affordable housing was also identified as a top need in the community (Figure 5.4), with 26% of respondents who received LEO services receiving help with basic needs (food, rent, utilities) (Figure 5.2). Another top community need was childcare (Figure 5.4), supported by 37% of respondents who utilized LEO services having at least one child enrolled in Head Start and/or Early Head Start (Figure 5.2).

Individual-Level Needs

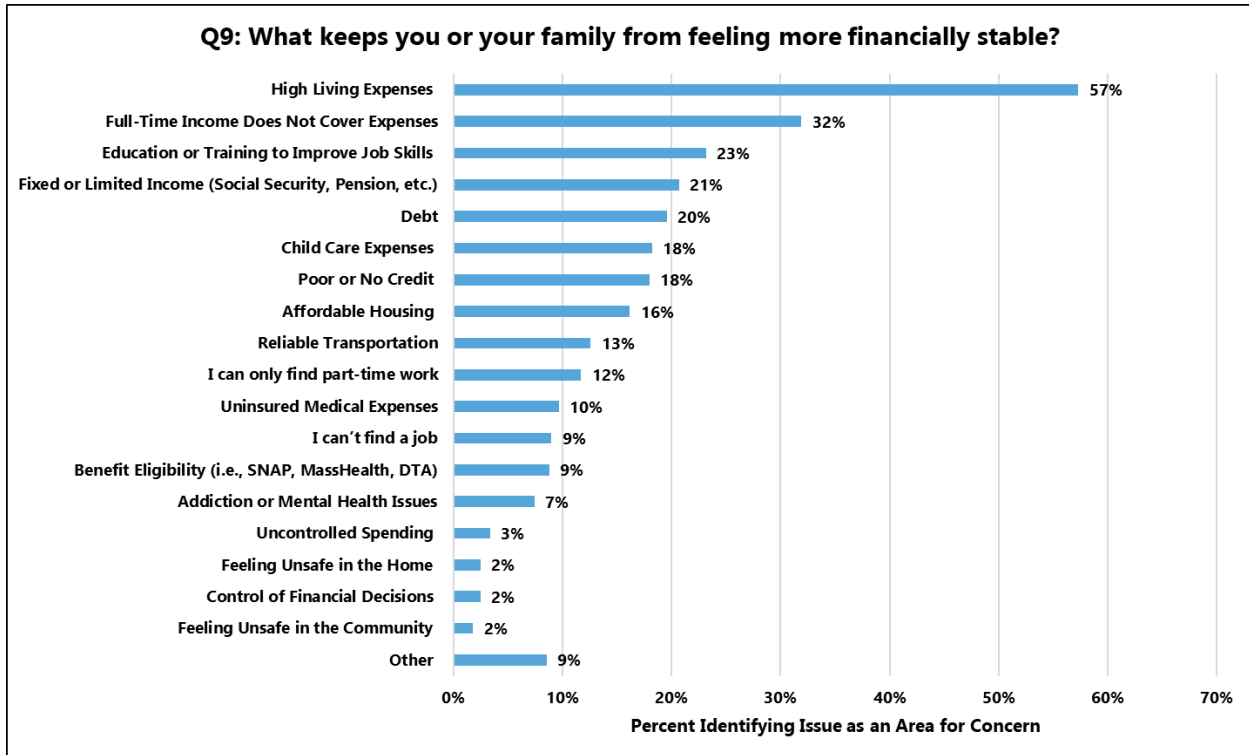


Figure 5.3. The percentage breakdown of barriers to respondent and their family feeling more financially stable.

Primary among the top five responses to the question 'What keeps you or family from feeling more financially stable,' was high living expenses (57%), full-time pay does not cover living expenses (32%), lack of education and training to improve job skills (23%), insufficient fixed income (21%), and debt (20%). These top five individual-level needs were determined directly from survey responses.

High Living Expenses

Affordable housing, a top community need for respondents, is out of reach for some with 21% of residents putting half of their income towards housing costs and 25% putting a third of their income towards housing.⁸⁴ Additionally, over the past five years, Eastern Massachusetts (and Southern New Hampshire) have had the highest home energy prices in the country, falling between 35-45% above the U.S average.⁸⁵ As more money per paycheck is used for rent/mortgage and utility costs, less can be spent on other necessities such as healthcare and food.

Insufficient Income from Wages

Wages from full-time work or working multiple jobs are not keeping pace with rising costs of living. Many residents expressed concern over their uncertain economic futures, the state of the economy, the possibility of a recession, and workplace layoffs. In focus groups with Head Start families hosted by LEO and MAPC, LEO's clients expressed that constant stress over stalled income and rising expenses is negatively impacting their mental and physical health: "*Tanto la comida, como la renta, como los billes ha subido mucho. Y en realidad los sueldos siguen siendo los mismos. El pago mínimo está quince. Y la verdad es no da para nada* [Everything like food, rent, and bills has gone up a lot. And in reality, the salaries have continued to stay the same.]"

Lack of Education and Training to Improve Job Skills

The lack of or low level of education prevents families from finding affordable housing. Many higher paying jobs located in Lynn require skilled labor and are concentrated in healthcare and manufacturing. Some low-income Lynn residents must travel outside of Lynn to their jobs in the service, transportation, hospitality and retail industries, adding to their mounting expenses (see "Lack of Jobs").

Insufficient Fixed Income

During our survey period, household finances were negatively impacted further by the ending of the American Rescue Act of 2021 and the extra benefits it afforded families during the COVID-19 national public health emergency. Included among many were the ending of the Advanced Child Tax Credit, extended Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) programs and temporary COVID-related increases in SNAP (Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program) benefits. This loss of monthly income has collided with the rising costs of housing, food and gas and is forcing families to choose which bills to pay.

Debt

Individuals and families reported being unable to save money for unexpected occurrences/emergencies because of ongoing debt. When asked if households had \$500 saved for emergencies, 61% of respondents said they did not. The most common reasons were debt and rising costs of basic needs resources, including housing, food, transportation and education.

Community-Level Needs

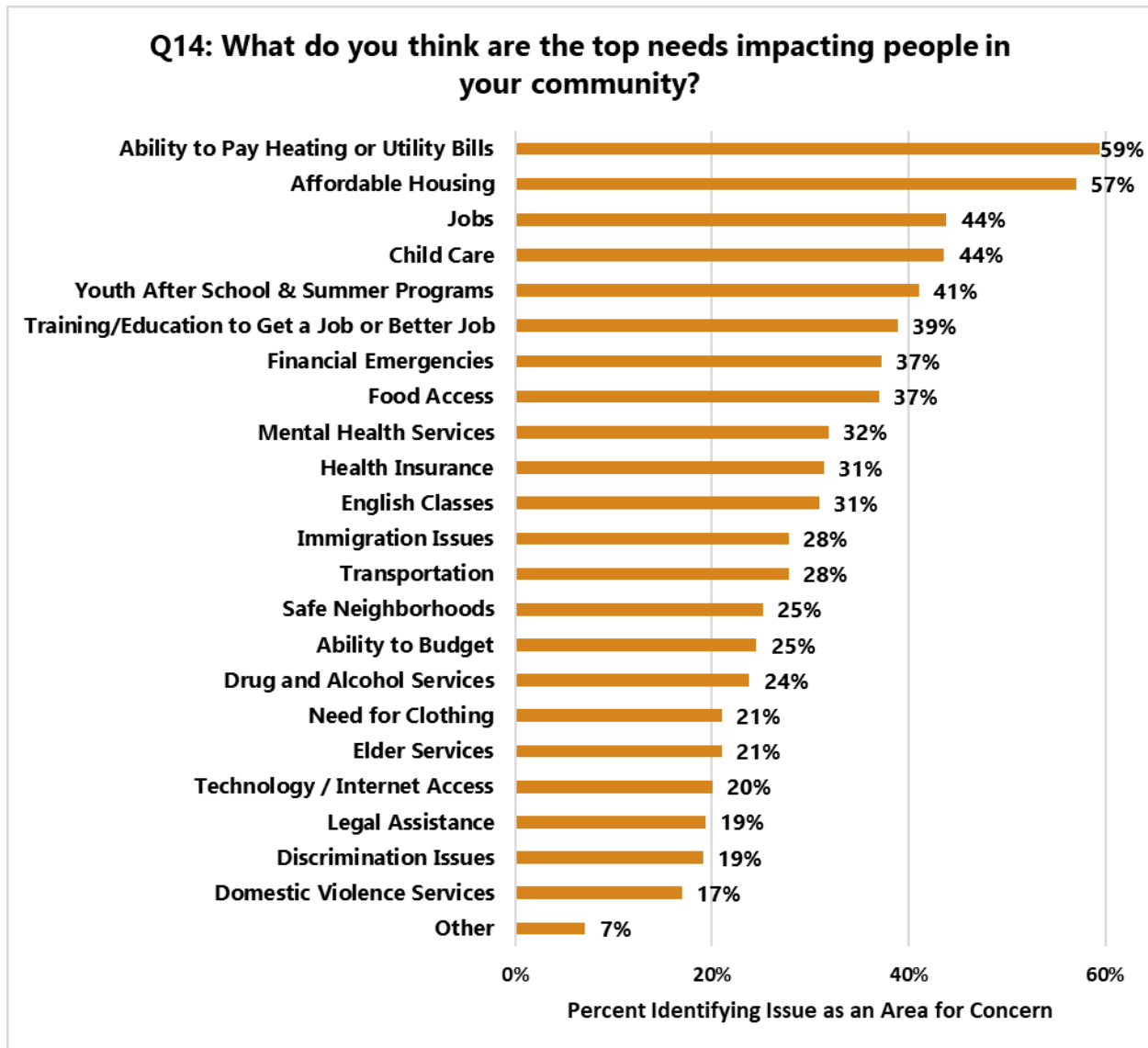


Figure 5.4. The percentage breakdown of perceived needs impacting the community.

