

Poverty and Income in North San Diego County



Analysis of regional data from the US Census Bureau 2015 American Community Survey

KEY FINDINGS:

► **Poverty in North County:** One of every eight people living in the North County region of San Diego County – 12.1% of the population – lived in poverty in 2015. The poverty rate varied across North County cities from 5% to 19.2%.

► **Income Inequality:** The median household income in North County was \$75,095 in 2015, more than \$7,000 higher than the medians for the whole county and the City of San Diego. The difference between cities with the highest and lowest median income in North County was more than \$47,000.

► **Low Pay in Key Industries:** Among the civilian industries employing the most North County residents, the lowest incomes were in the Accommodation and Food Services industry, primarily hotels and restaurants. The median annual pay for North County residents employed full-time and year-round in that industry was \$28,035.



Poverty:

The North County region is home to more than 103,000 men, women, and children who live below the federal poverty level, out of a population of 854,200 in the region. US Census Bureau data released this year show a poverty rate of 12.1% in the North County area, compared to 13.8% for the entire county. The poverty rate remained higher than before the 2008 recession. The income limit of the federal poverty level (FPL) varies by family size; in 2015 a family of four was below the FPL with an annual income below \$24,036.

POVERTY AND ECONOMIC HARDSHIP IN 2015

	North County region	San Diego County	City of San Diego
Share of population below the federal poverty level (FPL)	12.1%	13.8%	15.6%
Number of people below FPL	103,202	444,260	212,994
Share of population in economic hardship (below 200% FPL)	27.2%	31.2%	31.7%
Number of people living in economic hardship	232,264	1,004,003	432,203

Economic Hardship:

Since the national measure of poverty is not adjusted for the high cost of living in San Diego County,* we also analyzed the share of the population living below the economic hardship level of 200% of the FPL. This measure provides a more realistic count of the families and individuals who struggle with low incomes. In North County, 232,264 people, or 27.2% of the population, lived in economic hardship in 2015, compared to 31.2% in San Diego County overall.

2015 INCOME THRESHOLDS

Family size examples	Poverty (FPL)	Economic Hardship
1 person	\$12,082	\$24,164
Family of 4	\$24,036	\$48,072

*CPI "Making Ends Meet 2014" http://www.cpisandiego.org/making_ends_meet

Household Income and Housing Costs

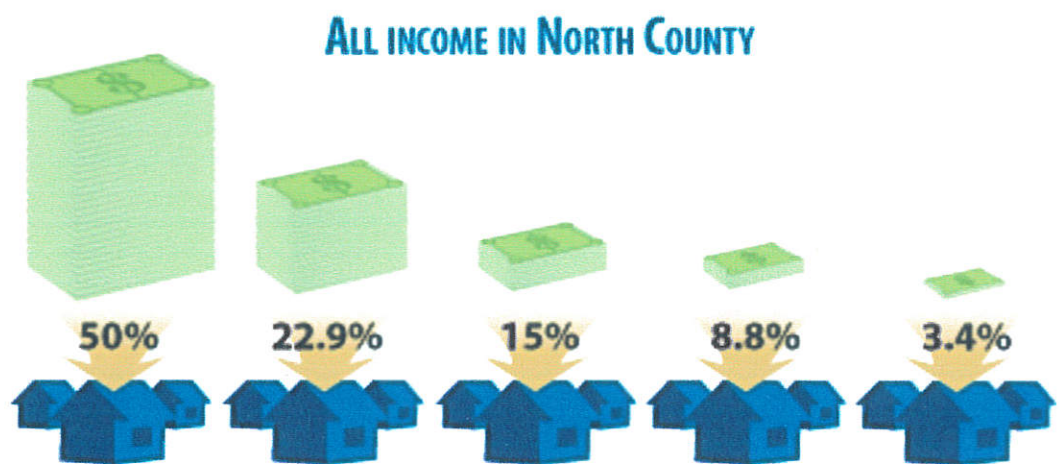
The median – or midpoint – of all household incomes in North County was \$75,095 in 2015.

That is more than \$7,000 higher than the medians for the whole county and for the City of San Diego, but there was much variation among North County cities. Encinitas had the highest median household income in the region, \$101,703, while three of the five largest cities in the region – Escondido, Oceanside, and San Marcos – each had median incomes lower than the City of San Diego or the entire County.

