



**COMMUNITY ACTION
PARTNERSHIP**
ORANGE COUNTY

2023 COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Prepared By:
CAP OC Planning Department

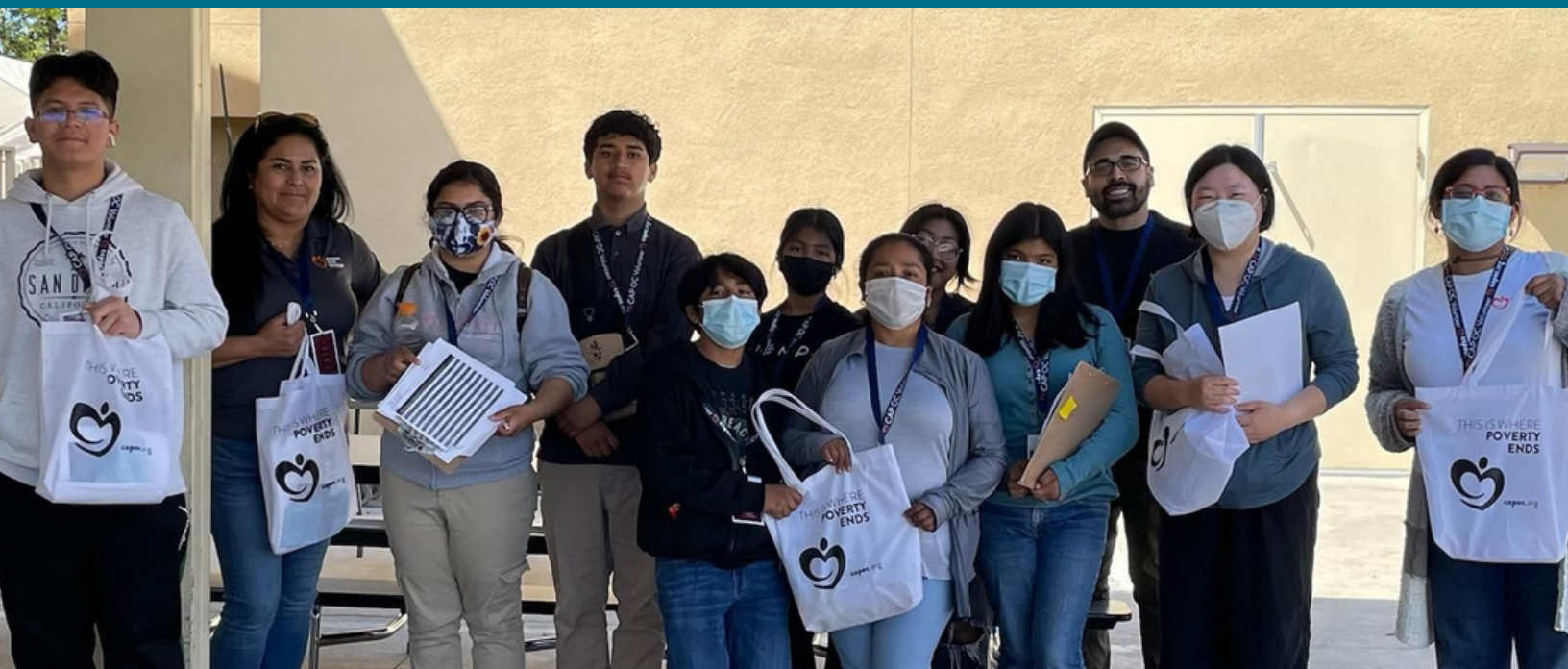


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Every two years, Community Action Partnership of Orange County (CAP OC) develops a Community Action Plan (CAP) that provides a roadmap for the agency for the next two years and provides a plan for delivering services to individuals and families affected by poverty. As part of the CAP, CAP OC also completes a comprehensive Community Needs Assessment (CNA) to understand the causes and conditions of poverty and to identify assets to fight against poverty. This results in a needs-driven process that will be used to improve the quality of life for community members and respond to the ever-changing needs of Orange County (OC).

Since 1965, CAP OC's mission has been to end and prevent poverty by stabilizing, sustaining and empowering people with the resources they need when they need them. By forging strategic partnerships, the agency forms a powerful force to improve its community. CAP OC's vision is to see generations of healthy communities where poverty ceases to exist.

This 2023 Community Needs Assessment reaffirms the agency's commitment to its mission by seeking to:

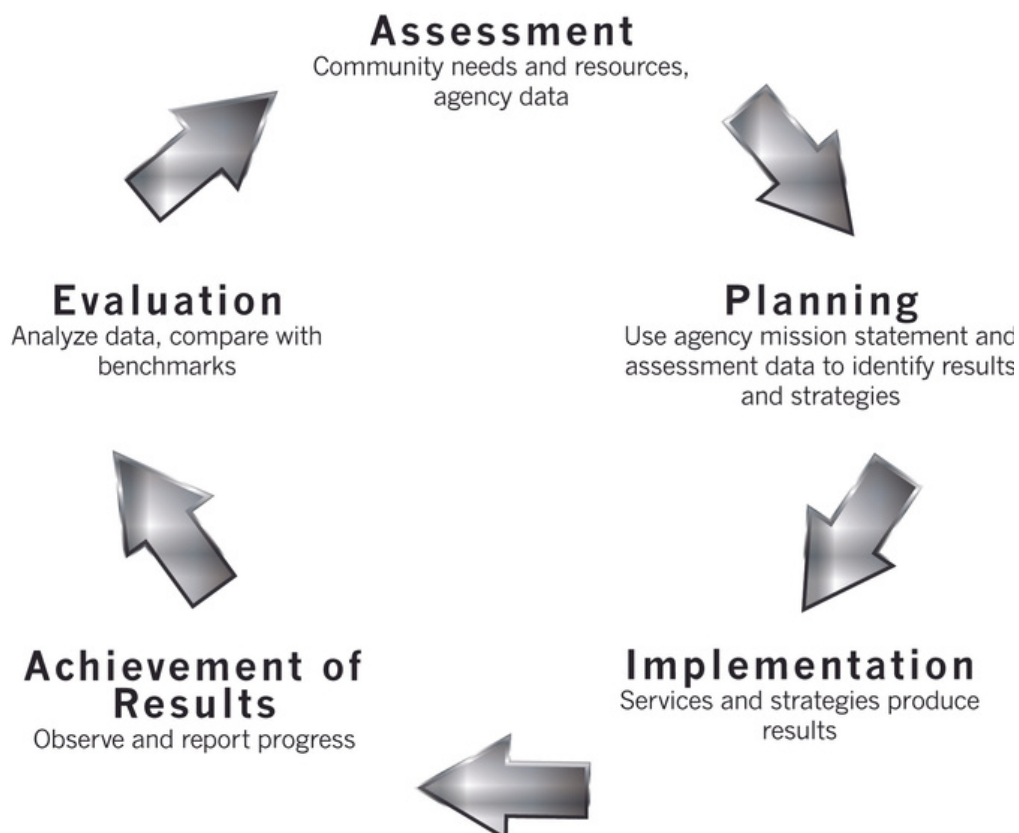
- Understand the emerging and ongoing needs of low-income families and individuals
- Identify causes and conditions of poverty in the community
- Identify community assets and resources
- Educate community members and leaders about the needs identified
- Build strategic partnerships to address these emerging needs

This report is a culmination of the agency’s efforts to understand the most pressing needs of Orange County in 2023 and how it will address those needs in the coming years.

ROMA Cycle

Our process to understand and respond to the needs identified as part of this needs assessment is guided by the Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) performance management framework, Results Oriented Management and Accountability, or ROMA (see ROMA illustration below). Community Action Agencies like CAP OC undertake ROMA implementation actions that focus on results-oriented management and accountability. ROMA principles include: assessing poverty needs and conditions within the community; identifying specific improvements, or results, to be achieved among people with low income and communities in which they live; and organize and implement programs, services, and strategies within the agency and among partnering organizations, to achieve anticipated results.

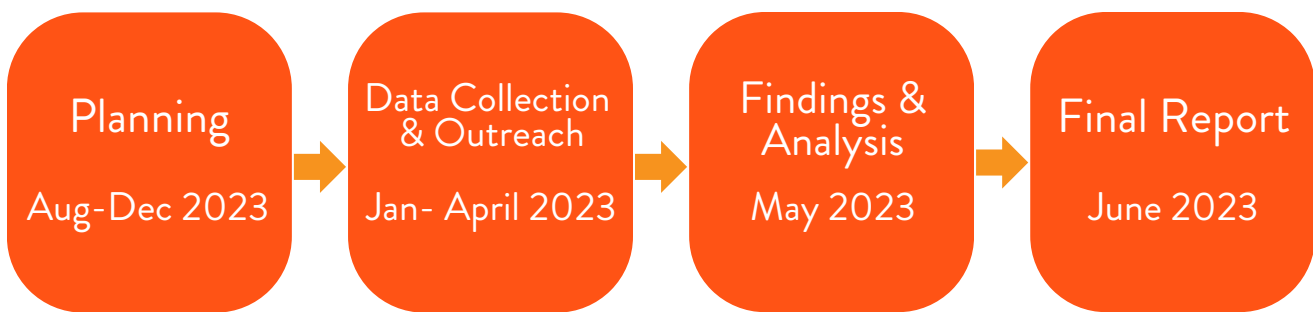
The Results Oriented Management and Accountability Cycle



Planning and Implementation

In the Fall of 2022, CAP OC's Planning Department began planning the implementation of its comprehensive 2023 Community Needs Assessment. With the assistance of interns from local colleges and universities, the planning team developed a timeline to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the emerging and ongoing needs of a post-pandemic Orange County.

2023 Community Needs Assessment Timeline



The community needs assessment process included the development of a needs assessment survey (instrument), a detailed outreach plan with a strong focus on leveraging partnerships with community stakeholder groups, a plan to recruit up to 10 college interns, 5 scheduled community meetings, a customer satisfaction survey, a social media campaign (with paid advertisements), an intensive email campaign, canvassing efforts and an intent to attend between 2-3 in-person outreach events a week between January-April 2023. The result was a successful needs assessment, which was an improvement on what was done in the previous needs assessment from 2021. The 2023 CNA included many direct outreach strategies aimed at surveying as many community members as possible, something that was a challenge in 2021 during the height of the pandemic with periodic lockdowns and other in-person restrictions.

Results

The findings from the 2023 CNA are a culmination of the data from the 2023 CNA survey results, direct community input coming from participants that attended the 5 community meetings, and database research that was used to collate the findings.

The 2023 CNA survey consisted of a total of 21 questions – 8 matrix, 8 multiple choice, 4 open ended, and 1 ranking question with the purpose of categorizing the needs into issue domains. The survey achieved a total of 1,221 responses with an 83% completion rate.

Top Needs Identified

The list below shows the top (11) needs identified in 2023 in the Community Needs Assessment. In total, 1,221 survey responses were collected between January 1st to April 30th of 2023. The survey was open to anyone 16 years and older that lived or worked in Orange County

Top 11 Needs Identified	Issue Domain
1. Lack of opportunity to save money for the future	Finance
2. Difficulty paying for basic essentials such as food and safe housing	Finance
3. Inability to consistently pay debts on time	Finance
4. Difficulty paying for utilities and affecting utilization	Housing
5. Lack of living wage employment opportunities	Employment
6. Lack of affordable housing due to high cost of rent or mortgage	Housing
7. Lack of basic (key) financial skills such as making budgets and obtaining/ managing credits	Finance
8. Difficulty navigating the healthcare system to access services	Health
9. Lack of access to affordable health insurance, medical care and prescription medicine	Health
10. Lack of access to job training and education to obtain desired employment	Employment
11. Lack of safety in the community due to crime or violence	Housing

The findings and identified needs from this assessment can be found throughout the report in each section or issue domain. A domain is a categorical framework that the national Community Action Network utilizes when assessing individual and family performance indicators. For the purposes of this report, the agency used these issue domains to organize the different sections of the report with top needs identified within each issue domain.

Each issue domain includes the needs identified, a listing of causes and conditions for each domain, and identified community resources and assets. These needs were selected by analyzing the combined data from surveys, meetings, and databases. For a full explanation of each need, please review the appropriate issue domain.

The six issue domains, or sections in this report are:



FINANCE



HOUSING



EMPLOYMENT



HEALTH



**COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**



EDUCATION

Methodology

As in previous years, CAP OC engaged in a research study for the County of Orange to identify the causes and conditions of poverty. This section will seek to lay out the agency's approach to data collection, discuss how research was conducted, its outreach strategies and data analysis methods.

Information for this assessment was gathered using qualitative and quantitative methods of approach. Qualitative data refers to data that is non-numerical, for example, interviews, focus groups and written feedback. Quantitative data, on the other hand, refers to information that can be measured and written down such as databases and statistics.

CAP OC's qualitative approaches included:

- Community Meetings (Focus Groups) - 5 community meetings with OC residents to gather additional data/information that could not be captured from surveys or database research.
- CNA Survey - Open-ended questions in the CNA, survey question #21 which asked, "Is there anything else you would like to add about your or your community's needs?"

CAP OC's quantitative approaches included:

- Database Research - Research that has already been done, utilizing secondary database research (i.e., OC Community Indicators Report, the Annual Report on the Conditions of Children in Orange County, etc.)
- CNA Survey - Primary data research conducted by CAP OC by collecting data directly from participants (available for anyone who was 16 years or older who lived or worked in Orange County).
- Reliable Data Sets - Pulling raw data sets directly from reliable sources such as the U.S. Census Bureau.

The data collected from our 2023 CNA survey was analyzed using descriptive statistics meant to describe the actual characteristics of a survey data set. These summaries only provide an analysis of the data of those that responded to our survey and do not make inferences about the community at-large.

Outreach

Community engagement in 2023 was much more successful than in 2021, as we received a total of 1,221 survey responses, compared to 753 responses in 2021. Additionally, the 2023 CNA survey resulted in an 83% completion rate (only 1 question was missed) in comparison to a 78% completion rate in 2021 (with more than 1 question missed). The increase in responses was due to CAP OC's push for more in person engagement strategies such as tabling events and canvassing.

Between January-April 2023, CAP OC staff, interns, and volunteers were successful in completing the following:

- Tabling 45 in-person events and completing 594 surveys at these large-scale community events, food distributions, CAP OC events, etc.
- Canvassed 1,050 homes surrounding our 3 community centers
- AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps) & CA Conservation Corps Volunteers surveying 1-2 times a week in our Energy and Environmental Services Department (EES) for two months.
- Social Media Advertising in 5 languages, this included paid targeting advertising.
- Direct Email Campaign – reached out to 737 individuals/ organizations in OC.



Comparing the 2021 & 2023 Community Needs Assessments

When comparing the highest priority needs identified in the 2023 CNA to 2021's assessment, we concluded that major challenges surrounding access to finding a living wage job and affordable housing are still present. However, in a departure from the 2021 Assessment, the 2023 CNA identified a number of challenges such as being unable to save money and difficulty paying for basic essentials like food, housing, and utilities to be top needs. These challenges can likely be due to the rising cost of housing in addition to the rising cost of food, gasoline, and other basic necessities. Please see the domains section of this report to understand the challenges facing Orange County as it relates to the needs identified in our assessment.

	2021	2023
# Surveys	752	1,221
Completion Rate	78%	83%
Top Issue Domains	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Health 2. Housing 3. Employment 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finance 2. Housing 3. Employment
Outreach Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual Outreach Only • Digital Survey Only • Social Media Campaign • Direct Email Campaign • Print/Virtual Advertisements • Virtual Interviews • Virtual Community Meetings • Leveraging Partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-Person & Virtual Outreach • Paper & Digital Surveys • Canvassing Local Neighborhoods • Social Media Campaign • Direct Email Campaign • Print/Virtual Advertisements • Virtual and In-person Community Meetings • Leveraging Partnerships
Top Needs Identifies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to affordable health insurance and healthcare in the community. • Having access to safe, stable shelter on a regular basis. • Finding and keeping a job that pays a living wage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of opportunity to save money for the future. • Difficulty paying for basic essentials such as food and safe housing. • Inability to consistently pay debts on time.

Next Steps

Our 2023 Community Needs Assessment (and CAP) was reviewed and approved by our Board of Directors in June 2023. The identified needs were priority ranked by the Board in late May 2023 and were included in the 2024-2025 Community Action Plan. You can find a copy of this needs ranking in the 2024-2025 CAP.

In the CAP, we show how these top needs align with our agency's mission and how we are addressing these needs as an agency. This final 2023 Community Needs Assessment and Community Action Plan will be available on our agency's website at www.capoc.org in the About section.

Our agency also intends to present this report to community members and stakeholder groups in the coming months. Beginning in the Fall of 2023, our agency will present our findings to community groups, local elected officials, colleges and universities, and other stakeholders. These efforts are intended to raise awareness of the emerging needs within our community, raise awareness of our agency's programs and services, and build upon our anti-poverty agenda with stakeholders. By forging these strategic partnerships, we can build a powerful force to end poverty in Orange County.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to everyone who helped make the 2023 Community Needs Assessment possible! This report would not be possible without the active participation of community members and CAP OC stakeholders. A special thank you to the following individuals:

- CAP OC's Board of Directors and our Executive Leadership Council, especially CAP OC's President and CEO Gregory C. Scott
- CAP OC's Planning Department:
 - Curtis Gibbs, Director of Planning and Business Development
 - Alexander Caro, Planning Manager
 - Yesenia Hernandez, Senior Planner
 - Carolyn Coleman, Community Engagement Liaison
- CAP OC's AmeriCorps VIP Fellow, Kelsey Quinn
- CAP OC Planning Volunteers and Interns including:
 - Nicholas Benton, CSUF Intern
 - Ivonne Huitron, CSUF MPH Intern
 - Celeste Aranda, CSUDH Intern
 - Nuria Maria Safar, CSUDH Intern
 - Breanna Cadiente, CSUF MPH Intern
 - Inez Aquino, CSUF MPH Intern
 - Nayeli Santa Cruz, UCI Intern
 - Zoelli Ortiz, UCI Intern
 - Lilya Chakhoyan, UCI Volunteer
 - Delia V. Acedo, UCI Intern
 - Arlette Ruedas Gonzalez, UCI Intern
 - Emely Vazquez, CSUF MPH Intern
- Coral Fenech, GIS Consultant

- We'd like to thank the many volunteers that assisted us during our in-person and virtual outreach events.
- All CAP OC staff for the time and energy they spent promoting the Community Needs Assessment Survey and the Customer Satisfaction Survey.
- All of CAP OC and other community stakeholders who generously offered their time and thoughts in meetings, including Anaheim Independencia FRC, El Modena FRC, Southwest Community Center, and other partners.



METHODOLOGY

CAP OC engaged in a research study on the County of Orange to identify the causes and conditions of poverty for the 2023 Community Needs Assessment. This section seeks to lay out CAP OC's approach to data collection, discuss how research was conducted, its outreach strategies and data analysis methods.

Data collection

Information was gathered using qualitative and quantitative methods of approach. Qualitative data refers to data that is non-numerical, for example, interviews, focus groups and written feedback. Quantitative data, on the other hand, refers to information that can be measured and written down like databases and statistics.

QUALITATIVE APPROACH

**COMMUNITY
MEETINGS/
FOCUS GROUPS**

(5 total meetings)

Survey

(open-ended
questions)

CAP OC's qualitative approach included:

- Community Meetings (Focus Groups) - 5 community meetings with OC residents to gather additional data/information that could not be captured from surveys, database research.
- CNA Survey - Open-ended questions in CNA, survey question #21 which asked, "Is there anything else you would like to add about your or your community's needs?"

QUANTITATIVE APPROACH

DATABASE RESEARCH

(Secondary Data Research)

SURVEY DATA

(Primary Data Research)

RELIABLE DATA SETS

(i.e., U.S Census Bureau)

CAP OC's quantitative approach included:

- Database Research - Research that's already been done, utilizing secondary database research (i.e., OC Community Indicators Report, the Annual Report on the Conditions of Children in Orange County, etc.).
- CNA Survey - Primary data research conducted by CAP OC by collecting data directly from participants (available for anyone who was 16 years and older who lived or worked in Orange County).
- Reliable Data Sets - Pulling raw data sets directly from reliable sources such as the U.S Census Bureau.

Hi, I am with Community Action Partnership of Orange County.

We are conducting a survey to help us identify the needs of the community so we can improve our services.

In addition, by participating in our survey you enter for a chance to win a \$50 gift card!

Would you like to participate?

Hola, pertenezco a Community Action Partnership of Orange County.

Estamos realizando una encuesta para ayudarnos a identificar las necesidades de la comunidad para que podamos mejorar nuestros servicios.

Además, al participar en nuestra encuesta, tendrá la oportunidad de ganar una tarjeta de regalo de \$50!

¿Le gustaría participar?



surveymonkey.com/r/2023CNA



Chào, tôi thuộc Community Action Partnership của Quận Cam.

Chúng tôi đang tiến hành một cuộc khảo sát để giúp chúng tôi xác định nhu cầu của cộng đồng để chúng tôi có thể cải thiện dịch vụ. Ngoài ra, bằng cách tham gia vào cuộc khảo sát của chúng tôi, bạn tham gia để có cơ hội giành được thẻ quà tặng \$50!

Bạn có muốn tham gia không?

您好, 我是橙县社区活动伙伴机构 (CAP OC)

我们致力于通过此项问卷调查能更了解您的社区需求, 以便于改进我们的服务。

此外, 通过完成我们的问卷调查您有机会赢取50美元礼品卡

您想参与吗?

مرحبًا ، أنا مع شراكة العمل المجتمعي في Orange County.

نجرى استبيانًا لمساعدتنا في تحديد احتياجات المجتمع حتى تتمكن من تحسين خدماتنا. بالإضافة إلى ذلك ، من خلال المشاركة في الاستبيان الخاص بنا ، فإنك تدخل للحصول على فرصة للفوز ببطاقة هدايا بقيمة 50 دولارًا!

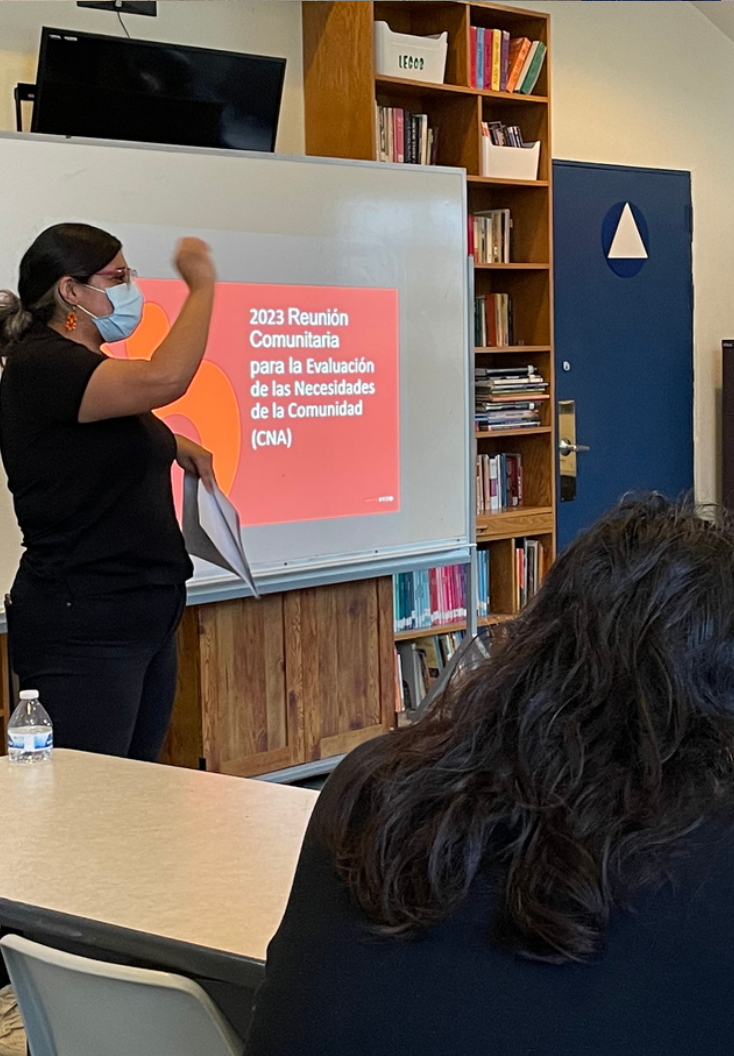
هل ترغب في المشاركة؟

The data collected for the Community Needs Assessment was gathered through primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include the Community Needs Assessment survey and community meetings. The survey was provided both in print for in-person outreach events and online through Survey Monkey. Four out of five community meetings were conducted in person, and one was virtual via Zoom. Secondary source research was obtained from official government databases (e.g., Census Bureau) and other data specific to Orange County provided quantitative information that served as a statistical foundation.

Outreach

To reach a diverse and representative population within the County, a variety of engagement strategies were conducted throughout Orange County with the help of an AmeriCorps Volunteer Infrastructure Program (VIP) Fellow, 12 interns from local universities and 50 volunteers. CAP OC's outreach strategies focused on targeting low-income populations in Orange County.



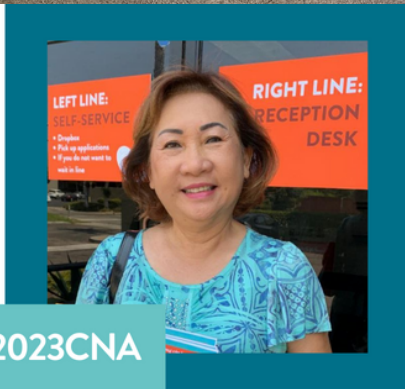


Engagement strategies consisted of the following:

- Large-scale community events, such as the Black History Parade and Unity Festival, Boco de Oro and Tet Festival, etc.
- Food distributions such as CAP OC's Senior Food Box and Clementine distributions and South County Outreach
- School events like the We Care Resource Fair, Open Houses and UCI Community Services and Leadership Fair
- Canvassing the surrounding neighborhoods of CAP OC's three Family Resource Centers (FRC): Anaheim Independencia FRC, Southwest Community Center, and El Modena FRC (canvassers focused on either the Census block and/or Census tract)
- 5 community meetings: 1) El Modena Family Resource Center, 2) Anaheim Independencia Family Resource Center, 3) Southwest Community Center, 4) CAP OC's Headquarters in Garden Grove, and 5) Virtual Meeting with CEAC (Community Engagement Advisory Council) members via Zoom



让我们听见您的社区意见!



surveymonkey.com/r/2023CNA

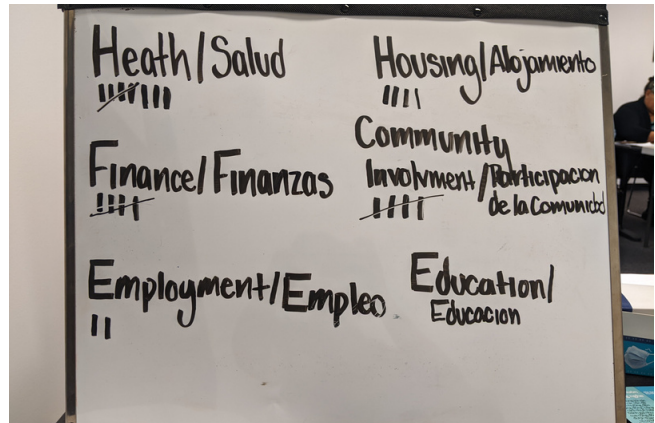


- Social Media advertising: Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram
- Promotional geo-targeted posts on Facebook targeting Orange County residents
- Leveraging CAP OC's Food Bank partnerships such as the Donated Food Program and Diaper Bank
- Conducting short presentations and announcements during virtual meetings and collaboratives
- Requesting short blurbs from other OC organizations newsletters such as CalOptima Health
- Direct email campaign targeting Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Faith-Based Organizations and Schools in OC
- Collaborating with CAP OC's departments and programs
- AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps) & CA Conservation Corps volunteers were stationed at the Energy and Environmental Service Department (EES) lobby one to two times a week for two months to help promote and assist participants with the CNA

In addition, to reduce language barriers CAP OC's CNA survey was available in five different languages: English, Spanish, Chinese (Mandarin), Vietnamese and Arabic. Community meetings were conducted either in English, Spanish or bilingual (English & Spanish) accommodating to the audience's needs. This action was essential to ensure that the 2023 Community Needs Assessment represented the Orange County community and community members shared and expressed themselves in their own languages. All the information gathered helped to inform CAP OC of the needs of low-income populations in Orange County.

Data Analysis

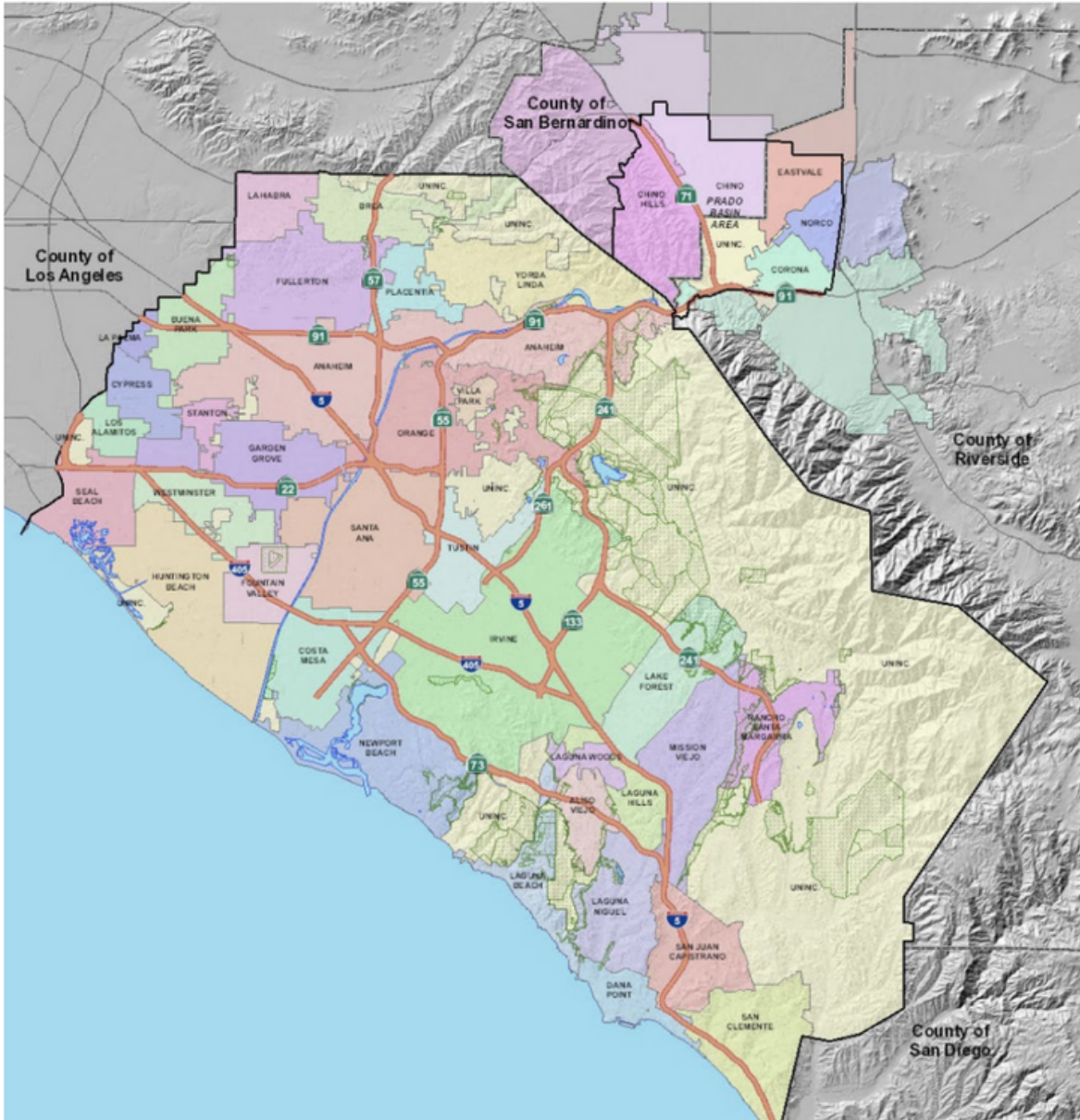
The data collected from the 2023 CNA survey was analyzed using descriptive statistics meant to describe the actual characteristics of a survey data set. These summaries only provide an analysis of the data of those that responded to the survey and do not make inferences about the community at-large.