Survey responses related to needs impacting the community highlighted the following top five stressors: inability to pay heat/utility bills (59%), lack of affordable housing (57%), lack of jobs (44%), insufficient childcare (44%), and lack of after-school/summer programs (41%), (Figure 5.4).

Inability to Pay Heat/Utility Bills

The most urgent need reported by survey respondents was that families are unable to afford their heating/utility bill expenses (59% according to Figure 5.4). This response is supported by the data in Figure 5.3 showing high living expenses being a top need for individuals and families

(57%). The survey outcome is further supported by the fact that 63% of those receiving LEO services received Fuel Assistance and 26% received Basic Needs Assistance, which also has a utility component (Figure 5.2).

Lack of Affordable Housing

In LEO's catchment area, the pressing community need is the lack of affordable housing, notably in Lynn. The scarcity of affordable housing places a heavy burden on our community members, impacting their well-being and quality of life. According to the city's survey Vision Lynn, 45% of Lynn's homes are family-sized, which falls short of the 65% of households that are family-based.⁸⁹ Addressing this is vital to ensure housing security and enhance the overall resilience of Greater Lynn

Lack of Jobs

Residents of Greater Lynn are faced with the daunting prospect of traveling long distances to access and sustain quality employment. To create a more equitable and thriving community, it is imperative that we work collaboratively to identify and implement solutions that bridge the gap in job availability and create opportunities for gainful employment within our local area.

Insufficient Childcare and Lack of After-School / Summer Programs

A lack of safe and affordable childcare resources is barrier for families to maintain work and pursue educational and workforce training opportunities. The majority of LEO's Head Start client families (98.6% from Table 3.5) come from Lynn. The City of Lynn is currently working to expand early childhood education programming to provide more childcare for pre-kindergarten aged students.⁹⁰ The section below ("Focus Groups") details further information on this need.

Focus Groups

To explore the needs of individuals and families in the Greater Lynn communities, focus groups were held. The qualitative data gleaned from focus groups supports the survey data. Many people reported having little to no money set aside for emergencies, despite working one or more jobs. Witnessing layoffs and inflation in the face of stagnant wages, focus group participants feared job security and lamented the lack of quality jobs in Lynn. Some families interviewed have lived in doubled-up situations, meaning they are sharing living accommodations with another family (related or non-related) to leverage the burden of rising rents. Other needs mentioned were more after school programs for the older children, in-person evening and weekend classes for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), financial coaching classes for parents, and clean family-friendly public parks where they can spend a few hours away from cramped living situations.

LEO's Efforts in Strengthening the Community

The community assessment aids LEO in identifying, understanding, and prioritizing the needs of our service area. The next step is to develop a strategic plan that leverages, coordinates or expands existing resources while identifying gaps in service and opportunities for LEO to initiate effective plans of action to meet the needs of the community. Listed below are notable partnerships and accomplishments of LEO's, illustrating its mission to strengthen the Greater Lynn community through resources and services that provide opportunities for children, families and individuals to thrive.

Community Development Block Grant: LEO was awarded \$75,000 through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). The funding was used to address and mitigate food insecurity in Lynn. LEO partnered with The Harrington School to provide food insecurity relief to families via a monthly grocery delivery where participants had autonomy over food items that they received. From March to June of 2023, this supplemental food project served 19 households. Additionally, LEO purchased and assembled 448 food boxes containing protein, vegetables, pasta and rice. Collectively, LEO's Head Start/Early Head Start Families as well as LEO employees received over 250 of these boxes, and over 150 boxes were delivered to Girl's Inc., Demakes YMCA, and Gregg House for distribution to their clients or employees.

Distribution of Over \$1M in Emergency Assistance Funds: In April 2020, LEO was chosen by the Essex County Community Foundation (ECCF) and United Way to manage over \$1M in emergency COVID-19 relief assistance for households that did not qualify for traditional forms of government assistance. Part of LEO's responsibility to ECCF was to establish and coordinate an intake and distribution process among six agencies serving vulnerable populations in Lynn. Our fiscal department processed checks payable to nearly 1,250 households, representing a 324% increase from FY19.

Greater Boston Food Bank Partnership: Since 2016, through partnership with the Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB), LEO has been one of Lynn's Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) providers, distributing an end of month supplemental food package to some of our most vulnerable community members. For seven years our program has served upwards of 100 seniors monthly with fresh produce, frozen protein and shelf stable goods designed to meet their specific nutritional and dietary needs. In addition to providing food, distribution days have proven to be an avenue for community outreach and engagement. The active and civic-minded seniors contribute to the growth and success of our programs and strengthen our community with their willingness to spread the word and provide translation and transportation services to friends and neighbors.

Head Start Education & Family Services: From March to July of 2020, LEO provided home deliveries of over 1,000 food boxes, 3,000 diapers, 550 packages of PPE, and other hard-to-find household items to Head Start families. In April, our teachers pivoted to remote learning, becoming one of the first agencies to do so. Learning materials were posted to Dojo classroom, Zoom was used for learning activities and circle time, and educational materials were delivered to each household. In May, “rolling” preschool graduation was conducted with teaching staff delivering diplomas and mortarboards to every child’s home complete with socially distanced pictures of students and attending staff.

Housing Lynn: A Plan for Inclusive Growth: LEO’s Chief Program Officer, Lilian Romero participated as a Steering Committee member of Housing Lynn, a partnership of Lynn Housing Authority and Neighborhood Development (LHAND), the Lynn Mayor’s Office, and Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to develop the City’s Housing Production Plan. The Plan sets a clear agenda for the type, amount and location of housing developments and standards for housing policies over the next five years. Priorities were determined through a community-driven process guided by the Steering Committee, comprised of Lynn residents and organizations working on issues pertaining to social justice, social service, education, housing, economic development, and job security.

Lynn Education District: LEO is a founding partner of the Lynn Education District (LED), a collaborative group of child-serving organizations including Lynn Public Schools, the local charter school, private schools, and several youth-serving nonprofits that work together to advance the needs of children and their families. LED meets bi-monthly to identify and address administrative challenges and opportunities for collaborative work. During Governor Charlie Baker’s administration, the LED had a direct line of communication to Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito, giving its members an open feedback channel regarding the impact of COVID-19 related state guidance, various regulations, and state funding decisions.

MA COVID-19 Community Grant by Health Resources: Focused on educating communities hardest hit by COVID-19, the purpose of the grant was to provide a multi-language information and education campaign regarding best practices and procedures to reduce the risk of contracting and spreading the virus. The terms of LEO’s grant were extended beyond the initial grant period to allow promotion of vaccine confidence, particularly within marginalized cultural groups in Lynn.

North Shore Community College Career Placement Partnership: LEO and North Shore Community College (NSCC) have been long time partners and through coordination of

resources have created a mutually beneficial exchange of talent and ideas. NSCC has assisted LEO with recruitment and placement of our AmeriCorps VISTAs, and NSCC graduates have a strong connection with LEO's Head Start early childhood education centers. LEO also partnered with NSCC Talent Search, to both support and have access to students in the TRIO program. TRIO is a federally funded college access program for high school and middle school students who would be first-generation college students. Through a partnership between NSCC and Lynn Public Schools, LEO was promoted as one of the agencies where high school students could gain practical experience in either accounting or early childhood education. Students were awarded college credit for completing internships in LEO's Fiscal Department or one of our early education centers. Every semester, one or two students participated in this initiative. Additionally, Lilian Romero, Chief Program Officer, is part of the NSCC advisory board.

Paycheck Protection Program: LEO applied for and received a loan for a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) to continue to pay our staff who were unable to perform their regular duties due to COVID-19 restrictions. With this loan, agency staff redirected and adapted their service model to assist with crisis management, including delivery of food boxes, processing emergency assistance applications, and placing over 4,000 wellness phone calls to current and past LEO clients. Content of the calls included COVID-19 prevention tips, reminders to complete the 2020 Census, and information about LEO services. Without PPP, LEO would not have had the additional human resources to complete this work.

Secretary of State Census Outreach Grant: LEO was in the final stages of completing work for a 2020 Census outreach grant from the Secretary of State's office, awarded to cities with hard-to-count census tracts, when the state locked down for COVID. In partnership with City Hall, Lynn Public Schools, and North Shore Community College, LEO conducted a public information campaign regarding the importance of completing the census with a specific focus on immigrant households. Our plan included a door-to-door campaign in undercounted neighborhoods. Our extraordinary Board member and volunteer Thelma Velasquez, winner of the 2019 Myra Kraft Community MVP Award, reached out for volunteers willing to place a lawn sign on their property to promote census completion in low-response neighborhoods. We engaged businesses that continued to operate during the lockdown. Local take-out establishments, insurance agencies, and bodegas were asked to post signs in their windows and include flyers in pizza boxes and delivery and shopping bags. Large banners were posted in high-traffic areas in the city. As a result, census completion in the city of Lynn surpassed 2010 numbers.