	Carlsbad	Encinitas	Escondido	Oceanside	San Marcos	Vista	North County Region	San Diego County	City of San Diego
Median household income, 2015	\$96,346	\$101,703	\$54,284	\$60,720	\$66,318	\$67,421	\$75,095	\$67,320	\$67,871
Change from 2007 <i>adjusted for inflation</i>	+\$5,532	n/a*	-\$2,214	-\$13,574	-\$3,168	+\$7,515	n/a*	-\$3,318	-\$2,846

Income Inequality:

As in the City of San Diego, one fifth of all households in North County received 50% of all the income in the region in 2015. By contrast, the lowest income-earning fifth of households received only 3.4% of all income.



All households in North County, grouped in equal-sized fifths

Housing Costs:

The median cost of renting a 2-bedroom apartment in North County was \$1,485, and ranged from \$1,260 in Escondido to \$1,877 in Carlsbad. Housing, the biggest expense in most family budgets, is considered unaffordable if it consumes more than 30% of household income. In North County a household needs at least \$59,400 per year to afford the median 2-bedroom rent without having to resort to survival strategies such as relying on public benefits, going into debt, or doing without other needed items. More than half of renters throughout the region have unaffordable housing relative to their income, except in Carlsbad, where it's not quite half.

RENT AFFORDABILITY IN NORTH COUNTY CITIES

	Carlsbad	Encinitas	Escondido	Oceanside	San Marcos	Vista	North County Region	San Diego County	City of San Diego
Median gross rent - 2 BR	\$1,877	n/a*	\$1,260	\$1,481	\$1,411	\$1,442	\$1,485	\$1,438	\$1,550
Renters paying more than 30% of income for rent	44%	n/a*	61%	58%	59%	54%	58%	57%	55%




*Census data not available



Industries and Working Poverty

In the North County region, 43.5% of adults (over age 16) living in poverty had jobs in 2015. That includes 8,494 people who worked full-time all year and were paid less than the federal poverty threshold. Among the 10 industries that had 20,000 or more employees living in North County, the Accommodation and Food Services industry – primarily hotels and restaurants – had the lowest civilian earnings; median annual pay for North County residents employed full-time and year-round in that industry was \$28,035 in 2015. The US military had the lowest pay rates but also provided room and board at Camp Pendleton or an additional allowance for family housing. Only two of the largest 10 industries – Manufacturing and the combined Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services industry – had median earnings above the \$59,400 needed to afford the median rent for a 2-bedroom apartment in the region, indicating that many families must have at least two incomes to get by.

ANNUAL EARNINGS OF NORTH COUNTY RESIDENTS EMPLOYED IN MAJOR INDUSTRIES

Top 10 industries employing residents of North San Diego County, in order of median earnings	Number of North County residents employed	Median earnings for full-time year-round work in 2015
 Military	27,599	\$21,027*
 Accommodation and Food Services	35,920	\$28,035
 Other Services, Except Public Administration	24,287	\$30,038
 Administrative, Support, and Waste Management Services	21,629	\$30,038
 Retail Trade	52,303	\$40,051
 Health Care and Social Assistance	52,631	\$45,057
 Construction	26,725	\$47,059
 Educational Services	38,058	\$58,073
 Manufacturing	49,695	\$63,080
 Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	42,679	\$85,107

*The North County region includes Camp Pendleton. Military service members earning this level would live on base and also receive room and board.



Methodology: All data are from the Census Bureau's 2015 1-year American Community Survey (ACS). North County regional estimates are based on analysis by CPI of 2015 ACS data Public Use Microdata. We defined "North County" based on the Census Bureau's Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs) 07301, 07303, 07304, 07305, 07306, and 07309, which include Camp Pendleton, Oceanside, Vista, Carlsbad, San Marcos, Escondido, Encinitas, Solana Beach, Rancho Santa Fe, Fairbanks Ranch, as well as areas surrounding or between these cities and places. We also used Census data available separately for most cities of over 65,000 population, and limited 2015 estimates available for cities or places with population between 20,000 and 65,000 (e.g., Encinitas).