



2025 COMMUNITY LEVEL DATA

DESKTOP REFERENCE VERSION (MARCH 2025-2026)

United Way of Dane County relies on accurate data to track changes, make informed decisions, and ensure a consistent message across the organization about our collective impact.

DANE COUNTY POPULATION (INDIVIDUALS): 564,777¹

POVERTY

57,774 people are experiencing poverty² in Dane County (10.5% of the population).³

72% of Camp Randall could be filled with people experiencing poverty in Dane County.⁴

118,121 people in Dane County live below 200% of the federal poverty line (21.4% of the population).⁵

By Race and Ethnicity: White: 8.7%; Black or African American: 19.5%; American Indian or Alaska Native: 19.7%; Asian: 17.2%; Some Other Race: 17.6%; Two or More Races 16.0%; Hispanic or Latino: 16.4%⁶

CHILD POVERTY

2,511 children under 5 (8.6%) are experiencing poverty in Dane County.⁷

837 red wagons could be filled with children under 5 experiencing poverty in Dane County.⁸

By Race and Ethnicity: White: 3.2%; Black or African American: 33.8%; Asian: 7.3%; Some Other Race: 8.4%; Two or More Races: 19.6%; Hispanic or Latino: 21.8%⁹

UNEMPLOYMENT

2.4% of individuals 16 years or older are experiencing unemployment in Dane County.¹⁰

Unemployment among Black or African American and American Indian or Alaska Native people is significantly higher than the overall rate (at 5.4% and 12.1%, respectively).¹¹

HOMELESSNESS

737 individuals (including 123 children in 217 families) were experiencing acute homelessness in 2024.¹²

Homelessness has increased by 18% from last year.

Black or African American people make up over 40% of those experiencing homelessness in Dane County despite composing 5.0% of the population.

HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION

93.0% of students completed high school in Dane County (5,672 out of 6,096) (6-year cohort).¹³

By Race and Ethnicity: White: 95.7%; Black or African American: 86.7%; Asian: 97.2%; Hispanic or Latino: 89.2%; Two or More Races: 92.7%¹⁴

THIRD GRADE READING

54.9% of third grade students meet grade level standards in reading (2,810 out of 5,114)

(Note: Due to changes in test score benchmarks, this data is not comparable to previous years).¹⁵

33 school buses could be filled with third grade students who are not reading at grade level.¹⁶

By Race and Ethnicity: White: 67.4%; Black or African American: 13.4%; Asian: 63.6%; Hispanic or Latino: 27.8%; Two or More Races: 49.7%¹⁷

LOW BIRTHWEIGHT

7.1% of babies were born at low birthweight in Dane County (399 out of 5,594).¹⁸

By Race and Ethnicity: White: 6.3%; Black or African American: 15.4%; Hispanic or Latino: 7.1%; Asian (non-Hmong) or Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian: 5.4%; Two or More Races: 9.0%¹⁹

HEALTH INSURANCE

Nearly 1 in 25 people do not have health insurance in Dane County (3.6%, or 20,341 out of 561,010).²⁰

By Race and Ethnicity: White: 2.5%; Black or African American: 6.5%; American Indian or Alaska Native: 11.4%; Asian: 3.3%; Some Other Race: 20.9%; Two or More Races: 9.0%; Hispanic or Latino: 15.2%²¹

LIFE EXPECTANCY

Life expectancy is over 10 years shorter for Black or African American people than the overall average.²²

Overall: 81.2 years. **By Race and Ethnicity:** Asian: 87.3 years; Black or African American: 71.1 years; Hispanic or Latino: 84.1 years; White: 81.6 years²³

Whenever we present data disaggregated by race and ethnicity internally or externally, it is essential that this data is properly contextualized. When we see disparities by race and ethnicity in education, income and health outcomes, we are seeing the result of systemic racism (happening at institutional, cultural and interpersonal scales), not placing blame or assuming cultural or group-based deficits.

