



The Race for Wages

**Living Wage Jobs
in the Current
Economy**



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Northwest Federation of
Community Organizations

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JOB GAP STUDY**

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Introduction

There is an emerging awareness of growing economic disparities in the United States. As the concentration of wealth reaches record levels, income gaps and the shortfall in living wage jobs have become subjects of increasing concern among observers and policymakers. However, less attention has been paid to how people of color are particularly affected by these trends, even in the face of persisting racial inequities in wages and income.

Economic indicators show that prosperity is not being shared by all. Over the last two decades, the wealthiest 20 percent of families enjoyed a 58.5 percent growth in income, compared to an 18.9 percent increase for the poorest 20 percent.¹ Meanwhile, the income share of the top one percent of households has reached the highest level since 1929.² Wage disparities are also growing. Between 1973 and 2005, real hourly wages for the top 10 percent of earners rose by 30 percent or more, while those in the bottom half saw their real hourly wages go up by only five to 10 percent.³

People of color especially feel the brunt of growing income gaps. Although the percentage of white people living in poverty went down between 1959 and 2005, poverty rates increased or stayed the same among people of color.⁴ As of 2000, 13.5 percent of male workers in the bottom fifth of earnings were African American and almost one quarter Latino, whereas in the top three fifths seven percent were African American and eight percent Latino.⁵

The doors to steady, quality employment are closed for many people living in the United States, but especially for people of color. Indeed, compared to whites, a greater proportion of

African Americans, Latinos, and Native people in the job market find themselves unemployed.⁶ For African American men and women, higher unemployment rates have endured even in good times, and despite a shrinking education gap.⁷

Meanwhile, workers of color often find themselves concentrated in jobs and employment sectors characterized by lower pay, substandard or unsafe conditions, and few benefits. Occupational segregation – the relegation of people of color to inferior work – may account for a portion of the income and wage gap.⁸ There is also evidence of devaluation of work where people of color predominate, based on racial discrimination itself as opposed to differences in education, experience, and similar factors. This devaluation results in a “racial wage penalty.”⁹ A wage gap also exists within occupations. According to one study, “the higher the average earnings to white men in an occupation, the greater the relative penalty experienced by their black coworkers.”¹⁰

Additional research has documented the persistence of racial discrimination in employment. In a 2004 New York City job market study, researchers found that white male job applicants received call-backs or job offers almost twice as often as did African American male applicants with identical qualifications.¹¹ The study also uncovered instances of channeling of Black and Latino applicants from higher status positions into lower status jobs.¹² The impact of a criminal record on employment prospects is much greater for African American men than for white men. One study in Milwaukee found that when African American

male job applicants had a criminal record, their callback rate was five percent – without a criminal record, their callback rate still fell below that for white men with a record.¹³

The decline in unionization does not bode well for the resolution of wage inequities. Unions significantly raise the wage and benefit levels of unionized workers, in addition to reducing wage inequality and raising the bar even for nonunion work.¹⁴ The amount that a unionized worker’s earnings surpass those of a comparable nonunion worker is referred to as the “union wage premium.” One researcher estimates the union wage premium as 21.9 percent for Latinos, 20.3 percent for African Americans, 16.7 percent for Asians, and 13.1 percent for whites.¹⁵

Meanwhile, as income and wage inequality grow for people of all racial groups, families are experiencing greater insecurity when it comes to basics. Increasing health insurance premiums have created challenges for obtaining quality, affordable health coverage. The costs of other basics, such as gasoline and utility services, are also on the rise, straining household budgets. Meanwhile, individuals are being forced to shoulder greater risk against financial insecurity, whether due to cuts in public programs or the rollback of employer benefits.¹⁶ Again, these challenges are hitting people of color – who, for instance, are overrepresented among the uninsured – particularly hard.¹⁷

This report takes a close look at jobs that currently exist in the Northwest economy. It asks whether these jobs provide wages that can actually support individuals and families. It then examines whether people of color in the region are less likely than white people to earn a living wage. The findings of this report have direct implications for public debates on a range of economic

policies, such as wage standards, tax benefits for business, anti-discrimination policies, and barriers to unionization. They also raise the issue of what types of public support our state and federal governments should provide to ensure that all residents can meet their basic needs.

Methodology

This report is a part of a series of studies that calculate the cost of basic household budgets in the Northwest. These costs are then used to estimate a living wage for certain household types. *The Race for Wages: Jobs in the Current Economy* compares living wage data to occupation and wage data from each state and calculates the number and proportion of jobs currently in the economy that are paying a living wage for each household type. The findings are based on data from 2006, the most recent year for which data on a household budgets, wages, and employment are available.

To calculate a living wage for each state, the Job Gap Study estimates the costs of basic needs, such as housing, food, utilities, transportation, health care, and child care, for certain household sizes. Data for this calculation come from state and/or federal public data sources. (For a complete discussion of our living wage methodology, see *Living in the Red: Northwest Family Budgets Falling Behind*, available at www.nwfc.org.)

This report then uses wage and income data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Current Population Survey and the American Community Survey to find the percentage of jobs that pay a living wage overall, the percentage of wage earners making a living wage by race, and the percentage of households earning a living wage, also by race.

What Is a Living Wage?

A living wage is one that allows families to meet their basic needs, without public assistance, and that provides them some ability to deal with emergencies and plan ahead. It is not a poverty wage.

The amount a family needs to make ends meet exceeds both the federal poverty threshold and the minimum wage. The federal poverty threshold is calculated by multiplying the cost of a food budget by three. However, living expenses such as housing and child care have increased much more quickly than the cost of food. Therefore, the federal poverty threshold now substantially underestimates a family's basic needs. In fact, for all five households and in all four states, the living wage is greater than *twice* the federal poverty threshold.¹⁸

This is also the case with minimum wages. The federal minimum currently is \$5.85 an hour and will reach \$7.25 an hour in 2009. Montana, Oregon and Washington have independent state minimum wages, now \$6.25, \$7.80 and \$7.93, respectively.¹⁹ Even with recent increases in minimum wages, they still fall short of a living wage for any household size.

In the Northwest states, living wages range from \$10.32 an hour for a single adult in Montana to \$11.67 an hour for a single adult in Oregon. For a household with two children and a single working adult, the living wage ranges from \$20.97 an hour in Montana to \$25.18 an hour in Washington. (These figures are for full-time work.)

This living wage is the wage that will afford a family or individual a basic standard of living. Therefore, the living wage calculation is also used as a measure of the cost of living in a state or geographic region.

Many people who currently work are struggling to make ends meet in jobs that pay insufficient wages. This study compares living wage data to occupation and wage data from each state, calculating the number and proportion of jobs in the economy that are currently paying a living wage for each household type. The study also compares the living wage to worker earnings, and household income, calculating the number and proportion of workers and households able to afford a basic cost of living.

Findings

The Overall Job Gap

Many workers are fighting the odds when it comes to earning a living wage. Across the Northwest, the likelihood that a job pays less than a living wage ranges from 26 percent (for a single person in Washington) to 88 percent (for a single adult with two children in Idaho).

Although the likelihood is much greater that a job will pay less than a living wage for a family with a single wage earner, an alarmingly high percentage of jobs fail to meet

living wage standards even for households in which two adults work to support two children. For instance, Washington jobs are those most likely to pay a living wage for an adult in a dual income family. Yet nearly half (48 percent) of those jobs come up short in living wage terms – they do not pay enough for a working adult in this family to contribute his or her half of the cost of living.²⁰

Even single adults without children face difficult odds. In Montana, only 60 percent of jobs pay a living wage for this household size. Even in Washington, the state with the highest proportion of living wage jobs for single adults (74 percent), over one quarter pay less.

These findings indicate that a significant portion of the workforce in the Northwest is engaged in employment that fails to provide wages sufficient to meet basic needs and maintain a reasonable standard of living.

Race Matters in the Northwest

As tough as these odds are, they are especially tough for people of color, who are much less likely than whites to earn living wages.

In the states for which data was available, Asian American, African American, and Latino full-time workers are all less likely than white full-time workers to earn a living wage for each household size (with the exception of one household size in Oregon for Asian Americans).

Among all groups for which data was available, Latino workers were the most likely to earn below a living wage for all household sizes. For example, in Idaho 74 percent of Latino earners bring home wages below a living wage for a family composed of two children and two working adults, compared to 42 percent of whites.

These figures do not estimate the percentage of workers who in fact earn living wages. Rather, they estimate the portion of workers whose earnings amount to a living wage for each household size.

Because statistically significant data was not available for all groups in all states, we also calculated the percentage of households that had an annual income that would afford a basic cost of living for five household sizes. This data also indicated that the income of people of color lags behind that of whites in households across the Northwest. While household income can come from other sources besides wages, the racial income disparities also point to a disparity in living wage work.



I have lived in Blackfoot, Idaho my whole life and belong to the Shoshone Bannock tribe. I raised my children here and had a good job working at the FMC chemical plant outside Pocatello until things changed when I got laid off. I looked all over but couldn't find a job that fit my skill set. There just aren't that many chemical plants in Southeast Idaho.

Being unemployed and losing that regular paycheck didn't make my bills go away. The bills piled up despite my efforts to keep up. I have to take thyroid medication, and there was no way I could have afforded health insurance. I was one step away from the downward spiral where you lose your job, then you get sick because you can't pay for health care, and then you can't get work again because you're sick. If it weren't for Indian Health Services, where I got my medication, I don't know what I would have done.