COMMUNITY PROFILE

To best serve the community, one must first understand the factors that make up the community including geography, population trends, the cost of living, and the economy.

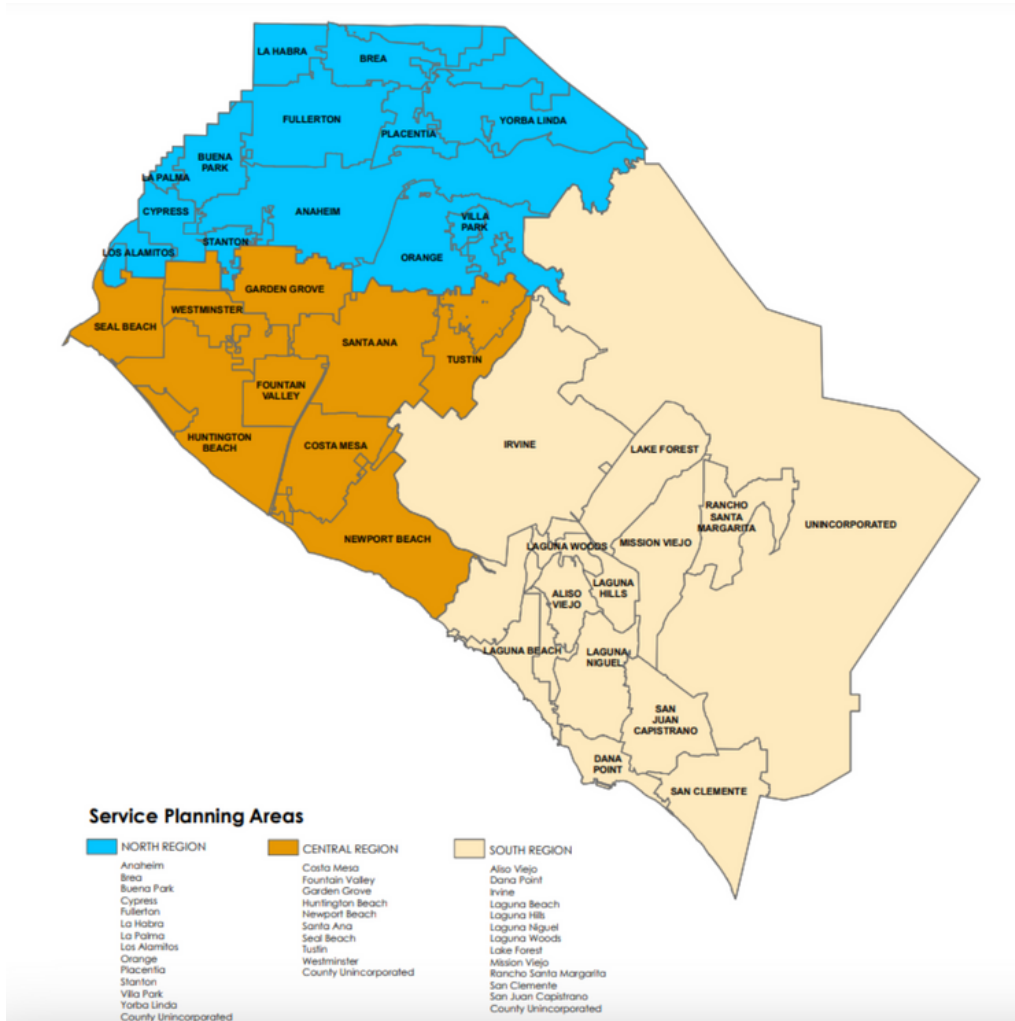
Orange County Geography



Source: Orange County GIS Open Data Portal

Orange County consists of a total of 799 square miles of land and 42 miles of coastline, making up 0.5% of California’s land area and only 8% of California’s population.¹

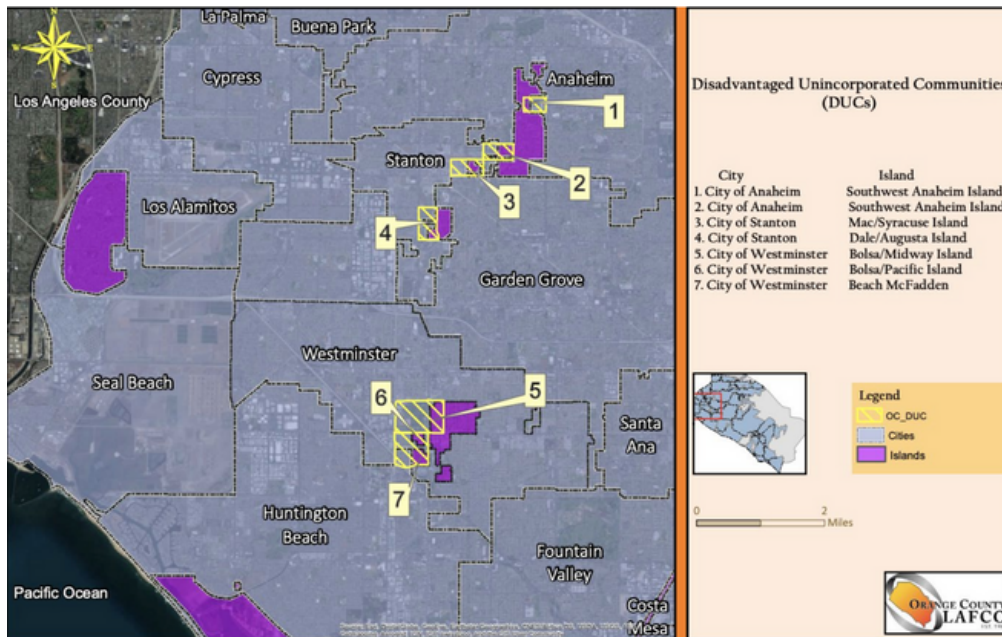
The county is located on the coast of Southern California, with Los Angeles County, San Bernardino County, Riverside County, and San Diego County as neighboring counties.



Source: Orange County Health Care Agency

Orange County is composed of 34 cities and several large unincorporated areas. In northern and central Orange County, there are 24 unincorporated areas that are either completely or substantially surrounded by cities that are responsible for providing most of its essential services.² The county governs these unincorporated areas by providing services such as public safety, libraries, and other essential services.

1. Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators Report 2022-2023, p. 6.
2. Orange County Local Agency Formation Commission, <https://oclafco.org/how/county-unincorporated-areas/>



Source: Orange County Local Agency Formation Commission

The Orange County Local Agency Formation Commission has identified 7 disadvantaged unincorporated communities (DUCs) within the cities of Anaheim, Stanton, and Westminster, all of which are also important when assessing community needs. DUCs are areas within an unincorporated area that have an annual median income less than 80% of the statewide median income.³ This may be due to the aging infrastructure and lack of investment in essential services. Recognizing these vulnerable communities and addressing their needs is a crucial part of CAP OC’s mission.

Population

Orange County’s population in 2021 was 3,169,542 residents, but declined to 3,162,542 residents in 2022 due to domestic migration.⁴ However, the county still remains to be California’s third largest county after Los Angeles and San Diego.⁵ The average population density in 2022 was 3,967 residents per square mile, which was 5.7% more than the population density in 2010.⁶ The county is projected to reach a population of 3,166,309 residents in 2060.⁷

3. County Local Agency Formation Commission, <https://oclafco.org/how/disadvantaged-unincorporatedcommunities/>
 4. Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators Report 2022-2023, p. 7.
 5. Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators Report 2022-2023, p. 8.
 6. Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators Report 2022-2023, p. 8.
 7. Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators Report 2022-2023, p. 8.

Population Size by City

City	Population
Aliso Viejo	51,824
Anaheim	345,940
Brea	47,589
Buena Park	83,011
Costa Mesa	110,750
Cypress	49,926
Dana Point	32,821
Fountain Valley	56,495
Fullerton	141,874
Garden Grove	170,488
Huntington Beach	196,652
Irvine	309,031
La Habra	62,609
La Palma	15,413
Laguna Beach	22,795
Laguna Hills	30,965
Laguna Niguel	64,239
Laguna Woods	17,452
Lake Forest	85,742
Los Alamitos	11,695
Mission Viejo	92,449
Newport Beach	84,792
Orange	137,263
Placentia	51,274
Rancho Santa Margarita	47,442
San Clemente	63,896
San Juan Capistrano	34,955
Santa Ana	309,441
Seal Beach	24,937
Stanton	37,970
Tustin	79,430
Villa Park	5,773
Westminster	90,195
Yorba Linda	67,989

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

In 2021, the median age in Orange County was 39.2 years.⁸ About 21.4% of Orange County residents were under the age of 18 years, 42.6% of residents were between the age of 18-64, and 15.7% of residents were 65 years and older.⁹ However, the county will begin to see the continuous growth of older age groups, where the 65+ age group is expected to reach 29% by 2060.¹⁰ The US Census Bureau reports that in 2020 there were 50.4% females and 49.6% males residing in Orange County.¹¹

8. Census Reporter 2021, <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/05000US06059-orange-countyca/>

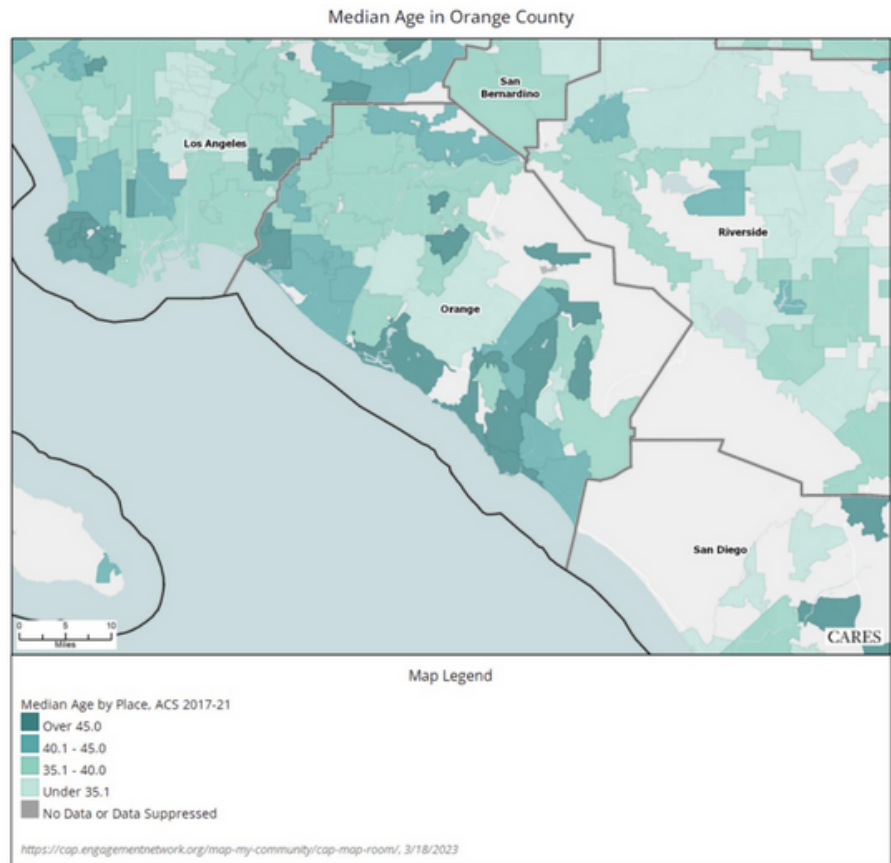
9. United States Census Bureau 2020, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/orangecountycalifornia/POP010220>.

10. Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators Report 2022-2023, p. 9.

11. United States Census Bureau 2020, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/orangecountycalifornia>.

A limitation with the Census data, is that it only asks respondents to choose between female or male, therefore excluding other identities such as transgender, nonbinary, etc.

Orange County cities are a reflection of the diversity and different racial and ethnic groups of the region. Currently, Orange County is 69.7%



Source: Community Action Partnership Map Room

White, 34.1% Hispanic or Latino, 22.8% Asian, 2.2% Black or African American, 1.1% American Indian and Alaska Native, and 0.4% Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.¹² The California Department of Finance’s Demographic Research Unit expects White and Asian communities to decline by 5.4% and 1.0% respectively between 2022 to 2060, while the Latino community will increase by 4.5% over the same time.¹³

Race and Ethnicity in Orange County

White	Hispanic or Latino	Asian	Black or African American	American Indian & Alaskan Native	Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander
69.7%	34.1%	22.8%	2.2%	1.1%	0.4%

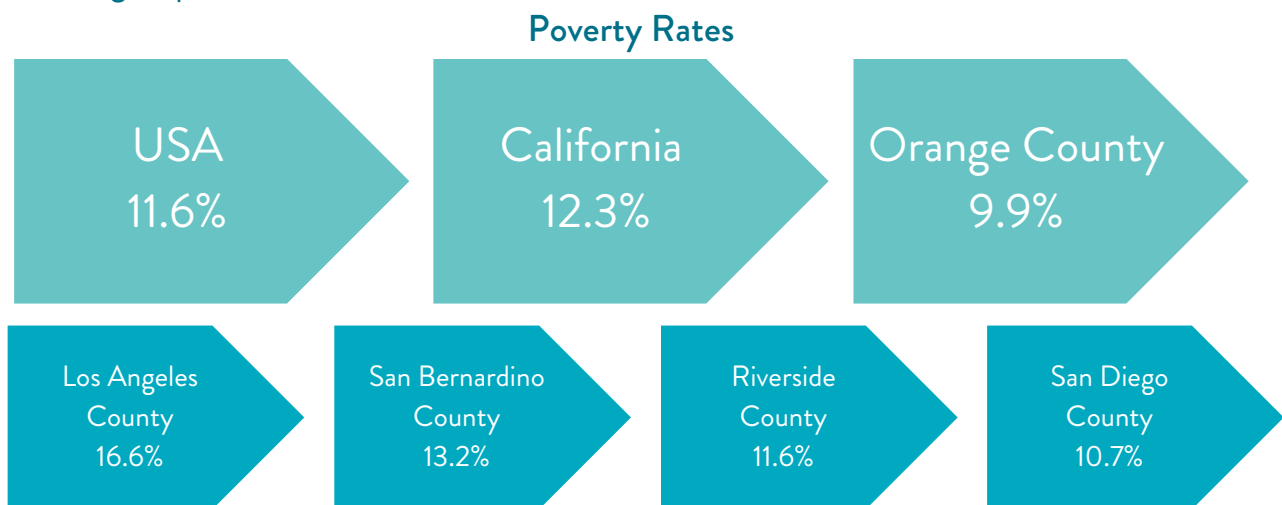
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

12. United States Census Bureau 2020, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/orangecountycalifornia/POP010220>
 13. Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators Report 2022-2023, p. 10

With a county home to different racial and ethnic groups, foreign-born individuals make up a significant portion of those who reside in it. There are approximately 939,029 foreign-born residents in Orange County, that is 2.1% of all foreign-born residents in the US and 29.6% of the foreign-born population of Southern California counties.¹⁴ 30% of OC residents were born in other countries. The top countries of origin include Mexico, Vietnam, China, and Korea. In addition, 45% of all OC residents over the age of five speak a language other than English at home.¹⁵

Poverty in Orange County

In 2021, 9.9% of Orange County residents were living below the poverty line, that is 0.2% decrease from 2020’s rate of 10.1%.¹⁶ Orange County’s poverty rate is in fact lower than the nation (11.6%), the CA state (12.3%), and its neighboring counties – Los Angeles (16.6%), San Diego (10.7%), San Bernardino (13.2%), and Riverside (11.6%).¹⁷ However, when digging deeper and looking at factors such as race, age, gender, etc. the disparity between groups is much more evident.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

14. Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators Report 2022-2023, p. 10-11. 15

15. Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators Report 2023-2023, p. 10-11.

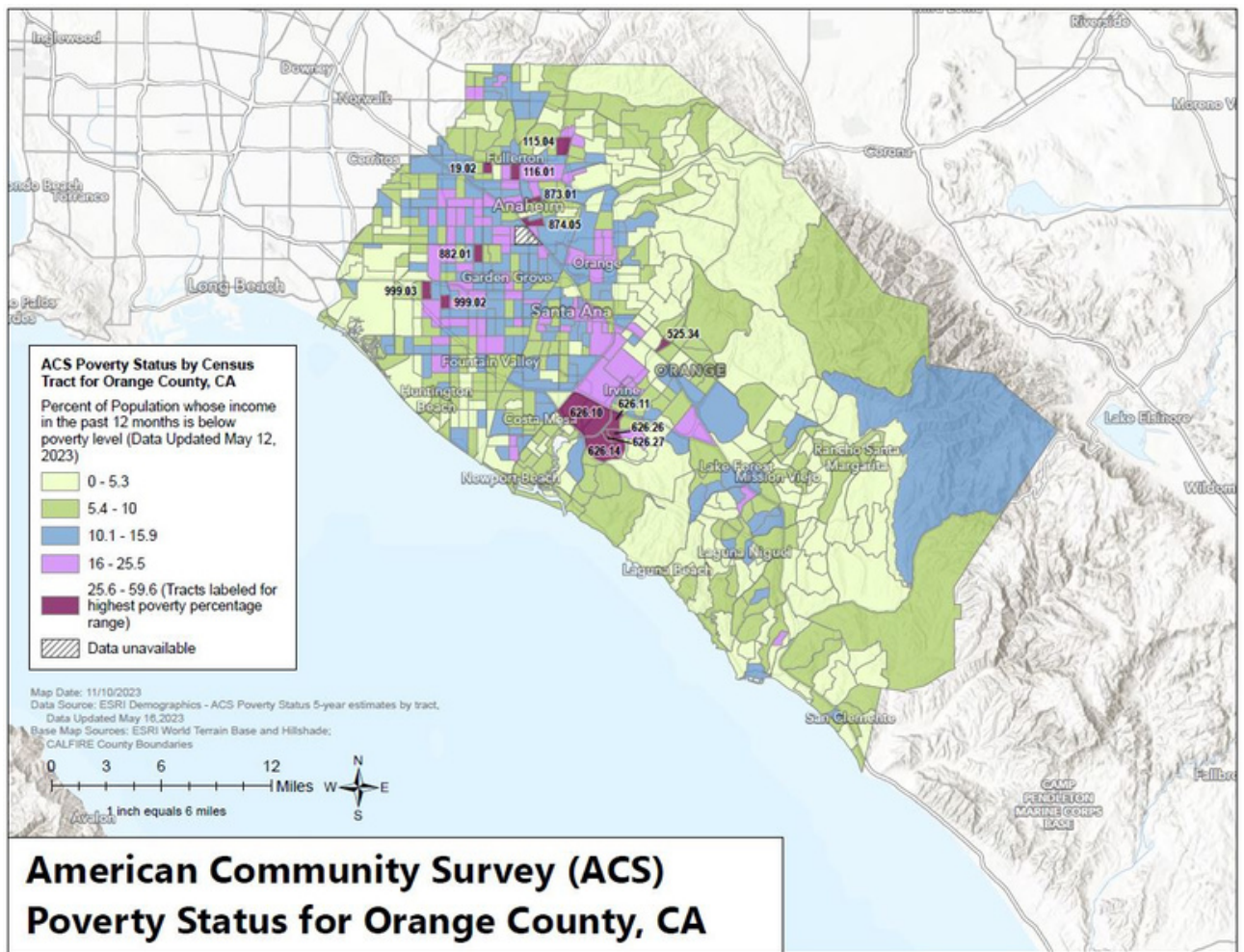
16. United States Census Bureau 2020, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/orangecountycalifornia/POP010220>; Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators Report 2023-2023, p. 11

17. United States Census Bureau 2021, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/orangecountycalifornia/POP010220>, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/losangelescitycalifornia/RH1125221>, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/sandiegocountycalifornia>,

18. United States Census Bureau 2021, <https://data.census.gov/table?q=poverty&g=050XX00US06059>

19. United States Census Bureau 2021, <https://data.census.gov/table?q=poverty&g=05XX00US06059>

The map below illustrates the poverty status across Orange County by census tract according to data from the U.S Census Bureau. As depicted in the map, poverty in OC is concentrated in the northern central region of the county in cities such as Santa Ana, Garden Grove, Anaheim, Westminster, Irvine and Orange. Census tract 626.26 had the highest rate of poverty (59.6%) and is located in the City of Irvine. As a matter of fact, the City of Irvine had the most census tracts, 6, with the highest rates of poverty ranging between 29.9% and 59.6%.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau
 Create by Coral Fenech

Along racial lines, the two racial groups with the highest rate of poverty also account for the lowest population size in OC – Black or African Americans’ poverty rate is 13.1%, yet only account for 2.2% of the population and American Indian and Alaskan Natives’ poverty rate is 12.8% yet they only make up 1.1% of the population.¹⁸ This is followed by Hispanic or Latino (11.6%) and Asian (11.5%).¹⁸ In comparison, White Americans poverty rate is 7.8%, 4-5% less than people of color.²⁰

Race	Poverty Rate	Population Size
White	7.8%	69.7%
Black or African American	13.1%	2.2%
American Indian and Alaska Native	12.8%	1.1%
Asian	11.5%	22.8%
Hispanic or Latino origin	11.6%	34.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

According to the Census Bureau, 10.8% of children, those under 18, are living below the poverty level, even more alarming, is the poverty rate for children under 5 years of age – 10.9%.²¹ For older adults, age 65 years and older, the poverty rate is 10%.²²

The graph from Data USA displays poverty levels among age and gender indicating that females among all age groups were the largest demographic living under the poverty line in Orange County.²³ The largest demographic group was in fact Females 18-24 years of age.²⁴

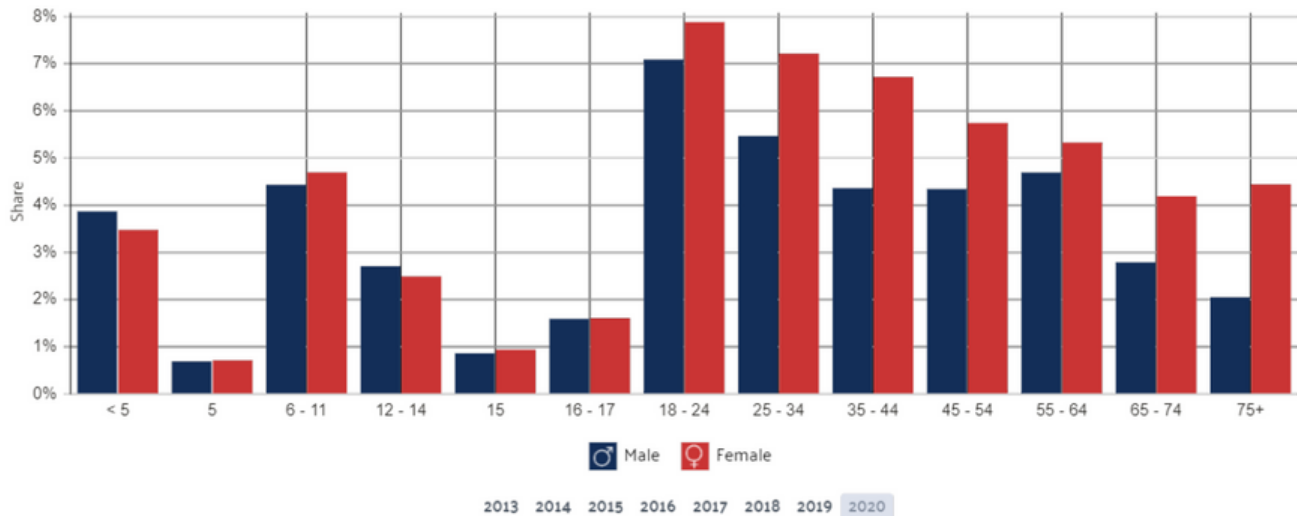
20. United States Census Bureau 2021, <https://data.census.gov/table?q=poverty&g=05XX00US06059>

21. United States Census Bureau 2021, <https://data.census.gov/table?q=poverty&g=050XX00US06059>

22. United States Census Bureau 2021, <https://data.census.gov/table?q=poverty&g=>

23. Data USA. Orange County, CA. <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/orangecountyca#:~:text=Poverty%20%26%20Diversity&text=The%20largest%20demographic%20living%20in,followed%20by%20Hispanic%20and%20Asian.>

24. Data USA. Orange County, CA. <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/orange-countyca#:~:text=Poverty%20%26%20Diversity&text=The%20largest%20demographic%20living%20in,followed%20by%20Hispanic%20and%20Asian.>



Source: Data USA

It is important to note the LGBTQIA+ community is also impacted by poverty. Data from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System and the U.S. Census Household Pulse Survey reported 17% of LGBTQ individuals lived in poverty in 2021.²⁵ However, data specific to the LGBTQIA+ community in Orange County living in poverty is limited and requires further research. Part of the limitation is due to systems not properly identifying LGBTQIA+ and gender non-conforming residents. Gender, most confused with sex, refers to social identities that best reflect the identity of the individual, thus creating a large array of different genders and further identities.

Educational attainment and employment status are also important indicators of poverty. Of the population 25 years and older, 16.9% of those that completed less than high school are living below the poverty line and those with a high school diploma or equivalent have a poverty rate of 11.9%.²⁶ In comparison, individuals with a Bachelor’s degree or higher have a poverty rate of 5.5%.²⁷ In terms of employment status, of the civilian labor force 16 years and older, 19.5% of unemployed individuals live below the poverty line.²⁸

25. UCLA Williams Institute School of Law. LGBT Poverty in the United States. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/lgbt-poverty-us/>
 26. United States Census Bureau 2021, <https://data.census.gov/table?q=poverty&g=050XX00US06059>
 27. United States Census Bureau 2021, <https://data.census.gov/table?q=poverty&g=050XX00US06059>
 28. United States Census Bureau 2021, <https://data.census.gov/table?q=poverty&g=050XX00US06059>

On the other hand, only 4.1% of employed individuals live below the poverty line.²⁹ However, once again, females have a higher rate of poverty – unemployed females have a poverty rate of 21% and unemployed males are 18.1%.³⁰ In addition, employed females have a poverty rate of 4.9% while employed males are 3.3%.³¹

Cost of Living in Orange County

The US Census Bureau estimated the Orange County median household income in 2021 to be \$100,559, about \$6,000 higher than in 2020.³² The housing wage needed to afford a one-bedroom unit in Orange County in 2016 was \$25.46 per hour and has increased to \$36.63 in 2022.³³ As the cost of living in Orange County continues to rise, this becomes a struggle for low-income residents. Over 90% of residents who make under \$20,000 spend more than 30% of their income towards housing payments.³⁴ Additionally, 9.5% of full-time workers and 28.3% of part time workers were living in poverty in 2020.³⁵ These numbers highlight the attention needed towards employment and housing in the county.