United Way
of Dane County



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UNITED WAY OF DANE COUNTY COMMUNITY-LEVEL DATA FOOTNOTES

- 1 2019-2023 US Census American Community Survey, 5 year estimates, Table S0101.
- 2 Poverty defined as below 100% Federal Poverty Level (FPL). FPL for a family of four in 2023 was \$30,000. Poverty status cannot be determined for people institutional group quarters (such as prisons or nursing homes), college dormitories, military barracks, living situations without conventional housing (and who are not in shelters). Additionally, poverty status cannot be determined for unrelated individuals under age 15 (such as foster children) because income questions are asked of people age 15 and older and, if someone is under age 15 and not living with a family member, we do not know their income. The total number of individuals for whom poverty status is calculated in Dane Co. in ACS 5-year (2019-2023) Data (Table S1701) is 551,045 people.
- 3 2019-2023 US Census American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, Table S1701.
- 4 Based on a seating capacity of 80,321.
- 5 2019-2023 US Census American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, Table S1701.
- 6 2019-2023 US Census American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, Table S1701.
- 7 2019-2023 US Census American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, Table S1701.
- 8 Based on a seating capacity of 3.
- 9 2019-2023 US Census American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, Table B17001A, B17001B, B17001C, B17001D, B17001E, B17001F, B17001G, B17001I.
- 10 2019-2023 US Census American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, Table S2301. Unemployment rate is a percentage of the total civilian labor force (327,177 total individuals in Dane County).
- 11 2019-2023 US Census American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, Table S2301.
- 12 Data from Annual Point in Time Count conducted by the Homeless Services Consortium of Dane County; This year's count was conducted in January 2024. The Point in Time Count involves counting people in emergency shelter in Dane County alongside unsheltered people who are spending the night outside, in a car, or in another place unsuitable for human habitation. The point in time count is a snapshot of people who are homeless on a single night; consequently, it under-represents the number of people who experience homelessness in Dane County throughout a given year. Additionally, the point in time count does not include people who are living "doubled up" with friends or family or who are living in hotels or motels, as these people do not meet the HUD's criteria for being considered homeless during a PIT count. Dane County Homelessness Consortium PIT Count
- 13 Data from 2022-2023 School Year, Department of Public Instruction WiseDash, HS Completion for 6 year (2021) cohort, calculated by UWDC, <https://wisedash.dpi.wi.gov/Dashboard/dashboard/17880>; Dataset excludes Online Only Schools within Dane County school districts.
- 14 DPI suppresses small data points for privacy reasons, meaning that students of marginalized groups are often hidden from smaller or less diverse districts. Consequently, the count of racial and ethnic groups is not fully representative of students in Dane County, and marginalized students are much more likely to be underrepresented numerically. The redaction of small data points accounts for 5.0% (302 out of 6,096) of students in this cohort. The HS completion rate of the redacted group is 73.5%.
- 15 2023-2024 School Year, Department of Public Instruction WiseDash, Forward Test (English Language Arts), calculated by UWDC (online only schools removed), <https://wisedash.dpi.wi.gov/Dashboard/dashboard/19948>. The Forward English Language Arts exam scores students as either advanced, meeting, approaching, or developing. Students who did not take the exam (<5%) are excluded from the results but included in the total number of students at each school (source: <https://dpi.wi.gov/wisedash/about-data/forward>).
- 16 Based on an average capacity of 70 students.
- 17 WiseDash suppresses small data points for privacy reasons, meaning that students of marginalized groups are often hidden from smaller or less diverse districts. Consequently, the count of racial and ethnic groups is not fully representative of students in Dane County, and marginalized students are much more likely to be underrepresented numerically. The redaction of small data points accounts for 7.8% (398 out of 5114) of students in this cohort. The share of the redacted group meeting grade level standards is 51.5%.
- 18 Wish Query: Low Birthweight Module, Wisconsin Department of Health Services, data from 2022: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/wish/lbw/form.htm>. Low birthweight is defined as less than 2,500 grams.
- 19 Data for several racial and ethnic groups was suppressed due to privacy reasons.
- 20 2019-2023 US Census American Community Survey, 5 year estimates, Table S2701; all percentages are a percentage of the total "civilian non-institutionalized population."
- 21 2019-2023 US Census American Community Survey, 5 year estimates, Table S2701.
- 22 Data from HealthyDane, "Life Expectancy," source data from Conduent Healthy Communities Institute 2019-2021, last updated by HealthyDane in April 2024.
- 23 Data from HealthyDane, "Life Expectancy," source data from Conduent Healthy Communities Institute 2019-2021, last updated by HealthyDane in April 2024.