Kathleen Johnson*
Blackfoot, ID

Eventually, I found a job driving for a farmer, but the hours became less and less as the weather got cold. I looked around the community, but couldn't find a job that paid over 8 or 9 dollars an hour. Then, I found a job as a nutrition van driver at the reservation. I counted myself lucky to be in my position as I saw how many other people were struggling just to eat. I wanted to do more to help, but my hands were tied because I had to work so hard just to stay afloat myself.

I was finally able to go back to school and get my commercial driver's license. I became a truck driver, but I still only made about 9 dollars an hour. It hasn't been until recently that I've managed to make a decent living at it. Things are better now, but it took me a long time – and a lot of struggle – to get here. Now, my sister is in the same boat I was in before. She only makes about 8 dollars an hour and really struggles to make ends meet.

* Pseudonym used

The Job Gap Overall

The data on the overall job gap measures the number of jobs in the economy that pay a living wage for each household size.

- Jobs that pay a living wage for families with children are especially scarce, with less than forty percent providing a living wage even for households with two working adults (and two children).
- Thirty-six percent of current jobs pay less than a living wage for a single adult (\$22,728 a year or \$10.93 an hour).
- Seventy-four percent of current jobs pay less than a living wage for a single adult with one child (\$39,035 year or \$18.77 an hour).
- Eighty-eight percent of current jobs pay less than a living wage for a single adult with two children (\$48,750 a year or \$23.44 an hour).
- Eighty-four percent of current jobs pay less than a living wage for two adults (one working) with two children (\$44,850 a year or \$21.56 an hour).
- Sixty-four percent of current jobs pay less than a living wage for two adults (both working) with two children (\$31,257 a year or \$15.03 an hour for each adult). This is likely a conservative estimate, since both adults need to find a job at or above this wage to meeting living wage standards.

The proportion of jobs paying a living wage for each household size is a statewide average. In some counties, there may be a greater or lesser number and percentage of jobs paying less than

Percent of Jobs in Idaho That Pay Less Than a Living Wage					
	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with one child	Household 3 Single Adult with two children	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with two children	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with two children
Living Wage	\$22,728/yr. or \$10.93/hr.	\$39,035/yr. or \$18.77/hr.	\$48,750/yr. or \$23.44/hr	\$44,850/yr. or \$21.56/hr	\$31,257/yr. or \$15.03/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	212,140	432,010	512,840	492,310	371,640
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	36%	74%	88%	84%	64%

Table 1



**Maria Rodriguez
Caldwell, ID**

on food. Once we had our water shut off for three days and I had to borrow water from neighbors, then borrow money to get the water back on. Three years ago, my family was evicted from our home because we couldn't pay the rent. My husband's employer helped us find a one-bedroom apartment and we lived there, the whole family, for six months.

My name is Maria Rodriguez. I've lived in Idaho for 14 years, in Caldwell for the last two. I am 40 and my husband is 43. We have five children, and also take care of a niece and nephew who are three and two years old.

My husband works as a painter and I care for the children at home. He earns fourteen dollars an hour and brings home about \$2,000 a month. I am tempted to look for a job myself because with only his income, it's difficult to make ends meet. But with young kids, child care is so expensive. We've done the math and it's cheaper for me to stay home and look after the children.

Sometimes we can't afford enough food or keep up with bills. This past year I had to go to a food pantry twice because we were short

There are so many bills – phone, electricity, rental space for my trailer home, home insurance, food, gas, clothing and shoes for the kids. My children receive Medicaid, but my husband and I have no health insurance, so when we get sick we have to pay out of pocket.

Living paycheck to paycheck is challenging and I hope for a better future. When my children grow up I hope they have an opportunity to go to college and better their lives. That is my dream for them.

* Pseudonym used

a living wage. (Living wages also vary by county, due to difference in costs for things such as housing and child care.) For each county in Idaho, this study includes a table with the percent of jobs that pay less than a living wage (see appendix).

Race Matters in Idaho

Where data is available, the race-based component of the job gap measures the number of workers with living wage earnings. We also calculated household income compared to the cost of living by race.

Statistically significant data on Idaho workers' earnings was available for two groups: whites and Latinos. For all household sizes, Latino workers' earnings fall short of a living wage far more frequently than do the earnings of white workers.

The widest earnings gap between Latino and white workers exists when it comes to the living wage for an adult in a household of two working adults and two children. Seventy-four percent of Latino workers earn less than this wage, compared to 42 percent of white workers.

- Forty-seven percent of Latino workers earn less than a living wage for a single adult, compared to 25 percent of white workers.
- Eighty-two percent of Latino workers earn less than a living wage for a single adult with one child, compared to 56 percent of white workers.
- Ninety-two percent of Latino workers earn less than a living wage for a single adult with two children, compared to 70 percent of white workers.

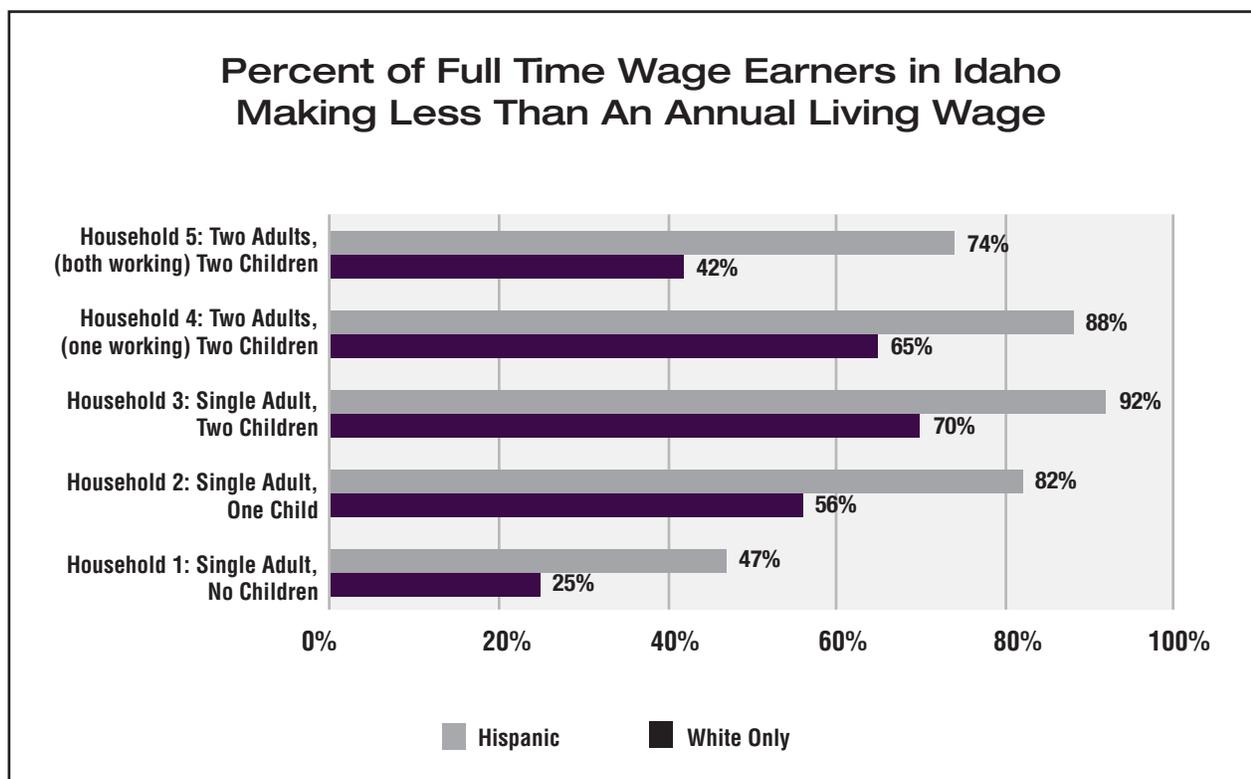


Chart 1

- Eighty-eight percent of Latino workers earn less than a living wage for two adults (one working) with two children, compared to 65 percent of white workers.

Because wage data was not available for all groups, we also calculated household income compared to the cost of living. These findings show significant racial income gaps, which are particularly acute for Native people, followed by Latinos.

- Forty-nine percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives, 30 percent of Latinos, 18 percent of Asian Americans, and 22 percent of whites have income that falls below the cost of living for a single adult.
- Seventy percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives, 60 percent of Latinos, 36 percent of Asian Americans, and 44 percent of whites have income that falls below the cost of living for a single adult with one child.

- Seventy-seven percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives, 71 percent of Latinos, 54 percent of whites, and 42 percent of Asian Americans have income that falls below the cost of living for single adult with two children.
- Seventy-three percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives, 67 percent of Latinos, 50 percent of whites and 42 percent of Asian Americans have income that falls below the cost of living for two adults (one working) with two children.
- Eighty-four percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives, 82 percent of Latinos, 68 percent of whites and 53 percent of Asian Americans have income that falls below that adult's share of the cost of living for two working adults with two children.