Living Wage

Living wage refers to the “minimum subsistence wage for persons living in the United States”.³⁶ According to the living wage model it is an alternative market-based approach that measures basic needs and “draws upon geographically specific expenditure data related to a family’s likely minimum food, childcare, health insurance, housing, transportation, and other basic necessities (e.g. clothing, personal care items, etc.) costs”.³⁷ In Orange County, the living wage for a single individual is \$23.66 - this is the hourly rate an individual in a household must earn to support themselves.³⁸

29. United States Census Bureau 2021, <https://data.census.gov/table?q=poverty&g=050XX00US06059>

30. United States Census Bureau 2021, <https://data.census.gov/table?q=poverty&g=050XX00US06059>

31. United States Census Bureau 2021, <https://data.census.gov/table?q=poverty&g=050XX00US06059>

32. California State University, Fullerton Center for Demographic Research, Orange County Facts & Figures December 2022.; Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators Report 2022-2023, p. 13

33. Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators Report 2022-2023, p. 58

34. Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators Report 2022-2023, p. 56

35. Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators Report 2022-2023, p. 66

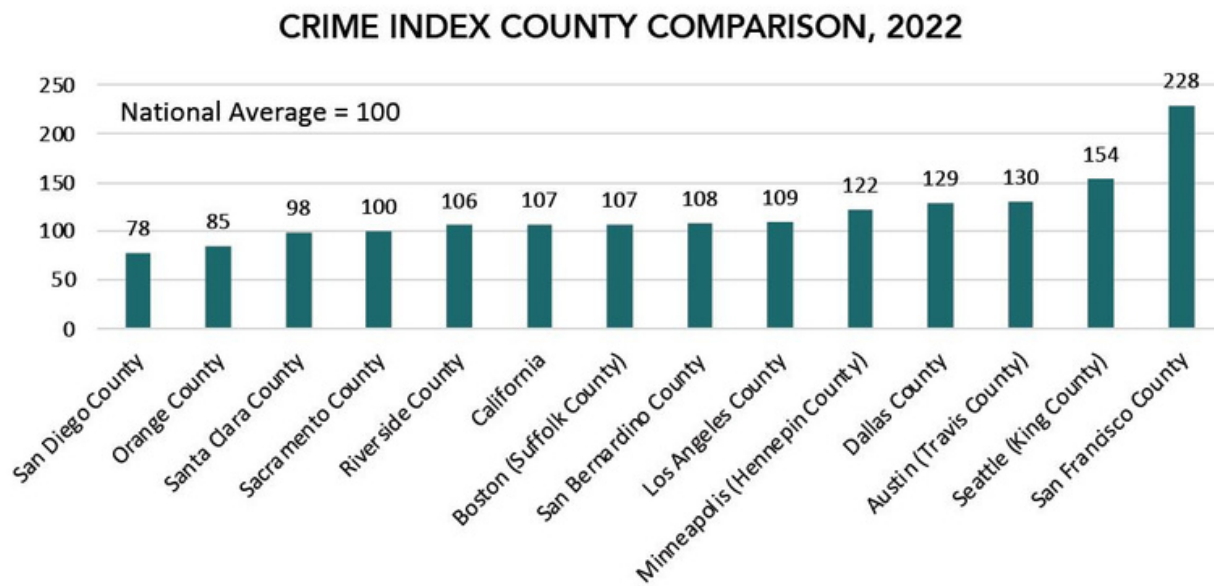
36. About the Living Wage Calculator. Living Wage Calculator. Retrieved May 2023, from <https://livingwage.mit.edu/pages/about>

37. About the Living Wage Calculator. Living Wage Calculator. Retrieved May 2023, from <https://livingwage.mit.edu/pages/about>

38. Living wage calculator. Living Wage Calculator - Living Wage Calculation for Orange County, California. (n.d.). Retrieved April 14, 2023, from <https://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/06059>

Crime Rates in Orange County

Crime index is a measure of relative risk for specific types of crimes committed.⁴³ Orange County has seen a small increase in its total crime index over the past couple of years, rising from 82 to 85.⁴⁴ However, Orange County still has the second lowest crime index compared to neighboring counties Los Angeles and San Bernardino, who had high total crime index numbers at 109 and 108 respectively.⁴⁵ Irvine was ranked the third best city to raise a family due to high scores in Health & Safety and Childcare, as well as attracting diverse groups to the city, according to WalletHub.⁴⁶ Cities such as Huntington Beach, Garden Grove, Anaheim, and Santa Ana ranked lower, despite improving in areas such as poverty, unemployment, wealth gaps, and debt.⁴⁷



Source: 2022-2023 Orange County Community Indicators Report

43. Esri Demographics Regional Data. <https://doc.arcgis.com/en/esri-demographics/latest/regional-data/crimeindexes.htm>

44. Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators Report 2022 -2023, p. 22.

45. Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators Report 2022 -2023, p. 22.

46. Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators Report 2022 -2023, p. 23.

47. Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators Report 2022 -2023, p. 23

Broadband

High-quality, affordable, and reliable broadband is essential to the social and economic welfare of communities in the modern world. In Orange County from 2017-2021, 92.9% of OC residents had a broadband internet subscription.⁴⁸ According to the United States Census Bureau 88.2% of households possessed a desktop or laptop, 92.3% had a smartphone, 73.6% had a tablet or other portable device, and 3.3% owned some other type of computer technology.⁴⁹

Within all households, 86.6% owned a cellular data plan, 81.2% had a broadband subscription such as cable, fiber optic, or a digital subscriber line.⁵⁰ Even though the overall numbers are high in OC, when looking at the household income there is inequality. According to the Census Bureau, households with an income less than \$20,000 have a higher proportion of individuals without an internet subscription (16.7%). In fact, it is almost double the percentage of households with an income between \$20,000 to \$74,999 (8.8%) and almost 8 times more than households earning \$75,000 or more (2.2%).⁵¹

The lack of dependable broadband may affect access to social services or other opportunities, resources, and information. Insufficient broadband threatens to magnify existing inequalities by denying communities of fundamental infrastructure for education, commerce, and civic engagement.⁵²



48. United States Census Bureau. 2022. Narrative Profiles. Census.gov. <https://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/datatables-and-tools/narrative-profiles/2021/report.php?geotype=county&state=06&county=059>

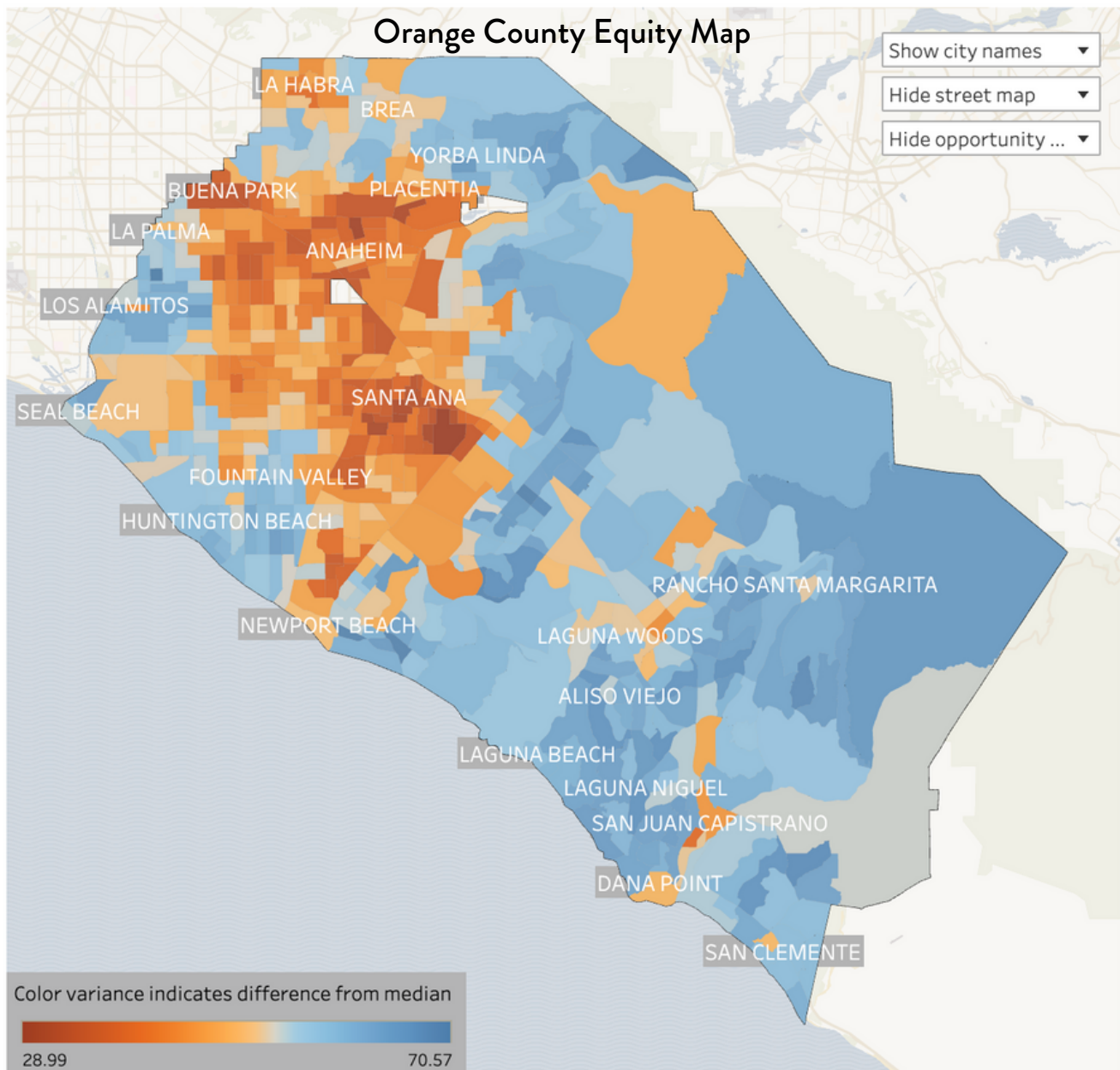
49. United States Census Bureau. 2022. Narrative Profiles. Census.gov. <https://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/datatables-and-tools/narrative-profiles/2021/report.php?geotype=county&state=06&county=059>

50. United States Census Bureau. 2022. Narrative Profiles. Census.gov. <https://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/datatables-and-tools/narrative-profiles/2021/report.php?geotype=county&state=06&county=059>

51. United States Census Bureau 2021, <https://data.census.gov/table?q=BROADBAND&g=050XX00US06059>

52. Galperin, H., Le, T. H., & Wyatt, K. (2021). Who gets access to fast broadband? Evidence from Los Angeles County. *Government Information Quarterly*, 38(3), 101594. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2021.101594>

Racial Equity



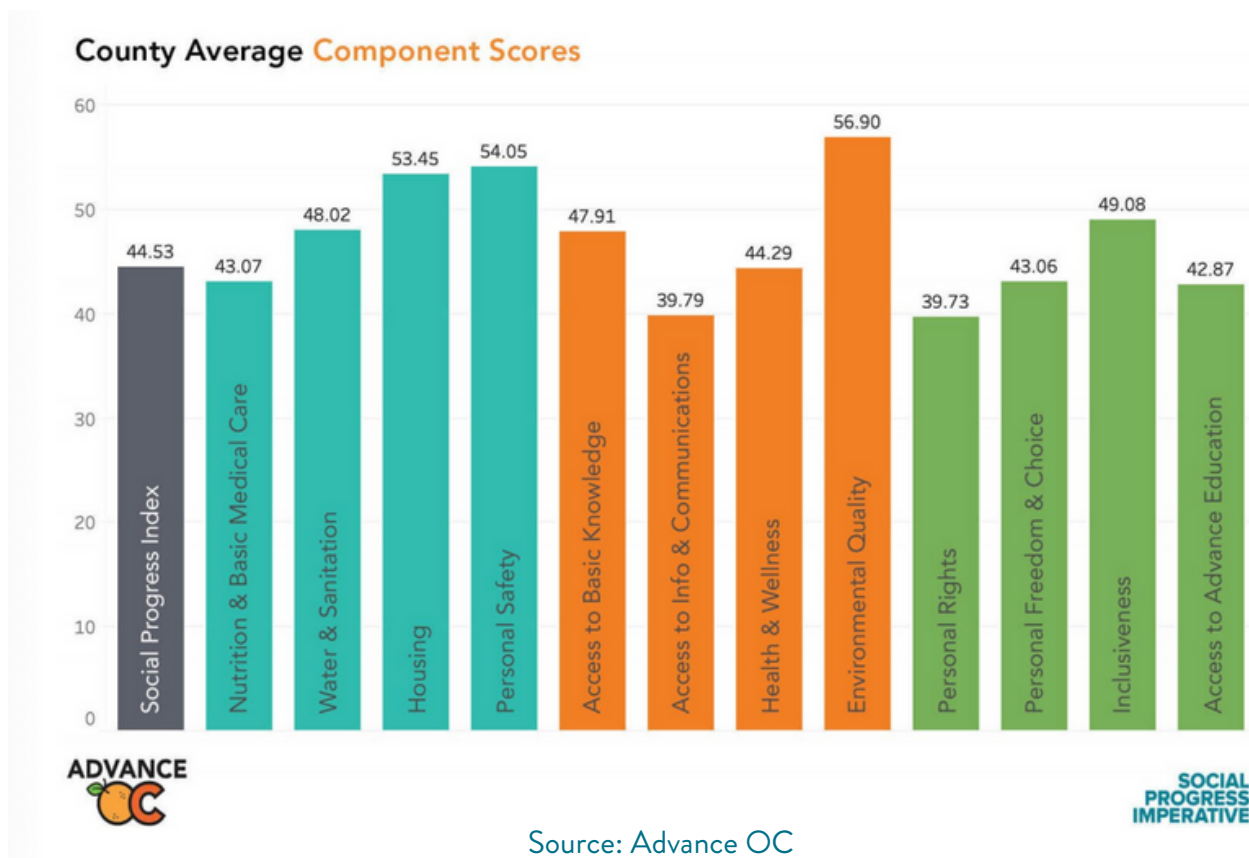
Blue indicates areas with a higher social progress index and orange a lower index.

Source: Equity In OC

Racial equity can be achieved when an individual's racial identity no longer predicts how they will thrive.⁵³ The OC Equity map showcases the current social progress index in Orange County.

53. Racial Equity Tools. Racial Equity. <https://www.racialequitytools.org/resources/fundamentals/coreconcepts/racial-equity>

This tool is used to identify where any health inequalities may exist in order to eliminate them and incorporates over 50 indicators that measure the health and wellness of a community.⁵⁴ Using the equity map, areas in blue along the coast and southern Orange County have a higher social progress index and areas in orange, such as northern Orange County, have a lower social progress index score. For example, a city such as Santa Ana is not meeting the social and environmental needs as much as cities like Huntington Beach. Looking at the different components of the OC Equity Map, the county’s overall average Social Progress Index was 44.53. Low scores should not be interpreted as “bad” or as a “less desirable” outcome, but rather areas in need of improvement.⁵⁵



Source: Advance OC

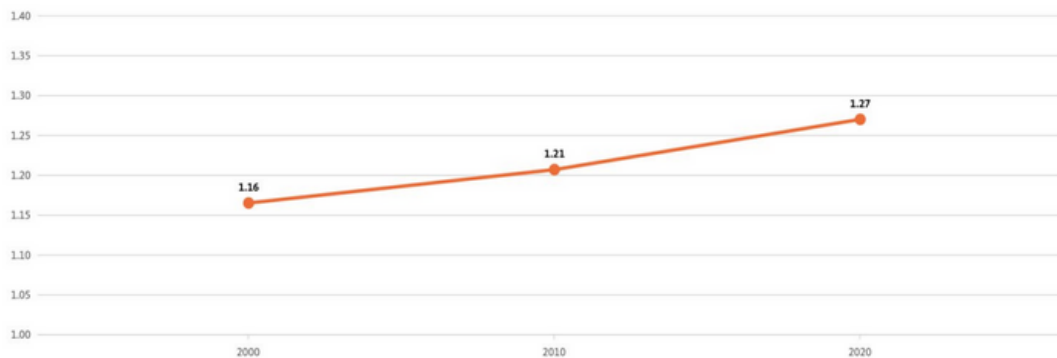
54. Advance OC. Social Progress Index. <https://www.advanceoc.com/social-progress-index>

55. Advance OC. Orange County Equity Map Instructional Manual. https://globaluploads.webflow.com/61d5e32cdf7f97aec0f7534/620ec893395255bed52ccf29_OCHCA-EquityToolManualEnglish_210914_v5-3.pdf

A community thrives and prospers due to the racial and cultural diversity of its residents. Data from the National Equity Atlas indicates Orange County’s diversity index has risen from 1.16 in 2000 to 1.27 in 2020, ranked #44 out of 430 counties.⁵⁶ According to population growth rates, the rates of Black, Hispanic, or Latino, Asian or Pacific Islander and multiracial people far outpace the rates for White Americans.⁵⁷

The statistics on race and ethnicity as provided by the Census for the City of Santa Ana are 76.7% Hispanic or Latino, 29.7% White, 11.9% Asian, and 1% Black or African American.⁵⁸ Compared to the City of Huntington Beach where the population is 67.8% White, 19.8% Hispanic or Latino, 12.9% Asian, and 1.2% Black or African American.⁵⁹ It is important to note the differences in diversity between the two cities, as one racial group in one city may have needs and require resources different from other racial groups in the city.

Diversity Index of Orange County (2000-2020)



Source: National Equity Atlas

Race and communities must both be measured in order to address impacts of structural racism. Community indicators such as having access to open space and parks, access to health insurance, and homeownership provide a snapshot of the community’s current condition, however it is disaggregated by race and ethnicity.

56. National Equity Atlas. Diversity index. https://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators/Diversity_index#/?geo=04000000000006059

57. National Equity Atlas. Diversity index. https://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators/Diversity_index#/?geo=04000000000006059

58. United States Census Bureau 2020. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/santaanacitycalifornia,anaheimcitycalifornia,orangecountycalifornia>

59. United States Census Bureau 2020. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/huntingtonbeachcitycalifornia,santaanacitycalifornia,anaheimcitycalifornia,orangecountycalifornia/PST045222>

Hate Crimes

In 2021, 398 hate crimes and incidents were reported in Orange County, which was a 6% increase from 2020.⁶⁰ The California Attorney General defines hate crime as “a crime against a person, group, or property motivated by the victim’s real or perceived protected social group”.⁶¹ The California Department of Justice defines hate incidents as “an action or behavior motivated by bias-motivated hate but is not necessarily a crime”.⁶² Although Orange County is diverse, 60% of hate crimes were primarily motivated by the victim’s race, ethnicity, or national origin.⁶³ More than half of the hate crimes were towards victims who identified as black, indigenous, persons of color (BIPOC).⁶⁴ In the past year, the OC Human Relations Commission has issued several statements denouncing incidents of racism and hate speech in regards to anti-Asian hate emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic.⁶⁵



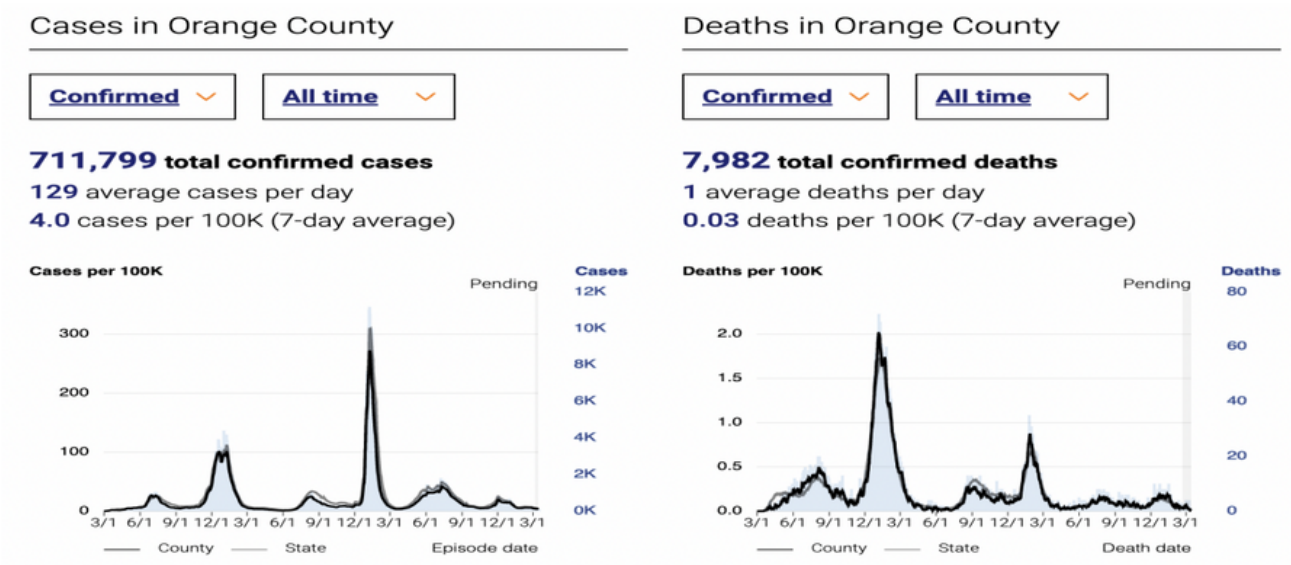
Source: 2021 Orange County Hate Crimes Report

COVID-19 in Orange County

Orange County has seen the effects of COVID-19 in the community and after three years, the impact of COVID-19 has slowly diminished although it is still a prominent matter. As of 2023, there are 711,799 total confirmed cases which is 4.0 cases for every 100,000 people in Orange County.⁶⁶ The total number of confirmed deaths from COVID-19 is 7,982 deaths averaging 0.03 deaths per 100,000 people.⁶⁷

60. Orange County Human Relations Commission. 2021 Orange County Hate Crimes Report. p. 7.
61. Orange County Human Relations Commission. 2021 Orange County Hate Crimes Report. p. 3.
62. Orange County Human Relations Commission. 2021 Orange County Hate Crimes Report. p. 3.
63. Orange County Human Relations Commission. 2021 Orange County Hate Crimes Report. p. 3.
64. Orange County Human Relations Commission. 2021 Orange County Hate Crimes Report. p. 3.
65. Orange County Human Relations Commission. 2021 Orange County Hate Crimes Report. p. 2.
66. California Governor’s Office, COVID-19 State Dashboard, available at <https://covid19.ca.gov/statedashboard/>.
67. California Governor’s Office, COVID-19 State Dashboard, available at <https://covid19.ca.gov/statedashboard/>.

The most vulnerable populations with a risk of COVID-19 are seniors with disabilities with a 31% vulnerability and seniors living alone at 20% vulnerability.⁶⁸ Asthma ER admissions rate is at 0.3 per 10,000 admissions which is the highest associated health risk factor for COVID-19.⁶⁹ The number of fully vaccinated individuals in Orange County is 2,369,627 people as of 2023.⁷⁰



Source: California Governor’s Office

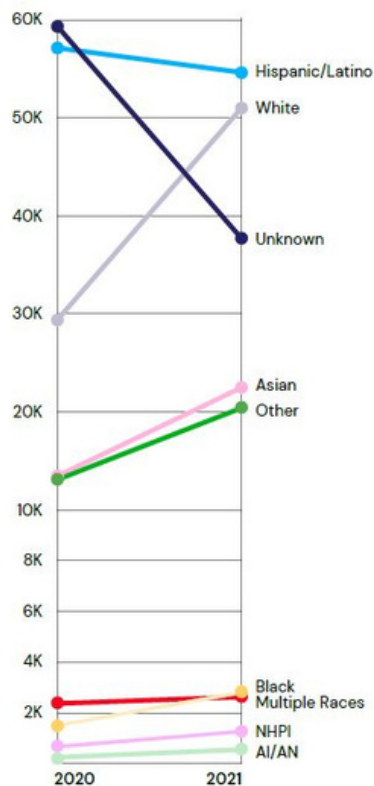
COVID-19 disproportionately affects marginalized communities, and the Latino population represents the largest minority group in Orange County. The Latino population accounts for 44.4% of all confirmed COVID-19 cases in Orange County and 38.9% of the total cases in California.⁷¹ The death rate is the highest amongst the Latino population accounting for 42.1% of confirmed COVID-19 deaths in Orange County and 38.9% of the total deaths in California.⁷²

68. Public Health Alliance of Southern California, The California Healthy Places Index (HPI). <https://covid19.ca.gov/vaccination-progress-data/>
 69. Public Health Alliance of Southern California, The California Healthy Places Index (HPI). <https://covid19.ca.gov/vaccination-progress-data/>
 70. OC Health Care Agency, Vaccines Administered in OC, available at <https://occovid19.ochealthinfo.com/vaccinesadministered-oc>
 71. California Governor’s Office, COVID-19 State Dashboard, available at <https://covid19.ca.gov/statedashboard/>.
 72. California Governor’s Office, COVID-19 State Dashboard, available at <https://covid19.ca.gov/statedashboard/>

In 2020, COVID-19 was responsible for 90% of the decline in life expectancy for the Latino population of Orange County, dropping three years, from 81.8 years old in 2019 to 78.8 years old in 2020.⁷³ The vaccination rate among the Latino population was the lowest at 47% among all racial and ethnic groups in Orange County in 2021.⁷⁴

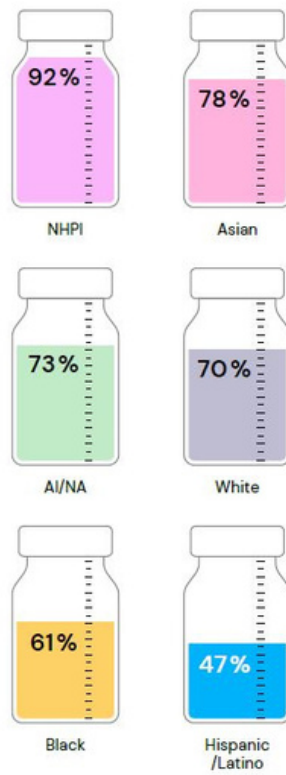
Total Cases

by race/ethnicity, 2020-2021



Vaccination Rate

per 100K population, 2021



Source: OC Health Care Agency

Although the aftereffects of this pandemic still exist in Orange County, many new changes have been implemented since COVID-19's initial beginning in late 2019. On January 30, 2023, the Biden Administration deemed that May 2023 will be the end of the ongoing public health emergency protocols.⁷⁵ Meaning that although access to COVID-19 related medicine such as testing, vaccinations, and treatment will remain accessible to the public, things such as COVID related doctor's appointments and rapid tests

administered by health professionals may be costly to uninsured people in the U.S. Following suit, Governor Gavin Newsom marked the end of California's COVID-19 state of emergency in February of 2023.⁷⁶ California's COVID-19 death rate was one of the lowest in the nation thanks to the enacted SMARTER Plan, pledging to continue reducing the impact of COVID-19 on California's residents.

73. OC Health Care Agency, Population Overview Hispanic/Latino, pg. 13

74. OC Health Care Agency, Population Overview Hispanic/Latino, pg. 9

75. Kaiser Family Foundation, The End of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, para.

76. California Government, Governor Newsom Marks End of California's COVID-19 State of Emergency, para. 3

The end of March 2022 signified the end of the CA eviction moratorium meaning that tenants were no longer protected by rental laws that gave them the chance to gather funds for rent amid the COVID-19 pandemic.⁷⁷ For residents of Orange County, other emergency programs such as Orange County’s Emergency Rental Assistance program also came to an end in 2022.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic being no longer declared a public health emergency, residents of Orange County continue to feel the impacts of the pandemic. Respondents were asked if the pandemic had affected them in the following areas in life (employment, finances, housing, education, or health) in the last year and the majority of respondents stated having been to some degree impacted (slightly, moderately, or severely).

Response	Employment	Finance	Housing	Education	Health
Slightly, Moderately, & Severely Impacted	68%	74%	54%	54%	72%

Even after the height of the pandemic, 50% of OC residents still report having a difficult time accessing supplies like masks that would protect them against COVID-19 and 45% of residents report finding it difficult to find testing sites when they need them. For those seeking additional protection against COVID-19, 36% of residents find it difficult to access COVID-19 vaccinations; and in the case those resources are available, 39% of the community lack reliable transportation to access these resources. COVID-19 concerns were even brought up at the community meetings as participants advocated for the need for additional health care like counseling and services catered directly towards children due to the impact of the pandemic on their social life and education.

77. California Government, Tenant Protection Information, para. 1

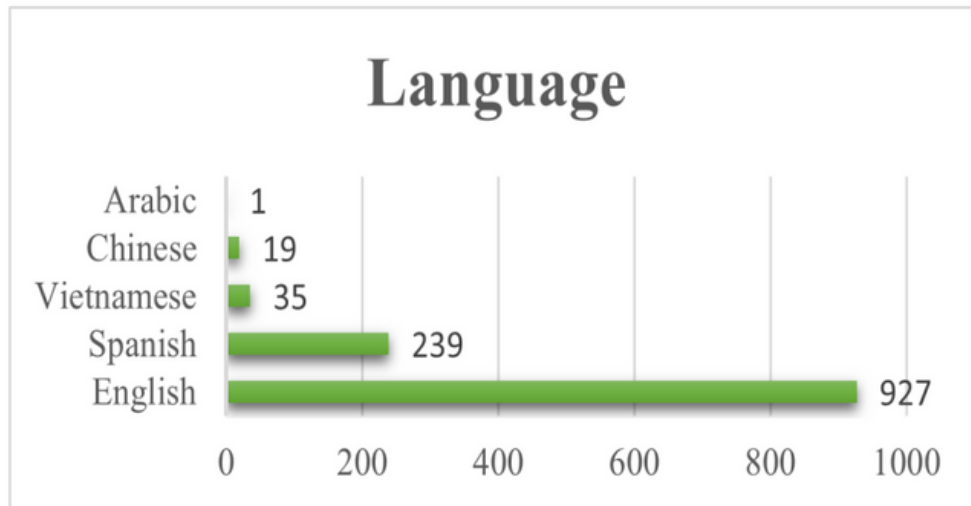
Orange County is home to a diversity of immigrants, of which nearly half at 41% have concerns in accessing much needed COVID-19 resources due to their immigration status, making it much more difficult to seek the assistance and care needed. As derived from these concerns, it is evident the community is still in need of COVID-19 resources and although the public health emergency is “over”, its impact is not.



THIS IS WHERE
POVERTY ENDS

FINDINGS

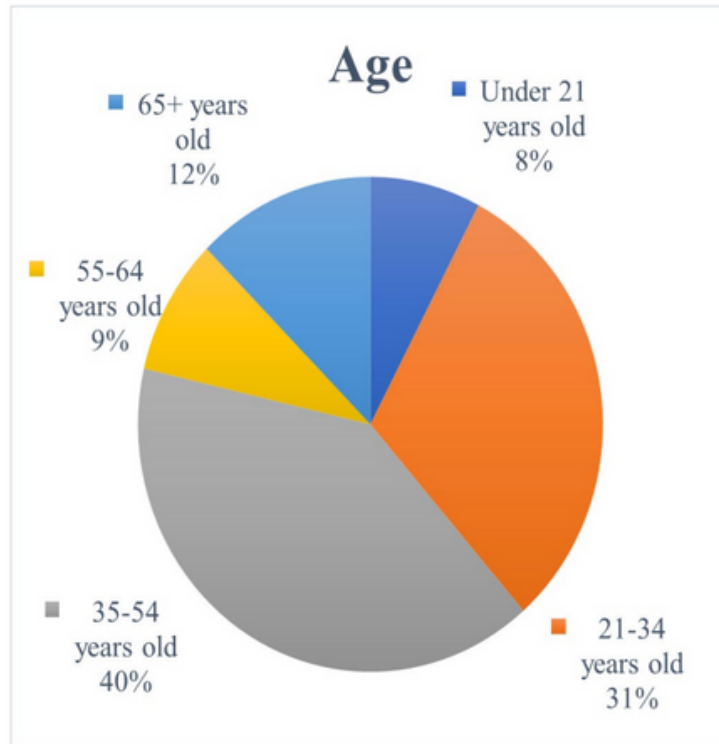
The 2023 Community Needs Assessment survey consisted of a total of 21 questions – 8 matrix, 8 multiple choice, 4 open ended, and 1 ranking. The survey achieved a total of 1,221 responses with an 83% completion rate, the ranking question #18 was incomplete by 212 responses. On average, respondents took about 9 minutes to complete the survey. Although the survey was available in five languages – English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese (Mandarin) and Arabic – an overwhelming number of survey respondents completed the survey in English, 927.



