How has the number of ALICE households changed over time?

ALICE is an acronym for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed — households that earn more than the Federal Poverty Level, but less than the basic cost of living for the county (the ALICE Threshold). Combined, the number of ALICE and poverty-level households equals the total population struggling to afford basic needs. The number of households below the ALICE Threshold changes over time; households move in and out of poverty and ALICE status as their circumstances improve or worsen. The recovery, which started in 2010, has been uneven across the state. Conditions have improved for some families, but with rising costs, many still find themselves struggling.

What types of households are struggling?

The way Americans live is changing. There are more different family and living combinations than ever before, including more adults living alone, with roommates, or with their parents. Families with children are changing: There are more non-married cohabiting parents, same-sex parents, and blended families with remarried parents. The number of senior households is also increasing. Yet all types of households continue to struggle: ALICE and poverty-level households exist across all of these living arrangements.
Why do so many households struggle?

The cost of living continues to increase…
The Household Survival Budget reflects the bare minimum that a household needs to live and work today. It does not include savings for emergencies or future goals like college. Family costs increased by 22 percent statewide from 2010 to 2016.

...and wages lag behind
Employment and wages vary by location and firm size, but across the state, wages are still often less than the cost of the family Household Survival Budget.

Private-Sector Employment by Firm Size With Average Annual Wages, 2016

![Bar chart showing employment by firm size](image)


Note: Municipal-level data is 1 or 5-year averages for Places (P) and County Subdivisions (SD), which include Census Designated Places (CDPs). Totals do not match county-level numbers because some places cross county borders, geographies may overlap, data is not available for the smallest towns, and county-level data is often 1-year estimates.