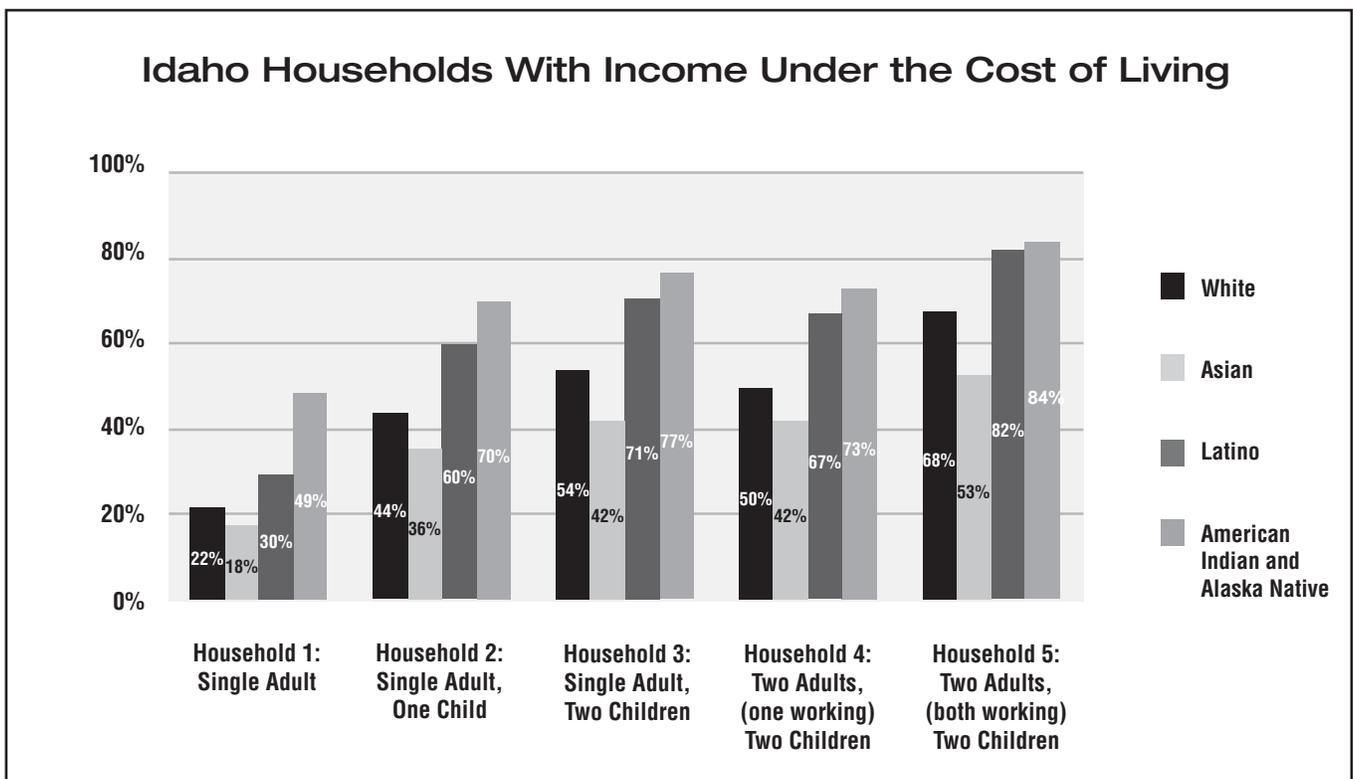


Chart 2

The Job Gap Overall

The data on the overall job gap measures the number of jobs in the economy that are paying a living wage.

- Jobs that pay a living wage for families with children are especially scarce, with less than half (41 percent) providing a living wage job even for households with two working adults (and two children).
- Forty percent of current jobs pay less than a living wage for a single adult (\$21,473 a year or \$10.32 an hour).
- Seventy-five percent of current jobs pay less than a living wage for a single adult with one child (\$34,889 year or \$16.77 an hour).
- Eighty-four percent of current jobs pay less than a living wage for a single adult with two children (\$43,620 a year or \$20.97 an hour).
- Eighty-five percent of current jobs pay less than a living wage for two adults (one working) with two children (\$44,435 a year or \$21.36 an hour).
- Fifty-nine percent of current jobs pay less than a living wage for two adults (both working) with two children (\$28,950 a year or \$13.92 an hour for each adult).

The proportion of jobs paying a living wage for each household size is a statewide average. In some counties, there may be a greater or lesser number and percentage of jobs paying less than a living wage. (Living wages also vary by county,

Percent of Jobs in Montana That Pay Less Than a Living Wage

	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with one child	Household 3 Single Adult with two children	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with two children	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with two children
Living Wage	\$21,473/yr. or \$10.32/hr.	\$34,889/yr. or \$16.77/hr.	\$43,620/yr. or \$20.97/hr	\$44,435/yr. or \$21.36/hr	\$28,950/yr. or \$13.92/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	169,540	321,650	360,580	362,740	252,100
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	40%	75%	84%	85%	59%

Table 2

due to difference in costs for things such as housing and child care.) For each county in Montana, this study includes a table with the percent of jobs that pay less than a living wage (see appendix).

Race Matters in Montana

No statistically significant data was available to analyze the race-based component of the job gap in Montana. However, we calculated household income compared to the cost of living. These findings show significant racial income gaps, which are particularly acute for Native people, followed by Latinos.

- Fifty percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives, 42 percent of Latinos, and 23 percent of whites have income that falls below the cost of living for a single adult.

- Sixty-four percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives, 63 percent of Latinos, and 41 percent of whites have income that falls below the cost of living for a single adult with one child.
- Seventy-four percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives, 68 percent of Latinos, and 52 percent of whites have income that falls below the cost of living for single adult with two children.
- Seventy-five percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives, 69 percent of Latinos, and 53 percent of whites have income that falls below the cost of living for two adults (one working) with two children.
- Eighty-five percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives, 75 percent of Latinos, and 66 percent of whites have income that falls below that adult's share of the cost of living for two working adults with two children.

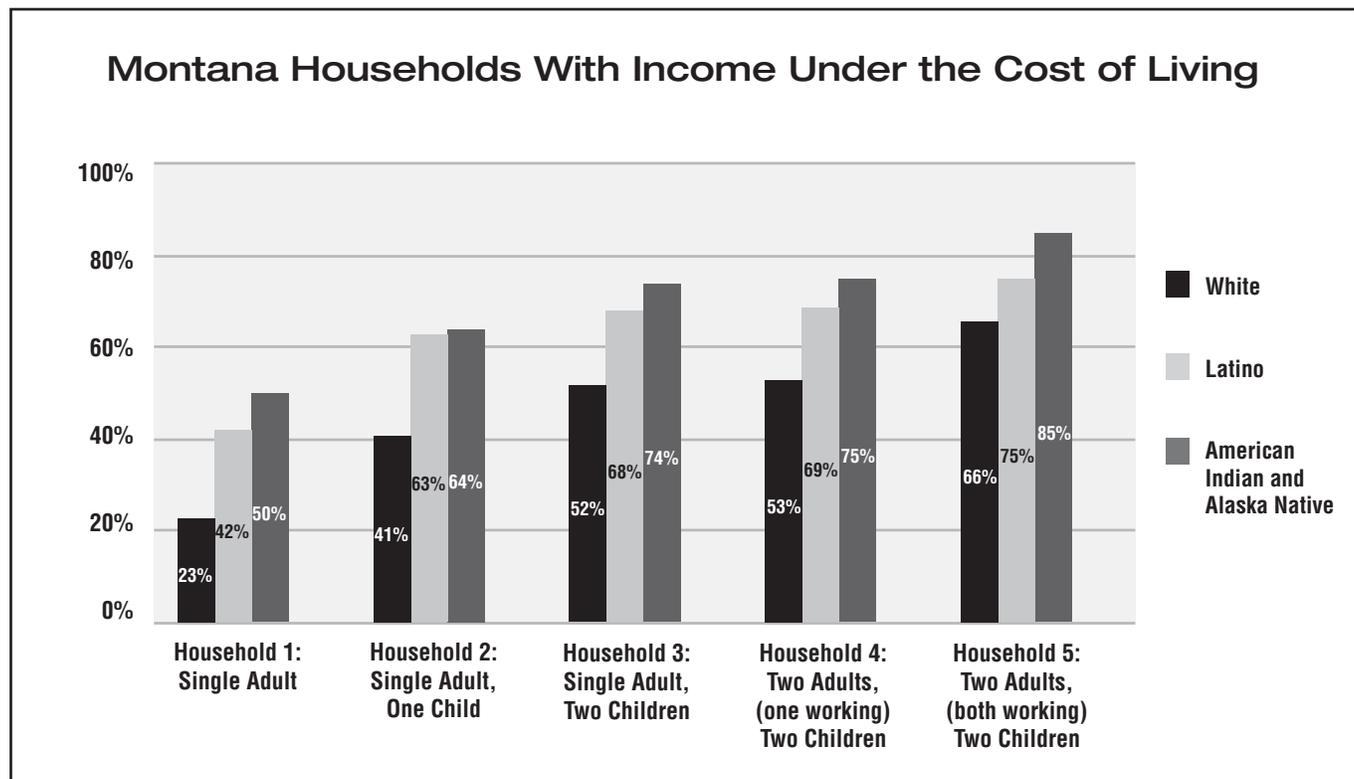


Chart 3

The Job Gap Overall

The data on the overall job gap measures the number of jobs in the economy that are paying a living wage.

- Jobs that pay a living wage for families with children are especially scarce, with less than half (45 percent) providing a living wage job even for households with two working adults (and two children).
- Thirty-one percent of current jobs pay less than a living wage for a single adult (\$24,276 a year or \$11.67 an hour).
- Sixty-seven percent of current jobs pay less than a living wage for a single adult with one child (\$40,862 year or \$19.65 an hour).
- Eighty percent of current jobs pay less than a living wage for a single adult with two children (\$50,916 a year or \$24.48 an hour).
- Seventy-eight percent of current jobs pay less than a living wage for two adults (one working) with two children (\$48,064 a year or \$23.11 an hour).
- Fifty-five percent of current jobs pay less than a living wage for a two adults (both working) with two children (\$32,594 a year or \$15.67 an hour for each adult).