Salem State University & Head Start Collaboration: On November 15, 2022, through a collaborative planning process rooted in civic engagement and social justice, LEO educators and 12 graduate students from the Salem State University's Occupational Therapy Program (SSU OT) program offered over 30 Head Start families a lively evening of play-based learning experiences. While some SSU OT students engaged children in play stations, others worked with parents to create at-home learning activities that promoted gross motor, fine motor, and emotional regulation skills. LEO and SSU's OT program began collaborating in 2019 and this was the first project they collaborated on after COVID-19.

Greater Lynn Area Community Needs Assessment

Poverty

Poverty is both a cause and a consequence of poor health. Poverty increases the chances of poor health. Poor health, in turn, traps communities in poverty. The cost of doctors' fees, prescriptions, and transportation to reach a health provider can be devastating for families living in poverty. Conversely, families with higher incomes can more easily purchase healthy foods and pay for health services and transportation.

Learn more about the impact of poverty below:

- People Living in Poverty
- Low Income Population
- Labor Force and Poverty
- Population Utilizing SNAP
- Population Utilizing WIC
- Population Living With Disability
- Population Without Health Insurance
- Medicaid Coverage
- Digital Access

People Living in Poverty

People in poverty face significant barriers to self-sufficiency, health care, and other resources needed for economic prosperity. Breaking the cycle of poverty means removing barriers. Importantly, it means increasing access to nearby jobs with better pay to afford basic needs. It also means increasing quality, access, and affordability of basics of food, housing, transportation, childcare, and medical care.



People Below Poverty Level

20,253

People
LEO

77,689

People
Essex County, MA

668,780

People
Massachusetts

People Below Poverty Level

9.8%

of People
LEO

9.7%

of People
Essex County, MA

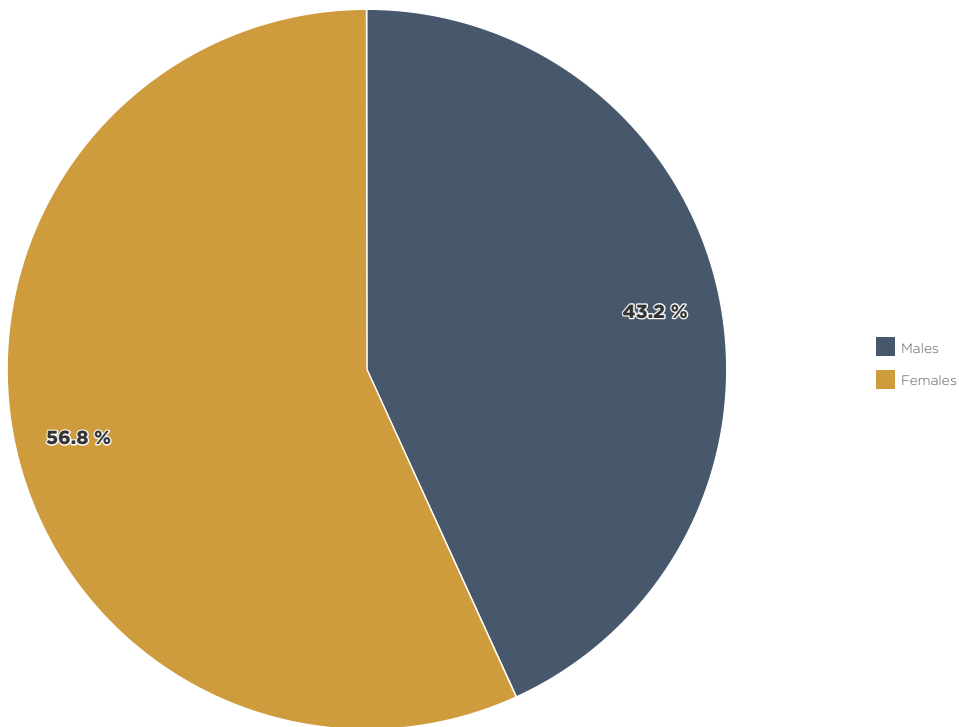
9.6%

of People
Massachusetts

Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

By Sex

People Below Poverty Level by Sex

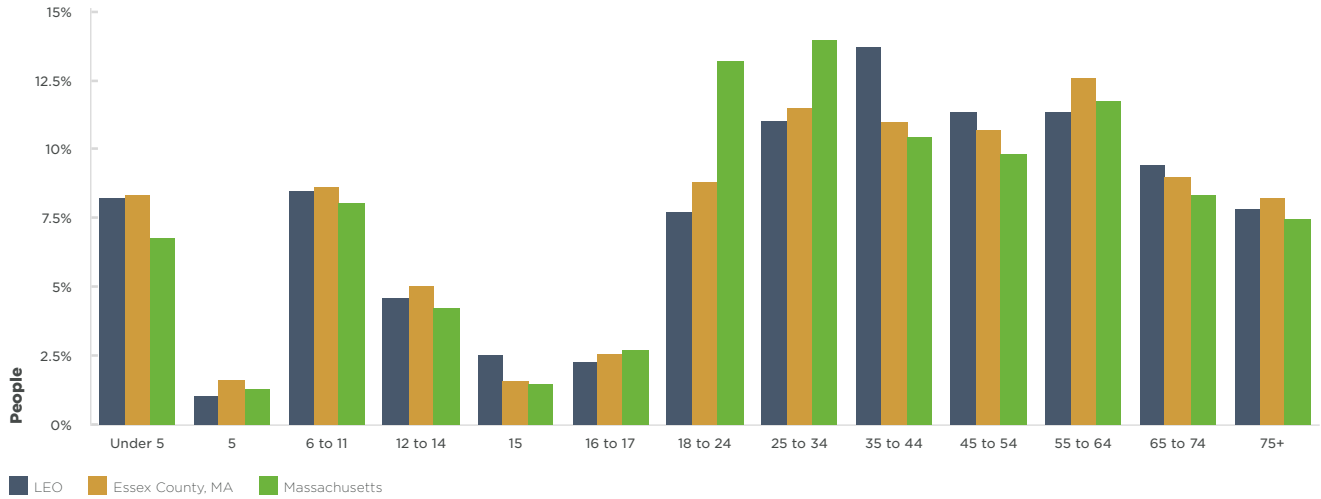


LEO

Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

By Age

People Below Poverty Level by Age



Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

By Race/Ethnicity

Poverty Rate by Race/Ethnicity

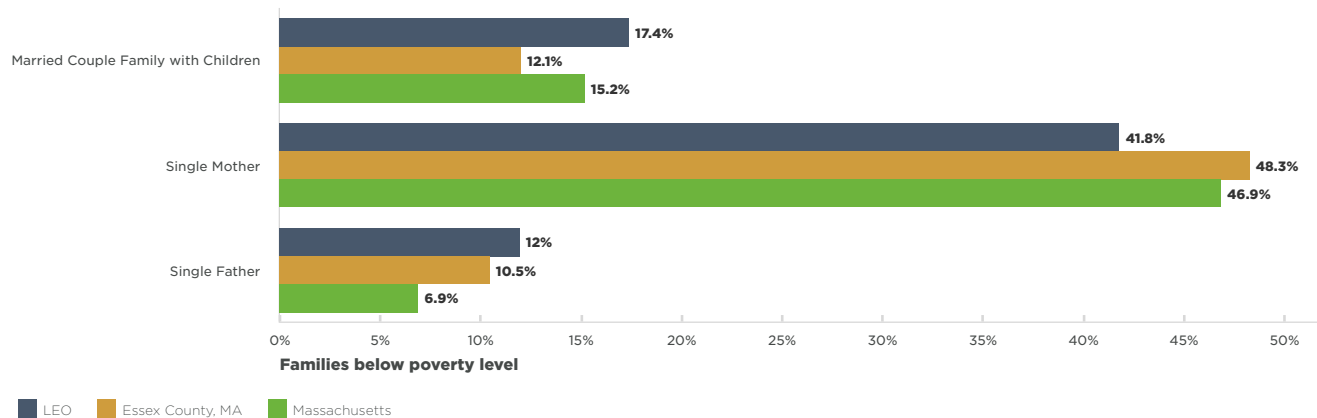
Data Sources	LEO	Essex County, MA	Massachusetts
2017-2021 Asian	7.7%	7.4%	11.4%
2017-2021 Black or African American	18.6%	16.4%	16.7%
2017-2021 Hispanic or Latino	16.6%	19.7%	22.5%
2017-2021 Multiracial	10.9%	12.9%	16.3%
2017-2021 Native American	35.3%	23.6%	24%
2017-2021 Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0%	0%	18.3%
2017-2021 Other	15.5%	20.3%	21.1%
2017-2021 White	8%	7.9%	7.8%

Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

*This data represents the percent of each group that is below poverty level.

