

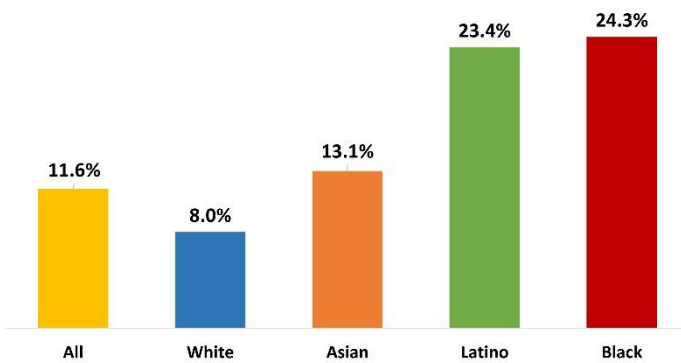
Facts and Stats 2018: U.S. Census Data Analysis on Poverty and Income

Rhode Island's overall poverty rate in 2017 continued to be the highest in New England with more than one in nine (11.6%) Rhode Islanders struggling to afford basic necessities, according to new data released by the US Census Bureau. The poverty level for a single adult was \$12,140/year in 2017 and \$24,600 for a family of 4. While Rhode Island's rate is lower than the national rate of 13.4% it is unacceptable that nearly 120,000 residents live in poverty and one in four residents have income below twice the poverty level, generally considered to be the amount required to meet basic needs. (The 11.6% percent poverty rate for 2017 compares to a 12.8% poverty rate for 2016 although the two rates are not far enough apart to indicate a statistically significant decline).

State	Poverty Rate	Poverty rank among all states (1 = lowest poverty rate)
United States	13.4%	
Rhode Island	11.6%	20
Vermont	11.3%	17
Maine	11.1%	15
Massachusetts	10.5%	10
Connecticut	9.6%	5
New Hampshire	7.7%	1

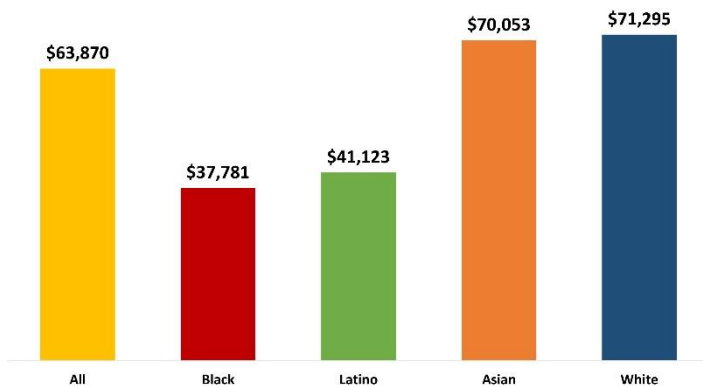
Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-yr data, 2017. Table B17001

Black and Latino poverty rates triple the rate for non-Hispanic White Rhode Islanders



Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-yr data, 2017. Tables B17001, B17001B, B17001H, B17001I, S1703.

Black and Latino median household incomes trail Asian and White medians



Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017. Tables B19013, B, D, H, I.

The data also show that Rhode Island's communities of color were much more likely to live in poverty with poverty rates for Blacks and Latinos three times those of Whites.

Rhode Island's overall median income (\$63,870) was higher than the national average (\$60,336) as well as the median incomes in Vermont and Maine. While ranking 15th in the nation, we are 4th in New England, trailing Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

The overall median income masks the hurdles faced by communities of color in our state. Latino (\$41,123) and Black (\$37,781) median incomes trail overall median income by a wide margin, while the median income in households headed by non-Hispanic White (\$71,295) and Asian¹ Rhode Islanders (\$70,053) was much higher than the statewide average.

One strategy to boost median income for workers of color is to increase the minimum wage, over time, to \$15/hr. Over half of Black and Latino workers (51% Black/54% Latino) would benefit from such a wage increase.

¹ The sample size in the American Community Survey is not sufficient to know how sub-populations of the Asian community are faring. We know from other recent studies that Southeast Asian Rhode Islanders normally do not share in the relative prosperity of the overall Asian community.