The proportion of jobs paying a living wage for each household size is a statewide average. In some counties, there may be a greater or lesser number and percentage of jobs paying less than a living wage. (Living wages also vary by county, due to difference

Percent of Jobs in Oregon That Pay Less Than a Living Wage					
	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with one child	Household 3 Single Adult with two children	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with two children	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with two children
Living Wage	\$24,276/yr. or \$11.67/hr.	\$40,862/yr. or \$19.65/hr.	\$50,916/yr. or \$24.48/hr	\$48,064/yr. or \$23.11/hr	\$32,594/yr. or \$15.67/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	515,400	1,133,190	1,353,950	1,313,334	919,807
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	31%	67%	80%	78%	55%

Table 3



María Sosa
Gaston, Oregon

animals and has four cats. Someday, she says, she'll donate time for people who don't have money, so their pets can receive vaccinations, too. She sees how both people and animals suffer without health care.

Things have been really tough. Sometimes we don't have enough money to pay our water or electric bill, and we get calls saying they're going to turn it off. We have two old cars that don't run, and we can't get fixed.

We're trying to start up our nursery business, and that costs money, too. We bought a truck and pay \$600 every six months for insurance. Right now we're trying to find a place to keep the plants from our nursery during the winter, but we don't have the money. In the summer, we set up shop at farmers' markets, but you don't make much. The stall costs \$45 dollars, then there's the gas, and in the end you make \$200 on a good day.

It's really hard to find a way to make ends meet. The government should support people who don't have insurance, because that's necessary for everyone.

In June, the nursery where my husband worked went into bankruptcy and he lost his job. Finally, in November, he found full-time work again, in food preparation. He earns just \$7.80 an hour, though – not nearly enough.

Two years ago, I had a car accident and I've been stuck at home ever since. At the time, I was trying to start up a housecleaning business, but now I have a burning pain in my neck that keeps me up at night and leaves my right arm feeling numb. I really wish I could work. I hate sitting around. I didn't receive any compensation from the accident, and I don't have health insurance, so I don't go to the doctor for treatment.

We have five children, but just one still living at home. Mercedes is 11 and wants to be a veterinarian when she grows up. She loves

in costs for things such as housing and child care.) For each county in Oregon, this study includes a table with the percent of jobs that pay less than a living wage (see appendix).

Race Matters in Oregon

Where data is available, the race-based component of the job gap measures the number of workers with living wage earnings. We also calculated household income compared to the cost of living by race.

Statistically significant data on Oregon workers' earnings was available for three groups: whites, Asian Americans, and Latinos. For all household sizes, Latino workers' earnings fall short of a living wage much more frequently than do the earnings of white workers and Asian American workers. Asian Americans workers' earnings fall short at a slightly greater rate than do white workers' for all households except for a household consisting of a single adult with two children.

- The widest earnings gap between Latino and white workers exists when it comes to the living wage for an adult in a household of two working adults and two children. Seventy-seven percent of Latino workers earn less than this wage, compared to 40 percent of white workers. This is also where the widest gap exists between white workers and Asian American workers, whose earnings fall below the living wage standard 48 percent of the time.
- Fifty-seven percent of Latinos workers earn less than a living wage for a single adult, compared to 28 percent of Asian American workers and 25 percent of white workers.
- Eighty-six percent of Latino workers earn less than a living wage for a single adult with one child, compared to 59 percent of Asian American workers and 52 percent of white workers.
- Ninety-one percent of Latino workers earn less than a living wage for a single adult with two children, compared to 64 percent of Asian American workers and 67 percent of white workers.

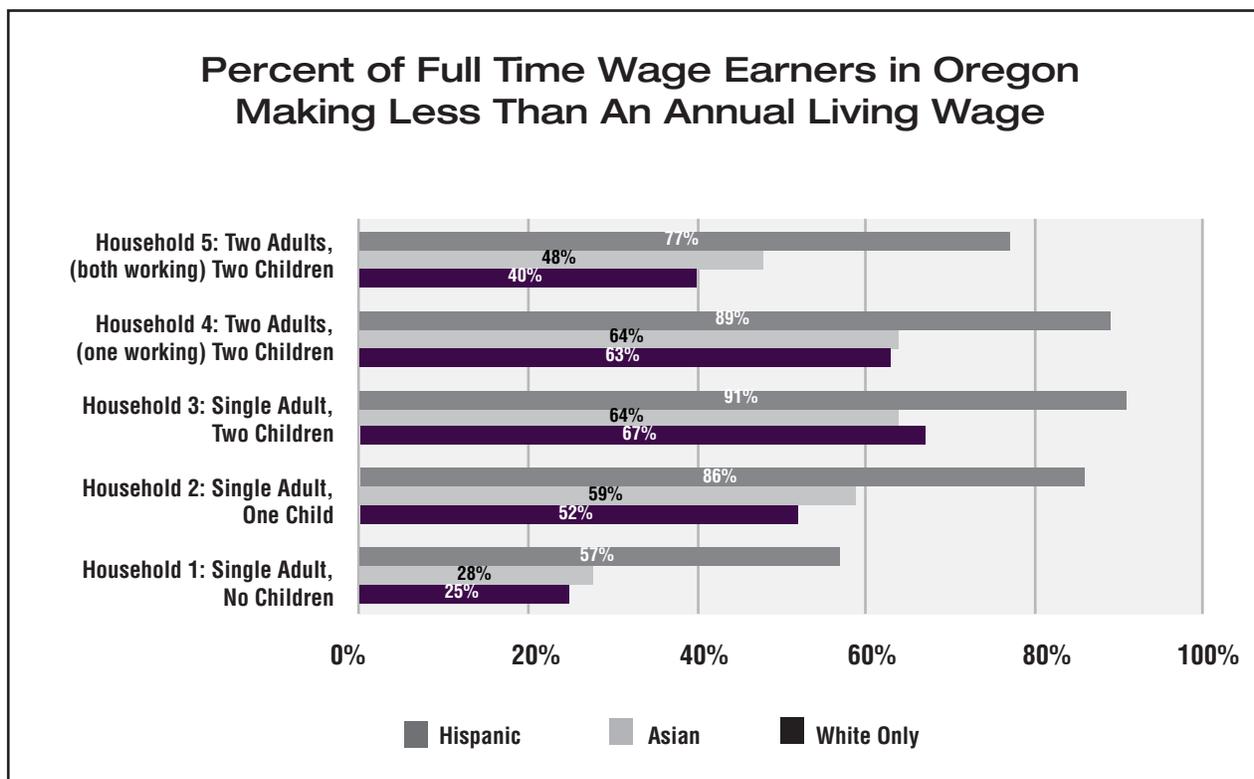


Chart 4

OREGON

two children, compared to 67 percent of white workers and 64 percent of Asian American workers.

- Eighty-nine percent of Latino workers earn less than a living wage for two adults (one working) with two children, compared to 64 percent of Asian American workers and 63 percent of white workers.

Because wage data was not available for all groups, we also calculated household income compared to the cost of living. These findings show significant racial income gaps.

- Thirty-four percent of African Americans, 32 percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives, 30 percent of Latinos, 24 percent of whites, and 22 percent of Asian Americans have income that falls below the cost of living for a single adult.
- Sixty-three percent of African Americans, 59 percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives, 58 percent of Latinos, 42 percent of whites, and 37 percent of Asian Americans have income that falls below the cost of living for two adults (one working) with two children.

37 percent of Asian Americans have income that falls below the cost of living for a single adult with one child.

- Seventy-six percent of African Americans, 72 percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives, 69 percent of Latinos, 53 percent of whites, and 45 percent of Asian Americans have income that falls below the cost of living for single adult with two children.
- Seventy-one percent of African Americans, 69 percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives, 66 percent of Latinos, 50 percent of whites and 43 percent of Asian Americans have income that falls below the cost of living for two adults (one working) with two children.
- Eighty-three percent of African Americans, 82 percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives, 80 percent of Latinos, 65 percent of whites and 56 percent of Asian Americans have income that falls below that adult's share of the cost of living for two working adults with two children.