By Families with Children

Below Poverty Level by Family Type with Children



Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

By Educational Attainment

Poverty Rate by Educational Attainment

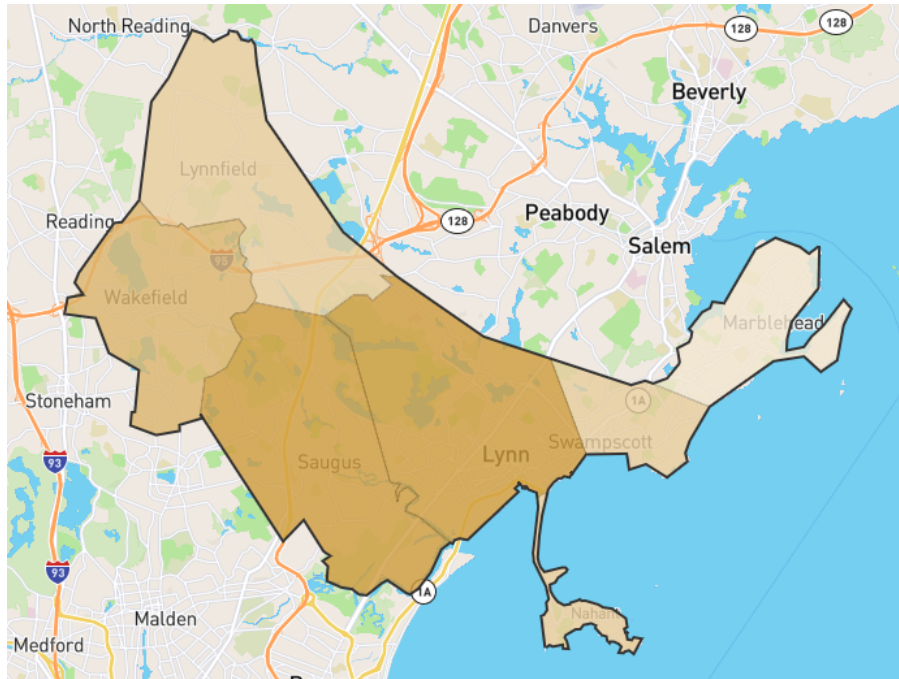
Data Sources	LEO	Essex County, MA	Massachusetts
2017-2021 Less than High School	21%	24%	23.5%
2017-2021 High School Degree	11.2%	11.8%	12%
2017-2021 Some College or Associate's Degree	9.3%	8.8%	8.7%
2017-2021 Bachelor's Degree or Higher	4%	3.5%	4%

Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

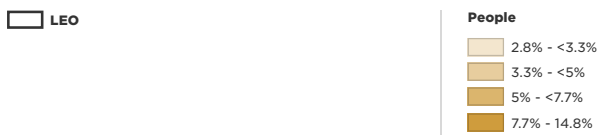
*This data represents the percent of each group that is below poverty level. All groups represent people ages 25 and over.

By Location

People Below Poverty Level



© Mapbox © OpenStreetMap



Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

Low Income Population

The U.S. Census identifies individuals with a household income of up to 200% of the poverty level as low income. They are more likely to face barriers to healthy choices, such as longer distances to healthy food or affordable healthcare, and are more likely to be exposed to environmental risks, such as low-quality housing.



Low Income Population

47,164

People
LEO

177,241

People
Essex County, MA

1,449,494

People
Massachusetts

Low Income Population

22.8%

of People
LEO

22%

of People
Essex County, MA

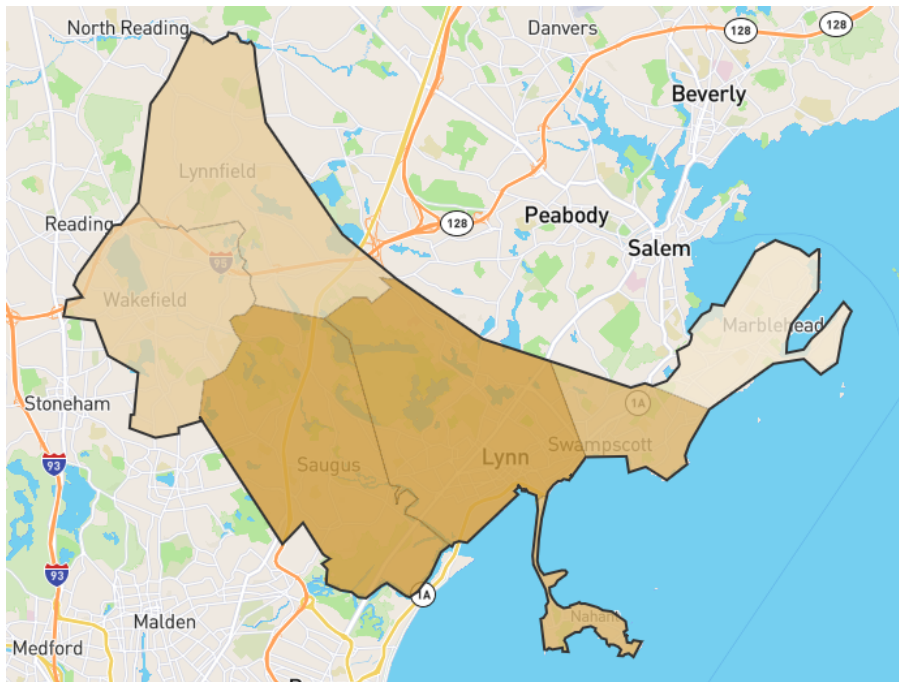
20.7%

of People
Massachusetts

Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

*This dataset represents the income to poverty ratio for those people 200 percent or below the poverty level (low income). The people at 100 percent of the poverty level are at the officially defined poverty level.

Low Income Population



© Mapbox © OpenStreetMap



Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

Labor Force and Poverty

Barriers to employment for residents in poverty are plentiful. Factors like "job availability and pay; qualifications, education, and training; transportation; childcare and family issues; crime and substance misuse; housing instability; and disabilities and mental and physical health"²⁴ contribute to the difficulties those in poverty face in the job market. Despite being employed, people in poverty are often faced with incomes that are not sufficient to lift them and their families out of poverty and ensure decent living conditions. Providing the necessary resources and opportunities will give people in poverty and in the labor force the capabilities to find and maintain jobs with decent pay.



Below Poverty Level and In Labor Force

5,169

People
LEO

21,671

People
Essex County, MA

185,564

People
Massachusetts

Below Poverty Level and In Labor Force

4.6%

of people in labor force
LEO

4.9%

of people in labor force
Essex County, MA

4.9%

of people in labor force
Massachusetts



Below Poverty Level and Not in Labor Force

10,017

People
LEO

36,279

People
Essex County, MA

336,163

People
Massachusetts

Below Poverty Level and Not in Labor Force

19%

of people not in labor force
LEO

18.1%

of people not in labor force
Essex County, MA

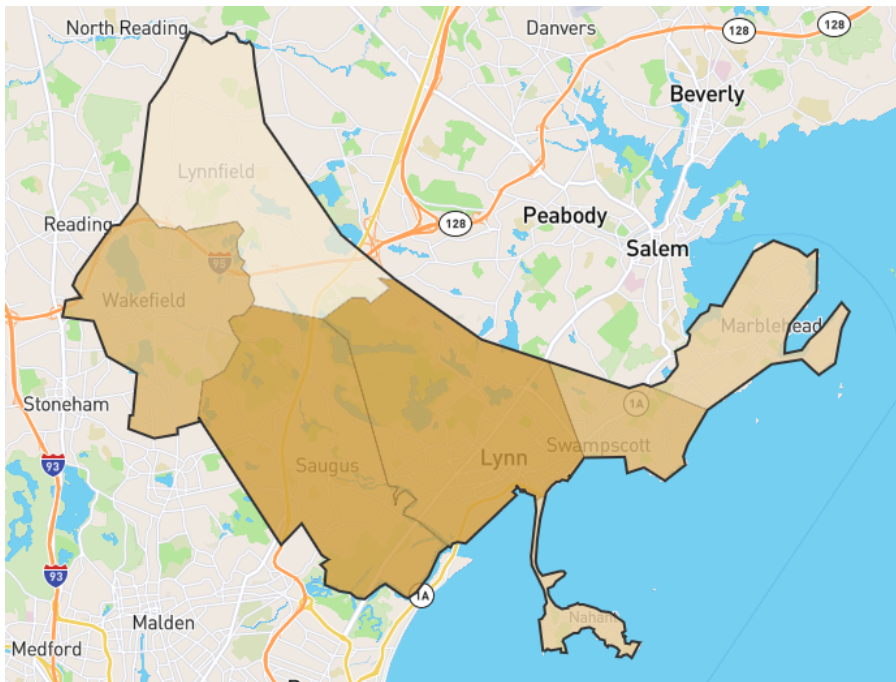
19.3%

of people not in labor force
Massachusetts

Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

People in Labor Force

People In Labor Force Below Poverty Level



© Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

LEO

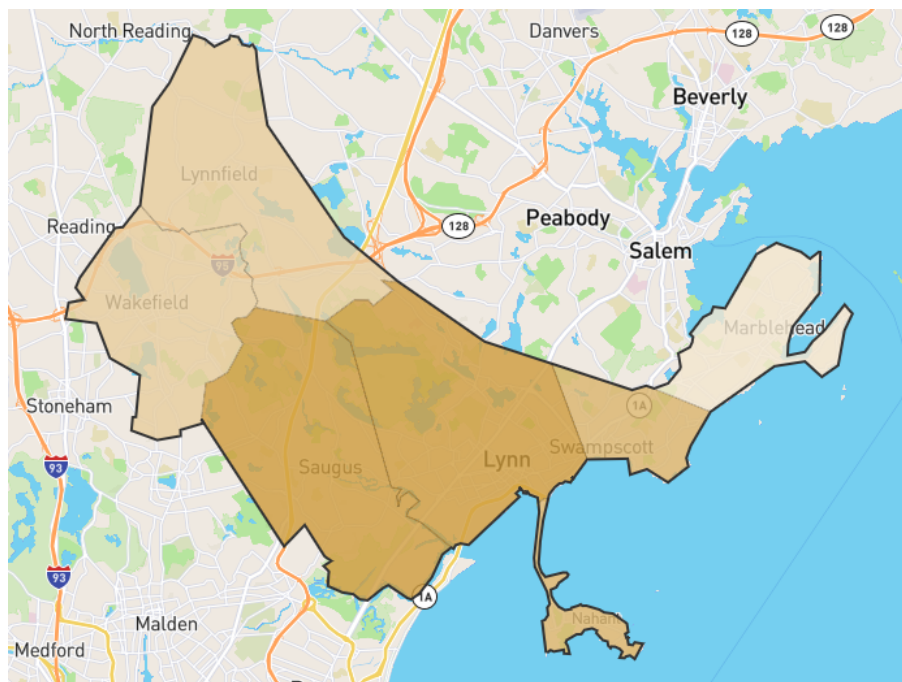
People in Labor Force

- 0.7% - <1.3%
- 1.3% - <2.6%
- 2.6% - <3.4%
- 3.4% - 7.1%

Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

People not in Labor Force

People Not in Labor Force Below Poverty Level



© Mapbox © OpenStreetMap



Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

Population Utilizing SNAP

For vulnerable families, nutrition assistance can be the most effective stepping stone for stabilizing their economic situation and their health. SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) helps families put more food on the table by increasing their food budget, and offers education on how to prepare healthy low-cost meals and make healthy choices.



Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP

11,797.9

Households
LEO

44,882

Households
Essex County, MA

331,259

Households
Massachusetts

Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP

15.2%

of Households
LEO

14.6%

of Households
Essex County, MA

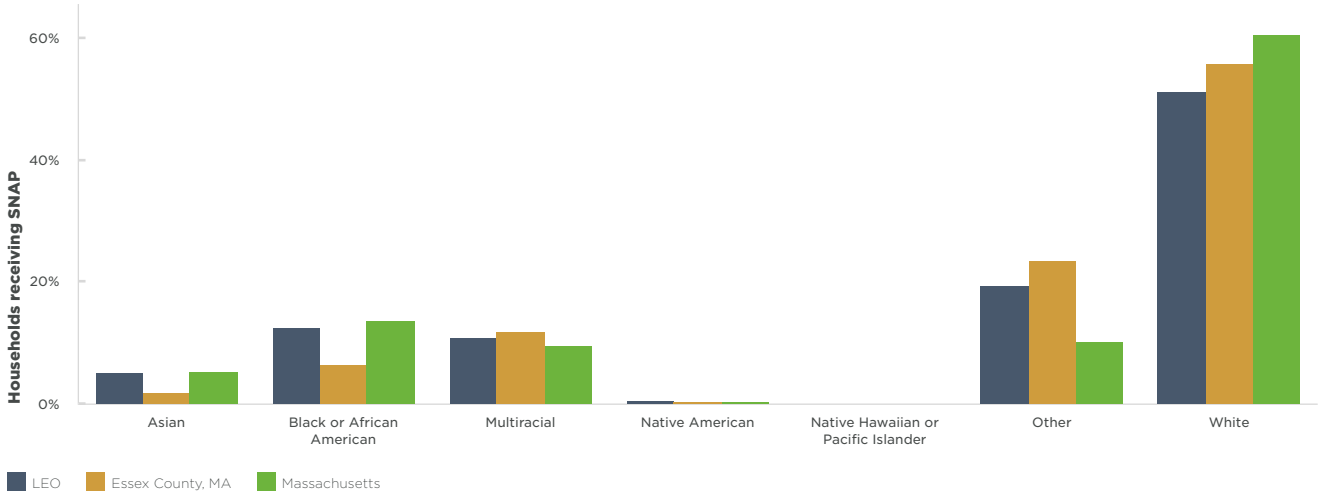
12.2%

of Households
Massachusetts

Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

By Race

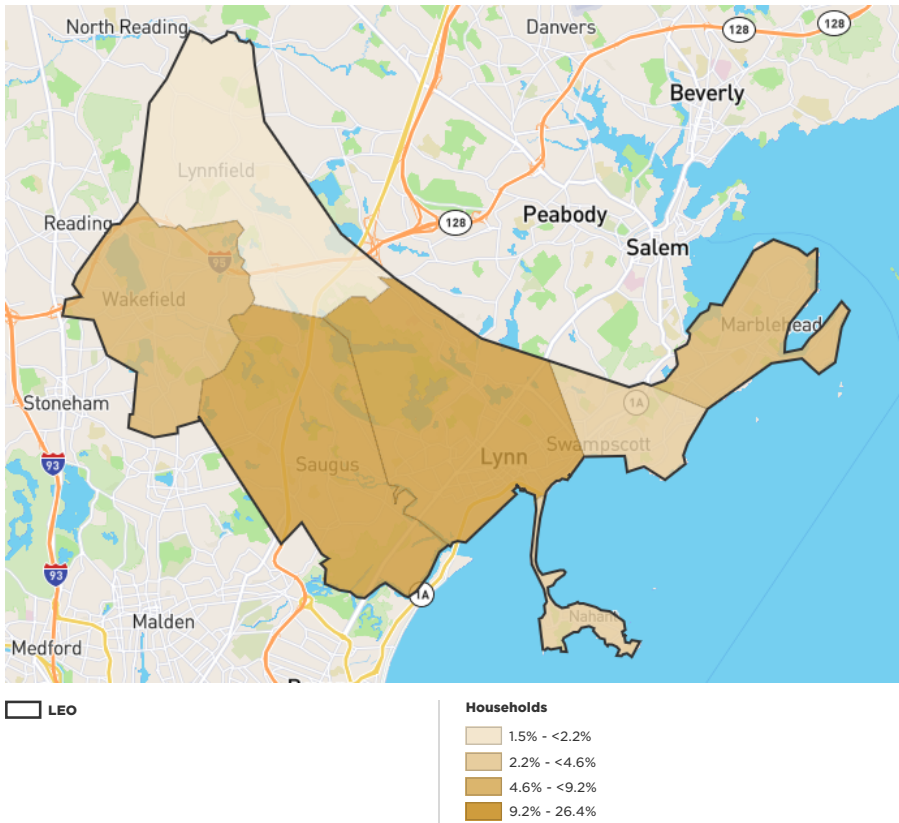
Households Receiving SNAP Benefits by Race



Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

By Location

Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP



© Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

Population Utilizing WIC

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is a program designed to help families access quality nutrition. Participation in WIC for eligible families may improve birth outcomes, breastfeeding rates, and children’s cognitive development, increase nutrition density and prenatal care rates, and could even have a positive effect on immunization rates.



Percent People participating in WIC

No data

LEO

1.6%

Essex County, MA

1.6%

Massachusetts

Sources: USDA ERS Food Envir Atlas 2017

Population Living With Disability

Disabilities include physical difficulties, like trouble walking, and developmental and behavioral disabilities. [National Disability Institute](#)² reports that "disabled adults experience poverty at nearly twice the rate of their non disabled counterparts." The Americans with Disability Act was the first step toward creating fully accessible communities. We can build equity for people with disabilities by making it easier to access needed resources.



Population Living with a Disability

25,053

People

LEO

93,758

People

Essex County, MA

803,600

People

Massachusetts

Population Living with a Disability

12.2%

of people

LEO

11.7%

of people

Essex County, MA

11.6%

of people

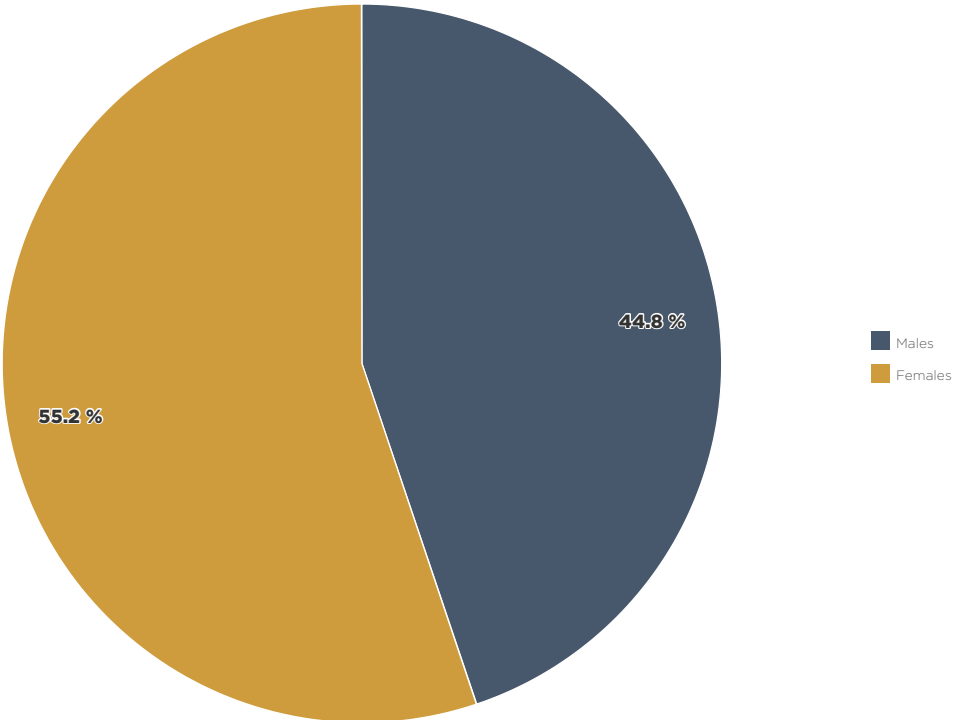
Massachusetts

Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

* The Census Bureau defines a disability as 'a long-lasting physical, mental, or emotional condition.'