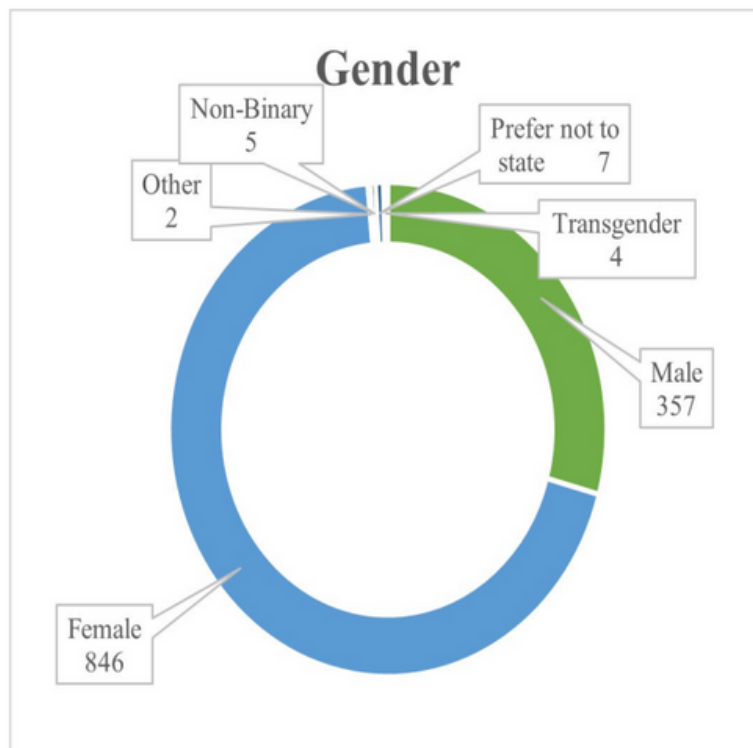
Demographics

The survey was available to respondents 16 years and older and received most responses (71%) from the following age groups 21-34 years old (31%) and 35-54 years old (40%). The median age range was 35-54 years old - which falls in line with Orange County’s median age of 39.2 years.⁷⁸ The majority of survey respondents identified their gender as being ‘Female’ (69%).

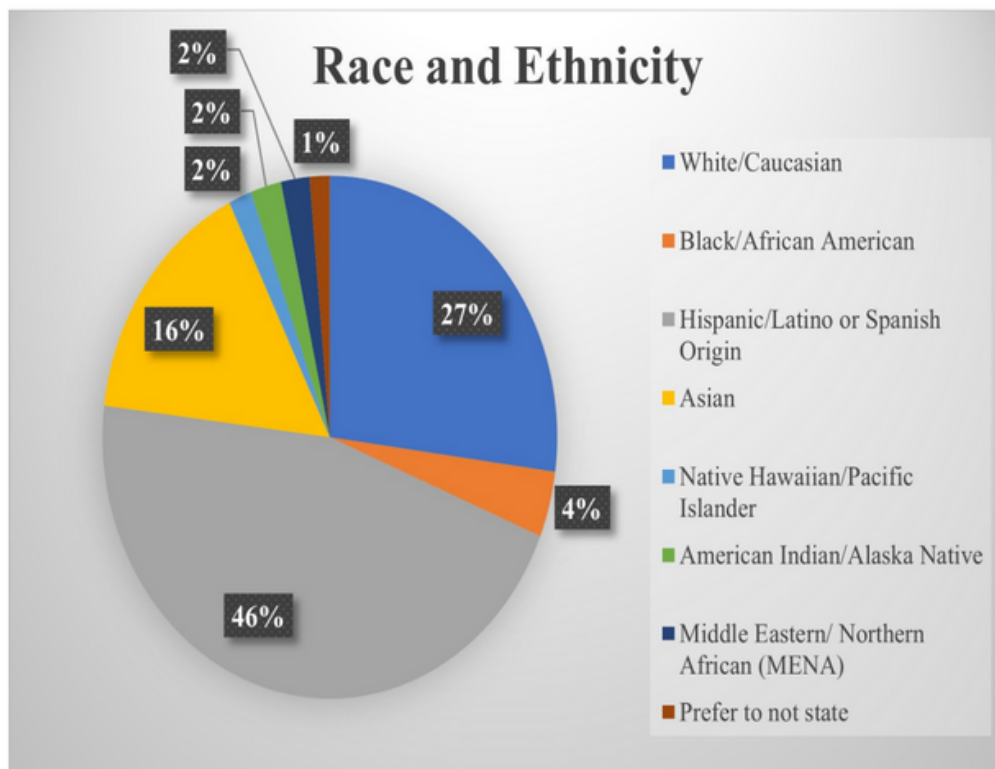
78. Census Reporter 2021, <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/05000US06059-orangecountyca/https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/orangecountycalifornia/POP01022>



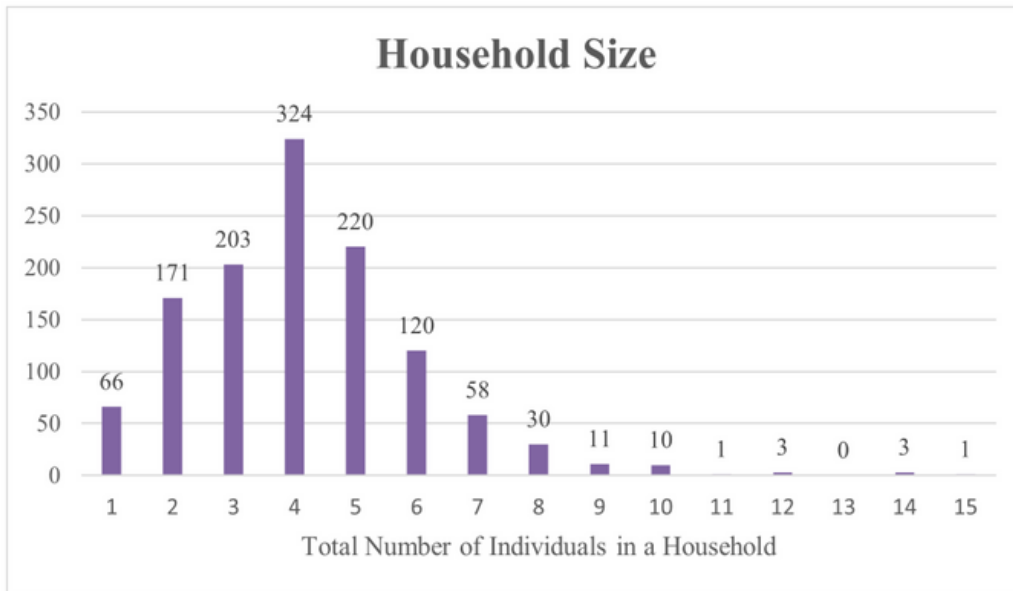
Although only 1% of respondents identified as something other than Female or Male, it is notable since in 2021 only 0.5% identified as non-binary, genderfluid or not sure.



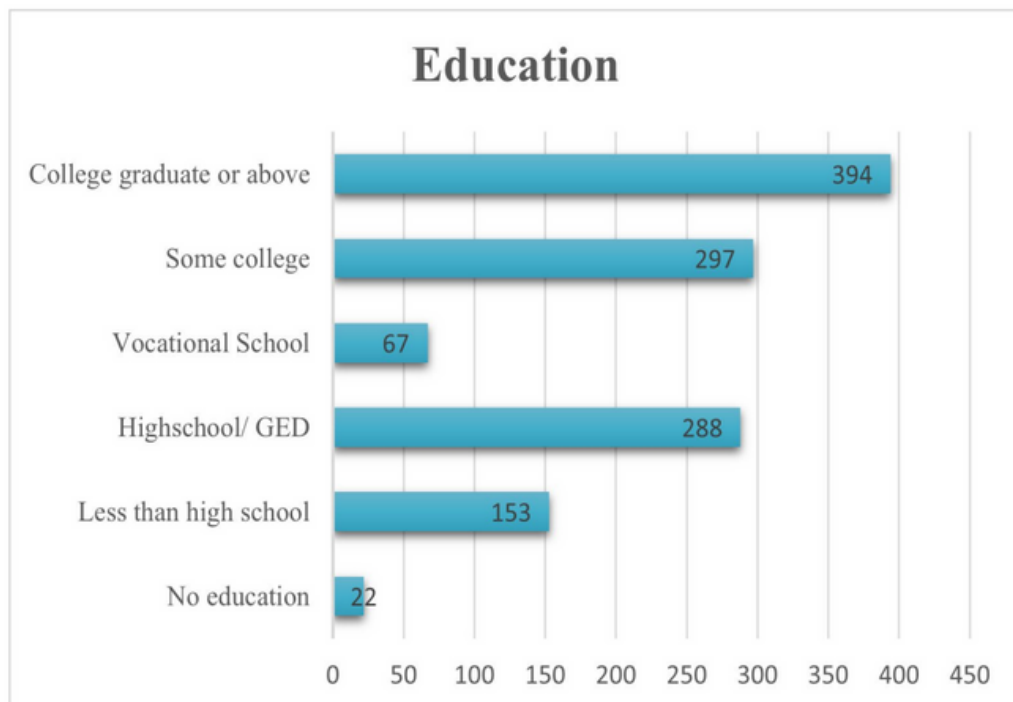
In terms of race and ethnicity, survey respondents identified as: 46% Hispanic/ Latino or Spanish Origin, 27% White/ Caucasian, 16% Asian, 4% Black/ African American, 2% Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander, 2% American Indian/ Alaska Native, 2% Middle Eastern/ Northern African (MENA), and 1% Preferred not to state. Of the 1221 respondents, 7.1% (87) identified as being multiracial (of 2 or more races or ethnicities). In comparison to the Census Bureau populations statistics, the CNA's largest race and ethnicity group was not White but Hispanic/ Latino or Spanish Origin. In addition, those who identified as Black/African American accounted for 4% of CNA respondents, double the proportion in OC. It is also important to note that the CNA included the category for MENA, a category not often included in population statistics.



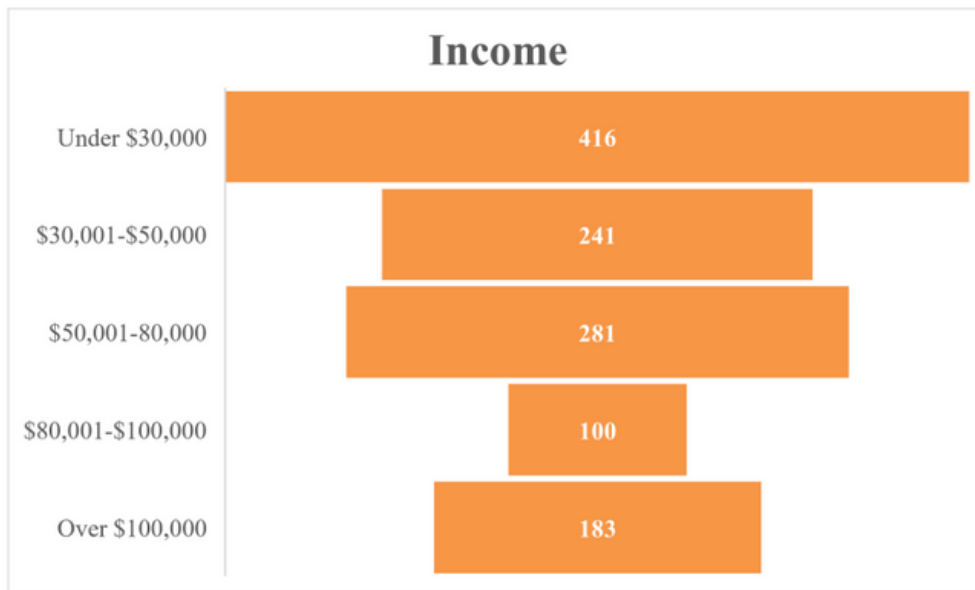
Household size ranged from a single person up to 15 people. However, most respondents lived in homes ranging from 3-5 individuals (61%), of which a majority (84%) resided in a household with 1-2 children (under 18 years of age). Of the 1221 households, 411 (34%) reported not having any children (individuals under 18 years of age) living in the household.



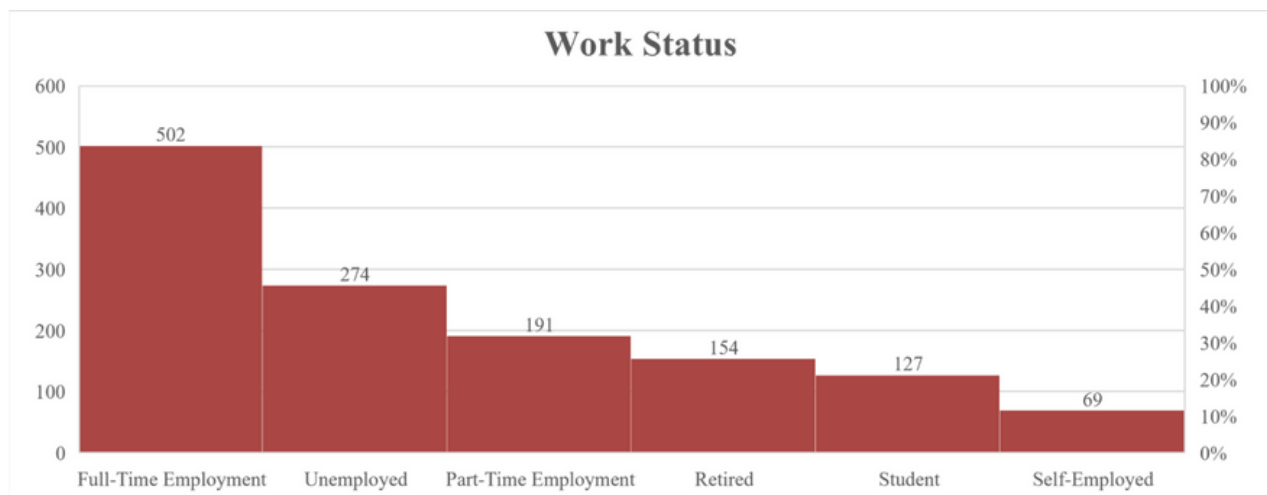
Respondents' education level varied from 'No education' up to 'College graduate or above'. Most respondents had at least acquired a high school diploma or more (80.18%). Respondents declared their education level as follows: 32.27% had obtained a college degree or more, 24.32% had some college education, 23.59% had at least a high school diploma or GED, 12.53% had less than a high school education, 5.49% had gone to a vocation school, and 1.80% had no formal education.



Of the 1221 survey respondents, 76.8% of respondents stated having a yearly household income of \$80,000 or less. The median income range was \$30,00-\$50,000 - which is significantly lower than Orange County's median household income of \$100,559.⁷⁹ Even more significant, 34% of respondents stated having a yearly income of under \$30,000.

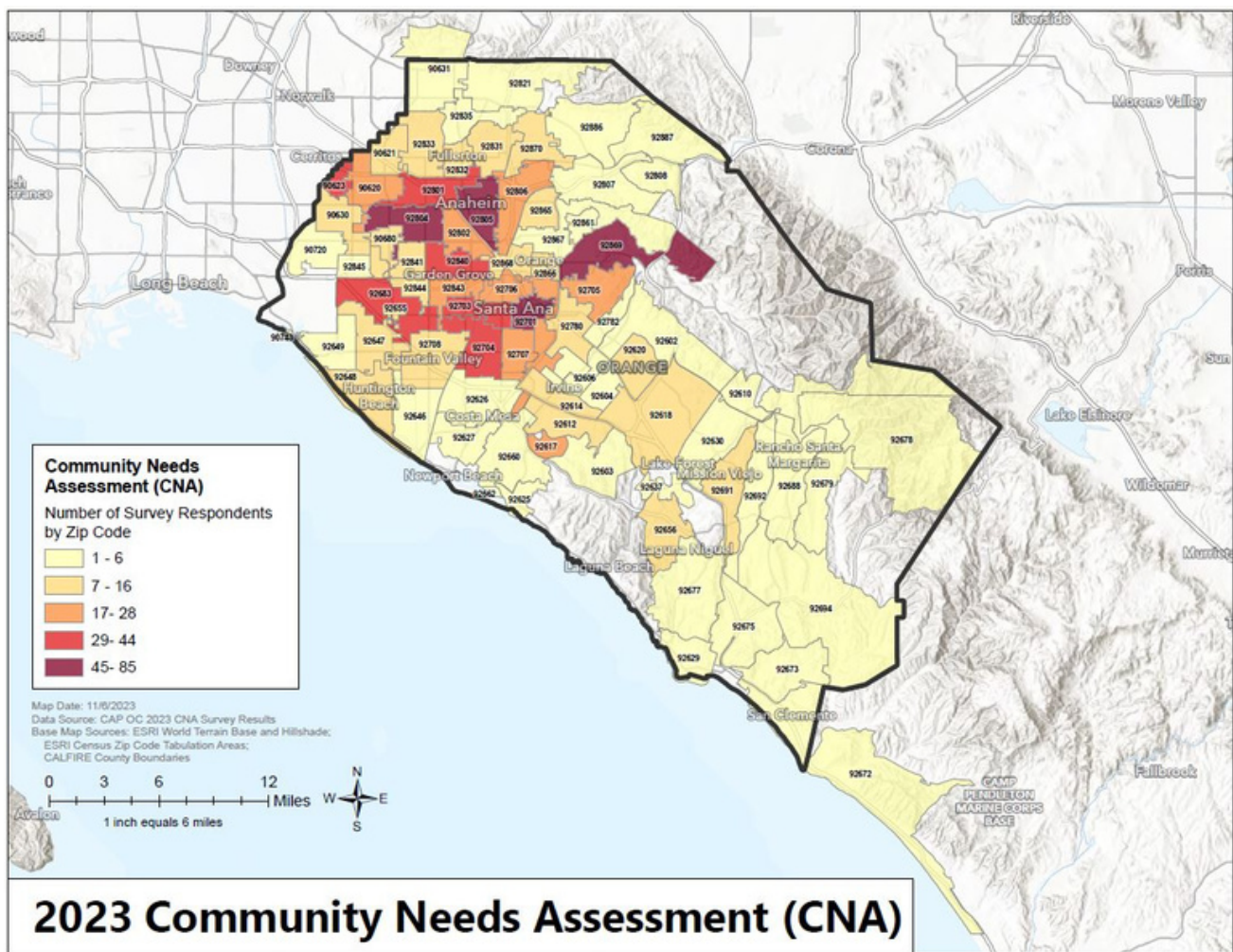


Respondents stated their work status as the following: 22.4% were unemployed, 15.6% worked part-time, 41.1% worked full-time, 5.7% were self-employed, 12.6% were retired and 5.2% stated they were students. Of the 127 respondents that stated they were students, 24% (31) were employed full-time.



79. California State University, Fullerton Center for Demographic Research, Orange County Facts & Figures December 2022.

The map below demonstrates the distribution of survey respondents across Orange County by zip code. A total of 1,035 responses were received from OC residents. The survey was available to individuals who worked and/or lived in OC, therefore survey responses from zip codes outside of OC were also recorded (186). The highest rate of respondents were centered in the central region of OC and in cities such as Anaheim (92804 and 92805), Orange (92869) and Santa Ana (92701). It is important to note that the top two zip codes with the highest number of respondents consist of regions where CAP OC’s Family Resource Centers (FRCs) are located and canvassing efforts occurred - zip code 92804 (85 respondents) houses CAP OC’s Anaheim Independencia FRC and 92869 (68 respondents) houses CAP OC’s El Modena FRC.



Created by Coral Fenech

Top Needs Identified

The list below shows the top (11) needs identified in our 2023 CNA survey results.

Top 11 Needs Identified	Issue Domain
1. Lack of opportunity to save money for the future	Finance
2. Difficulty paying for basic essentials such as food and safe housing	Finance
3. Inability to consistently pay debts on time	Finance
4. Difficulty paying for utilities and affecting utilization	Housing
5. Lack of living wage employment opportunities	Employment
6. Lack of affordable housing due to high cost of rent or mortgage	Housing
7. Lack of basic (key) financial skills such as making budgets and obtaining/ managing credits	Finance
8. Difficulty navigating the healthcare system to access services	Health
9. Lack of access to affordable health insurance, medical care and prescription medicine	Health
10. Lack of access to job training and education to obtain desired employment	Employment
11. Lack of safety in the community due to crime or violence	Housing



FINANCE

The finance domain encompasses topics such as budgeting, financial literacy, and credit scores. In 2022, the median household income in Orange County was \$100,559.⁸⁰ Median household income can vary by factors such as race and age. The breakdown of median household income by race and age can be seen in the tables below.

Median Household Income by Race	
Race	Median Household Income
White (Non-Hispanic)	\$110,482
Hispanic or Latino	\$81,606
Black or African Americans	\$88,536
Asian	\$103,291
Native American	\$81,025

Median Household Income by Age of Householder	
Age	Median Household Income
15 to 24 years	\$52,758
25 to 44 years	\$106,747
45 to 64 years	\$117,893
65 years and over	\$74,048
15 to 24 years	\$52,758

Source: 2021 American Community Survey, US Census Bureau

80. 2021 American Community Survey, US Census Bureau, <https://data.census.gov/table?q=median+income+orange+county&tid=ACSST1Y2021.S1901>

Needs

As indicated by the 2023 Community Needs Assessment and community forums, finance is the top concern for residents of Orange County, ranking first in the assessment with 58% of respondents having difficulty with this domain. Additionally, 74% of respondents indicated their finances being significantly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic in the past year (2022).

Lack of Opportunity to Save Money for the Future and Inability to Consistently Pay Debts on Time

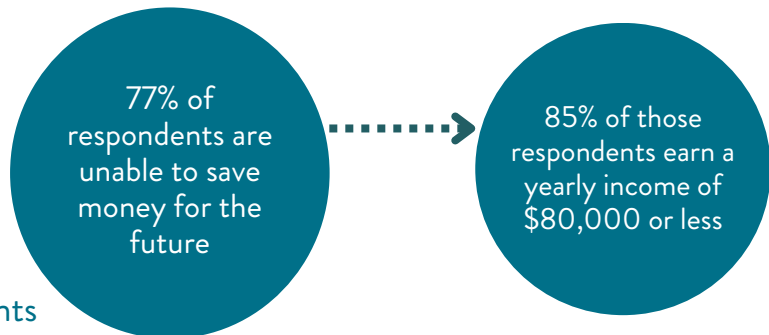
77% of community members have shared they are unable to save money for the future.

Of those, 44% reported a moderate and severe impact on their ability to save money. Even more alarming, 26% of respondents stated it was “Very Difficult”. At the Southwest

Community Meeting many participants

expressed living paycheck to paycheck therefore making it difficult to set money aside.

Additionally, 64% of community members stated having a difficult time paying debts on time - 33% experienced significantly higher difficulty.



In OC the median household income is \$100,559.⁸¹ Yet 81% of community members that said they had difficulty saving money for the future have a yearly income of \$80,000 or less, furthermore 35% said it was less than \$30,000. The significant difference between the median income and the actual income of respondents only accentuates the hardships in which residents find themselves in. Being able to save on an annual income that is lower than the median income is difficult, but it is significantly harder to do so when unemployed. Furthermore, 25% of respondents that found it difficult to save money stated being unemployed.

81. California State University, Fullerton Center for Demographic Research, Orange County Facts & Figures December 2022.

Additionally, community members are currently experiencing inflation. Inflation is “a rise in prices, which can be translated as the decline of purchasing power over time. The rate at which purchasing power drops can be reflected in the average price increase of a basket of selected goods and services over some period of time.”⁸² Therefore, inflation makes it difficult to stay financially stable and pay back debts when the value of money keeps fluctuating.⁸³ The combined effects of insufficient income and inflation have exacerbated the financial need of the community.

Difficulty Paying for Basic Essentials Such as Food and Safe Housing

Finances shape the lives of people and 66% of Orange County residents have reported not feeling financially secure enough to consistently afford food, housing, and other essentials. Furthermore, 64.8% of respondents that found it difficult to pay for basic essentials stated having a yearly income of under \$30,000. Participants at the Southwest Community Meeting stated that during the pandemic their CalFresh benefits generously increased which was relief for the families as it allowed them to pay for other expenses, however, that has since decreased, and families are struggling once again.

With the cost of food, gas, housing and other essentials at an all-time high, it is much more difficult for families to stay afloat. The cost of food, gas, and transportation is 29% higher in Orange County than the national average.⁸⁴ For examples, eggs experienced a 72.3% price increase from \$1.67 in 2021 to \$2.68 in 2022 and \$3.44 in March of 2023.⁸⁵ Gas, another essential, dropped 5.2% less than in previous years making it more expensive in 2023 than it was in 2022.⁸⁶

82. Fernando, Jason. “Inflation: What It Is, How It Can Be Controlled, and Extreme Examples.” Investopedia, 6 June 2023, www.investopedia.com/terms/i/inflation.asp.

83. Western & Southern Financial Group. 2023. The impact of inflation on your savings & investments. Western & Southern Financial Group. <https://www.westernsouthern.com/investments/the-impact-of-inflation-on-your-savingsand-investments>

84. Forbes. (2023). Cost of living in orange county, ca. Forbes Advisor. <https://www.payscale.com/cost-of-livingcalculator/California-Orange-County>

85. US Inflation Calculator. (2023). Egg Prices By Year And Adjusted For Inflation. US Inflation Calculator. <https://www.usinflationcalculator.com/inflation/egg-prices-adjusted-for-inflation/>

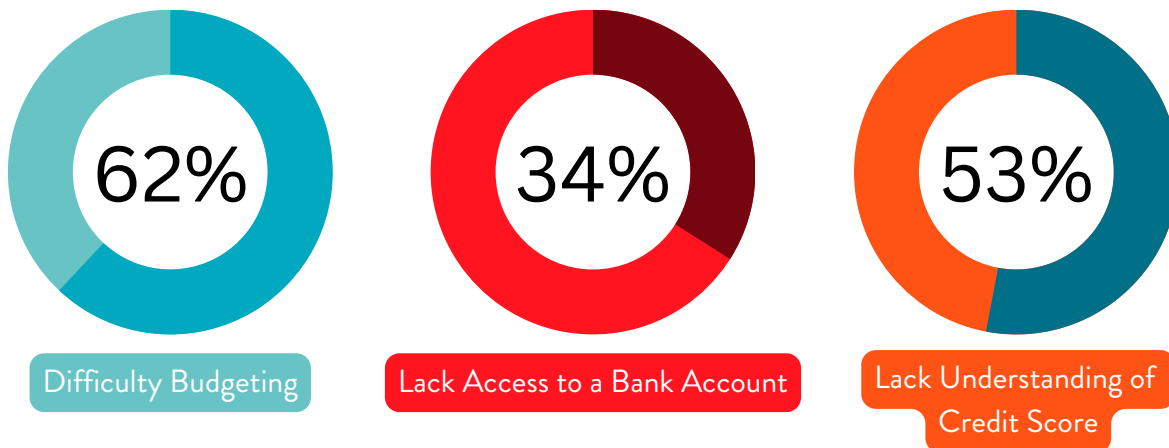
86. US Inflation Calculator. (2023). Gasoline Inflation in the United States (1968-2023). US Inflation Calculator. <https://www.usinflationcalculator.com/inflation/gasoline-inflation-in-the-united-states/>

In addition, housing expenses in OC are 157% higher than the national average, making affordable housing a significant need.⁸⁷ According to the Orange County 2023 Affordable Housing Needs Report, the monthly average rent is \$2,672, totaling \$32,064 a year, while 34% of survey respondents stated making less than \$30,000 a year.⁸⁸

Lack of Basic (Key) Financial Skills

Financial literacy is a significant need for the community. The Community Needs Assessment recorded 62% of the community has a difficult time budgeting to achieve their financial goals. Additionally, 34% of the community does not have access to a bank account and 53% of respondents do not understand their credit score or how to improve it. Without a bank account, credit is much harder to obtain, build and maintain a good score. Not having a credit score or having a low credit score affects a person’s ability to buy a home, car, rent, or make other forms of large purchases. To achieve their financial goals, the community must have a stable foundation of financial literacy. Having a firm financial education means the ability to make conscious decisions on how one is spending their money and managing their finances intelligently, using credit and loans carefully, and protecting one’s identity thus granting them the financial freedom to take control of their lives.⁸⁹

Respondent Financial Skills



87. Forbes. (2023). Cost of living in orange county, ca. Forbes Advisor. <https://www.payscale.com/cost-of-livingcalculator/California-Orange-County>

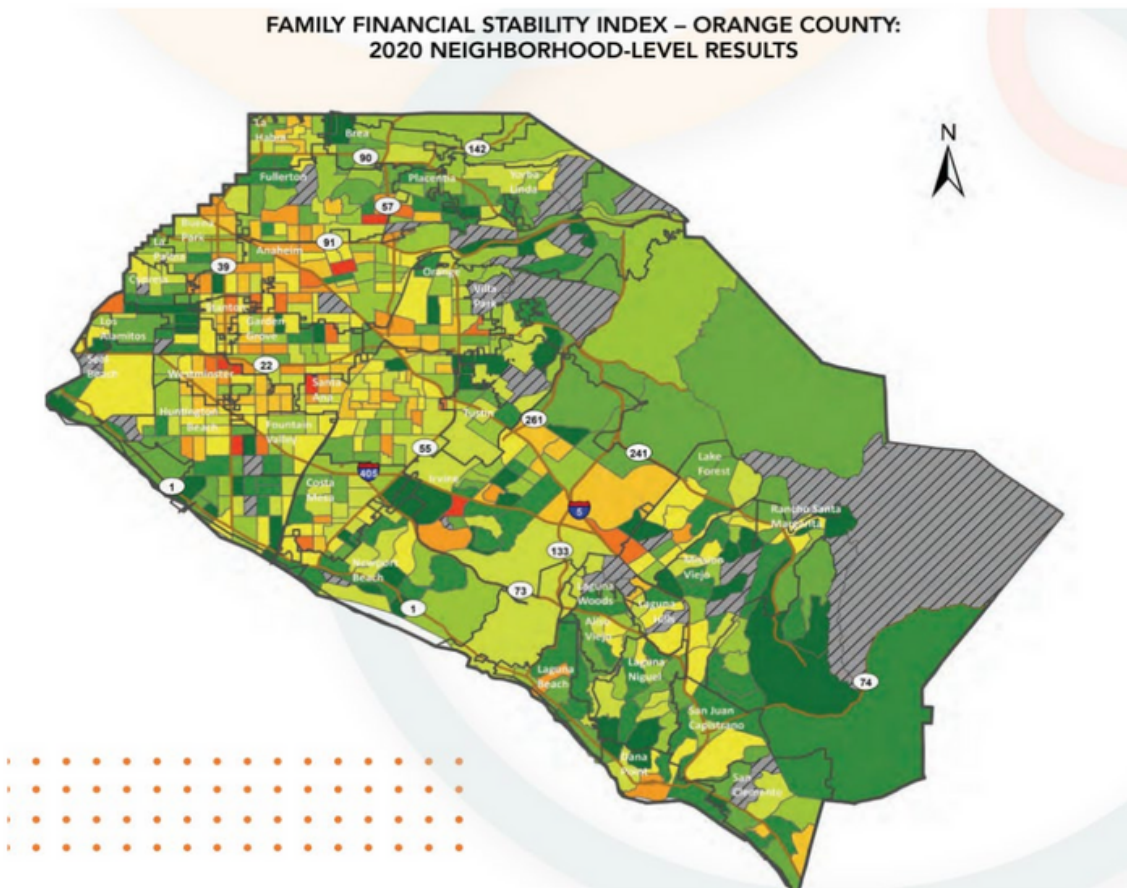
88. California Housing Partnership (2023). Orange County 2023 Affordable Housing Needs Report, pg.

