

# Median Family Income

## DEFINITION

Median family income is the dollar amount which divides Rhode Island families' income distribution into two equal groups – half with incomes above the median and half with incomes below the median. The numbers include only families with their “own children” under age 18, defined as never-married children who are related to the family head by birth, marriage, or adoption.

## SIGNIFICANCE

Median family income is a measure of the ability of families to meet the costs of food, clothing, housing, health care, transportation, child care, and higher education. In 2024, the median family income for Rhode Island families with their own children was \$105,770.<sup>1</sup>

Between 2020 and 2024, in Rhode Island, the median family income for married two-parent families (\$143,465) was more than twice that of male-headed single-parent families (\$68,107) and more than three times that of female-headed single-parent families (\$43,965).<sup>2</sup>

In 2025, Rhode Island's unemployment rate was 4.8%. The unemployment rate was 7.8% for Hispanic workers, 5.4% for Black workers, and 4.2% for white workers.<sup>3</sup> Due to the government shutdown, October 2025 unemployment data were not collected. The 2025 unemployment

data are an 11-month average and should not be compared to previous years.<sup>4</sup>

Even when Rhode Island's unemployment rate is low, many workers are unable to find full-time work and struggle to make ends meet with inadequate and unpredictable income. In 2022, 20% of U.S. workers made less than \$15 per hour.<sup>5-7</sup> Conditions at low-wage jobs, such as unstable and inadequate work hours, lack of paid time off, and strict attendance policies can harm children's development by making it difficult for parents to find and keep affordable high-quality child care for their children.<sup>8</sup>

In the U.S., income inequality has grown substantially since the 1970s.<sup>9</sup> In 2022 in Rhode Island, the top 1% of households held almost 20% of total income. Rhode Island has the 22nd highest income inequality of the 50 states based on the share of income held by the top 1% of households.<sup>10</sup>

Median Family Income	
	2024
RI	\$104,000
US	\$101,200
National Rank*	22nd
New England Rank**	6th

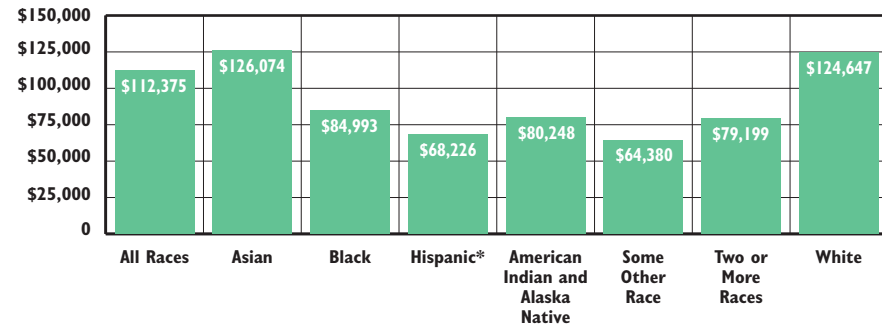
\*1st is best; 50th is worst

\*\*1st is best; 6th is worst

Source: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, KIDS COUNT Data Center, datacenter.kidscount.org



Median Family Income, by Race and Ethnicity, Rhode Island, 2020-2024\*



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2020-2024. Tables B19113, B19113A, B19113B, B19113C, B19113D, B19113E, B19113G, and B19113I. \*Median Family Income by race and ethnicity includes all families because data for families with “own children” are not available by race and ethnicity. \*\*Hispanics may be in any race category.

- ◆ The median income for Asian and white families in Rhode Island is higher than that of Black families and nearly twice as high as for Hispanic families and families of Some other race.<sup>11</sup>
- ◆ Educational attainment is strongly associated with economic well-being. Rhode Islanders who have achieved a bachelor's degree have twice the median earnings as workers who have not completed high school. In Rhode Island, more than one in four Hispanic adults, one in seven Black adults, and one in 14 white adults lack a high school diploma.<sup>12</sup>
- ◆ According to the 2024 Rhode Island Standard of Need, it costs a single-parent family with two young children \$83,239 a year to pay basic living expenses, including housing, food, health care, child care, transportation, and other miscellaneous items. This family would need an annual income of \$99,418 to meet this budget without government subsidies.<sup>13</sup> At the current Rhode Island minimum wage of \$16 per hour in 2026, this family would have to work 119 hours per week for 52 weeks to meet this budget.
- ◆ An adequate minimum wage and income support programs (including RIte Care health insurance, child care subsidies, SNAP benefits, the Child Tax Credit, and the Earned Income Tax Credit) are critical for helping low-and moderate-income working families in Rhode Island make ends meet, and expanding these programs would help decrease racial and ethnic disparities in meeting basic needs.<sup>13</sup>

Table 5. Median Family Income, Rhode Island, 2020-2024

2020-2024 MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN UNDER AGE 18		
CITY/TOWN	ESTIMATES WITH HIGH MARGINS OF ERROR*	ESTIMATES WITH LOWER, ACCEPTABLE MARGINS OF ERROR
Barrington		\$178,770
Bristol		\$141,079
Burrillville		\$118,542
Central Falls	\$35,063	
Charlestown		\$121,546
Coventry		\$126,759
Cranston		\$114,493
Cumberland		\$160,066
East Greenwich		250,000+
East Providence		\$109,130
Exeter	\$109,886	
Foster		\$161,733
Glocester		\$142,019
Hopkinton	\$145,938	
Jamestown***		250,000+
Johnston		\$94,033
Lincoln		\$137,604
Little Compton	\$159,875	
Middletown		\$111,250
Narragansett	\$115,795	
New Shoreham		**
Newport	\$51,216	
North Kingstown		\$168,077
North Providence		\$102,481
North Smithfield	\$118,981	
Pawtucket		\$77,799
Portsmouth	\$192,926	
Providence		\$69,167
Richmond		\$147,000
Scituate	\$150,441	
Smithfield		\$162,315
South Kingstown		\$145,160
Tiverton		\$143,780
Warren		\$130,208
Warwick		\$108,219
West Greenwich		\$176,471
West Warwick		\$84,222
Westerly		\$138,950
Woonsocket		\$56,692
Five Core Cities		NA
Remainder of State		NA
Rhode Island		\$105,770

### Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Median family income data include only households with children under age 18 who meet the U.S. Census Bureau's definition of a family. The U.S. Census Bureau defines a family as a household that includes a householder and one or more people living in the same household who are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption.

The 2020-2024 data come from a Population Reference Bureau analysis of 2020-2024 American Community Survey data. The American Community Survey is a sample survey, and therefore the median family income is an estimate. The reliability of estimates varies by community. In general, estimates for small communities are not as reliable as estimates for larger communities.

\*The Margin of Error around the estimate is greater than or equal to 25 percent of the estimate.

The Margin of Error is a measure of the reliability of the estimate and is provided by the U.S. Census Bureau. The Margin of Error means that there is a 90 percent chance that the true value is no less than the estimate minus the Margin of Error and no more than the estimate plus the Margin of Error. See the Methodology Section for Margins of Errors for all communities.

Five core cities are Central Falls, Newport, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

\*\*The estimate or margin of error could not be computed due to an insufficient number of observations.

\*\*\*The margin of error could not be computed because the median falls in the lowest interval or highest interval of an open-ended distribution.

NA: Median family income cannot be calculated for combinations of cities and towns (i.e., Five Core Cities and Remainder of State).

### References

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