By Sex

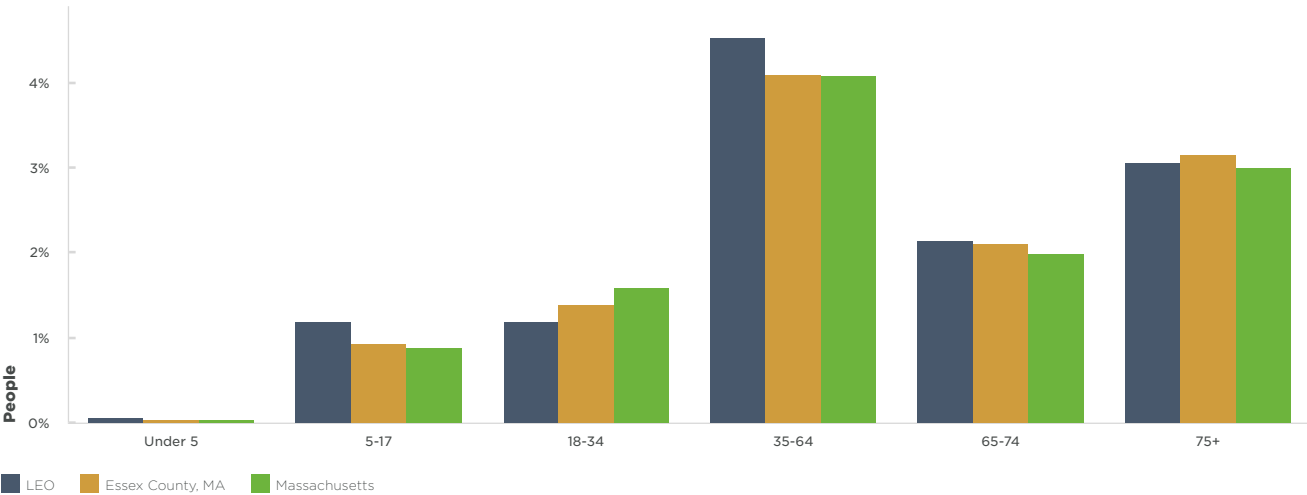
People Living With Disability by Sex



LEO
Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

By Age

People Living With Disability by Age



Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

By Race/Ethnicity

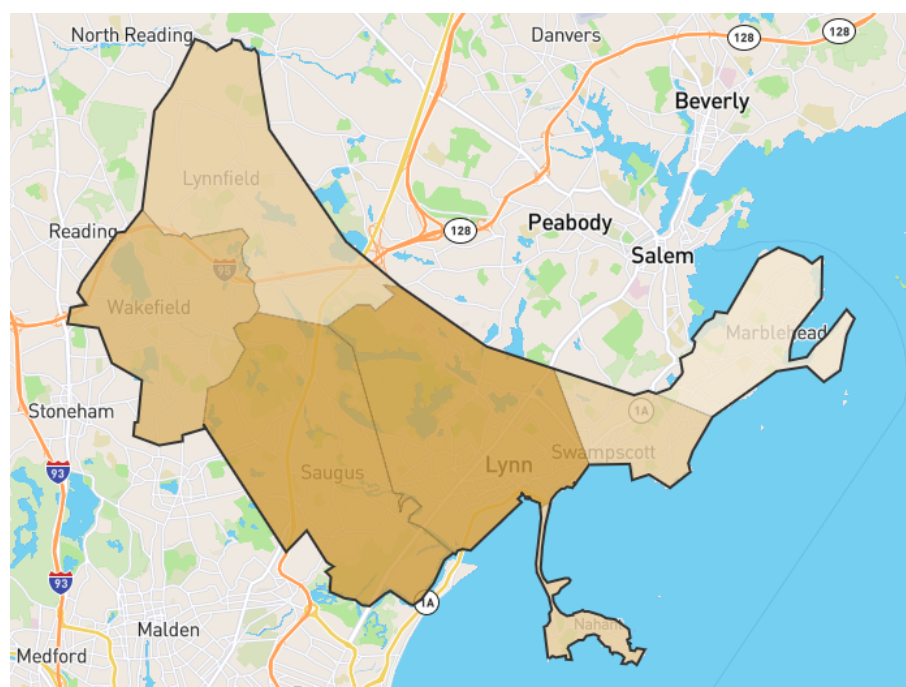
Data Sources	LEO	Essex County, MA	Massachusetts
2017-2021 Asian	10%	5.9%	6%
2017-2021 Black or African American	16.4%	12.3%	12.9%
2017-2021 Hispanic or Latino	11.2%	11.2%	12.4%
2017-2021 Multiracial	12.9%	11.4%	10.5%
2017-2021 Native American	17%	20.4%	19.5%
2017-2021 Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0%	0%	7.5%
2017-2021 Other	9.4%	11.6%	12.1%
2017-2021 White	12.2%	12%	12%

Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

*This data represents the percent of each group with a disability. Each race includes both people who identify as Hispanic or Latino as well as people who do not. Hispanic or Latino includes any race.

By Location

Population Living with a Disability



© Mapbox © OpenStreetMap




Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

Population Without Health Insurance

People with comprehensive health insurance coverage are more likely to seek preventative care, which prevents illnesses, diseases, and other health problems. Most health plans must cover a set of preventive services, such as screenings and immunizations, at no cost to the insured individual. While many employers offer health insurance to their employees, a

substantial number of employers do not offer financially-achievable plans or do not offer any insurance at all. For uninsured workers, and their families, the costs of obtaining insurance coverage on their own can quickly become prohibitive.