89. Orange County Treasurer-Tax Collector. (2023). Orange county proclaims april national financial literacy month. OCgov. <https://www.octreasurer.com/press/orange-county-proclaims-april-national-financial-literacy-month>

Causes of Poverty

Financial Instability

In 2020, approximately 19% of Orange County neighborhoods were financially unstable.⁹⁰ Debts and bills can be quick to pile up, which is why people living in poverty may find it difficult to invest in future ventures like education or homeownership. Late or missed payments may result in a low credit score. Individuals with low credit scores are seen as a risk to future lenders and pay higher interest rates on loans. Additionally, potential employers or renters may be dissuaded from hiring or housing an individual with a low credit score, further perpetuating that individual's poverty. Santa Ana, Los Alamitos, and Westminster are the cities in Orange County with the highest concentration of families who are financially unstable.⁹¹



Red and orange indicate high levels of family financial instability.

Source: 2022-2023 Orange County Community Indicators Report

90. Orange County Business Council, Orange County Community Indicators Report 2022-2023, p. 69
91. Orange County Business Council, Orange County Community Indicators Report 2022-2023, p. 69

Financial Literacy

In an Orange County survey conducted by the Institute for Money, Technology & Financial Inclusion at the University of California, Irvine, researchers found that about 58% of respondents had never had any type of financial literacy training.⁹² People who have limited financial literacy are more likely to make poor financial decisions. A lack of knowledge of the basic functions of financial management could greatly impact one's ability to pay for everyday expenses and build wealth in the future. Topics such as understanding how credit works, applying for loans, and managing a bank account is information that typically isn't taught in many schools or at home for many families struggling to pay for everyday expenses. These issues become exacerbated when applied to community members who speak a language other than English because they may not be familiar with the financial terminology or have confidence in traditional banking institutions. This is why financial literacy has become one of the ways that low-income individuals can break the cycle of poverty and begin to make transformative changes in the financial health of their families.

Conditions of Poverty

Inability to Accumulate Wealth

As stated previously, people who have a low credit score are seen as risks to lenders and pay higher interest rates on loans. Without the help of loans, impoverished community members may find it difficult to invest in assets such as homes, businesses, or vehicles. These assets can accumulate wealth for an individual who can later pass those assets onto future generations, which creates generational wealth. Low-income communities specifically have the odds stacked against them by the cycle of poverty. The cycle of poverty is “a term used to describe the phenomenon where poor families stay impoverished for at least three generations. Generally speaking, if your grandparents were poor, and your parents were poor, the odds are decent that you, too, will be poor.”⁹³ Sadly, without the ability to accumulate generational wealth, many families get caught in a web of debt that is passed down from generation to generation.

92. Nandita Badami, Jenny Fan, & Bill Maurer, Addressing Financial Literacy in Orange County, California, 2020, p.9

93. Williams, Geoff. “The Cycle of Poverty and Its Traps That Keep You Poor”. U.S. News & World Report. 30 May 2023.

Assets

Community Action Partnership for Orange County (CAP OC)

CAP OC offers financial empowerment classes throughout the year in Orange County. The classes (one session, three sessions or five sessions) utilize the Your Money, Your Goals curriculum developed by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (federal government) to help participants develop and use knowledge, skills, and tools to increase their financial wellbeing.

In 2023 CAP OC launched a Lending Circle Program in partnership with Mission Asset Fund. Lending Circles (social loans) turns a common community practice into a credit-building activity that changes lives by giving members access to zero-interest loans that are funded by the group. With Lending Circles, CAP OC transforms this practice into a safe way to build members' credit.

A Financial Empowerment Course



your money, your goals



February 4-18, 2020
Tuesday's 9:30am-11:30am

Magnolia Park FRC
11402 Magnolia St.
Garden Grove CA, 92841

Topics Covered:

- Managing Income
- Debt Management
- Credit Increase
- And more...

childcare will be provided

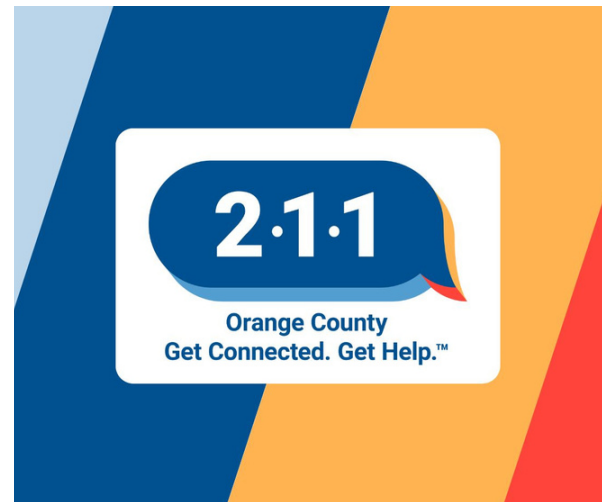


The Lending Circle Program is represented by the following:

- Payments are reported to three credit bureaus.
- Members receive a loan when it's their turn.
- Typical monthly payments are between \$50-\$200.
- Lending Circles are formed between 6-12 people.
- The loan amount ranges from as little as \$300 to \$2,400.
- Each month, a new member of the Lending Circle receives the loan until everyone in the group gets their chance.
- Members are provided with Financial Empowerment information, tools and resources

2-1-1 Orange County (211OC)

211OC links Orange County’s most vulnerable with the health and human service resources they need through a simple toll-free, three-digit phone number. They offer resources for bills/finances, clothing/hygiene, consumer protection, Covid-19 information & resources, disaster preparedness & response, children/family, crisis services, education, employment, food, health care, housing, legal assistance, mental health, people resource centers, substance abuse, teen health, and transportation.

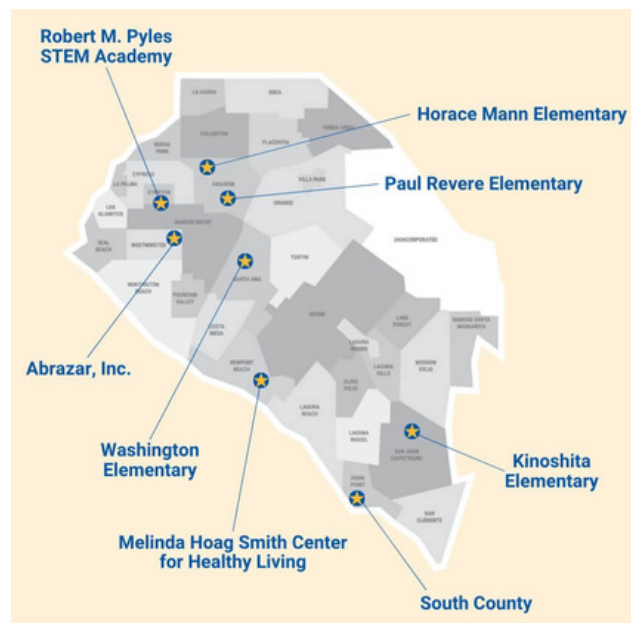


Source: 211

SparkPoint OC - Orange County United Way

SparkPoint OC empowers Orange County families and individuals to get on the path from surviving to thriving. Through the program, families create step-by-step personal financial plans to tackle their specific needs – from getting out of debt, to going back to school, or learning how to budget. Families can take part in the program for up to 12 months to achieve their goals.

SparkPoint OC’s 8 Locations in OC



Source: Orange County United Way



HOUSING

The housing domain covers topics concerning recent developments in Orange County surrounding housing security, affordability, and availability. Researchers are working to identify factors impacting these three components, a prominent element being the recent COVID-19 pandemic. The perspective of unsheltered residents living in Orange County will also be included in this report.

Needs

The housing domain dominated the conversations during the community meetings. Out of the 5 community meetings, participants chose to focus on the topic of housing at 4 of them. Not to mention, 54% of OC community members reported housing concerns due to the pandemic - 38% of which are experiencing a far heavier impact.

Lack of Affordable Housing Due to High Cost of Rent or Mortgage


In the 2023 Community Needs Assessment Survey, 61% of respondents had difficulty paying rent or making mortgage payments. Attendants at the Virtual Community Meeting expressed the importance of the topic with one participant stating, “La comunidad necesita empatia y equidad, la vivienda es un derecho” translated to “the community needs empathy and equity, housing is a right”.

Furthermore, the stated yearly income of 53.8% of respondents was \$50,000 or less with about 41.10% of these respondents having a household of 4 to 5 individuals. At

community meetings respondents communicated the need for

and suggested implementing rent control or relief to mitigate the high cost of housing.

They also indicated landlords have raised rents to make up for the economic crisis caused by the pandemic.



“La comunidad necesita empatia y equidad, la vivienda es un derecho”

affordable housing

The topic of affordable housing is connected to issues of high rent and mortgage payments. In Orange County the median rent is \$2,057 and the median mortgage is \$2,967.⁹⁴ According to the Orange County 2023 Affordable Housing Needs Report one must earn an average hourly wage of \$51.39 in order to afford the average monthly asking rent of \$2,672 yet OC's current minimum wage is \$15.50.⁹⁵ In addition, in Orange County an individual/household must make \$162,000 a year to afford a median priced home of \$826,000, however only 21% of households are able to afford the median price.⁹⁶ Rent and mortgage rates are only increasing, from Q4 2021 to Q4 2022 the asking rents increased by 2.7% in OC.⁹⁷



Source: Orange County 2023 Affordable Housing Needs Report

Difficulty Paying for Utilities and Affecting Utilization

61% of respondents had difficulty paying for utilities including water, electricity, and gas and using them how they want to. At community meetings, participants indicated that their difficulty in paying for utilities was because of the high cost of living including paying high rent/mortgage payments. At one community meeting a guest speaker presented the fact that 30% of income in Orange County is allocated to rent but no more than 1/3 of income should be allocated to rent to avoid living in poverty. Participants felt that high cost of living like rent/mortgage payments were economic burdens that declined their ability to pay for additional services like utilities.

94. QuickFacts: Orange County, California. (2021). Census Bureau QuickFacts; United States Census Bureau.

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/orangecountycalifornia>

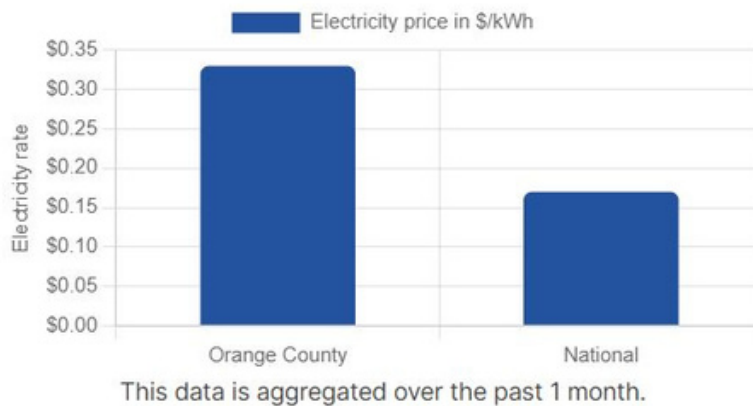
95. California Housing Partnership (2023). Orange County 2023 Affordable Housing Needs Report, pg. 1; Living wage calculator. Living Wage Calculator - Living Wage Calculation for Orange County, California. (n.d.). Retrieved April 14, 2023, from <https://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/06059>

96. The Kennedy Commission | Orange County Affordable Housing Advocacy. (n.d.). The Kennedy Commission. Retrieved from <https://www.kennedycommission.org>

97. California Housing Partnership (2023). Orange County 2023 Affordable Housing Needs Report, pg. 1

In Orange County, residents spend a median of \$213 per month on electricity that's about 28% higher than the national average.⁹⁸ In California, residents pay the second highest price for electricity in the nation with an estimate of Orange County residents spending \$130,600 in electric bills over the next 25 years.⁹⁹ Even worse, the cost of natural gas has skyrocketed in the past year, especially in the winter months as “wholesale prices for the home-heating, waterboiling, climate-warming commodity rose 63% since October (2022)”.¹⁰⁰ Although utility prices have steadied as of February 2023, Southern California Edison is seeking to increase rates by 4.4%, which would take effect on June 1, 2023.¹⁰¹

Electric rates in Orange County, CA



Source: energysage

Lack of Safety in the Community Due to Crime or Violence

51% of respondents had difficulty living in an area where they felt safe from crime or violence. At community meetings participants reported not feeling safe in their neighborhoods, attributing high crime to homelessness and gang activities. Other participants expressed not feeling safe due to the high levels of drug use (alcohol and marijuana), and vandalism of gang affiliation.

98. Electricity Cost in Orange County, CA: 2023 Electric Rates. (n.d.). EnergySage. Retrieved from <https://www.energysage.com/local-data/electricity-cost/ca/orange-county/>

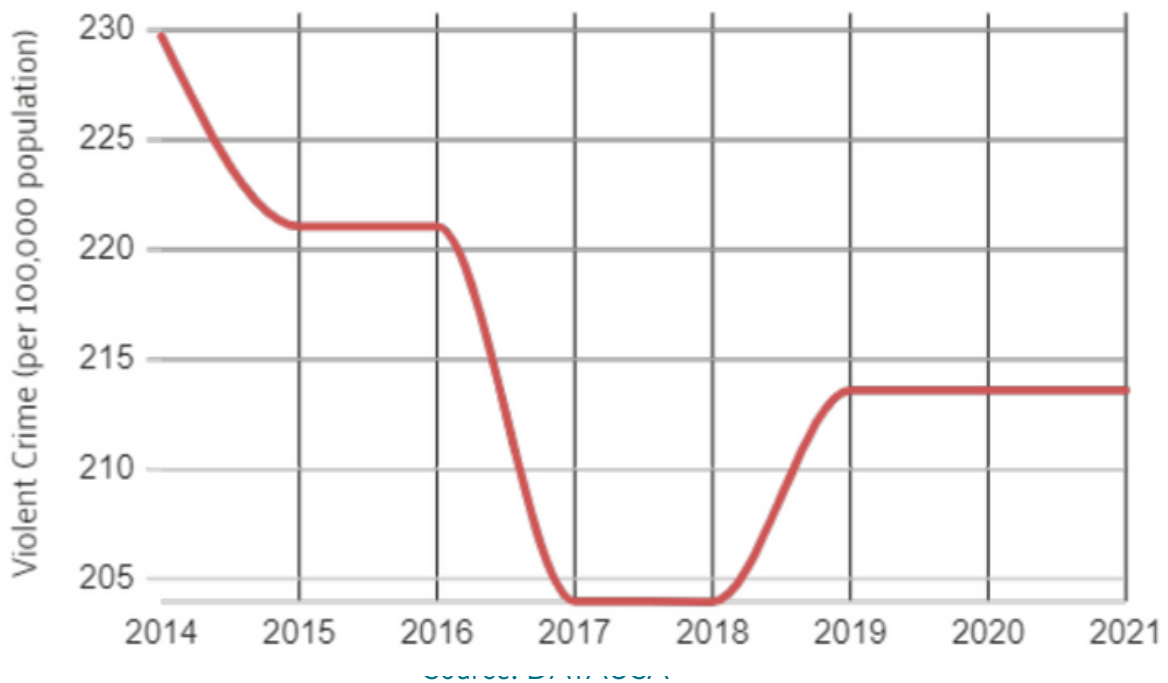
99. Electricity Cost in Orange County, CA: 2023 Electric Rates. (n.d.). EnergySage. Retrieved from <https://www.energysage.com/local-data/electricity-cost/ca/orange-county/>

100. CALMatters. “Relief for California’s Natural Gas Price Pain Is Coming.” The Orange County Register, 2 Feb. 2023. Retrieved from <https://www.ocregister.com/2023/02/02/relief-for-californias-gas-price-pains/>

101. Sternfield, M. “Higher power bills likely headed for Southern California.” KTLA 5 News, 8 Feb. 2023. Retrieved from <https://ktla.com/news/local-news/southern-california-can-expect-higher-electricity-bills-this-summer/>

Participants expressed not feeling safe letting their children wait to be picked up after school, walk to school/home, or spend time in recreational areas without supervision.

As mentioned in the Community Profile of this report, Orange County is relatively safe when comparing it to neighboring counties like Los Angeles and San Bernardino. Violent crimes rates, for example, have remained relatively the same throughout the pandemic.¹⁰²



Causes of Poverty

Housing Affordability Continues to be a Pain Point Amongst Residents

Housing affordability has had a dramatic increase since June 2012, home prices in OC have increased by 123%.¹⁰³ This means that an OC homebuyer would need a minimum qualifying income of \$157,000 to purchase a home with a median price of \$1,000,000.¹⁰⁴ Although recently becoming home to a large tech-talented group of people, OC has always catered to an array of different income levels, making housing affordability a key issue.

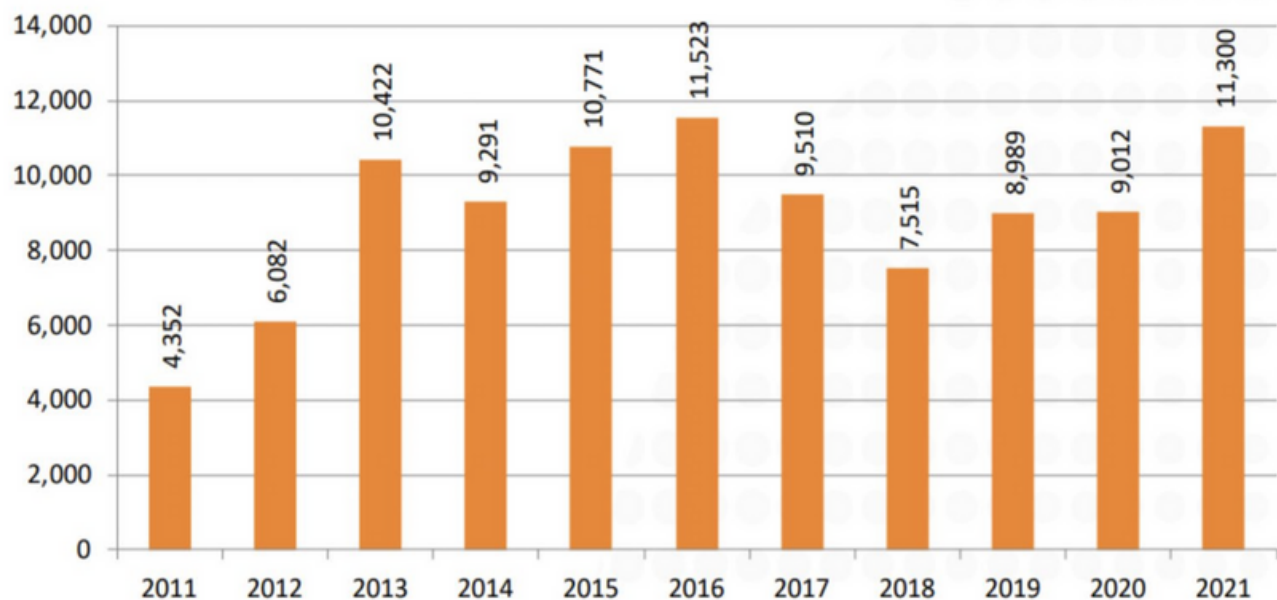
102. Data USA. Orange County, CA. <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/orangecountyca#:~:text=Poverty%20%26%20Diversity&text=The%20largest%20demographic%20living%20in, followed%20by%20Hispanic%20and%20Asian>

103. 2022-2023 Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators, p. 53.

104. 2022-2023 Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators, p. 53.

Although the market wavers from time to time, home prices in OC are making it difficult for residents to become homeowners. Many cities in OC are working to create more affordable housing for their middle income and low-income families. Funding for housing production and preservation has gone up to \$251,000,000 which is a 9% increase from last year.¹⁰⁵ Incentivization for this plan to supply more affordable housing stemmed from a need to cater to OC’s middle-income families. Although state and federal tax credits help to create these homes, they primarily target low to very low-income home creation.¹⁰⁶ Building permits have had an upward trend in the last few years, showing hope for more building creation in the future.

ORANGE COUNTY BUILDING PERMIT YEARLY TRENDS, 2011-2021



Source: U. S. Census Bureau’s Building Permits Survey

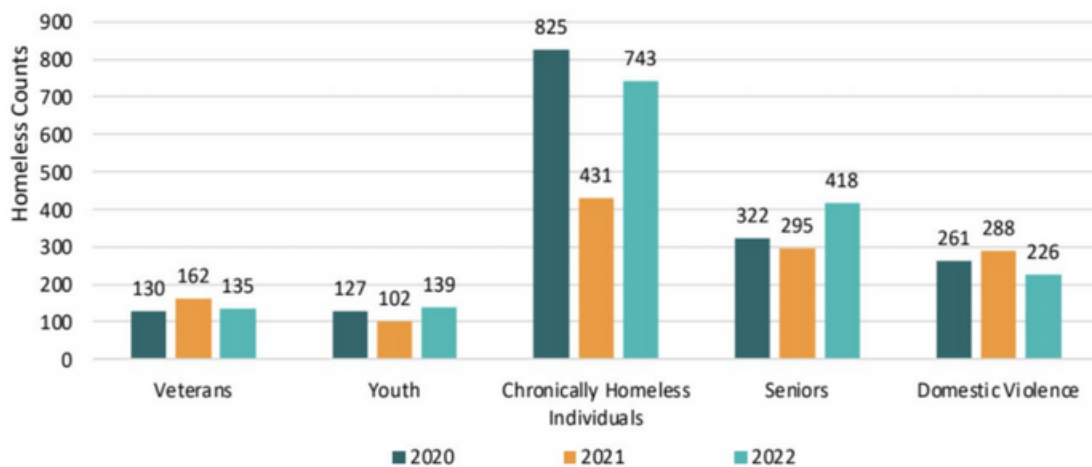
The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the county’s already established affordability crisis.¹⁰⁷ Many residents are receiving a high score of 4 (out of 10) on the Family Financial Stability Index for Orange County (FFSI-OC). This measure looks at a family’s income, employment status, and proportion of household income spent on rent.¹⁰⁸

105. 2022 California Housing Partnership, Affordable Housing Needs Report, pg. 1.
 106. Caro, Alexander. Strategies to incentive middle income housing in the city of Anaheim, p. 1.
 107. 2022-2023 Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators, p. 53.
 108. 2022-2023 Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators, p. 69.

Three cities (Santa Ana, Los Alamitos, and Westminster) had the highest concentrations of family financial instability with scores of 4 on the 2020 FFSI-OC.¹⁰⁹

OC’s unsheltered population has risen by 9% since 2021 with approximately 2,661 Orange County residents living in sheltered homeless arrangements in 2022.¹¹⁰ Looking at individuals who identified as chronically homeless, OC saw an increase in chronically unsheltered individuals by 312 people since 2021 according to the Point-in-Time Count conducted in OC.¹¹¹ The same was not true for unsheltered families as OC. In 2021, there was a reported 1043 number of unsheltered families, 93 more than 2022’s number of reported 930 unsheltered families.¹¹² It is important to note that collecting the perspectives of unsheltered families has been more difficult to collect in recent years. Maura Mikulec, from housing advocacy group Housing as a Human Right OC, explained that there were 16% fewer volunteers doing counts in 2022 than in 2019, and these volunteers were directed to ‘hot spots’ which likely could have left many individuals uncounted.¹¹³

SHELTERED HOMELESS COUNTS BY SPECIAL POPULATIONS IN ORANGE COUNTY, 2022



Source: Orange County 2-1-1, 2022 Sheltered Point in Time Count

109. 2022-2023 Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators, p. 69.
 110. 2022-2023 Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators, p. 61.
 111. 2022 Sheltered Point In Time Count, Orange County, CA (CA-602).
 112. 2022 Sheltered Point In Time Count, Orange County, CA (CA-602).
 113. 2022-2023 Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators, p. 62

Conditions of Poverty

Insufficient Income and Lack of Rent Control Increase Housing Insecurities in Orange County

A lack of stable and adequate income and high rent is cited as the prevailing barrier to acquire safe and affordable housing. Although employment rates in OC have increased since May of 2021, there has been a recent increase in unemployment in June, which is indicative of a nationwide slowdown in economic activity as employers look to reduce operating costs during the pandemic.¹¹⁴ A lack of substantial income, high grocery and fuel costs, and rising rent have made it difficult for OC residents to sustain their lifestyles. Rapidly rising rents are becoming serious concerns as a significant portion of resident's income is going towards high rent prices, leaving less margins for other areas of one's life. The median rent of 2,200 requires renters to make an average \$42 per hour that is 3.6 times the state minimum wage, more than 83% of households are paying half their income on housing.¹¹⁵ On average Orange County residents need to make an average \$86,000 annually in order to meet the current basic needs.¹¹⁶

Assets

Community Action Partnership of Orange County (CAP OC)

To meet immediate needs and help support OC residents with the high cost of living, CAP OC offers utility assistance, a variety of food assistance programs and gift cards. CAP OC offers utility assistance through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). The program provides federally funded assistance to eligible households so they can meet and manage their home heating/ cooling needs. These households are provided with bill support and assistance to reduce the costs associated with their home energy bills, energy crises, weatherization, and minor energy-related home repairs.

114. 2022-2023 Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators, p. 40.

115. (2019, May). Orange County's Housing Emergency Update [Review of Orange County's Housing Emergency Update]. California Housing Partnership . <https://www.families-forward.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/OrangeHNR-2019-1.pdf>

116. (2019, May). Orange County's Housing Emergency Update [Review of Orange County's Housing Emergency Update]. California Housing Partnership . <https://www.families-forward.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/OrangeHNR-2019-1.pdf>

This program helps reduce the risk of health and safety problems that arise from unsafe heating and cooling situations and practices. One of CAP OC's newer programs is the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) which is set to cover water bills for Orange County residents. The program will cover up to \$15,000 in past due water bills. If individuals received and were eligible for LIHEAP benefits, they're automatically eligible for LIHWAP.

CAP OC has a variety of food programs through the Orange County Food Bank that helps to feed the community from seniors to families and those that are unsheltered.

- Southwest Community Center in Santa Ana, CA provides hot meals 7 days a week.
- Clementine Food Trolley distributes food to 8-10 sites a month each with 60-70 families. Please note that currently, the Trolley itself is temporarily sidelined however, Food Bank trucks are covering its distributions.
- Through the CalFresh Outreach program low-income families and individuals on a limited budget are assisted in applying for food stamps. Additionally, CAP OC is part of a county-wide collaborative to increase CalFresh enrollment in OC.
- 23,000 food boxes are distributed each month at 70 distribution sites to low-income senior ages 60+ through the Commodity Supplemental Food Box Program (CSFP).
- OC Food Bank has 300+ hunger-fighting agency partners that help distribute food to people in need.
- The Diaper Bank provides diapers, pull ups and related supplies through a collaborative network of 94 partner organizations serving families with infant children.

The Anaheim Mobile Family Resource Center, a partnership with the City of Anaheim, helps bring and link services to 14 isolated neighborhoods in Anaheim. CAP OC's role is to provide \$200-500 gift cards to 100 families.



CAP OC also has a few programs aimed at housing individuals/ families.

- Since late 2020, CAP OC beginning with the County of Orange followed by CalOptima Health, has been contracted for Housing Navigation and Sustainability Program services that help with preparing, locating, and stabilizing homeless, Medi-Cal-insured, chronically ill, high utilizers in permanent housing. This is one of 6 Community Supports through the CalAIM program that CAP OC is under contract with CalOptima Health. See the Assets Section under the Health domain for a complete list of Community Supports.
- CAP OC has 7 housing units in the City of Anaheim that are rented out to low-income households which are to receive some improvements and case management services offered to the tenants beginning in 2024.

OC Housing Authority

The Orange County Housing Authority (OCHA) is a federally funded program that provides housing assistance to qualified low-income homeless individuals/households. The program offers several services based on housing needs ranging from veteran supportive housing, homeownership, elderly housing, emergency housing and rental assistance. The program provides vouchers to use for rental assistance and other housing needs for various forms of apartments, houses, and dwellings located in Orange County. The vouchers can only be used in privately owned housing not city owned and can be used if the property owner is willing to participate. Cities such as Garden Grove, Anaheim, and Santa Ana also provide a limited number of federal Section 8 housing certificates, which could be project or tenant based.

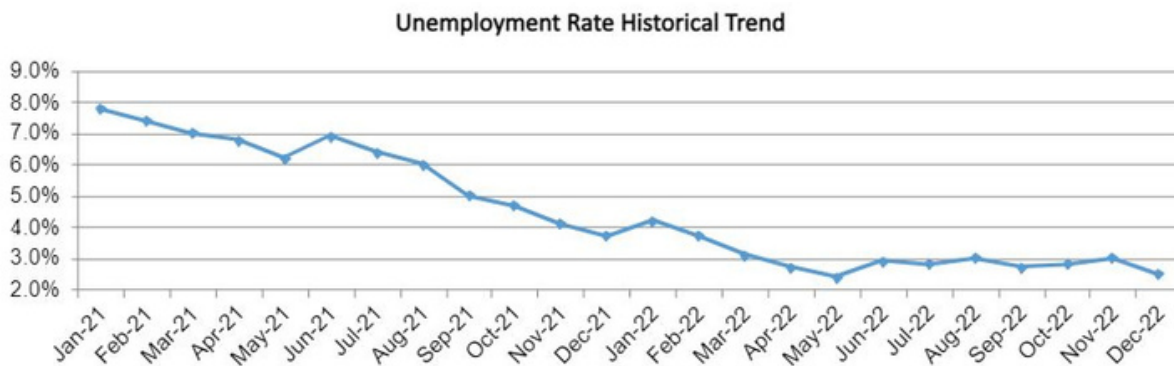
The Kennedy Commission

The Kennedy Commission is a community-based non-profit that works with residents and community organizations to increase the production of homes affordable to lower income households in Orange County. They develop housing solutions that affirm the dignity of families with very low- and extremely low-incomes and unite communities across Orange County to develop homes affordable to all. CAP OC is a member of the Kennedy Commission.