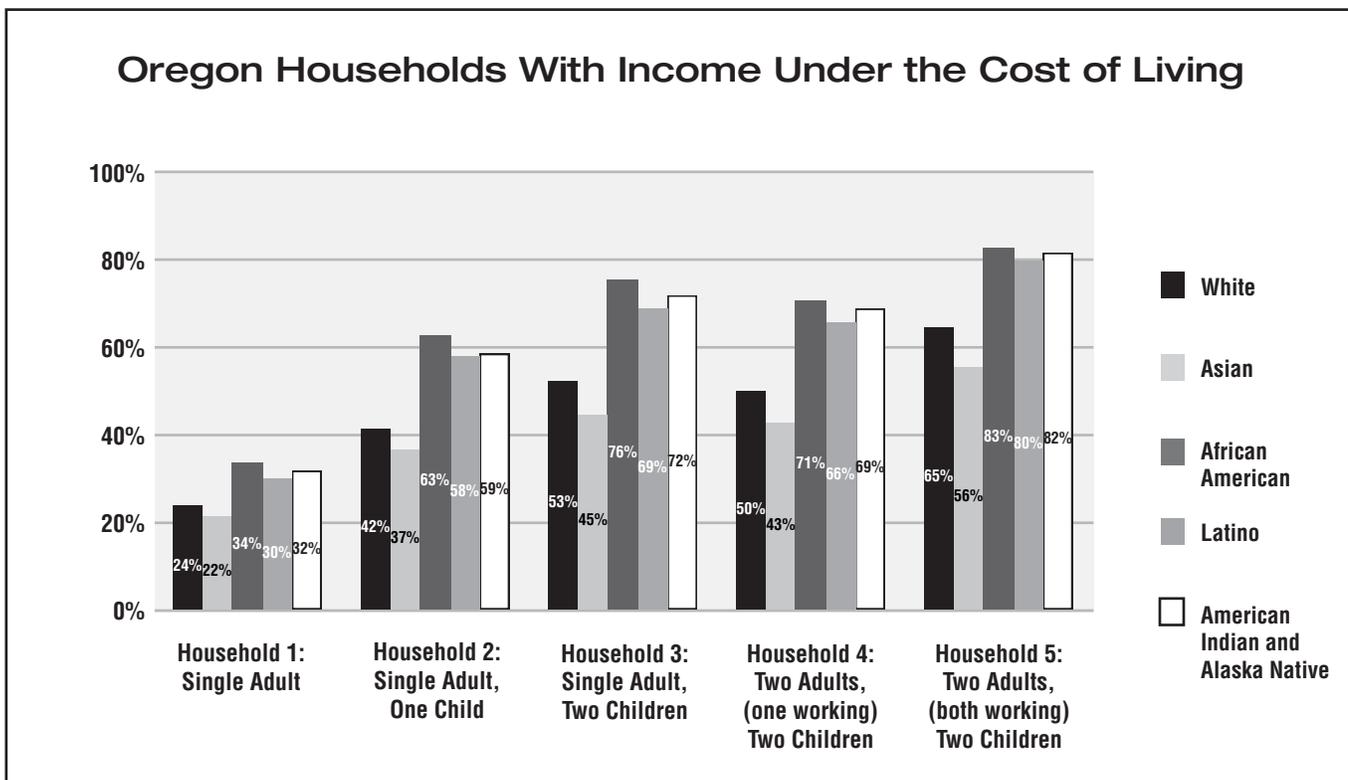
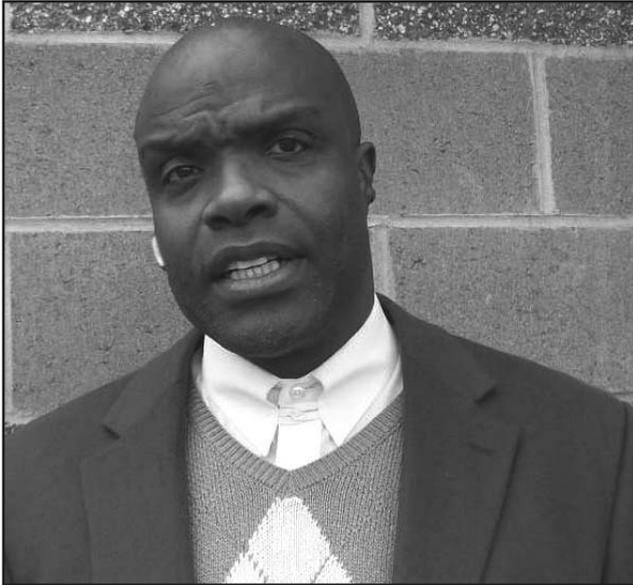


Chart 5



E.J. Penn
Portland, Oregon

My name is E.J. Penn. I have lived in Oregon for all 48 years of my life. I now live in Portland; my wife and I have three children who are 14, 11, and 7 years old.

I work for an academy with at risk students on skills and character development through sports. Together with my wife we make about \$2,500 per month. From this, we pay \$1,500 in rent and utilities, almost \$500 a month in car insurance and gas. This doesn't leave us much for food, and other basic things the kids need, like school materials and sport fees. Melissa and our children have health insurance, but the deductible is so high that we still have medical debt. I'm not insured at all, so I just don't get sick. Fortunately, my extended

family is able to offer support to make sure we keep food on the table and a roof over our heads.

I am working hard to help young people create better futures for themselves, but every day I see how hard that is in face of racial discrimination and the ongoing negative stereotypes of Black men. I have experienced this discrimination myself firsthand – including being treated with suspicion in my work as a coach. Black men are not always fairly represented in the media or in society overall, and this is a big barrier to us in finding and keeping quality work.

Our financial situation has gotten to the point that we are going to relocate out of state to where we may be able to find better paying jobs. It will be difficult to leave my home state and my family, but we're just not able to find work that pays here.

The Job Gap Overall

The data on the overall job gap measures the number of jobs in the economy that are paying a living wage.

- Nearly half of all jobs in Washington (48 percent) do not provide a living wage for a family in which two adults work to support two children. Jobs that pay a living wage for single adults are even scarcer, with only 42 percent providing wages sufficient for a single adult to raise a child.
- Twenty-six percent of current jobs pay less than a living wage for a single adult (\$23,940 a year or \$11.51 an hour).
- Fifty-eight percent of current jobs pay less than a living wage for a single adult with one child (\$38,247 year or \$18.39 an hour).
- Seventy-seven percent of current jobs pay less than a living wage for a single adult with two children (\$52,369 a year or \$25.18 an hour).
- Seventy percent of current jobs pay less than a living wage for two adults (one working) with two children (\$47,919 a year or \$23.04 an hour).
- Forty-eight percent of current jobs pay less than a living wage for two adults (both working) with two children (\$32,948 a year or \$15.84 an hour for each adult).

The proportion of jobs paying a living wage for each household size is a statewide average. In some counties, there may be a greater or lesser number and percentage of jobs paying less than a living wage. (Living wages also vary by county, due to difference in costs for things such as housing and child care.) For each county in Washington, this study includes a table with the percent of jobs that pay less than a living wage (see appendix).

Percent of Jobs in Washington That Pay Less Than a Living Wage

	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with one child	Household 3 Single Adult with two children	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with two children	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with two children
Living Wage	\$23,940/yr. or \$11.51/hr.	\$38,247/yr. or \$18.39/hr.	\$52,369/yr. or \$25.18/hr	\$47,919/yr. or \$23.04/hr	\$32,948/yr. or \$15.84/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	703,260	1,588,660	2,112,240	1,913,970	1,314,410
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	26%	58%	77%	70%	48%

Table 4

Race Matters in Washington

Where data is available, the race-based component of the job gap measures the number of workers with living wage earnings. We also calculated household income compared to the cost of living by race.

Statistically significant data on Washington workers' earnings was available for four groups: whites, Asian Americans, African Americans, and Latinos. For all household sizes, Latino workers' earnings fall short of a living wage more frequently than do the earnings of workers in the other groups, followed by African American workers' wages, then Asian American workers' wages. In other words, for all household sizes, white workers are most likely to earn a living wage.

- The widest earnings gap between Latino and white workers exists when it comes to the living wage for an adult in a household of two working adults and two children. Sixty-three percent of Latino workers earn less than this wage, compared with

35 percent of white workers. This is also where the widest gap exists between white workers and Asian American workers, whose earnings fall below the living wage standard 46 percent of the time.

- The widest earnings gap between African American and white workers exists when it comes to the living wage for one adult and one child. Sixty-four percent of African American workers earn below a living wage for this household, compared to 69 percent of Latino workers, 53 percent of Asian American workers, and 43 percent of white workers.
- Forty-three percent of Latino workers, 32 percent of African American workers, 26 percent of Asian American workers, and 19 percent of white workers earn less than a living wage for a single adult.
- Eighty-four percent of Latino workers, 78 percent of African American workers, 70 percent of Asian American workers, and 63 percent of white workers earn less than a living wage for a single adult with two children.