 **Population Without Health Insurance**
6,181
People
LEO

24,080
People
Essex County, MA

192,326
People
Massachusetts

Population Without Health Insurance
3%
of People
LEO

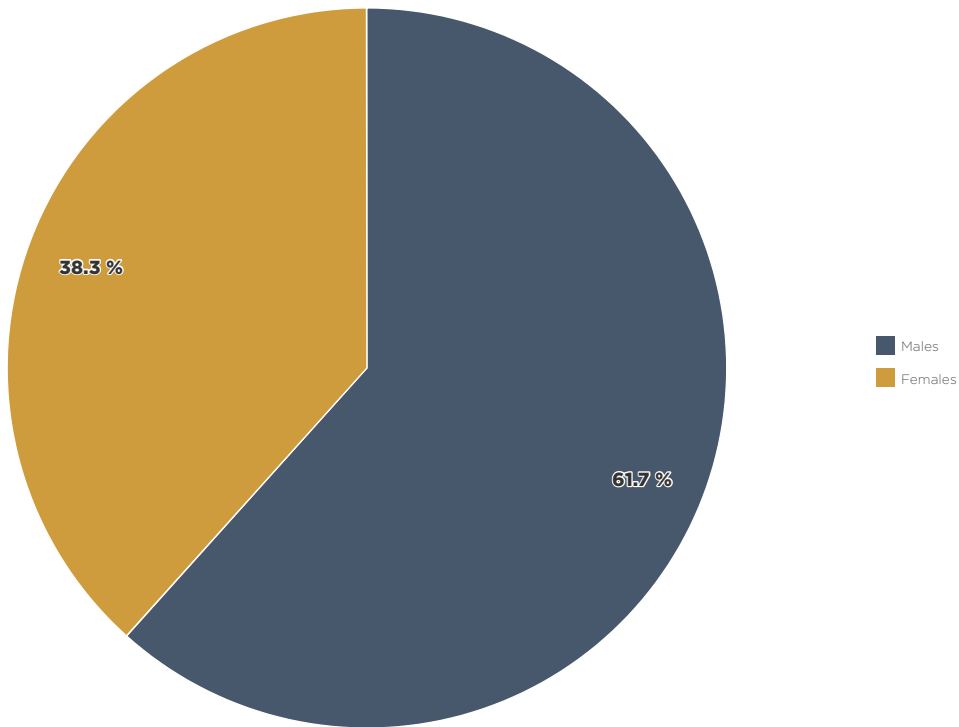
3%
of People
Essex County, MA

2.8%
of People
Massachusetts

Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

By Sex

People Without Health Insurance Coverage by Sex

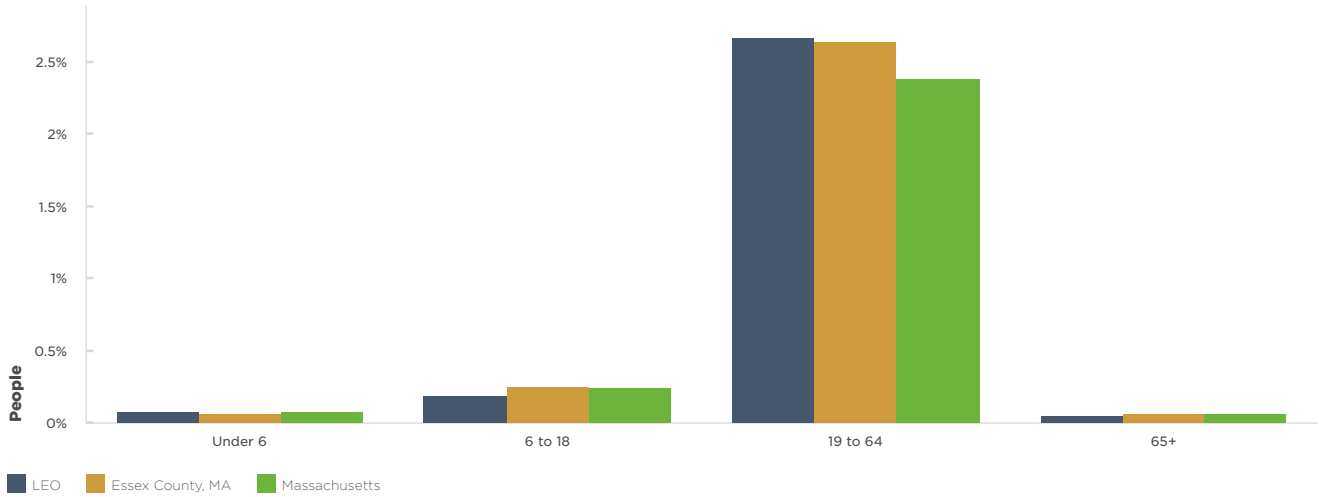


LEO

Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

By Age

Uninsured People by Age



Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

By Race/Ethnicity

People without Health Insurance by Race/Ethnicity

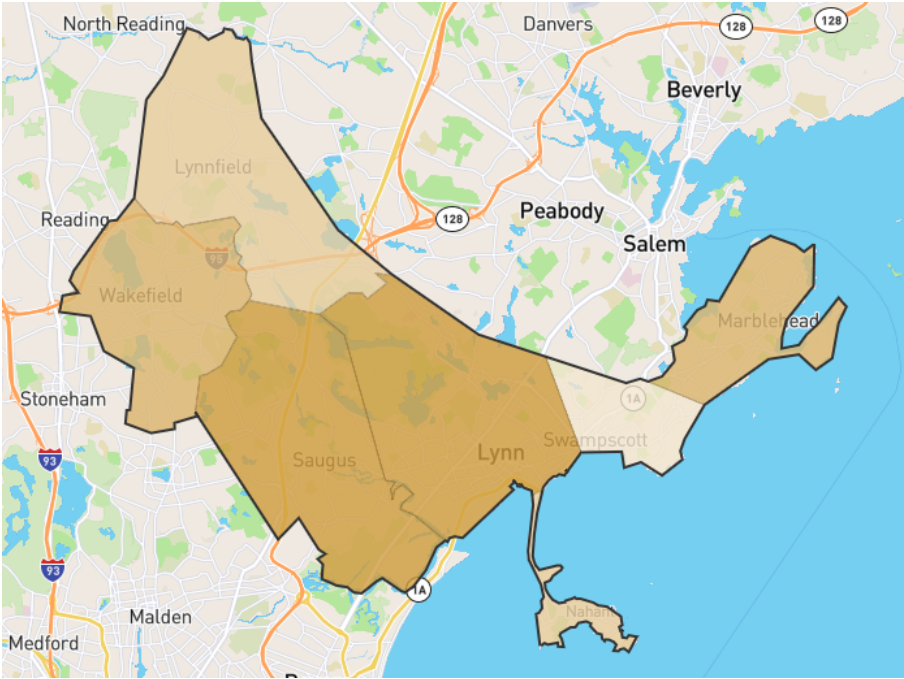
Data Sources	LEO	Essex County, MA	Massachusetts
2017-2021 Asian	2.2%	2.2%	3%
2017-2021 Black or African American	6.5%	5.4%	4.6%
2017-2021 Hispanic or Latino	4.9%	5.8%	5.5%
2017-2021 Multiracial	3.1%	3.6%	3.8%
2017-2021 Native American	25.6%	10.1%	3.6%
2017-2021 Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0%	0%	9.6%
2017-2021 Other	4.7%	6.1%	7.2%
2017-2021 White, Not Hispanic or Latino	2.1%	2.1%	2%

Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

*This data represents the percent of each group that does not have health insurance.

By Location

Population without Health Insurance



© Mapbox © OpenStreetMap



Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

Medicaid Coverage

Medicaid provides health coverage to low-income adults, children, pregnant women, elderly adults and people with disabilities. Medicare improves access to health care, increases affordability, and improves health for low-income populations.