EMPLOYMENT

The employment domain encompasses a variety of topics centered on employment-related themes such as accessing well-paying jobs, projected job growth, vocational training, and other opportunities. Orange County is home to a labor force of 1,613,807 people.¹¹⁷ Its unemployment rate fell to 2.5% by December 2022, according to a report by the Employment Development Department of California, below that of the state’s (3.7%) and nation’s (3.3%).¹¹⁸ Although 47% of households in OC earn over \$100,000, 9.9% of OC residents live below the poverty line.¹¹⁹



Source: Orange County Business Journal

Needs

Lack of Living Wage Employment Opportunities

Although Orange County is home to strong job sectors and industries in the region, the County is also experiencing a lack in living wage employment opportunities. Findings from our 2023 CNA survey results found that 61% of respondents reported difficulty in finding and keeping a job that pays a living wage. About half of respondents (53%) earned \$50,000 or less.

117. “Orange County (Change Location).” ORANGE COUNTY Community Profile | State of California, properties.zoomprospector.com/california/community/Orange-County-CA-/r1700/profile. Accessed 2 June 2023.

118. Brennan, Peter J. “OC Unemployment Falls to 2.5%.” Orange County Business Journal, 20 Jan. 2023, www.ocbj.com/finance/oc-unemployment-falls-to-2-5/.

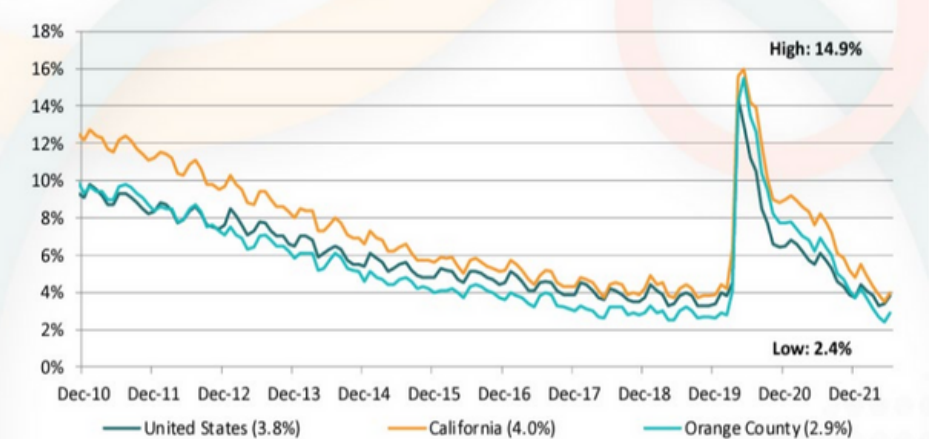
119. 2022-2023 Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators, p. 66; United States Census Bureau 2020, https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/orangecountycalifornia/POP010220

Even more alarming, 56% of those respondents that stated it was “Very Difficult” finding and keeping a job that pays a living wage, earned a yearly income of under \$30,000.

According to the State of California, the following occupations are the most common in Orange County: 1) Executive, Managers and Administrators, 2) Sales and 3) Office and Administrative Support.¹²⁰ Of these top 3 occupations only the Executive, Managers and Administrators' median hourly wage of \$60.84 exceeds the living wage of \$23.66.¹²¹ Sales, on the contrary, has a median hourly wage of \$17.97, almost \$6 below the living wage.¹²² The Office and Administrative Support's median hourly wage is only about a dollar from the living wage at \$22.71.¹²³ These jobs also include the many hospitality jobs in hotels, service industries that help support economies like Anaheim, Santa Ana, and beach cities.

Orange County, in general, was able to fare well in maintaining jobs during the pandemic, even as unemployment numbers rose at the state and national levels. However, even with these low figures, many employers were putting into place hiring freezes and other measures fearing a possible recession.¹²⁴

COUNTY UNEMPLOYMENT RATE LOWER THAN STATE AND NATIONAL AVERAGES



Source: 2022-2023 Orange County Community Indicators Report

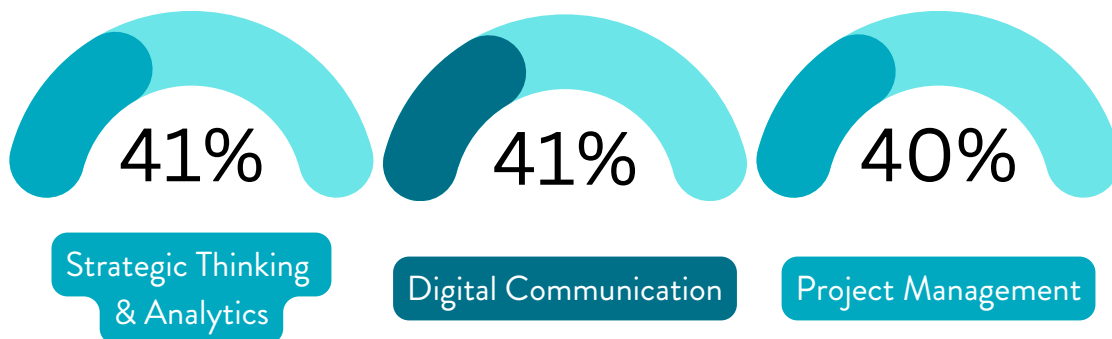
120. “Orange County (Change Location).” ORANGE COUNTY Community Profile | State of California, properties.zoomprospector.com/california/community/Orange-County-CA-/r1700/profile. Accessed 2 June 2023.
121. “Orange County (Change Location).” ORANGE COUNTY Community Profile | State of California, properties.zoomprospector.com/california/community/Orange-County-CA-/r1700/profile. Accessed 2 June 2023.; “Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA - May 2022 OEWS Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Area Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates.” U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 25 Apr. 2023, www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_31080.htm#top.
122. “Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA - May 2022 OEWS Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Area Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates.” U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 25 Apr. 2023, www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_31080.htm#top.; Living wage calculator. Living Wage Calculator - Living Wage Calculation for Orange County, California. (n.d.). Retrieved April 14, 2023, from https://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/06059
123. “Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA - May 2022 OEWS Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Area Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates.” U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 25 Apr. 2023, www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_31080.htm#top.
124. Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators Report 2022-2023, p. 6.

Lack of Access to Job Training and Education to Obtain Desired Employment

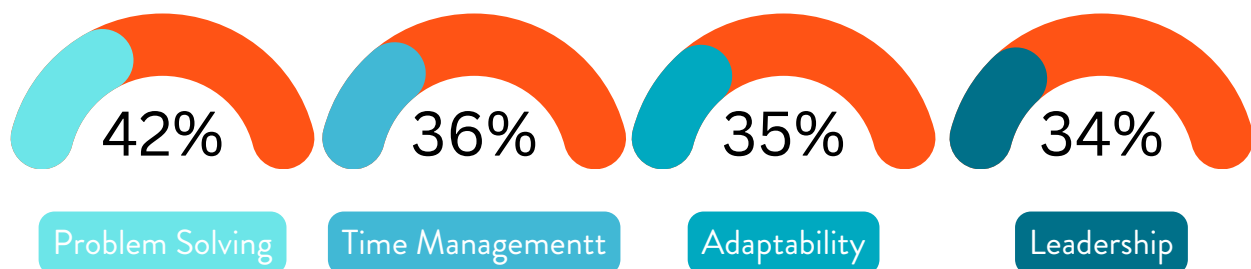
According to the survey results, more than half of respondents (53%) expressed difficulty with having the education and skills to get the job they want. Of those 706 respondents, 44% had a high school diploma or less and 24% stated being unemployed.

According to Closing the Skills Gap, 69% of HR professionals believe their organization has a skills gap.¹²⁵ With the most in-demand hard and technical skills being - strategic thinking and analytics (41%), digital communication (41%), and project management (40%). On the other hand, the most needed soft and durable skills being - problem-solving (42%), time management (36%), adaptability (35%), and leadership (34%).

Hard & Technical Skills



Soft & Durable Skills



Source: Closing the Skills Gap 2023

125. Stokes, Kris. "Closing the Skills Gap 2023." Wiley, 24 Jan. 2023, beyond.wiley.com/resources/skills-gap-report/.

According to the Orange County Business Council, 45% of U.S. employers cite lack of skills as the “main reason” for entry-level vacancies.¹²⁶ They believe the top three reasons for these issues to be lack of technical skills, lack of workplace competencies, and lack of applicants. A few recommendations the report offered was Educators must continually seek to tailor their programs to fit employer needs and emerging middle-skill job opportunities; develop and expand infrastructure for internships, apprenticeships, and career technical education (CTE) programs in healthcare, IT, and advanced manufacturing; develop comprehensive, adaptable middle-skill courses and certificate programs with transferable labor market skills; and more.¹²⁷

According to The Future of Work after COVID-19 Report, “more than 60% of the world’s labor force is employed in occupations that could be partially displaced by automation and digital technologies by 2030”.¹²⁸ As of 2022, OC is the nation’s 2nd most concentrated high-tech sector (2nd to Oakland-Hayward-Berkeley) with five emerging technology industries - Cybersecurity, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Computer and Video Gaming, and Ophthalmic/ Vision.¹²⁹ Closing the skills gap will be essential in ensuring that OC residents have the necessary skills and education to be able to fill these high tech jobs.

Causes of Poverty

Low Wages

A report from the United Ways of California, an antipoverty advocacy organization, shows that the rising costs of housing and child care have outstripped growth in wages so much that 3.5 million working households don’t make enough to meet their most basic necessities.¹³⁰

126. Closing Orange County’s skills gap. Orange County business council. (n.d.). <https://www.ocbc.org/wpcontent/uploads/2016/07/Chase-Middle-Skills-report-for-web.pdf>.

127. Closing Orange County’s skills gap. Orange County business council. (n.d.). <https://www.ocbc.org/wpcontent/uploads/2016/07/Chase-Middle-Skills-report-for-web.pdf>.

128. Lund, Susan, et al. “The Future of Work after COVID-19.” McKinsey & Company, 18 Feb. 2021, www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/the-future-of-work-after-covid-19.

129. Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators Report 2022-2023, p. 46.; Orange County Business Council. Orange County Workforce Indicators Briefing, p. 2.

130. Paz, Erika. “For 3.5 Million California Families, Jobs Don’t Cover High Cost of Living.” CalMatters, 22 July 2021, <https://calmatters.org/california-divide/2021/07/cost-of-living-study-california-families/>.

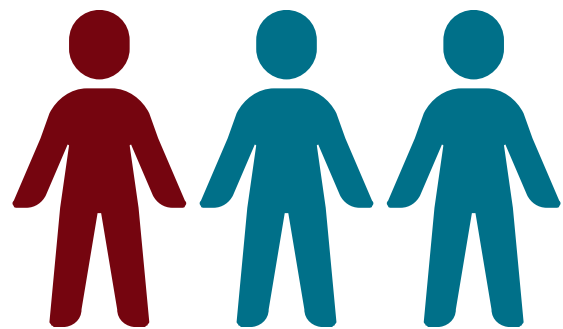
In 2016, California passed a law to raise the minimum wage to \$15.00 per hour statewide by 2022 for large businesses with 26 or more employees, and by 2023 for small businesses with 25 or fewer employees. Despite the raise in the minimum wage, Orange County's living expenses have gone up 3.0% from a year ago (2022).¹³¹ The largest increases were found in transportation, food, and housing. This further shows that the minimum wage isn't keeping up with the living expenses in the Orange County area. Orange County is known for being on the list of the top most expensive cities to live in. The average living cost in Orange County ranges from \$41,926 to \$174,380 depending on family size and how many adults are working in the household.¹³²

Impacts of Criminal Conviction on Job-Seekers

Jobseekers with a criminal record will have a harder time obtaining a job than one without one. According to a study done by the University of Michigan, fairly minor felony records have large negative effects on employer callbacks across a variety of subsamples defined by applicant and job characteristics. The effect on labor market access may ultimately be limited by employers' voluntary or mandatory elimination of the criminal record box on job applications.¹³³

Employment rates are lower for individuals with a criminal record than the general population and recent studies suggest that criminal records may be preventing about one third of working-age males from contributing to the formal economy, leading to a substantial loss of income and tax revenue.¹³⁴

**1 in 3 Working-Age Males
are Affected by Criminal Records**



Source: Work and Opportunity Before and After Incarceration

131. Cal/OSHA. "California's Minimum Wage to Increase to \$15.50 per Hour." California's Minimum Wage to Increase to \$15.50 per Hour | California Department of Industrial Relations, 14 December 2022, <https://www.dir.ca.gov/DIRNews/2022/2022-102.html>;
Salary.com, S. built by: (n.d.). Cost of living calculator: Cost of living in Orange, California. <https://www.salary.com/research/cost-of-living/orange-ca#:~:text=Orange%2C%20CA%20area%20prices%20were,Transportation%2C%20Food%2C%20and%20Housing>.
132. Living wage calculator. Living Wage Calculator - Living Wage Calculation for Orange County, California. (n.d.). Retrieved April 14, 2023, from <https://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/06059>.

133. Agan, A., & Starr, S. B. (n.d.). The effect of Criminal Records on access to employment. The Effect of Criminal Records on Access to Employment. Retrieved March 22, 2023, from <https://repository.law.umich.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2892&context=articles>.

134. Looney and Turner, 2018. Work and Opportunity Before and After Incarceration. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/work-and-opportunity-before-and-after-incarceration/>


Patterns in employment around the time of either the first or last criminal history event do not necessarily reflect the causal impact of having a record. These persistent trends could be the direct result of the criminal charge or conviction, or they could also be the result of other unobservable events in an individual's life that caused both the criminal charge and a decline in employment, such as recent drug addiction or job loss. The reduction in any wage employment for convictions could also be the result of incapacitation effects stemming from incarceration, though this is not the case for non-convictions which would not result in incarceration sentences.¹³⁵

Conditions of Poverty

Lack of Access to Childcare

The lack of access to childcare is a condition of poverty. Low-income residents are often unable to afford childcare costs, which can negatively impact an individual's employment status. For example, someone may not take job opportunities for the reason of not being able to get childcare during the time they need to be in attendance for that job.

According to surveys done by First 5 Orange County, lack of adequate childcare is taking working parents out of the workforce talent pool.¹³⁶ Despite employers recognizing this issue, it still does not change the problem of minimum wage. According to the California Budget and Policy Center, childcare in Orange County costs anywhere between \$390 to \$1,385 a month, which is a significant expense for low-income families already struggling to make ends meet.¹³⁷



California Budget & Policy Center

Making Ends Meet

Orange County Monthly Family Budget

Expenses Per Month and as a Percentage of Budget

This budget represents the total income required to cover a family's basic needs in this county through earnings only, without government benefits or supports.

	Single Adult	Single-Parent Family	Two-Parent Family (One Working)	Two-Working-Parent Family
Housing and Utilities	\$1,257 45.6%	\$1,813 30.9%	\$1,813 34.4%	\$1,813 26.9%
Food	\$268 9.7%	\$577 9.9%	\$773 14.7%	\$773 11.5%
Child Care	\$0 0.0%	\$1,385 23.6%	\$390 7.4%	\$1,385 20.6%
Health Care (Employer-Based)	\$125 4.5%	\$470 8.0%	\$491 9.3%	\$491 7.3%
Transportation	\$304 11.0%	\$437 7.5%	\$437 8.3%	\$567 8.4%
Miscellaneous	\$361 13.1%	\$463 7.9%	\$787 15.0%	\$787 11.7%
Taxes	\$441 16.0%	\$714 12.2%	\$574 10.9%	\$915 13.6%
MONTHLY TOTAL	\$2,755	\$5,859	\$5,265	\$6,730
ANNUAL TOTAL	\$33,061	\$70,304	\$63,176	\$80,765
Monthly Total With Unsubsidized Marketplace Health Care	\$2,902	\$5,857	\$5,545	\$7,025
Annual Total With Unsubsidized Marketplace Health Care	\$34,823	\$70,285	\$66,537	\$84,303

Note: All family types except "single adult" are assumed to have two children, one preschool aged and one school aged. Main budget totals include health care costs with employer-based health insurance, while totals with unsubsidized marketplace health care include health care costs with unsubsidized health insurance purchased on the individual marketplace (Covered California). Amounts correspond to calendar year 2017. Numbers and percentages may not sum due to rounding. For methodology details, see the full 2017 Making Ends Meet report.

This estimated family budget is from the California Budget & Policy Center report, Making Ends Meet: How Much Does It Cost to Support a Family in California? (December 2017). Visit calbudgetcenter.org/MakingEndsMeet.

Source: California Budget & Policy Center

135.. A, A., G, A., & M, A. (2022, September 19). The Impact of Criminal Records on Employment, Earnings, and Tax Filing *. IRS: Internal Revenue Service. Retrieved April 13, 2023, from <https://www.irs.gov/downloads/irs-soi>.
 136. "Exploring the Challenges." First 5 Orange County, 2 July 2021, <https://first5oc.org/childcare/exploring-thechallenges/>.
 137. "Making Ends Meet: How Much Does It Cost to Support a Family in California?" California Budget and Policy Center, 22 Jan. 2022, <https://calbudgetcenter.org/resources/making-ends-meet-much-cost-support-family-california/>.

Assets

Community Action Partnership of Orange County (CAP OC)

In mid-2021, CAP OC demonstrated their dedication to ending poverty by providing all employees with a minimum living wage of \$23/hr. This new policy demonstrates that the agency is “walking the walk” to ensure that no employee struggles to make ends meet.

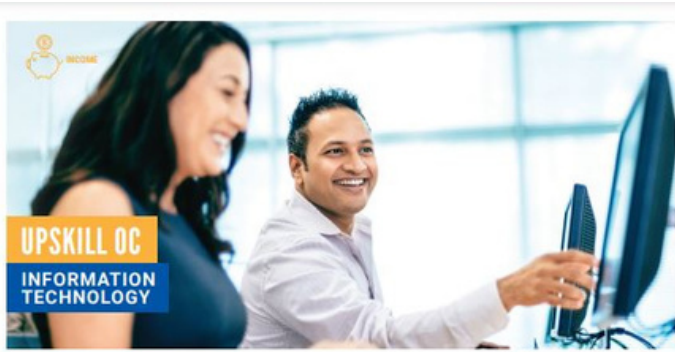
Additionally, CAP OC’s workforce development program, known as Empowered2Work, targets disadvantaged youth/ young adults in providing holistic workforce development support, training and mentorships that address issues of equity, inclusion, diversity and trauma from a healing and self-development perspective. They partner with traditional workforce development programs such as the Employee Development Department (EDD) and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) that provide soft skills, resume creation, interviewing skills, certifications, and specific job skills.

Across the agency there are various opportunities to volunteer and intern that provide individuals with hands-on work and leadership experience. Some of these opportunities include CAP OC’s partnerships with local colleges and universities to provide internship opportunities for college credit. The interns volunteer their time with a number of agency departments, with the Planning Department coordinating and helping to place such interns across the agency.

CAP OC’s Apprenticeship Program

CAP OC’s Energy and Environmental Services (EES) Department currently has a number of internship and apprenticeship programs, recruiting interns from local colleges and universities. These interns and apprentices help to support both Weatherization and Utility Assistance, including water programs that will focus on educating low-income communities on sustainability and promotion of environmental issues and policies. In 2023, 3 EES apprentices became certified Weatherization technicians.





A Collaborative Approach to Bridge the Skills Gap for Middle-Wage Jobs in Orange County

United Way's UpSkill OC workforce development program supports individuals as they move from unemployment or low-wage positions into livable wage, middle-skill positions. These jobs require more than a high school diploma but less than a four-year degree.

UpSkill OC directly connects qualified candidates to training, support and middle-skill jobs by partnering with local nonprofits and the business community. The program ensures a strong job pipeline that matches the needs of the employer with trained candidates. By focusing on two of the largest middle-skill job sectors in Orange County—healthcare and information technology—UpSkill OC reduces the gap between the number of job openings and the number of individuals ready to fill those positions.



LEVELS OF SUPPORT

UpSkill OC helps individuals navigate their employment journey from unemployment or low-wage positions to secure, middle-skill careers. Our partners provide different levels of engagement and support, each based on need and capacity.

- Individualized assessment of participants with commitment plan
- Personalized workforce development coaching
- Tailored training of all skills
- Finding and securing living wage employment

17,678

MIDDLE-SKILL JOB OPENINGS IN OC PER YEAR OVER THE NEXT DECADE



MIDDLE-SKILL JOB GROWTH IS 25% FASTER THAN OVERALL COUNTY EMPLOYMENT GROWTH



ONE FOURTH OF ALL MIDDLE-SKILL JOBS IN OC ARE IN HEALTHCARE AND IT

*Source: OC Community Indicators 2013 report



UpSkill OC - Orange County United Way

UpSkill OC is a workforce development program that provides recently homeless and housing insecure OC residents with a path to sustainable employment in middle-skill careers, particularly in the IT and Healthcare industries. Through job training programs, coaching and community-based support services, UpSkill OC bridges the gap between the growing number of job openings and newly trained candidates ready to fill middle-skill jobs with livable wages.

Source: Orange County United Way

OC Workforce Solutions Centers

OC Workforce Solutions Centers (formerly known as the One-Stop Centers) are centers that provide comprehensive employment and training services, including a mobile unit with access to computers, fax machines, copiers, and telephones. Other services include a resume distribution program, veteran transition services, a career resource library, labor market information, networking opportunities, job search workshops, on-site interviews with local employers, transferable skills information, job leads, and training programs. There are programs for youth, mature workers, people with disabilities, adults, dislocated workers and Veterans.



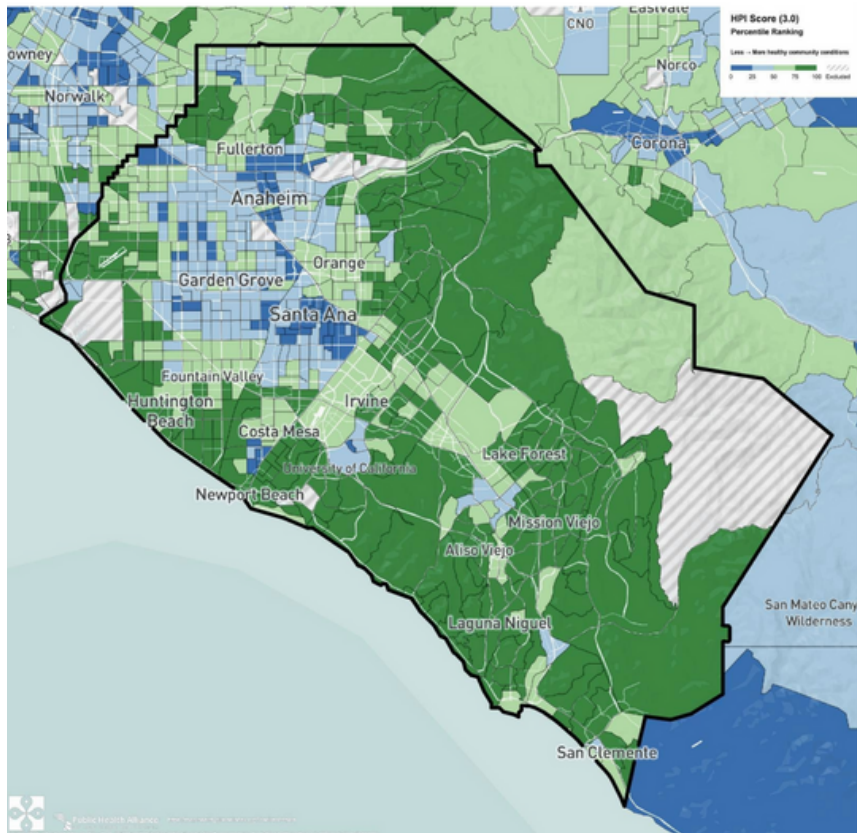
Source: OC Workforce Solutions



“Many of the strongest predictors of health and well-being fall outside of the healthcare setting. Our housing, transportation, education, workplaces, and environments are major elements that impact the physical and mental health of Americans.” - Regina Benjamin, former US Surgeon General (2009-2013).

The most significant predictors of health are education and income (which can influence a person’s lifestyle), their nutrition, and their physical and mental well-being. Since health encompasses a variety of factors, it is important to look at the overall community health of Orange County. The Healthy Places Index (HPI) serves to provide data on the health equity of communities

through its robust online data and GIS mapping tool (see map below). The HPI combines 25 community characteristics into a single index score. Those community characteristics include housing, education, access to healthcare, and much more. This powerful tool allows stakeholders and policy makers to see the social conditions that drive health and identify/address health inequities through new programs and policies.¹³⁸



Source: Public Health Alliance of Southern California
– The California Healthy Places Index (HPI)

138. Public Health Alliance of Southern California, The California Healthy Places Index (HPI) website: <https://www.healthypacesindex.org/>

With this data, the varying index scores across Orange County is evident. Most notable are the regions in blue, indicating “less healthy community conditions”, that are concentrated in cities such as Santa Ana, Garden Grove, and Anaheim.¹³⁹ In contrast, greener regions, indicating “more healthy community conditions”, are concentrated near the coast and southern region in cities such as Newport Beach, Mission Viejo, and Laguna Niguel.¹⁴⁰

Needs

The 2023 Community Needs Assessment Survey revealed that Orange County community members face a set of challenges related to the healthcare sector. The top two concerns were related to accessing and maintaining consistent access to healthcare services.

Difficulty Navigating the Healthcare System to Access Services

Navigating the healthcare system to access services was a significant challenge and presented to be the top health need of the community. 57% of the respondents expressed a degree of difficulty (slightly, moderately, or very difficult) with navigating the existing healthcare system in order to access the appropriate services they needed in their community. On top of that, seeing a doctor on a regular basis also revealed to be a significant challenge as more than 50% of respondents indicated they have experienced a level of difficulty when dealing with setting a consistent physician appointment.

These exact challenges were reinforced and discussed in community meetings. The undocumented community faced challenges in accessing medical services they needed due to their immigration status, as noted in the Monarch Community Meeting.

138. Public Health Alliance of Southern California, The California Healthy Places Index (HPI) website: <https://www.healthyplacesindex.org/>

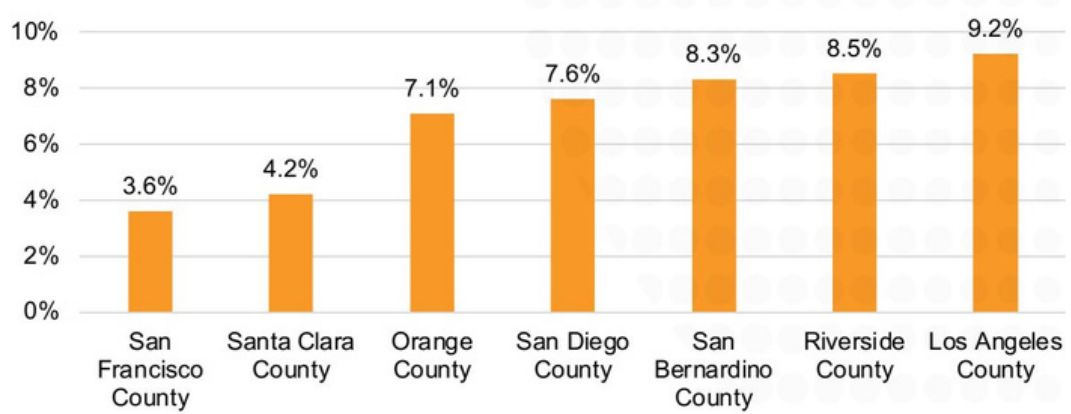
139. Public Health Alliance of Southern California, The California Healthy Places Index (HPI) website: <https://www.healthyplacesindex.org/>

140. Public Health Alliance of Southern California, The California Healthy Places Index (HPI) website: <https://www.healthyplacesindex.org/>

In this meeting the community also discussed the necessity for more bilingual care, as well as more information and guidance on how to navigate medical resources. During the Anaheim Independencia Family Resource Center (AIFRC) Community Meeting, members shared that the lack of transportation services for elderly residents was a significant barrier for them to attend their medical appointments. These external challenges restricted their ability to maintain a more comprehensive understanding of their health and limited services.

Community-level statistics reveal Orange County remains as the third lowest rate of uninsured residents when compared to other counties.¹⁴¹ Being that insurance is the gateway to appropriate health attention in the United States, having coverage plays a

UNINSURED (ALL AGES) IN ORANGE COUNTY AND PEER REGIONS, 2020



Source: 2022-2023 Orange County Community Indicators Report

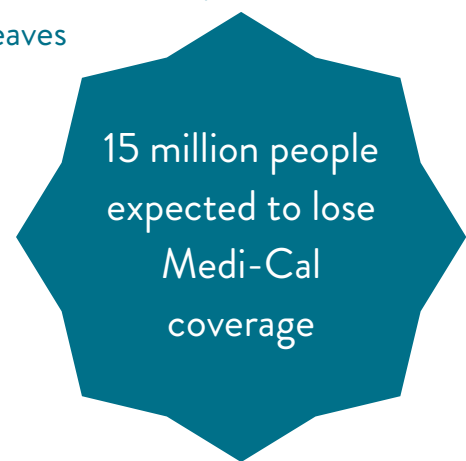
huge role in accessing a physician on a regular basis. Having access to trustworthy physicians or healthcare professionals may vary tremendously

due to the complexity of the system. Creating adjustments to make healthcare more accessible and less complicated can improve the quality of life for many. Navigating the healthcare system through a more simplified avenue can lead to higher use of existing health services and more security for individuals to prioritize their health. With a decline of Orange County residents lacking health insurance, falling from 7.6% to 7.1% in 2020, these improvements may continue to permit access to services to more people in an affordable manner.¹⁴²

141. Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators Report 2022-2023, p. 88.
 142. Orange County Business Council. Orange County Community Indicators Report 2022-2023, p. 88.

However, the decline of uninsured people does not mean the healthcare system has become easier to navigate. Recently, Medi-Cal has begun a recertification process that may leave millions of Californians at risk of losing their medical coverage.¹⁴³ As the COVID-19 public health emergency protocol comes to end, Medi-Cal has begun to reevaluate the eligibility of all recipients. If recipients do not provide the proper required information, nor reapply on time, or they have earned above the income threshold, they will lose their healthcare coverage.¹⁴⁴

During the pandemic, the recertification process was paused and not required thus navigating this system change after these past few years leaves individuals in a vulnerable position. In fact, the Biden administration predicts that nearly half of the 15 million people expected to lose coverage across the country will be “dropped due to procedural reasons such as failing to respond to requests for updated personal information.”¹⁴⁵ It is cases such as not being aware of the recertification process, or forgetting to complete the procedure that will endanger the coverage of individuals who have been under Medi-Cal for several years.¹⁴⁶



Source: OC Register

Lack of Access to Affordable Health Insurance, Medical Care, and Prescription Medicines

In the 2023 Community Needs Assessment Survey, 52% of respondents stated they had trouble in getting and maintaining health insurance that covers their needs.

143. “Millions of Californians at Risk of Losing Medi-Cal Coverage.” Orange County Register, February 2, 2023.