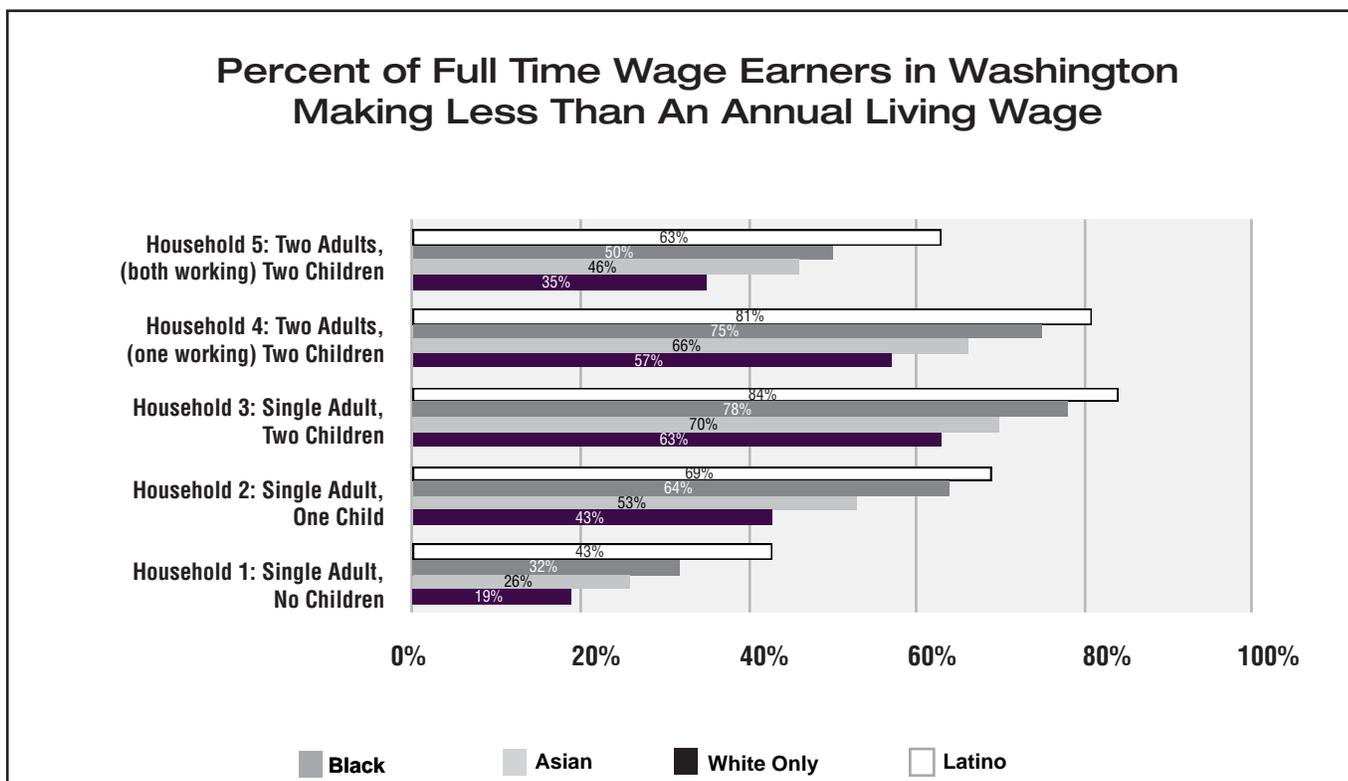


Chart 6

Asian American workers, and 63 percent of white workers earn less than a living wage for a single adult with two children.

- Eighty-one percent of Latino workers, 75 percent of African American workers, 66 percent of Asian American workers, and 57 percent of white workers earn less than a living wage for two adults (one working) with two children.

Because wage data was not available for all groups, we also calculated household income compared to the cost of living. These findings show significant racial income gaps.

- Thirty-six percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives, 31 percent of African Americans, 31 percent of Latinos, 19 percent of whites, and 19 percent of Asian Americans have income that falls below the cost of living for a single adult.
- Fifty-three percent of Latinos, 50 percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives, 47 percent of African Americans, 34 percent of whites, and 32 percent of Asian Americans have income that falls below the cost of living for two adults (one working) with two children.

percent of Asian Americans have income that falls below the cost of living for a single adult with one child.

- Sixty-eight percent of Latinos, 63 percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives, 61 percent of African Americans, 47 percent of whites, and 44 percent of Asian Americans have income that falls below the cost of living for single adult with two children.
- Sixty-four percent of Latinos, 59 percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives, 57 percent of African Americans, 44 percent of whites and 39 percent of Asian Americans have income that falls below the cost of living for two adults (one working) with two children.
- Seventy-eight percent of Latinos, 74 percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives, 72 percent of African Americans, 59 percent of whites and 55 percent of Asian Americans have income that falls below that adult's share of the cost of living for two working adults with two children.

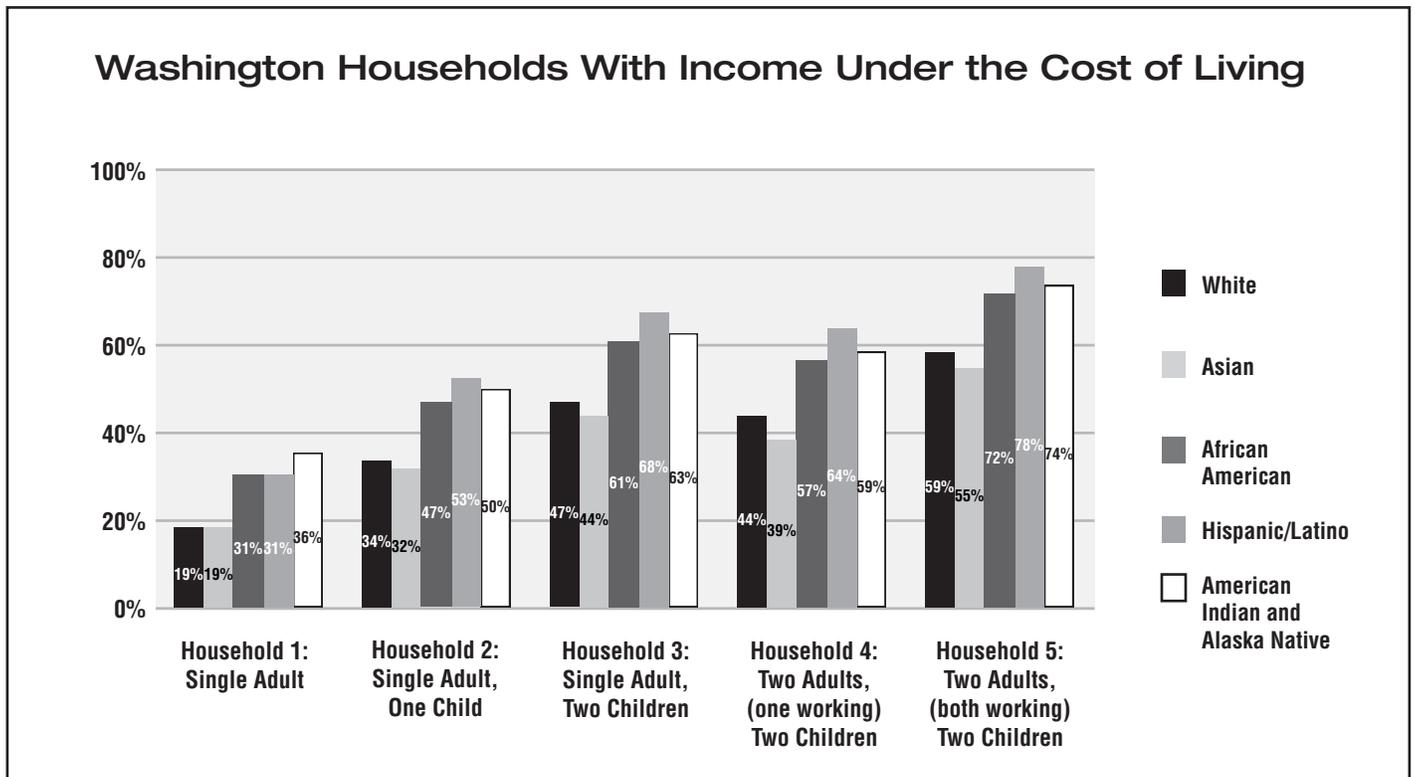


Chart 7



Esther García
Everett, Washington

My name is Esther García. My husband and I have three kids, and we've been in this country for nine years. We both work full time. I work as a housekeeper and my husband works in construction. Together we earn \$2,720 per month. Our income barely covers our expenses.*

Our rent is \$580. Each month we spend about \$200 on utilities and \$100 a month for car insurance, and another \$100 each week for gasoline. Then there's the cost of clothing and our phone fees. That doesn't even account for food.

As you can see, we're on a tight budget. There isn't even an extra penny to put away for a rainy day. There are times when we

just don't have the money for food—that means going to bed hungry. When we are up against the wall, there is no one there to help, just my husband and me trying the best we can. I am always looking for a better job, but these days it is hard to find work if you are Mexican. Many factories won't hire Mexicans for fear that we are undocumented, and that makes it hard to get a good job.

Our youngest child is the only one in our family that has health insurance. It takes a lot of energy out of you to live without health insurance. Never knowing when the hammer of sickness might drop can make you sick all by itself. The thing is we already have a small debt from a community health center. We just can't afford to get sick—so we don't.

* Pseudonym used

Trade-Offs and Tough Times:

What Happens to Families That Don't Earn a Living Wage?

These findings indicate that work, standing alone, often is not enough for people who are trying to make ends meet. When jobs pay less than a living wage, workers in those jobs are deprived of the financial resources necessary to address their basic needs and maintain a reasonable standard of living. As a result, many workers have no choice but to forgo basics. They make tradeoffs between things such as adequate health care, nutritious food, and heat or electricity.

Health insurance is often the first tradeoff that families make. As the employee share of premiums rises and fewer employers offer coverage, insurance simply becomes out of reach for many workers.²¹ As a result, more and more families wind up in the health gap, finding themselves one health emergency away from financial catastrophe.

Conclusion

When it comes to earning a living wage, workers in the Northwest face tough odds – and the odds are especially tough for people of color. A large proportion of jobs in the current economy pay wages that fall below what is necessary to meet basic needs and maintain an adequate standard of living. This shortfall is even greater for people of color.

Those earning less than a living wage face a delicate and ultimately impossible balancing act. Frequently, they must choose

among basic necessities, such as health care, balanced nutrition, and heat.

Protecting financial wellbeing and equity in wages for all residents is a primary responsibility of state and federal governments; the shortfall in living wage jobs overall and the alarming race-based inequities present a crucial public policy challenge. These findings indicate that when increasing access to jobs, state and federal policy makers must also address wage levels and provide access to income supplements. To meet this challenge, lawmakers and policymakers have several options at their disposal to increase the number of living wage jobs and secure adequate income for all residents of the region.

Policy Options for Closing the Gap

Workers in the Northwest – both workers of color and white workers – are doing all they can to support themselves and their families. What can be done to close the gap between actual wages and living wages and promote racial equity? Findings from this report suggest a number of strategies that government, business, labor, and communities can pursue to close the job gap and promote living wage jobs for all workers.



