

September 2022 Census Days – Poverty & Income

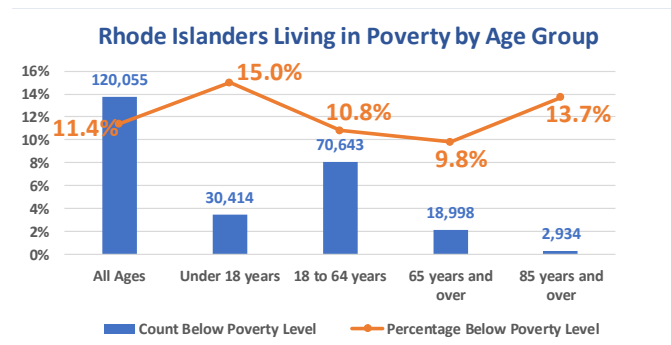
The Official Poverty Measure (OPM) rate in Rhode Island in 2021 increased from 2019, going from 10.8% to 11.4%. For the Official Poverty Measure, Rhode Island has the 5th highest rate in New England and ranks 20th best nationally for 2021 (1-year data estimates for 2020 were not considered reliable by the Census Bureau).

United States & New England States	Poverty Rate (1-Year Estimate)	Poverty rank among all states (1 = lowest poverty rate)
United States	12.8%	
New Hampshire	7.2%	1
Connecticut	10.1%	6
Vermont	10.3%	9
Massachusetts	10.4%	11
Rhode Island	11.4%	20
Maine	11.5%	21

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-yr data, 2021, Table B17001.

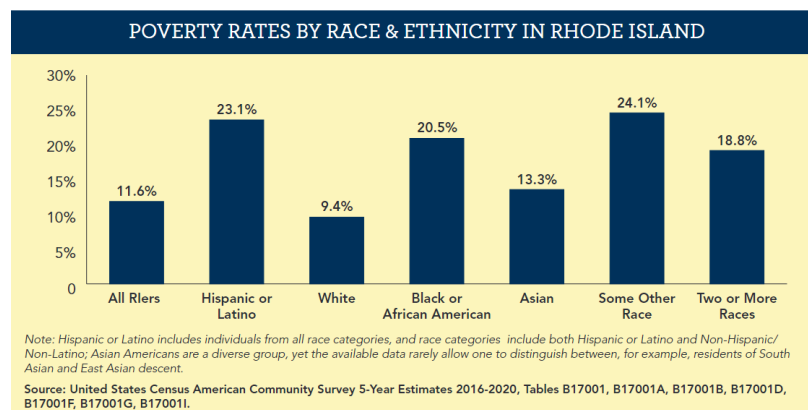
Although the Official Poverty Measure rate increased, the Supplemental Poverty Measure rate decreased (*see box on next page*), telling an important story of how government investments and assistance helped reduce poverty in Rhode Island.

Poverty is not distributed evenly, whether by age or by race and ethnicity. Children are more likely than adults to live in poverty (and although adults ages 65 and older are less likely to live in poverty than younger adults, those ages 85 and older are more likely to live in poverty):



Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-yr data, 2021, Tables S1701, B17020.

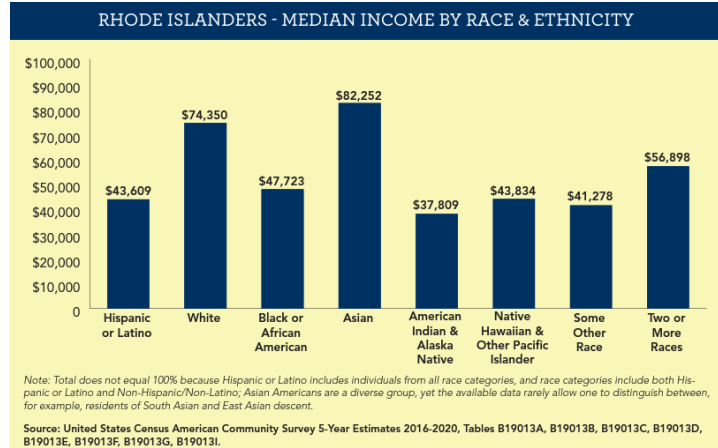
Black Rhode Islanders are more than twice as likely as White Rhode Islanders to be in poverty, and compared with all Rhode Islanders, Latino Rhode Islanders are about twice as likely to be in poverty, as 5-year Census estimates show:



Rhode Island's median income dropped by \$1,414 from 2019 to 2021 (in 2021 dollars), and the state ranks 4th best in New England and 16th best nationally. As with poverty rates, median income varies by race and ethnicity.

United States & New England States	Median Household Income	Rank among all states (1 = highest median income)
United States	\$ 69,717	
Massachusetts	\$ 89,645	3
New Hampshire	\$ 88,465	5
Connecticut	\$ 83,771	9
Rhode Island	\$ 74,008	16
Vermont	\$ 72,431	17
Maine	\$ 64,767	33

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-yr data, 2021, Table B19013.



The Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM)

The Official Poverty Measure (OPM) was developed in the 1960s and is based solely on food costs. The more recent Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM), unlike the official measure, takes into account federal and state government investments and other factors including: the Child Tax Credit (CTC); the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC); Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits; stimulus payments; rental assistance; non-cash benefits; state and federal income taxes paid; payroll taxes; and child care and healthcare expenses.

As newly-released Census data demonstrate, the difference between the SPM and the OPM for 2021 shows that measures such as the 2021 boost in the federal CTC can make a huge difference in moving and keeping people out of poverty.

United States & Rhode Island	Official Poverty Rate (3-Year Average 2019-2021)	Supplemental Poverty Rate (3-Year Average 2019-2021)	Difference Between Official and Supplemental Poverty Rates
United States	11.2%	9.6%	1.6%
Rhode Island	9.0%	6.0%	3.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2020 to 2022 Annual Social and Economic Supplements (CPS ASEC).

Notes: For more data on poverty, income, and general demographics, see the Appendix to EPI's 2022 Candidate Briefing Book, http://www.economicprogressri.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/2022_CBB_EPI_web_FINAL-1.pdf.

Not all Census data, even seemingly on the same topic, come from the same sources and surveys. For example, the comparison between the OPM and SPM come from the Current Population Survey and report averages over 3 years, whereas the 1-year state-level estimates and comparisons for 2021 come from the much larger American Community Survey. Although larger, the ACS is still not large enough to provide reliable 1-year estimates for race and ethnicity breakouts of the data, so we use the 5-year estimates or averages for this. The 5-year estimates are released a few months after the 1-year estimates, so are for 2016-2020 and do not include 2021 data. EPI will update the race and ethnicity breakouts for 2017-2021 when they are released later this year.