<https://www.ocregister.com/2023/02/02/millions-of-californians-at-risk-of-losing-medi-cal-coverage/>.

144. Pradhan, Rachana. “Why Millions on Medicaid Are at Risk of Losing Coverage in the Months Ahead.” NPR, February 14, 2022.

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2022/02/14/1080295015/why-millions-on-medicicaid-are-at-risk-of-losing-coverage-in-the-months-ahead>.

145. “Millions of Californians at Risk of Losing Medi-Cal Coverage.” Orange County Register, February 2, 2023.

<https://www.ocregister.com/2023/02/02/millions-of-californians-at-risk-of-losing-medi-cal-coverage/>.

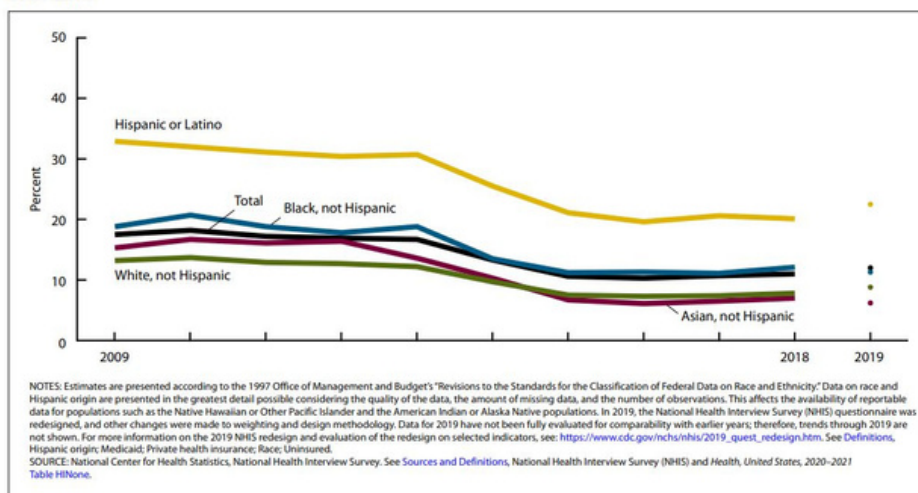
146. “Millions of Californians at Risk of Losing Medi-Cal Coverage.” Orange County Register, February 2, 2023.

<https://www.ocregister.com/2023/02/02/millions-of-californians-at-risk-of-losing-medi-cal-coverage/>

Up to 25% of those respondents stated it was either moderately difficult or very difficult to obtain appropriate health insurance. More than half of the respondents, 51%, identified difficulty in paying for prescription medicines. Given that 72% of all survey respondents indicated that COVID-19 had some level of impact (slight, moderate, or severe impact) to their health and 26% of respondents reported COVID-19 having a severe impact on their health, it is important that these medical system needs are met.

Regarding health and health insurance, during the Monarch Community Meeting, participants stated they wanted more rounded care by their provider and proper education on their insurance. Participants also expressed that they wanted mental health services to be included in their health insurance and detailed information on cost of insurance and pharmaceuticals. Similarly, in the El Modena Family Resource Center (ELMO) Community Meeting, participants stressed the importance of having health insurance to address the mental health issues children and adolescents have experienced due to the pandemic. However, it is important to note that while conducting survey outreach, respondents seemed hesitant to respond when asked about mental health. This could be due to the stigma surrounding mental health within the community which may have impacted the qualitative data collected.

Figure 4. Lack of health insurance coverage among people under age 65, by race and Hispanic origin: United States, 2009–2019



Source: Health, United States, 2020-2021: Annual Perspective
National Center for Health Statistics

For the past 26 years in the US, health insurance has become increasingly crucial when investigating early and timely patient health-seeking behaviors for medical and dental care and prescription adherence.

Although non-Hispanic Americans (including Blacks, Whites, and Asians) have lead in terms of those with medical coverage, Hispanic Americans usually have less or no health insurance.¹⁴⁷ In an investigation conducted by the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) from 1997 to 2019, late health care-seeking behaviors across multiple sociodemographic were analyzed and it was found that the most brutally vulnerable groups were consistently adults and seniors, Hispanic, people with poor education, poverty-hit populations, and uninsured Americans.¹⁴⁸ The CDC also looked at how much individuals would spend on average on health care services from 1960 to 2019 and it determined that generally throughout the decades, out-of-pocket costs and health insurance (private, Medicare, Medicaid, CHIP, etc.) costs rose dramatically and that trend is expected to continue into the future.¹⁴⁹

In Orange County, according to the US Census Bureau, in 2022, 7.5% of residents younger than 65 (of which 5.3% are disabled) do not have health insurance.¹⁵⁰ The OCHIP (OC Health Improvement Plan) found that from 2020 to 2022, about 15% of adult residents were uninsured, 10% of residents reported late or difficulty in health-seeking, and at least 33% of adults did not receive needed mental health care.¹⁵¹ This further supports the needs of maintaining health insurance that covers specific health demands and paying for necessary prescription medicines presented by the communities throughout OC.



Source: OC Health Improvement Plan 2020-2022

147. Centers for Disease Control. 2022. Health, United States, 2020-2021: Annual Perspective. cms.gov. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hus/hus20-21.pdf>

148. Centers for Disease Control. 2022. Health, United States, 2020-2021: Annual Perspective. cms.gov. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hus/hus20-21.pdf>

149. Centers for Disease Control. 2022. Health, United States, 2020-2021: Annual Perspective. cms.gov. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hus/hus20-21.pdf>

150. United States Census Bureau. 2022. Quick Facts Orange County, California. census.gov. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/orangecountycalifornia>

151. Orange County's Healthier Together. 2022. Orange County Health Improvement Plan 2020-2022. ISSUU. https://issuu.com/advanceoc/docs/oc_health_improvement_plan_2020-202_865ed257f5f016



Causes of Poverty

Increased Cost of Living Creates Greater Food Insecurity and Health Concerns

Orange County’s cost of living is higher compared to other places in California, which means that the minimum for a family household to meet its basic needs is \$76,488.¹⁵² Yet, 18% of households in Orange County have an income of less than \$35,000.¹⁵³ Families that pay more than 30% of their income towards housing are considered “cost burdened” and therefore have more difficulty affording food, medical care, and transportation.¹⁵⁴ This leaves adults and children with the threat of food and nutrition insecurity, as their health is negatively affected by foods that they can afford, such as processed meals and fast food. This can lead to serious health conditions such as cardiovascular diseases and kidney disease which is higher in Orange County compared to California averages.¹⁵⁵

Food insecurity is associated with chronic health problems including, heart disease, diabetes, hyperlipidemia, obesity, high blood pressure, and mental health issues including major depression.¹⁵⁶ The food insecurity rate in Orange County increased by 45% in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁵⁷

152. OC Health Care Agency, Public Health Services, Retrieved March 21, 2023, from <https://www.ohealthinfo.com/about-hca/public-health-services>.

153. OC Health Care Agency, Public Health Services, Retrieved March 21, 2023, from <https://www.ohealthinfo.com/about-hca/public-health-services>.

154. UCI Medical Center 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment, pg. 17

155. UCI Medical Center 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment, pg. 30

156. Report on Aging in Orange County 2022 - Presented by the Orange County Strategic Plan for Aging, pg. 42

157. Feeding America 2021 Hunger and Food Insecurity website: <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/food-insecurity>.



Condition of Poverty

Lack of Food Security Increases the Onset of a Number of Mental and Physical Health Concerns

Living in a food-insecure household means that the consistent lack of food leads to more unhealthy lifestyles because of their lower economic status which does not allow them to purchase healthy foods such as fresh fruits, vegetables, and meats.

In Orange County, more than half of children and teens (55.1%) consumed two servings of fruit a day, which is lower than the California rate of 64.5%.¹⁵⁸ Adults that were able to find fresh produce in their communities in Orange County said that only 55.7% were considered affordable.¹⁵⁹

Unfortunately, communities that have a lower socioeconomic status have higher concentrations of fast-food establishments and convenience stores with relatively high prices, resulting in higher rates of obesity and diabetes.¹⁶⁰ Food insecurity can also manifest itself in mental health issues among children, adults, and seniors, with 19.5% of adults in Orange County needing help for emotional and mental health distress, and 46.9% of people who sought treatment did not receive any.¹⁶¹ Many people do not have the mental capacity to learn about healthy food options and nutrition because they are prioritizing basic necessities such as shelter, job security, and access to food.¹⁶² This can cause anxiety and depression to develop and lead to a decline in health which disproportionately affects the health in lower socioeconomic communities compared to wealthier ones.

158. UCI Medical Center 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment, pg. 47

159. UCI Medical Center 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment, pg. 47

160. Retrieved from Let's Get Healthy California website: <https://letsgethealthy.ca.gov/goals/creating-healthy-communities/increasing-access-to-healthy-food-outlets/>.

161. UCI Medical Center 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment, pg. 49

162. UCI Medical Center 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment, pg. 48

Assets

Community Action Partnership of Orange County (CAP OC)

CAP OC partnered with CalOptima Health to provide case management and 6 CalAIM Community Supports to help improve the health of Orange County residents:

1. Enhanced Care Management (ECM) (starts Jan 1, 2024) - A new statewide Medi-Cal benefit available to select “Populations of Focus” that will address clinical and non-clinical needs of the highest-need enrollees through intensive coordination of health and health-related services. It will meet beneficiaries wherever they are – on the street, in a shelter, in their doctor's office, or at home. Beneficiaries will have a single Lead Care Manager who will coordinate care and services among the physical, behavioral, dental, developmental, and social services delivery systems, making it easier for them to get the right care at the right time.
2. Housing Transition/ Navigation Services - Helps members to find housing including but not limited to conducting a housing assessment, developing a housing support plan, searching for housing, and securing housing.
3. Housing Deposits - Helps members establish a basic household with funding for one-time costs, like a security deposit, setup fees/deposits for utilities, one-time cleaning, furniture, or other goods.
4. Housing Tenancy and Sustaining Services - Helps members stay safe and stable in a home once they are housed. This can include education on the rights and responsibilities of the tenant and landlord, coaching on developing and maintaining a relationship with the landlord, and ongoing support with activities related to household management.
5. Day Habilitation Programs - Assists members in acquiring, retaining and improving self-help, socialization and adaptive skills necessary to reside successfully in the member's natural environment.
6. Asthma Remediation - Makes physical modifications to a home environment that are necessary to ensure member health, welfare, and safety, or enables members to function in the home and remediates acute asthma episodes that could result in the need for emergency services and hospitalization.
7. Environmental Accessibility Adaptations (Home Modifications) - Makes physical adaptations to a home environment that are necessary to ensure member health, welfare, and safety, or enable members to function with greater independence in the home and avoid institutionalization.

Family Resource Centers (FRCs)

Orange County has a network of Family Resource Centers located throughout Orange County that provide essential family support services, education, and resources to families. The 16 family resource centers are distributed accordingly:

1. Anaheim (2 FRCs) - Anaheim Independencia FRC is part of CAP OC
2. Garden Grove
3. Huntington Beach
4. La Habra
5. Lake Forest
6. Newport Beach
7. Orange (2 FRCs) - El Modena FRC is part of CAP OC
8. San Juan Capistrano
9. Santa Ana (3 FRCs)
10. Stanton
11. Tustin
12. Westminster

Mobile Clinics

Mobile Clinics are staple resources that travel to communities and neighbors to provide health care. These clinics are staffed by physicians, nurses, community health workers, and other related staff to bring medical services such as primary care, prevention care (e.g., mammography), health education, health screenings, vaccination, dental care, vision, and more. Two popular mobile units through Orange County are:

- Families Together of Orange County - They have 4 mobile units that provide essential care such as medical, dental, vision, and ambulance units for the homeless, vulnerable populations, and schools in Orange County. Services such as eye exams, glasses repair, full dental services, oral health assessments, vaccines, and full family practice services are provided.
- Central City Community Health Center - They provide quality health and human services to the medically underserved and low-income populations in a culturally sensitive manner through their mobile medical clinic. Services such as prevention and medical services, health screenings, vaccines, women's health, family practice, blood work, and medications are provided.

These mobile clinics work in collaboration with local non-profit organizations and FRCs throughout the county to provide low cost and free health services.



Source: Central City Community Health Center

Health Informatics Applications

Artificial Intelligence systems work to conduct public health surveillance that benefits both researchers and health consumers. Health surveillance organizations such as the CDC can use Natural Language Processing (coding method) machine learning in the following ways:

1. Monitoring social media texts containing health information¹⁶³
2. Mapping infectious disease outbreaks¹⁶⁴
3. Assisting with patient self-symptom checking (Apple Health/Fitbit health measures)¹⁶⁵
4. Understanding health behaviors¹⁶⁶

Future solutions must consider the health of marginalized populations because research and technological applications tend to underrepresent them.¹⁶⁷ The OC Health Care Agency hosts all its health informatics applications from HCA Information Technology, which improves electronic health records and other health IT systems.



163. Borghouts, J., Huang, Y. Gibbs, S., Hopfer, S., Li, C. & Mark, G. (2023). Understanding underlying moral values and language use of COVID-19 vaccine attitudes on twitter. *PNAS nexus*, 2(3), pgad013. <https://doi.org/10.1093/pnasnexus/pgad013>; Waikar, S. (2020, April 2). Tracking COVID-19: Hunting the Virus with Technology, AI, and Analytics. Stanford University Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence. <https://hai.stanford.edu/news/tracking-covid-19-hunting-virus-technology-ai-and-analytics>

164. Buoy Health. (2023). AI Symptom Checker. Buoy. <https://www.buoyhealth.com/multi-symptom-checker>

165. Outbreaks Near Me. (2019-2023). Outbreaks Near Me. Outbreaks Near Me. <https://outbreaksnearme.org/us/enUS>

166. UC Institute for Prediction Technology. (2023). The University of California Institute for Prediction Technology (UCIPT). UC IPT. <http://predictiontechnology.ucla.edu/>

167. Gayle, D.B., Yuan, X., Dubois, E., Knight, T. (2023). Technological Innovations in Response to COVID-19: Research Agenda Considering Marginalized Populations. *Social Vulnerability to COVID-19*, 11-30. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-06897-3_2



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The community engagement domain covers a wide range of topics that affect how an individual interacts with other community members and local government leaders. This can include access to things such as computers/internet, green space, recreational facilities, and transportation. Community engagement is crucial for community members to build social networks and have a voice in their community.

Needs

Difficulty Participating and Engaging in Community Groups or Civic Events

The 2023 Community Needs Assessment indicated that 46% of survey respondents struggled with getting involved with groups, such as schools and neighborhood associations, to help improve their communities, with 19% of respondents finding this situation to be moderately or very difficult for them. Overall, with almost half of respondents indicating their desire for community involvement, it is important to ensure that they are aware of and connecting with local groups.

Of the 5 community meetings held throughout the CNA outreach timeline, the one held at CAP OC's headquarters in Garden Grove (Monarch Community Meeting) was the only meeting where community members chose community engagement as one of their top choices to discuss.



Monarch Community Meeting

The participants that attended this meeting mostly consisted of community leaders from around the county that had greater experience and knowledge with advocacy and community organizing and a greater interest in being involved with their community and improving it. They expressed a desire for greater unity and the need for leadership to successfully implement change in their community. Moreover, they also had a need to work with the local government to address needs in their community, more allocated assistance in the adolescence of youth, and overall security.

A noteworthy resource community members identified was the need for a senior center in the City of Anaheim for support and socialization. With about 12% of Anaheim residents being 65 and older, it is important to include a space for these individuals to come together as a community.¹⁶⁸ Some benefits of getting involved with community groups, such as a senior center, include a sense of belonging, diversity, and emotional support.¹⁶⁹

Benefits of Community Engagement



Source: YMCA Whittier

Participants expressed the desire for more community meetings for residents to attend. 45% of respondents found participating in civic events to be a challenge, with 20% indicating it to be moderate or very difficult.

According to participants, there is a lack of information and resources on community services which they think can be improved with more community meetings as it would allow for them to have better access to community needs. To increase community engagement and involvement, participants also highlighted offering virtual meetings as a way for busier individuals to still attend and engage.

Research shows that getting involved with the community yields positive benefits in individuals. Community involvement is important because what goes on in the community has a direct impact on its residents.¹⁷⁰ Civic engagement promotes and increases social networks, which in turn strengthens an individual's self-esteem and connection to their community.¹⁷¹ Not only does civic engagement create a sense of belonging, but it also gives individuals a sense of their identity and purpose in life.

168. US Census Bureau. (2022). <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/anaheimcitycalifornia>

169. YMCA Whittier. (2023). 5 Benefits of Joining a Strong Community. <https://ymcawhittier.org/benefits-joiningstrong-community/>

170. Nutmeg. (2023). The importance of getting involved in the community. <http://www.nutmegcommunity.org/node/155>

171. Pancer, S.M. (2023). The Participation Phenomenon: Getting Involved in Your Community Might Just Save Your Life. <https://granicus.com/blog/participation-phenomenon-getting-involved-in-your-community/>

It is important to note that further research is needed to explore the reasons why respondents find it difficult to get involved with community groups or participate in civic events and what potential barriers they may be facing. Furthermore, additional research is needed to determine volunteerism rates in Orange County.

Causes of Poverty

Access to Internet/Broadband

Since the onslaught of COVID-19, much of how individuals conduct community involvement has gone virtual. Because of the shift to online participation, it is vital for people to involve themselves in community meetings virtually. Luckily, most OC residents have access to devices that can connect to the internet. It is estimated that 97.68% of households in Orange County have one or more computing devices.¹⁷² Additionally, 99.87% of Orange County residents have access to broadband internet as of June 2021.¹⁷³ While these numbers are promising, it is important to acknowledge that there is still a significant amount of Orange County residents that do not have access to computing devices or internet services. These members may be barred from attending virtual community involvement events and therefore would not be able to voice their concerns about the community.



Language Barriers

It is estimated that 45.84% of Orange County residents over the age of 5 speak a language other than English.¹⁷⁴ Community members who cannot speak English may be dissuaded from attending community events where only English is spoken. Facing a language barrier has implications beyond community involvement. Without being able to communicate in English, community members may find difficulty with employment, financial literacy, and educational attainment.

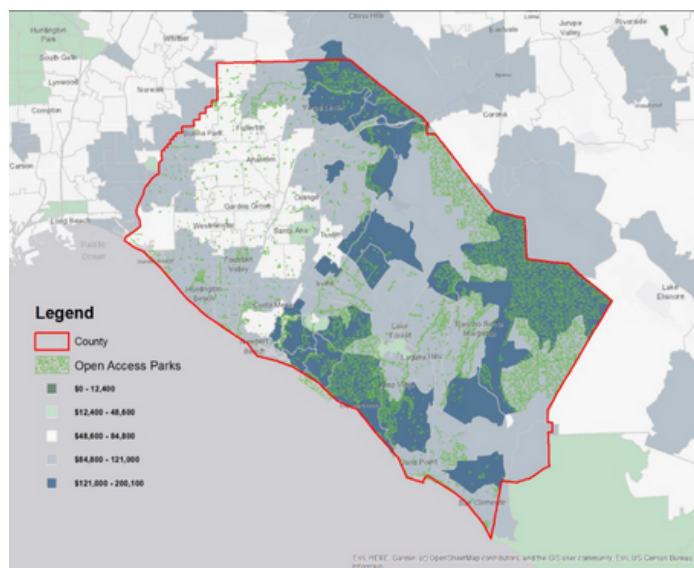
172. United States Census Bureau. American Community Survey 2021

173. United States Census Bureau. American Community Survey 2021

174. United States Census Bureau. American Community Survey 2021

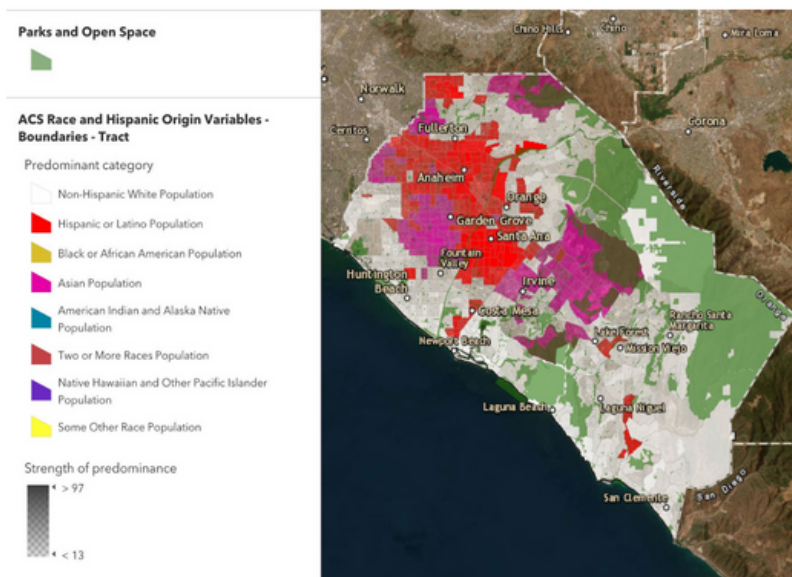
Design of the Built Environment

Access to green space or recreational facilities can be limited for some Orange County residents. Orange County has 25 urban and wilderness parks that make up 39,000 acres of land.¹⁷⁵ However, over half of these urban and wilderness parks are in Southern or Eastern Orange County. According to a study done with ArcGIS technology, Orange County’s green spaces are denser in high income, White non-Hispanic residential areas.¹⁷⁶ The maps on the page show open access greenspace distribution in Orange County according to income and race respectively. With a lack of access to green space facilities, it can be difficult for low-income residents to find opportunities to get involved with their community.



Orange County Green Spaces by Income

Source: Access to Nature in Orange County, CA by Annie Ng



Orange County Green Spaces by Race/Ethnic Origin

Source: Access to Nature in Orange County, CA by Annie Ng

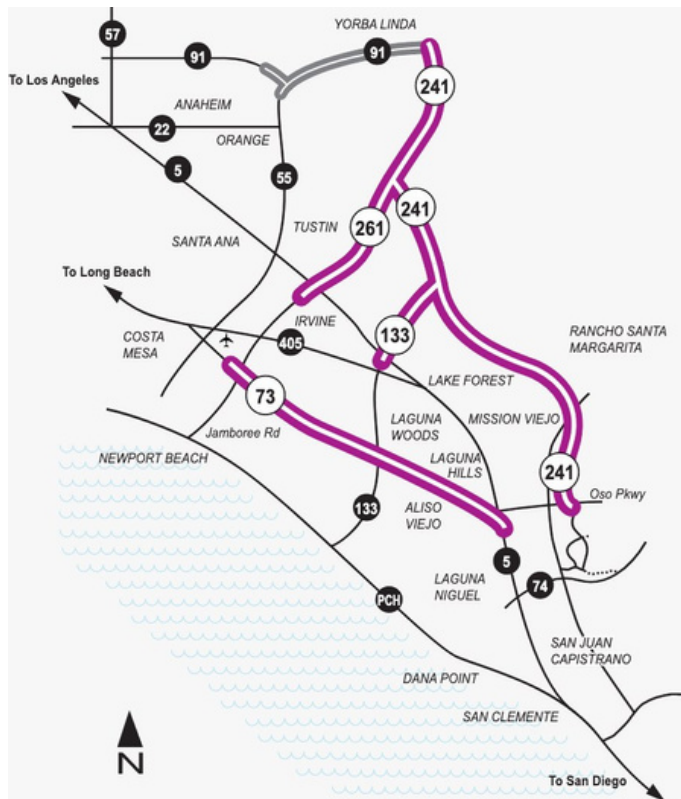
175. County of Orange (2022, January 11). REGIONAL & WILDERNESS PARKS. Oc Parks. Retrieved May 15, 2023, from <https://www.ocgov.com/residents/communities-neighborhoods/regional-wilderness-parks>

176. Ng, 2021. Retrieved from <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/0531461f5c0d47a385fb4e271f91bfbe>

Conditions of Poverty

Limited Transportation Options

Orange County offers limited transportation options. Motor vehicle transportation is prioritized over alternate modes of transportation, such as bus, light/heavy rail, or micro-mobility options (e.g., bikes, scooters, or skateboards). Orange County Transportation Authority continues to pour funds into highway improvements on the I-405 and I-5 while neglecting alternative transportation. Not having access to a motor vehicle can perpetuate difficulties when one is already in poverty. About 33.5% of Orange County residents live



Source: The Toll Roads of Orange County

in households with one or less motor vehicles.¹⁷⁷ Not having access to a motor vehicle can discourage community members from attending community events or local meetings where they would have the opportunity to voice their concerns about finances, employment, or other issues that are keeping them in poverty.

Aside from community involvement concerns, having only one motor vehicle can add stress to families who have multiple commuters. For example, a family may have one car that one family member needs to take to work every day,

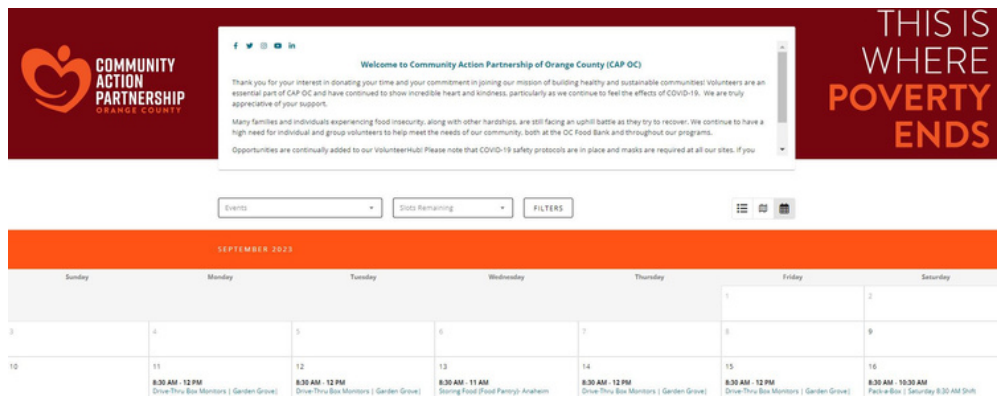
which means the rest of the family must rely on public transportation or micro-mobility to commute to their places of employment or education. With Orange County neglecting to improve alternate transportation, these modes of transportation can be slow, unreliable, or dangerous. This can prevent individuals who are forced to rely on alternative transportation from seeking jobs or educational opportunities that would be advantageous but are located further away.

177. United States Census Bureau. American Community Survey 2021

Assets

Community Action Partnership of Orange County (CAP OC)

CAP OC offers a variety of volunteer, internship, and leadership opportunities across the agency and throughout the county. Community members can sign up and view all volunteer opportunities at CAP OC on Volunteer Hub by going to <https://capoc.volunteerhub.com/>. College students can earn academic credit by interning at CAP OC such as the various Planning interns that assisted with this report.



Source: VolunteerHub

At CAP OC's FaCT (Families and Communities Together) funded centers, there are leadership opportunities for parents and youth to get involved through CEAC (Community Engagement Advisory Council) and YAC (Youth Advisory Council).

To address community engagement needs highlighted in Orange County, below is a list of organizations that empower and mobilize communities:

- Orange County Congregation Community Organization (OCCCO) - Works to empower individuals to use their voice to make positive, lasting change within low-income communities. Their work focuses on housing dignity, education justice, and immigration rights to shape equitable public policy throughout Orange County.
- OC Action - Was founded to develop political power and educate voters on issues that impact their communities in order to bring change to Orange County.
- Orange County United Way - Aims to create community-based and community led solutions that address issues OC residents face through their 50+ countywide programs.

- [Orange County Civic Engagement Table \(OCCET\)](#) - Serves low-income immigrant Latinx and Asian American communities, addressing issues surrounding immigration, finance, and racial justice. OCCET seeks to increase the quality and effectiveness of civic participation among low-income individuals and communities of color in Orange County.
- [VietRise](#) - Builds leadership and creates systemic change with working-class Vietnamese and immigrant communities in Orange County through cultural empowerment and civic engagement.
- [Resilience OC](#) - Vision is to inform and inspire communities of color to thrive and build a just future. Their programs include youth engagement, campaigns to cancel the ICE contract Santa Ana had, and leadership training.



Orange County has a plethora of nonprofit organizations that the community can get involved with, either by volunteering or attending meetings. Some of these organizations include but are not limited to:

- [Habitat for Humanity](#) - A nonprofit organization that helps people in communities around the world build homes for needy families.
- [The HUB OC](#) - A family of programs that empower, encourage and support change for individuals, families, and communities.
- [YWCA Orange County](#) - A women's organization/ nonprofit dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all through women's health programs and youth employment services.
- [Family Promise of Orange County](#) - A non-profit that aims to create a pathway of support for families experiencing housing instability and insecurity.
- [Friends of VNOC \(Volunteer Network OC\)](#) - A nonprofit organization designed to connect volunteers to OC organizations providing services to people in need through their website, user-friendly app, and social media platform.



EDUCATION

Community members of Orange County continue to experience new and existing challenges regarding education in 2023. Over the time of the pandemic, as new resources like vaccinations were presented, the transition of in-person classes for all education levels began to roll out. With this transition, it is essential to examine and identify how these changes influence the community, families, and individuals.

Needs

The needs described below explore challenges and opportunities to enable students and families to succeed at school and in higher education.

Lack of Access to Technology Affecting Computer Literacy

In the 2023 CNA Survey, 45% of respondents expressed a degree of difficulty with having access to technology which includes laptops, internet, hotspot and understanding how to use these devices. The lack of access to technology is affecting computer literacy in Orange County. Computer literacy is “the knowledge and ability to use computers and technology efficiently”.¹⁷⁸ Those individuals that are digitally literate have an advantage as studies have shown that students who are computer literate perform better academically.¹⁷⁹

Computer literacy is not only limited to students but also parents. For instance, parents shared that due to their lack of technology skills and language barriers, it was difficult when attempting to help their children.