Increase the number of jobs that pay a living wage and bring current jobs up to living wage standards

A number of options exist for increasing the number of living wage jobs and bringing current jobs up to living wage standards. Lawmakers and policymakers can:

- establish job quality standards for employers and industries that receive public economic development and business assistance resources;
- lift barriers to unionization;
- pursue strategies aimed at creating high-wage, high-skill jobs; and,



Supplement wages that fall short of living wage standards and reduce the cost of living without reducing living wage standards

If work alone can not meet the needs of families, the public sector should adopt measures to address this shortfall. Options include:

- using living wage figures to determine eligibility for public assistance;
- providing food, housing, health care, transportation, and child care assistance to those earning less than a living wage;
- ensuring access to quality, affordable health coverage;
- creating new and/or expanding existing safety net programs linked to employment; and,
- developing new institutions and/or mechanisms to provide workers stable benefits.



Improve equitable access to sectors and jobs that provide a living wage

The door to living wage work will remain shut as long as workers lack adequate education and training, or are shut out due to discrimination. To address this deficit, options include:

- increasing state dollars for customized training and targeting these dollars towards particular demographics and particular industries (e.g., green technology);
- promoting linkages between high schools and pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs;
- promoting linkages between pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs;
- lowering tuition rates at community and technical colleges;
- expanding grant programs at community and technical colleges.

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Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Central Idaho: Bear Lake, Bingham, Bonneville, Butte, Caribou, and Clark Counties					
Central Idaho	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$20,982/yr. or \$10.09/hr.	\$36,856/yr. or \$17.72/hr.	\$45,854/yr. or \$22.05/hr	\$43,267/yr. or \$20.80/hr	\$29,827/yr. or \$14.34/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	31,610	70,430	83,710	82,980	58,590
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	31%	70%	83%	82%	58%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Northern Idaho: Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, and Clearwater Counties					
Northern Idaho	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$21,866/yr. or \$10.51/hr.	\$38,108/yr. or \$18.32/hr.	48,062/yr. or \$23.11/hr	\$44,034/yr. or \$21.17/hr	\$30,899/yr. or \$14.86/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	43,390	91,210	107,550	100,970	70,360
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	38%	79%	93%	88%	61%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Pocatello Region, Idaho: Bannock County					
Pocatello Region	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$20,830/yr. or \$10.01/hr.	\$36,579/yr. or \$17.59/hr.	45,501/yr. or \$21.88/hr	\$43,176/yr. or \$20.76/hr	\$29,663/yr. or \$14.26/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	12,400	24,130	27,530	27,260	19,850
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	37%	73%	83%	82%	60%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in South Central Idaho: Blaine, Camas, Cassia, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, Minidoka, and Twin Falls Counties					
South Central Idaho	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$22,532/yr. or \$10.83/hr.	\$38,125/yr. or \$18.33/hr.	46,565/yr. or \$22.39/hr	\$44,617/yr. or \$21.45/hr	\$30,168/yr. or \$14.50/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	26,930	53,010	57,840	56,940	42,940
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	39%	77%	84%	82%	62%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Southwest Idaho: Adams, Boise, Elmore, Gem, Owyhee, Payette, Valley, and Washington Counties					
Southwest Idaho	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$22,165/yr. or \$10.66/hr.	\$38,049/yr. or \$18.47/hr.	\$48,065/yr. or \$23.11/hr	\$44,229/yr. or \$21.26/hr	\$30,923/yr. or \$14.87/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	10,030	19,202	22,410	22,060	17,450
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	41%	79%	93%	91%	72%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Boise Region, Idaho: Ada and Canyon Counties					
Boise Region	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$24,323/yr. or \$11.69/hr.	\$40,780/yr. or \$19.61/hr.	50,677/yr. or \$24.36/hr	\$46,321/yr. or \$22.27/hr	\$32,240/yr. or \$15.50/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	94,900	171,630	205,370	194,510	146,200
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	40%	72%	86%	81%	61%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Missoula County, Montana					
Missoula County	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$22,797/yr. or \$10.96/hr.	\$36,850/yr. or \$17.72/hr.	\$45,474/yr. or \$21.86/hr	\$46,053/yr. or \$22.14/hr	\$29,847/yr. or \$14.35/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	21,660	44,140	48,580	49,180	34,050
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	39%	79%	87%	88%	61%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Billings Region, Montana: Yellowstone & Carbon Counties					
Billings Region	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$21,428/yr. or \$10.30/hr.	\$35,053/yr. or \$16.85/hr.	\$44,026/yr. or \$21.17/hr	\$44,629/yr. or \$21.46/hr	\$29,123/yr. or \$14.00/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	32,030	57,980	66,740	67,150	48,390
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	40%	73%	83%	84%	61%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Cascade County, Montana					
Cascade County	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$20,728/yr. or \$9.97/hr.	\$33,877/yr. or \$16.29/hr.	42,382/yr. or \$20.38/hr	\$43,612/yr. or \$20.97/hr	\$28,331/yr. or \$13.62/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	12,560	25,600	28,520	28,830	22,660
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	37%	75%	84%	85%	67%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Central Montana: Big Horn, Blaine, Chouteau, Fergus, Glacier, Golden Valley, Hill, Judith Basin, Liberty, Musselshell, Petroleum, Pondera, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Teton, Toole & Wheatland Counties					
Central Montana	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$20,585/yr. or \$9.90/hr.	\$33,221/yr. or \$15.97/hr.	41,805/yr. or \$20.10/hr	\$43,063/yr. or \$20.70/hr	\$28,043/yr. or \$13.48/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	14,660	25,910	32,380	32,620	21,550
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	37%	66%	82%	83%	55%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Eastern Montana: Carter, Custer, Daniels, Dawson, Fallon, Garfield, McCone, Phillips, Powder River, Prairie, Richland, Roosevelt, Rosebud, Sheridan, Treasure, Valley, and Wibaux Counties					
Eastern Montana	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$21,006/yr. or \$10.10/hr.	\$33,207/yr. or \$15.97/hr.	\$41,140/yr. or \$19.78/hr	\$43,180/yr. or \$20.76/hr	\$27,711/yr. or \$13.32/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	12,380	22,690	25,430	26,970	18,740
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	40%	74%	83%	88%	61%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Southwest Montana: Beaverhead, Broadwater, Deer Lodge, Gallatin, Granite, Jefferson, Lewis and Clark, Madison, Meagher, Park, Powell and Silver Bow Counties					
Southwest Montana	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$21,362/yr. or \$10.27/hr.	\$34,815/yr. or \$16.74/hr.	\$43,520/yr. or \$20.92/hr	\$44,399/yr. or \$21.35/hr	\$28,882/yr. or \$13.89/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	39,750	80,670	93,620	95,060	64,130
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	35%	71%	82%	84%	56%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Western Montana: Flathead, Lake, Lincoln, Mineral, Ravalli and Sanders Counties					
Western Montana	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$21,671/yr. or \$10.42/hr.	\$35,119/yr. or \$16.88/hr.	43,775/yr. or \$21.05/hr	\$44,531/yr. or \$21.41/hr	\$29,013/yr. or \$13.95/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	25,190	53,760	61,520	61,780	44,280
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	36%	77%	89%	89%	63%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Oregon Region 1: Clatsop, Columbia and Tillamook Counties					
Oregon Region 1	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$23,801/yr. or \$11.44/hr.	\$39,805/yr. or \$19.14/hr.	\$49,136/yr. or \$23.62/hr	\$47,776/yr. or \$22.97/hr	\$31,694/yr. or \$15.24/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	13,225	26,342	30,921	30,268	21,062
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	38%	75%	88%	87%	60%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Oregon Region 2: Multnomah and Washington Counties					
Oregon Region 2	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$25,546/yr. or \$12.28/hr.	\$42,814/yr. or \$20.58/hr.	53,729/yr. or \$25.83/hr	\$49,031/yr. or \$23.57/hr	\$33,981/yr. or \$16.34/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	188,918	412,933	515,131	480,752	332,939
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	30%	65%	81%	75%	52%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Oregon Region 3: Marion, Polk and Yamhill Counties					
Oregon Region 3	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$24,025/yr. or \$11.55/hr.	\$39,975/yr. or \$19.22/hr.	49,643/yr. or \$23.87/hr	\$47,562/yr. or \$22.87/hr	\$31,940/yr. or \$15.36/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	64,682	129,188	154,361	149,255	106,105
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	36%	72%	85%	83%	59%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Oregon Region 4: Benton, Lincoln and Linn Counties					
Oregon Region 4	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$23,678/yr. or \$11.38/hr.	\$40,465/yr. or \$19.45/hr.	50,147/yr. or \$24.11/hr	\$48,028/yr. or \$23.09/hr	\$32,199/yr. or \$15.48/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	33,005	67,836	77,471	76,708	55,066
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	36%	74%	84%	83%	60%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Oregon Region 5: Lane County

Oregon Region 5	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$24,152/yr. or \$11.61/hr.	\$41,981/yr. or \$20.18/hr.	\$52,358/yr. or \$25.17/hr	\$48,751/yr. or \$23.44/hr	\$33,287/yr. or \$16.00/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	44,628	106,863	125,134	119,718	89,880
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	32%	76%	89%	85%	64%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Oregon Region 6: Douglas County

Oregon Region 6	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$21,809/yr. or \$10.49/hr.	\$36,632/yr. or \$17.61/hr.	43,828/yr. or \$21.07/hr	\$45,996/yr. or \$22.11/hr	\$29,799/yr. or \$14.33/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	9,832	27,734	31,693	32,432	20,211
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	26%	72%	82%	84%	52%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Oregon Region 7: Coos and Curry Counties