***** **People with Medicaid Coverage**
56,685
People
LEO

201,927
People
Essex County, MA

1,558,809
People
Massachusetts

People with Medicaid Coverage
27.6%
of People
LEO

25.3%
of People
Essex County, MA

22.5%
of People
Massachusetts

***** **People without Medicaid Coverage**
148,884
People
LEO

596,084
People
Essex County, MA

5,363,496
People
Massachusetts

People without Medicaid Coverage
72.4%
of People
LEO

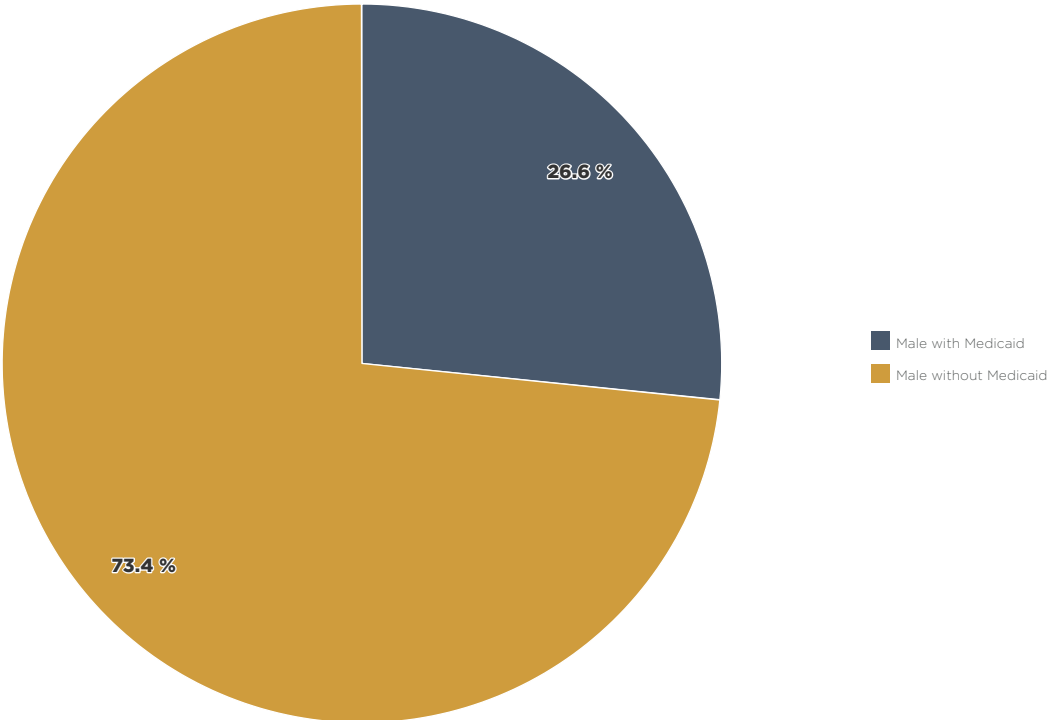
74.7%
of People
Essex County, MA

77.5%
of People
Massachusetts

Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

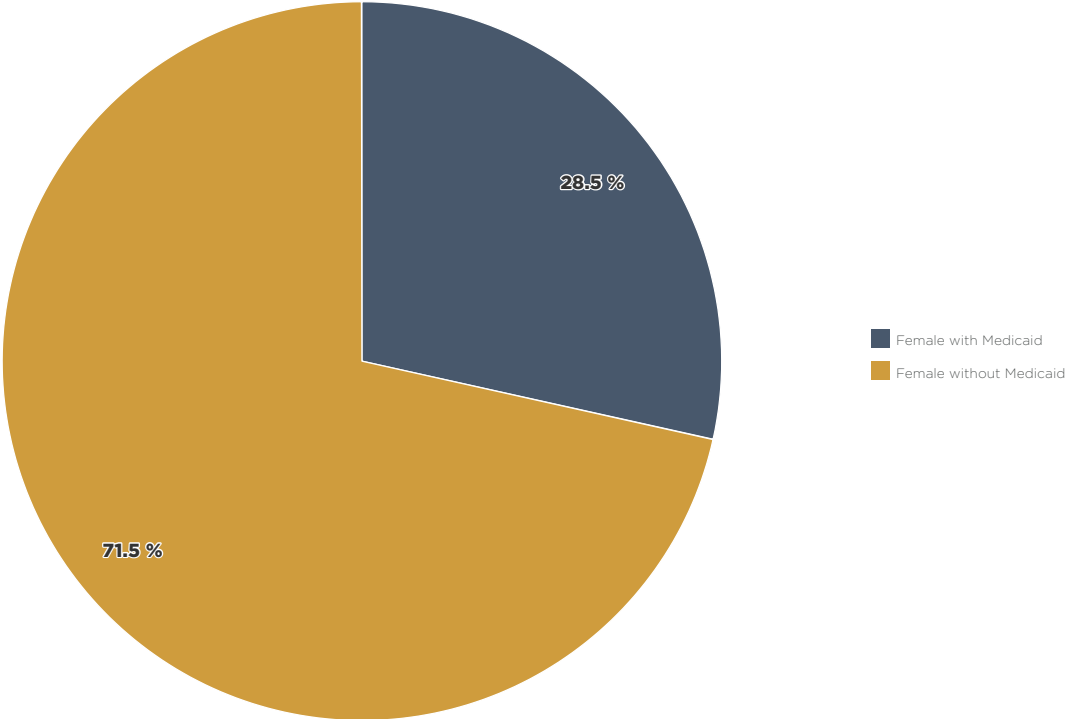
By Sex

Male People by Medicaid



LEO
Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

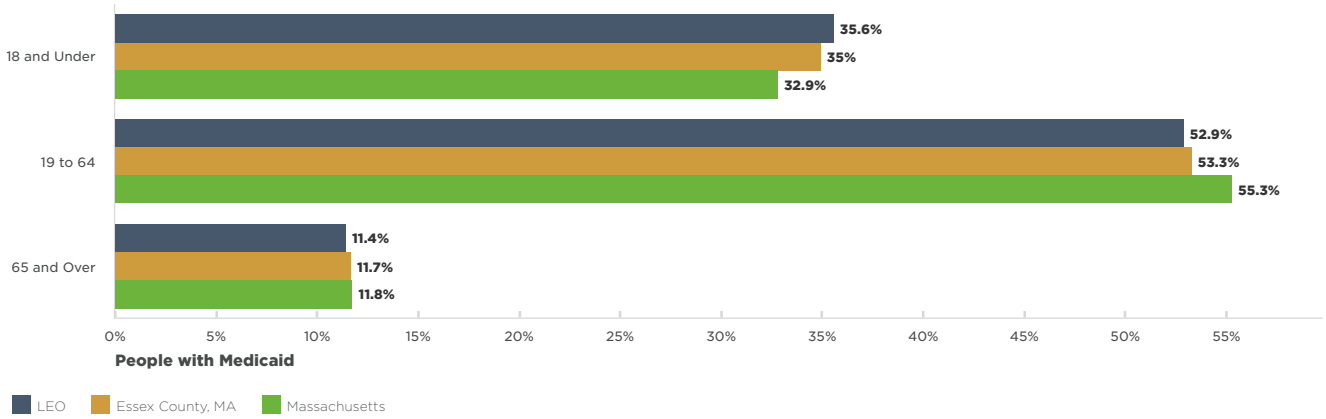
Female People by Medicaid



LEO
Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

By Age

People with Medicaid by Age



Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

Digital Access

Two factors that exclude communities from digital connectivity are poverty and proximity. If a household cannot afford a computer and an internet service provider, they are excluded. Also, households are excluded if they do not reside in an area with quality internet service.



Households With Computers

71,755

Households
LEO

286,315

Households
Essex County, MA

2,538,022

Households
Massachusetts

Households With Computers

92.3%

of Households
LEO

93%

of Households
Essex County, MA

93.5%

of Households
Massachusetts



Households Without Computers

5,974

Households
LEO

21,644

Households
Essex County, MA

176,426

Households
Massachusetts

Households Without Computers

7.7%

of Households
LEO

7%

of Households
Essex County, MA

6.5%

of Households
Massachusetts

Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021



Household With Internet Access

70,311

Households
LEO

279,933

Households
Essex County, MA

2,494,174

Households
Massachusetts

Household With Internet Access

90.5%

of Households
LEO

90.9%

of Households
Essex County, MA

91.9%

of Households
Massachusetts



Household Without Internet Access

7,418

Households
LEO

28,026

Households
Essex County, MA

220,274

Households
Massachusetts

Household Without Internet Access

9.5%

of Households
LEO

9.1%

of Households
Essex County, MA

8.1%

of Households
Massachusetts

Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

By Age

People in Households with Computer Device by Age

Data Sources	LEO	Essex County, MA	Massachusetts
2017-2021 Under age 18	98%	98.6%	98.9%
2017-2021 Age 18 to 64	97.5%	97.7%	97.9%
2017-2021 Age 65 and over	85.4%	87.1%	86.9%

Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

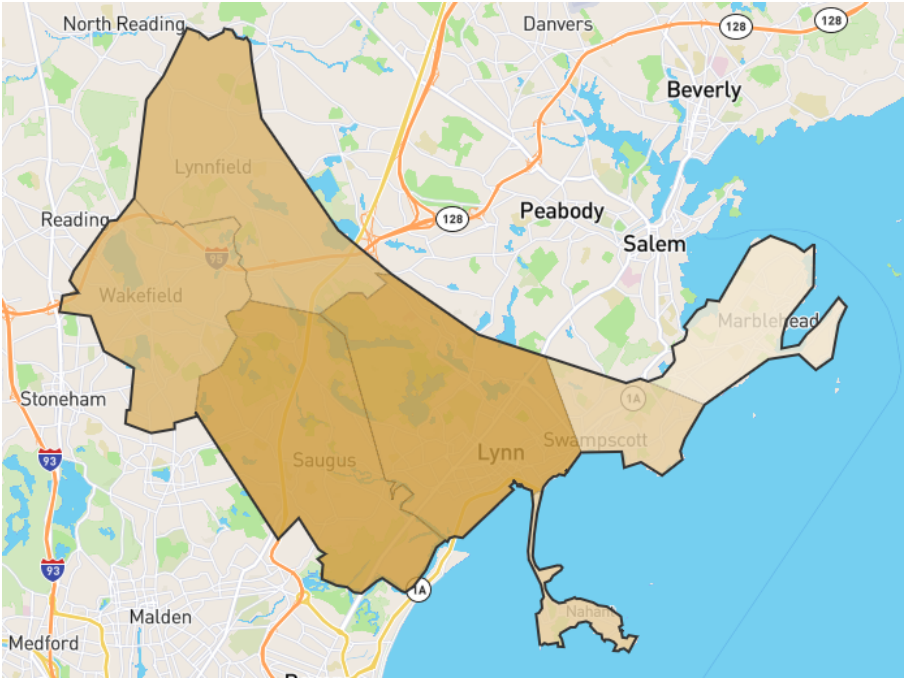
People in Households Without Computer Device by Age

Data Sources	LEO	Essex County, MA	Massachusetts
2017-2021 Under age 18	2%	1.4%	1.1%
2017-2021 Age 18 to 64	2.5%	2.3%	2.1%
2017-2021 Age 65 and over	14.6%	12.9%	13.1%

Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

By Location

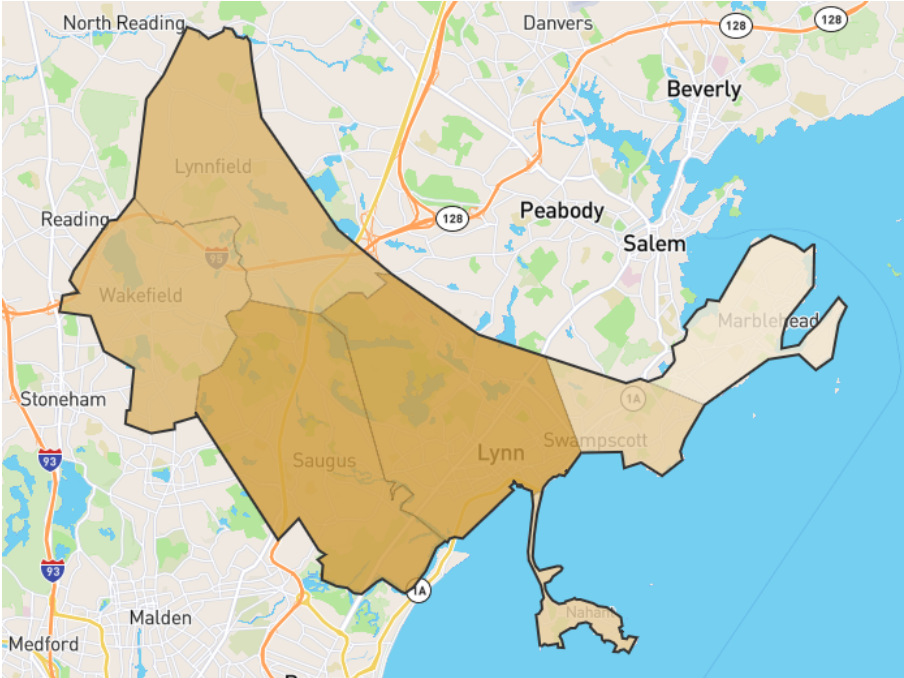
Households Without Computer



Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

© Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

Households Without Internet Access



Sources: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

© Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

End Notes

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¹⁹ "Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months." S1701.

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²⁶Ibid.

²⁷ "Selected Social Characteristics in the United States." DP02.

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²⁹ "Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months." S1701.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Ibid.

³² "Marblehead, Massachusetts." *Wikipedia*, 23 June 2023, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marblehead,_Massachusetts. Accessed 19 July 2023.

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³⁷ "Selected Social Characteristics in the United States." DP02.

³⁸ "Hispanic or Latino, and Not Hispanic or Latino by Race." P2.

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⁴¹Ibid.

⁴² "Nahant, Massachusetts." *Wikipedia*, 21 June 2023, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nahant_Massachusetts. Accessed 19 July 2023.

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⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷ "Selected Social Characteristics in the United States." DP02.

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⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷ "Selected Social Characteristics in the United States." DP02.

⁵⁸ "Hispanic or Latino, and Not Hispanic or Latino by Race." P2.

⁵⁹ "Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months." S1701.

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⁶³ "Populations and People." P1.

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⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷ "Selected Social Characteristics in the United States." DP02.

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- ⁷⁵ Ibid.
- ⁷⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷⁷ "Selected Social Characteristics in the United States." DP02.
- ⁷⁸ "Hispanic or Latino, and Not Hispanic or Latino by Race." P2.
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- ⁸¹ Ibid.
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