178. Kumareshwar, Shri, et al. “A Study on the Impact of Computer Literacy on Learning with Reference to High Schools in Karnataka.” Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research (JETIR), Feb 2023, <https://www.jetir.org/papers/JETIR2302132.pdf>

179. Kumareshwar, Shri, et al. “A Study on the Impact of Computer Literacy on Learning with Reference to High Schools in Karnataka.” Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research (JETIR), Feb 2023, <https://www.jetir.org/papers/JETIR2302132.pdf>

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there was an increased demand in the use of technology and computer/ tech skills, especially as schools, employment, and services for essential needs transitioned to virtual platforms. The lack of computer literacy can affect students, parents, and families by creating barriers to academic performance, communication, access to educational and human resources and opportunities for career advancement. As COVID-19 rules and regulations lift and there is a shift back to in-person participation for learning and work, virtual platforms and skills will remain relevant. According to Coursera Chief Product Officer Shравan Goli, “the bottom line is that technology acceleration using existing and emergency technology is here to stay in higher education.”¹⁸⁰

Lack of Access to Resources for Higher Education

43% of respondents expressed a degree of difficulty with understanding how to access options for education beyond high school. Higher education includes community “junior” colleges, 4- year universities, trade schools, technical schools, vocational schools and military service or training. This plethora of options is not always evident to high school students. At the ELMO Community Meeting, participants expressed a need for more counseling or career guidance for students, especially for students that would like to go to college. Another community member shared, “Parent involvement is critical in children or student’s success”. Navigating a system without proper guidance is stressful and can create even more barriers. For instance, first generation college students do not have the opportunity to rely on the college experience of their parents nor other family members and can have difficulty finding mentors to help them.¹⁸¹

“Parent involvement is critical in children or student’s success”

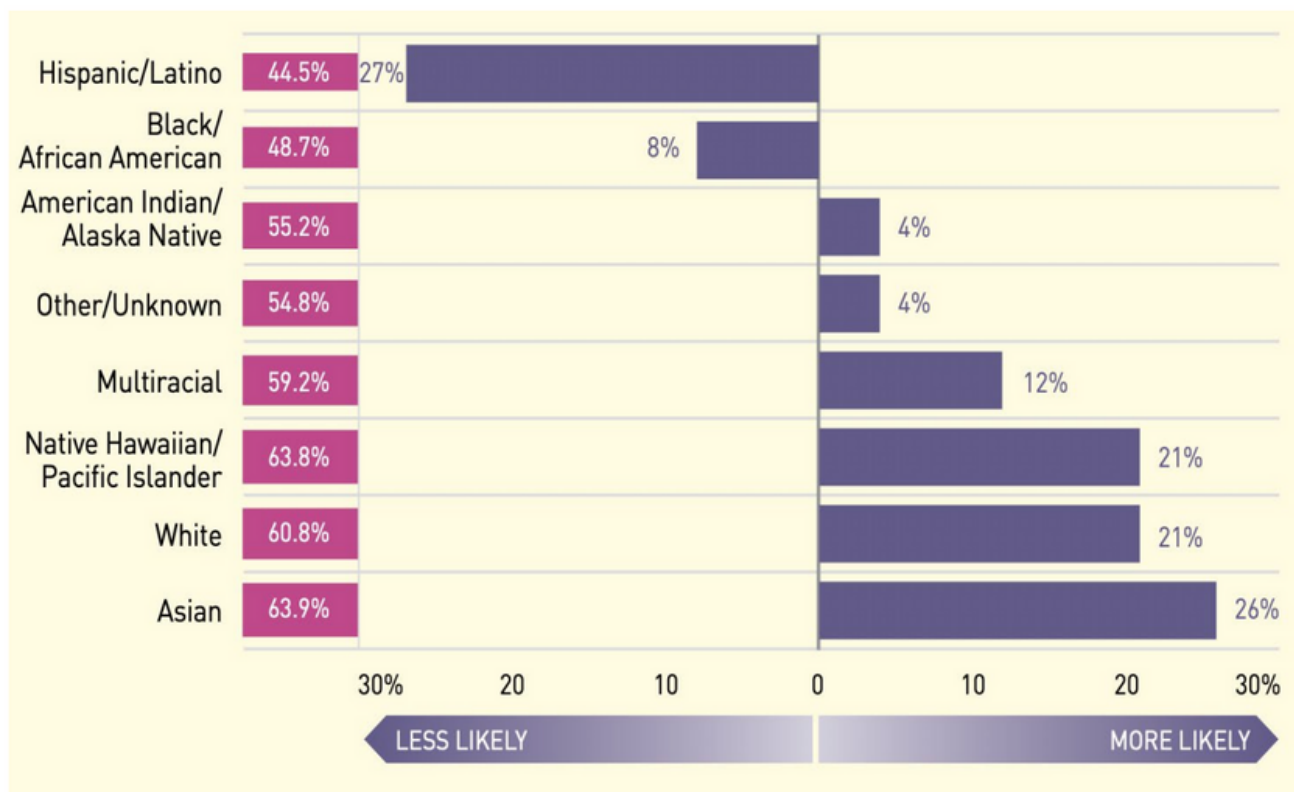
180. Teich, Annie Galvin. “Technology Acceleration Is Here to Stay in Higher Ed.” Fierce Education, 21 July 2021, www.fierceducation.com/best-practices/technology-acceleration-here-to-stay-higher-ed.

181. Khadijah Booth Watkins, Gene Beresin. “The Challenges of First-Generation College Students.” MGH Clay Center for Young Healthy Minds, 9 June 2022, www.mghclaycenter.org/parenting-concerns/young-adults/firstgeneration-college-studnets/

Cause of Poverty

Lack of Access to Educational Resources Across all Ages

Education begins at an early age before even entering kindergarten, children learn from early developmental opportunities and experiences. Without access to proper educational resources, communities are not able to reach their full academic potential. For instance, as stated by The 27th Annual Report on the Conditions of Children, the Hispanic/Latino community in Orange County had one of the lowest rates of children being ready to begin kindergarten at 44.5%.¹⁸² It is important to know that there are many social and environmental barriers that influence children’s development and preparation for school.¹⁸³



Source: The 27th Annual Report on the Conditions of Children

182. The 27th Annual Report on the conditions of children. (n.d). https://ocstudentmentalhealth.org/wpcontent/uploads/2021/12/27th-Annual-Conditions-of-Children-With-Supplemental-Tables_0.pdf

183. The 27th Annual Report on the conditions of children. (n.d). <https://ocstudentmentalhealth.org/wpcontent/uploads/2021/12/27th-Annual-Conditions-of-Ch>

Condition of Poverty

Lack of Equitable Growth

Individuals experiencing poverty are negatively impacted physically and mentally. Poverty's negative risk factors include homelessness, lack of nutrition, food insecurity, lack of access to healthcare and under-resourced schools. Furthermore, these conditions reflect the barriers that school districts face when assisting low-income communities and families. Living in poverty is a risk for poor academic achievement, school dropout and physical health issues.

High poverty schools have fewer resources, less skilled teachers, and less challenging curricula than schools in affluent communities. As schools experience poverty, students remain with lower resources and lack of equitable growth in education. All in all, education is a valuable accomplishment, and it serves a socioeconomic advantage for students and members of the community.¹⁸⁴ Students of color have remained more likely to attend high-poverty schools than White students for the past decade, of which disparity is most extreme in primary schools.

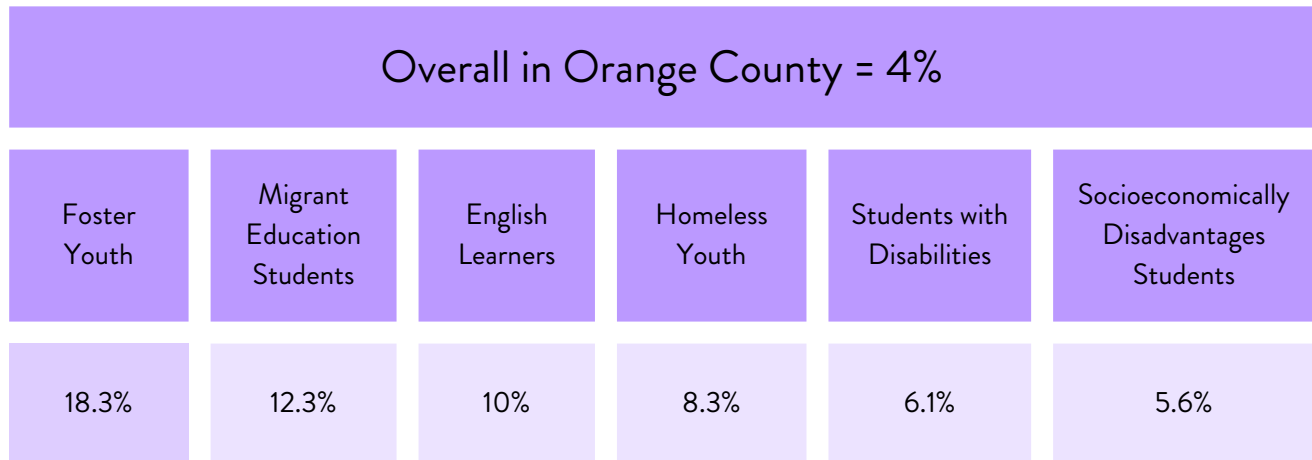


Source: National Equity Atlas

184. School poverty: National equity atlas. School poverty | National Equity Atlas. (n.d.). https://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators/School_poverty?breakdown=by-race-ethnicity

Although, Orange County’s dropout rate was 4% in 2021, lower than the state’s rate of 9.4%, dropout rates were highest among foster youth (18.3%), migrant education students (12.3%), English learners (10.0%), homeless youth (8.3%), Students with disabilities (6.1%) and socioeconomically disadvantaged students (5.6%)¹⁸⁵

Drop Out Rates



Source: The 27th Annual Report on the Conditions of Children

In 2021, of those aged 25 and over, 86.6% graduated high school or higher and 42.1% earned a bachelor’s degree or higher.¹⁸⁶ Although these numbers are high, many individuals continue to experience ongoing challenges in basic life necessities. For instance, in February 2021, California State University, Fullerton’s (CSUF) Department of Public Health staff found that 57% of CSUF students were insecure in at least one basic need. Of the 57%, 31% of all students were food insecure, 8% were homeless, 50% were housing insecure and 21% of car owners worried that they may lose transportation due to the pandemic.¹⁸⁷ These numbers identify preexisting and ongoing challenges that students at CSUF are experiencing, and potentially other students in the county may be experiencing as well.¹⁸⁸

185. The 27th Annual Report on the conditions of children. (n.d). https://ocstudentmentalhealth.org/wpcontent/uploads/2021/12/27th-Annual-Conditions-of-Children_With-Supplemental-Tables_0.pdf

186. U.S. Census Bureau quickfacts: Orange County, California. (n.d.). <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/orangecountycalifornia>

187. Nobari, T., Rusmevichientong, P., Peterson, H., Sami, M., & Koleilat. M. (2021). http://hhd.fullerton.edu/pubh/_resources/pdfs/pandemic%20on%20CSUF%20students%20basic%20needs.pdf

188. Nobari, T., Rusmevichientong, P., Peterson, H., Sami, M., & Koleilat. M. (2021). http://hhd.fullerton.edu/pubh/_resources/pdfs/pandemic%20on%20CSUF%20students%20basic%20needs.pdf

Assets

Community Action Partnership of Orange County (CAP OC)

CAP OC has 3 centers in Orange County - Anaheim Independencia Family Resource Center (Anaheim, CA), El Modena Family Resource Center (Orange, CA) and Southwest Community Center (Santa Ana, CA) - that focus on a two-generational Whole Family approach that simultaneously integrate child development, workforce development, and family development. A key program at the centers are the youth services that include various social and emotional services, after school activities, and teen activities. Youth services includes working with the Workforce Development program to expose youth to different careers and Elevate Youth to provide youth leadership development and prevention activities.

Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)

To ensure equitable access to appropriate broadband, the federal government established a benefit program called the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). The ACP focuses on helping low-income households pay for their broadband internet services and devices such as laptops or tablets.¹⁸⁹ This benefit program is run by the Federal Communications Commission. Under the ACP, recipients can receive a discount of up to \$30 per month on their internet service or up to \$75 per month for households on qualifying Tribal land.¹⁹⁰

There can also be a one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, desktop, computer, or tablet from providers participating in the benefits program.¹⁹¹



Source: Federal Communications Commission

189. Affordable Connectivity Program. Federal Communications Commission. <https://www.fcc.gov/acp>

190. Affordable Connectivity Program. Federal Communications Commission. <https://www.fcc.gov/acp>

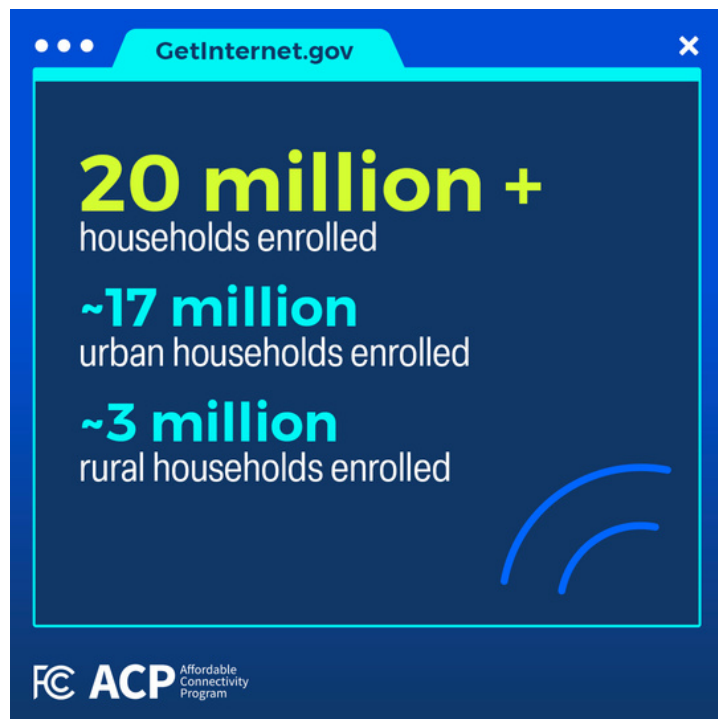
191. Affordable Connectivity Program. Federal Communications Commission. <https://www.fcc.gov/acp>

A household can become eligible for ACP if the household income is at the 200% federal poverty level or lower.¹⁹² They are also eligible if one member of the household meets at least one criteria of the following:

1. Received a Federal Pell Grant
2. Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating provider's existing low-income internet program
3. Participates in assistance programs like Free and Reduced-Price School Lunch, SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), Medicaid, Federal Public Housing Assistance, WIC (Women, Infants and Children), SSI (Supplemental Security Income), Veterans Pension or Survivor's Benefits, or Lifeline
4. Participates in one of these assistance programs and lives on Qualifying Tribal lands: Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance, Tribal TANF, Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations or Tribal Head Start (income based)¹⁹³

ACP stands as a very important and valuable program for the OC community because a large portion of residents qualify for this assistance.

There are 84,963 households receiving food stamps (SNAP), 26,00 individuals under 19 years old receiving Medicaid and 39,000 people ages 19-64 covered by Medicaid in OC.¹⁹⁴



Source: Federal Communications Commission

192. Universal Service Administrative Company. Do I Qualify? - ACP - Universal Service Administrative Company. <https://www.affordableconnectivity.gov/do-i-qualify/>

193. Universal Service Administrative Company. Do I Qualify? - ACP - Universal Service Administrative Company.

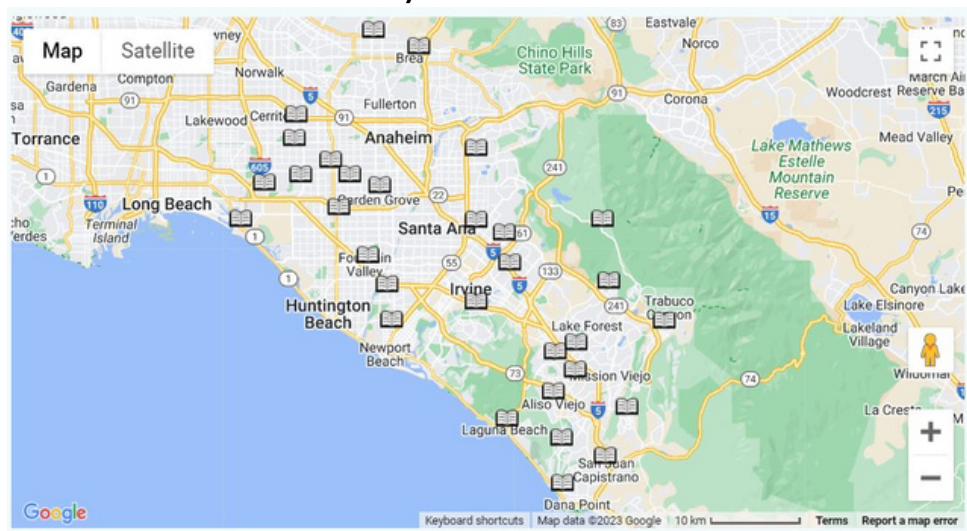
194. U.S. Census Bureau 2021. Explore Census Data. <https://data.census.gov/table?q=SNAP/Food+Stamps&t=Official+Poverty+Measure:Poverty&g=050XX00US06059&tid=ACSDT1Y2021.B22003>; U.S. Census Bureau 2021. Explore Census Data. <https://data.census.gov/table?q=MEDICAID&t=Official+Poverty+Measure:Poverty&g=050XX00US06059>

Under the California Universal Meals Program, for the 2022-23 school year, California has become the first state to implement statewide breakfast and lunch for all students, also making them eligible. It is estimated that 308,000 individuals are below the poverty level in OC.¹⁹⁵ Under such demographics, these individuals automatically qualify for ACP. The total number of households participating in ACP as of the first month of operation for Orange County was 12,322 total subscribers.¹⁹⁶ This number may continue to grow exponentially as the months go on. In 2023, CAP OC received a grant from SCAG (Southern California Association of Governments) to help bridge the digital divide and increase ACP enrollment.

Orange County Libraries

Orange County Public Libraries provide a variety of resources for different populations including children, young adults, adults, and seniors. Some services include research databases, volunteer opportunities, college and career assistance, wellness and health, and senior services. Aside from the library, computers are available onsite and online resources are accessible from any computer. Due to the events of the pandemic Orange County released options for loaner laptops at every public library in the county

Library Locations in OC



Source: OC Public Libraries

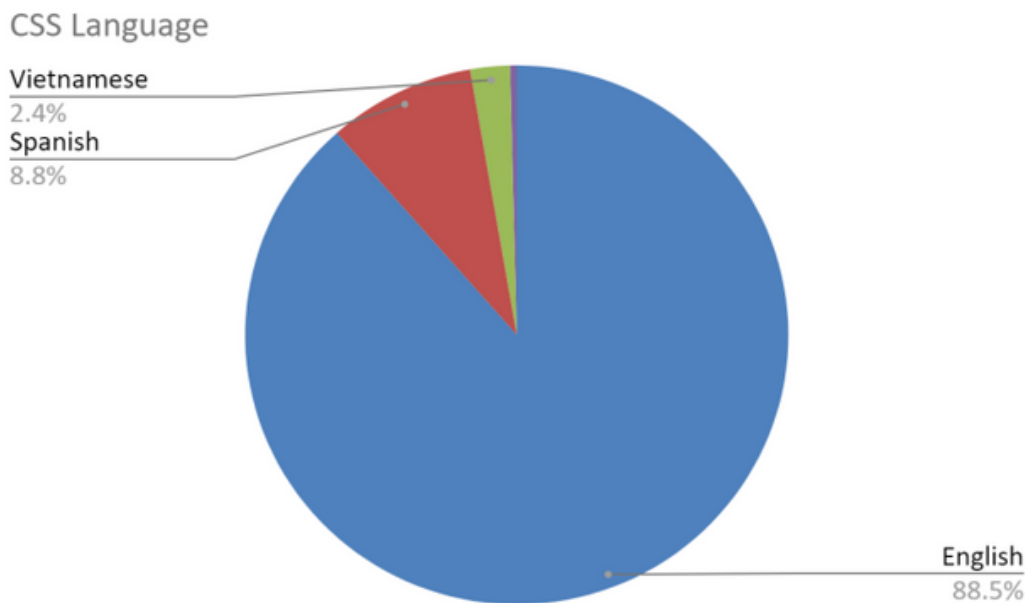
195. U.S. Census Bureau 2021. Explore Census Data. <https://data.census.gov/table?q=Orange+County,+California&t=Official+Poverty+Measure:Poverty&tid=ACST1Y 2021.S1701>

196. Universal Service Administrative Company. Emergency Broadband Benefit Program Enrollments and Claims Tracker - Universal Service Administrative Company. <https://www.usac.org/about/emergency-broadband-benefitprogram/emergency-broadband-benefit-program-enrollments-and-claims-tracker/#enrollment-by-county>

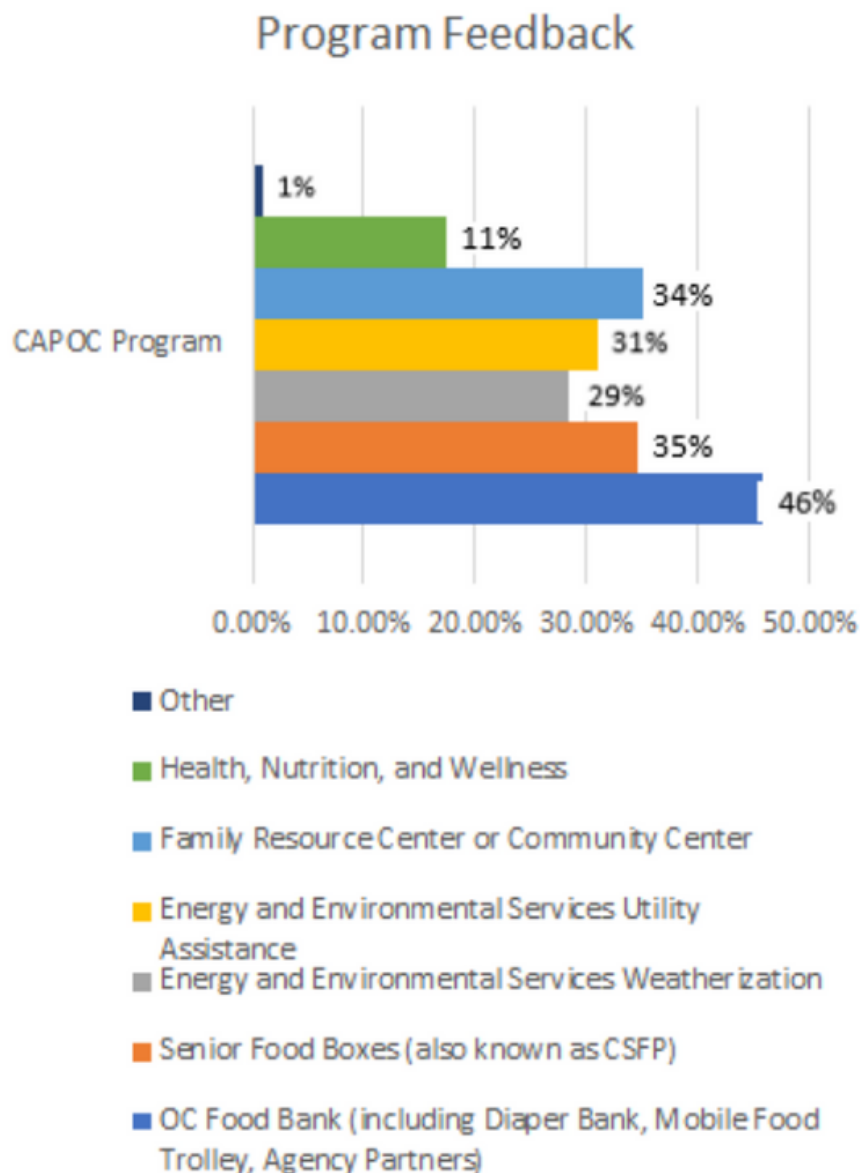
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

As part of the 2023 Community Needs Assessment, CAP OC also examined data related to customer satisfaction to understand how it can better improve its services and gauge how it is making an impact on the lives of its participants. To achieve this, CAP OC also engaged in a similar exercise to the CNA and developed a survey to collect information from our program participants. Data was collected via a Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS) and was supplemented heavily by feedback solicited from meeting participants regarding CAP OC customer satisfaction.

CAP OC planning department staff, with the assistance of interns, surveyed CAP OC participants at a total of 12 CAP OC-held events including food distributions, senior food box distributions, diaper bank distributions, events at our 3 community centers, etc. A total of 1,015 respondents completed this survey, either on a paper form or online with the assistance of planning department staff and interns. Although, the survey was available in 4 languages – English, Spanish, Vietnamese and Korean – most surveys were completed in English (88.47%), followed by Spanish (8.8%), Vietnamese (2.4%), and none in Korean.



Most respondents offered feedback for the OC Food Bank (including Diaper Bank, Mobile Food Trolley, and Agency Partners) at 46%, followed by the Senior Food Box Program at 35% and the Family Resource Center with 34%. The lowest was for Other at 1%. Respondents for ‘Other’ came from UC Irvine (interns), the UCI Fresh Program, and Orange Coast College.



Overall, respondents were very satisfied with CAP OC services. 98.72% of respondents were happy with their overall experience, stating they were grateful and praised the good service. Those that said ‘No’ complained of diaper rashes and long lines. Most respondents, 98.42%, felt that staff members and volunteers were respectful and helpful.

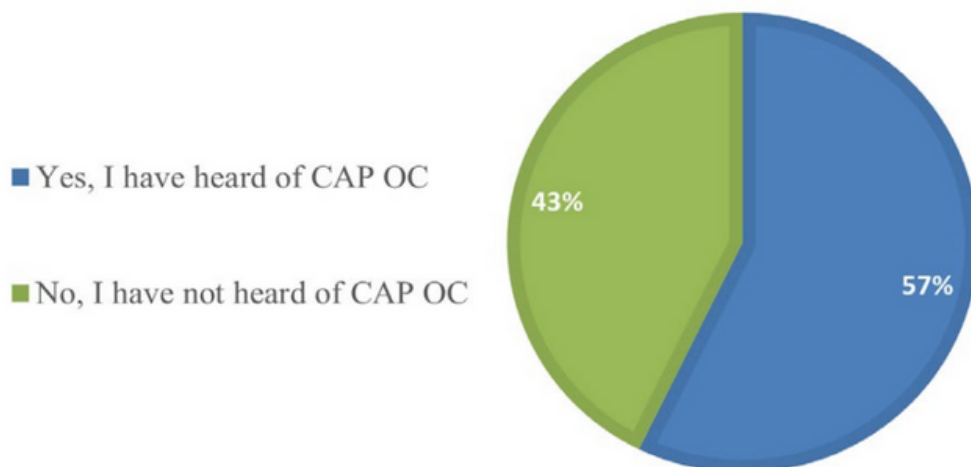
A small percentage that said ‘No’ felt that the staff was arrogant, and that service needed to improve. Those that said ‘Yes’, however, felt the staff went out of their way to help outside of their duties and were amazing overall. Staff employees Elva and Dao were specifically praised for their fantastic job!

84.63% of respondents found the building(s) to be clean and well organized, while 13.5% of respondents did not visit a building. Those that responded ‘No’ felt the building was accessible but not clean. 98.13% of respondents felt their needs were met and were satisfied with the services. Those that did not have their needs met lamented the lack of vegetables, diapers causing rashes, and that some food was expired.

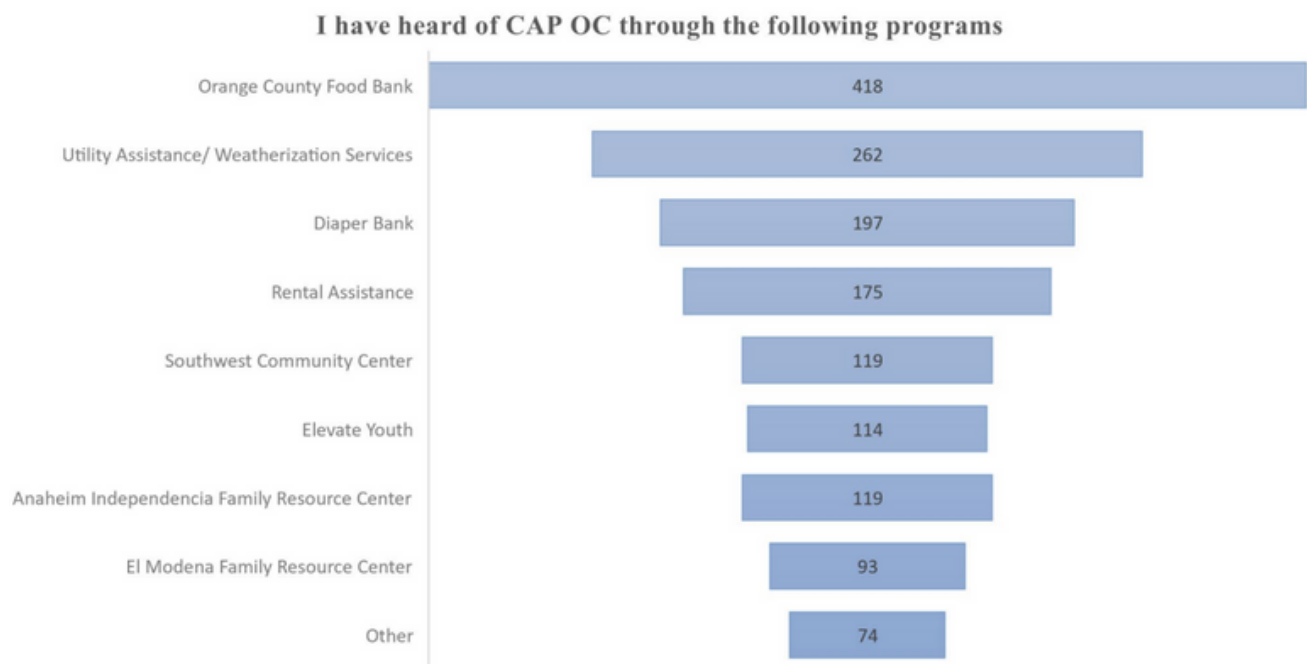
Additionally, many customers, 80.3%, were referred to other services offered by CAP OC, thus demonstrating great cross-departmental interaction. To eliminate poverty, CAP OC offers services to all members of the community and a measurable indicator of its success begins with people being aware of the resources offered.

In the 2023 CNA survey, respondents were asked if they had heard of CAP OC. Of the 1221 residents surveyed, 699 had previously heard of CAP OC, while the other 522 had not. This is a small drop, of 8%, from 2021 where 65% of respondents had heard of CAP OC.

HAVE YOU HEARD OF COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP OF ORANGE COUNTY (CAP OC)?



Amongst communities that were aware of our services, the most well-known was the Orange County Food Bank with 418 residents reporting they had heard of the program before, which is what was expected as the Food Bank has a big reputation in OC. During outreach events at CAP OC events, it was noted that while many respondents were evidently receiving CAP OC services, they were not aware the service they were receiving was from CAP OC.



The second most well-known program was Utility Assistance/ Weatherization Services with 262 of residents being aware of the services prior to being surveyed. The least known program was the El Modena Family Resource Center with only 93 residents. Aside from the programs listed in the survey, 74 residents reported having heard of CAP OC through “Other” mediums. The “Other” section consisted of individuals who were partners, staff, volunteers/ interns, family and friends, or had heard of CAP OC through the media.





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