Oregon Region 7	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$22,572/yr. or \$10.85/hr.	\$37,670/yr. or \$18.11/hr.	46,316/yr. or \$22.27/hr	\$46,272/yr. or \$22.25/hr	\$30,694/yr. or \$14.76/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	12,571	22,058	25,277	25,277	17,856
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	43%	76%	87%	87%	62%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Oregon Region 8: Jackson and Josephine Counties

Oregon Region 8	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$23,372/yr. or \$11.24/hr.	\$38,955/yr. or \$18.73/hr.	47,787/yr. or \$22.97/hr	\$47,400/yr. or \$22.79/hr	\$31,214/yr. or \$15.01/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	44,944	80,155	88,678	88,180	64,407
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	43%	76%	85%	84%	61%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Oregon Region 9: Lane Gilliam, Hood River, Sherman, Wasco and Wheeler Counties					
Oregon Region 9	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$22,562/yr. or \$10.85/hr.	\$37,761/yr. or \$18.15/hr.	\$46,201/yr. or \$22.21/hr	\$46,266/yr. or \$22.24/hr	\$30,689/yr. or \$14.75/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	9,543	17,757	19,648	19,773	14,840
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	41%	76%	84%	85%	64%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Oregon Region 10: Crook, Deschutes and Jefferson Counties					
Oregon Region 10	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$23,201/yr. or \$11.15/hr.	\$37,846/yr. or \$18.20/hr.	46,435/yr. or \$22.32/hr	\$46,510/yr. or \$22.36/hr	\$30,730/yr. or \$14.77/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	21,817	53,979	62,002	62,002	43,334
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	30%	73%	84%	84%	59%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Oregon Region 11: Klamath and Lake Counties					
Oregon Region 11	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$21,314/yr. or \$10.25/hr.	\$35,360/yr. or \$17.00/hr.	42,956/yr. or \$20.65/hr	\$45,134/yr. or \$21.70/hr	\$29,370/yr. or \$14.12/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	7,881	17,838	19,661	20,202	13,856
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	31%	70%	78%	80%	55%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Oregon Region 12: Morrow and Umatilla Counties					
Oregon Region 12	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$21,972/yr. or \$10.56/hr.	\$36,327/yr. or \$17.46/hr.	43,813/yr. or \$21.06/hr	\$45,724/yr. or \$21.98/hr	\$29,809/yr. or \$14.33/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	12,200	24,830	27,532	28,138	20,476
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	36%	74%	82%	84%	61%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Oregon Region 13: Baker, Union and Wallowa Counties					
Oregon Region 13	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$21,142/yr. or \$10.16/hr.	\$35,667/yr. or \$17.15/hr.	\$43,228/yr. or \$20.78/hr	\$45,399/yr. or \$21.83/hr	\$29,502/yr. or \$14.18/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	4,605	12,129	13,815	14,211	10,283
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	26%	68%	77%	80%	58%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Oregon Region 14: Grant, Harney and Malheur Counties					
Oregon Region 14	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$21,797/yr. or \$10.48/hr.	\$35,723/yr. or \$17.17/hr.	43,191/yr. or \$20.76/hr	\$45,363/yr. or \$21.81/hr	\$29,485/yr. or \$14.18/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	5,414	12,760	14,873	15,497	10,507
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	30%	70%	81%	85%	57%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Oregon Region 15: Clackamas County					
Oregon Region 15	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$25,546/yr. or \$12.28/hr.	\$42,731/yr. or \$20.54/hr.	53,556/yr. or \$25.75/hr	\$49,031/yr. or \$23.57/hr	\$33,903/yr. or \$16.30/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	46,901	98,590	118,704	111,081	77,251
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	34%	71%	86%	80%	56%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Spokane County					
Spokane County	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$21,325/yr. or \$10.25/hr.	\$35,170/yr. or \$16.91/hr.	46,549/yr. or \$22.38/hr	\$45,606/yr. or \$21.93/hr	\$30,150/yr. or \$14.50/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	46,216	143,150	190,724	189,727	122,877
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	19%	60%	80%	80%	52%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Southwest Region: Clark, Cowlitz, Skamania and Wahkiakum Counties					
Southwest Washington	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$23,044/yr. or \$11.08/hr.	\$36,289/yr. or \$17.45/hr.	\$49,312/yr. or \$23.71/hr	\$46,048/yr. or \$22.14/hr	\$31,491/yr. or \$15.14/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	50,196	115,279	155,057	142,565	97,434
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	25%	58%	78%	72%	49%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in South Central Region: Kittitas, Klickitat and Yakima Counties					
South Central Washington	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$21,701/yr. or \$10.43/hr.	\$35,439/yr. or \$17.04/hr.	47,356/yr. or \$22.77/hr	\$45,569/yr. or \$21.91/hr	\$30,523/yr. or \$14.67/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	35,151	97,741	117,966	115,768	64,953
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	25%	71%	86%	84%	47%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Snohomish County					
Snohomish County	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$25,685/yr. or \$12.35/hr.	\$40,382/yr. or \$19.41/hr.	54,941/yr. or \$26.41/hr	\$49,812/yr. or \$23.95/hr	\$34,136/yr. or \$16.41/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	66,668	155,316	208,321	191,746	132,983
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	25%	58%	78%	72%	50%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in King County					
King County	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$25,685/yr. or \$12.35/hr.	\$40,694/yr. or \$19.56/hr.	\$58,293/yr. or \$23.03/hr	\$49,812/yr. or \$23.95/hr	\$35,687/yr. or \$17.16/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	304,813	678,805	979,841	827,826	594,335
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	24%	52%	76%	64%	46%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Pierce County					
Pierce County	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$24,189/yr. or \$11.63/hr.	\$38,567/yr. or \$18.54/hr.	51,486/yr. or \$24.75/hr	\$48,463/yr. or \$23.30/hr	\$32,539/yr. or \$15.63/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	81,529	186,096	245,525	230,860	140,691
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	27%	61%	81%	76%	46%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Pacific Mountain Region: Grays Harbor Lewis, Mason, Pacific and Thurston Counties					
Pacific Mountain Region	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$21,814/yr. or \$10.49/hr.	\$35,828/yr. or \$17.23/hr.	48,874/yr. or \$23.50/hr	\$45,612/yr. or \$21.93/hr	\$31,274/yr. or \$15.04/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	36,986	115,054	149,934	146,109	94,390
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	19%	59%	77%	75%	48%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Olympic Region: Clallam, Jefferson and Kitsap Counties					
Olympic Region	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$22,803/yr. or \$10.96/hr.	\$36,951/yr. or \$17.76/hr.	49,923/yr. or \$24.00/hr	\$46,754/yr. or \$22.48/hr	\$31,790/yr. or \$15.28/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	34,655	76,176	105,952	102,306	61,397
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	25%	54%	76%	73%	44%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Northwest Washington Region: Island, San Juan, Skagit and Whatcom Counties					
Northwest Washington	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$23,605/yr. or \$11.35/hr.	\$38,141/yr. or \$18.34/hr.	\$52,546/yr. or \$25.26/hr	\$47,600/yr. or \$22.88/hr	\$33,029/yr. or \$15.88/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	53,735	117,623	154,875	144,149	101,345
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	30%	66%	86%	80%	57%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in North Central Washington Region: Adams, Chelan, Douglas, Grant and Okanogan Counties					
North Central Washington	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$21,148/yr. or \$10.17/hr.	\$34,196/yr. or \$16.44/hr.	45,702/yr. or \$21.97/hr	\$44,759/yr. or \$21.52/hr	\$29,726/yr. or \$14.29/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	22,276	88,634	102,174	101,947	75,999
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	19%	74%	85%	85%	64%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Eastern Washington Region: Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Garfield and Lincoln Counties					
Eastern Washington Region	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$20,429/yr. or \$9.82/hr.	\$33,607/yr. or \$16.16/hr.	45,173/yr. or \$21.72/hr	\$44,219/yr. or \$21.26/hr	\$29,461/yr. or \$14.16/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	11,972	50,153	63,255	62,930	40,165
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	15%	61%	77%	76%	49%

Number and Percent of Living Wage Jobs in Benton-Franklin Region: Benton, Franklin, Pend Oreille, Stevens, Walla Walla and Whitman Counties					
Benton – Franklin Region	Household 1 Single Adult	Household 2 Single Adult with a school-age child (age 6-8 yrs)	Household 3 Single Adult with a toddler (12-24 months) and a school-age child	Household 4 Two adults (one working) with a toddler and a school-age child	Household 5 Two adults (both working) with a toddler and a school-age child
Living Wage	\$20,879/yr. or \$10.04/hr.	\$34,179/yr. or \$16.43/hr.	45,645/yr. or \$21.94/hr	\$44,675/yr. or \$21.48/hr	\$29,697/yr. or \$14.28/hr (each adult)
Number of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	20,389	61,279	77,048	76,520	53,301
Percent of Jobs That Pay Less Than a Living Wage	19%	57%	71%	71%	49%

The Race for Wages

Living Wage Jobs in the Current Economy

**2007 NORTHWEST
JOB GAP STUDY**

About the organization releasing this report



Northwest Federation of Community Organizations (NWFCO) is a regional federation of three statewide, community-based social and economic justice organizations located in the states of Idaho, Oregon and Washington: Idaho Community Action Network (ICAN), Oregon Action (OA), and Washington Community Action Network (WashingtonCAN). Collectively, these organizations engage in community organizing and coalition building in both rural and metropolitan areas, including Seattle, Boise and Portland. 1265 South Main Street Suite #304, Seattle, WA 98144, Voice: (206) 568-5400, Fax: (206) 568-5444, Web: www.nwfc.org