

Priced out of affordable housing

HUD defines “extremely low income” as 30% of area median income (AMI)

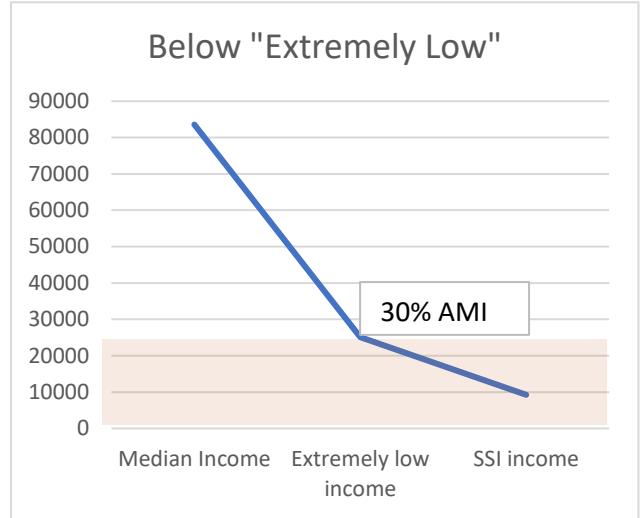
- In 2017, median income for King County was \$83,571
- That means \$25,071 was “extremely low income”

But people who rely on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) don’t even reach that bar

- In King County, an adult surviving on SSI receives \$9,252 – or 11% AMI

The numbers vary depending on where in the state you live, but statewide the median income was \$66,174. This means:

- \$19,852 is “extremely low income” statewide
- An adult surviving on SSI is at 14% AMI

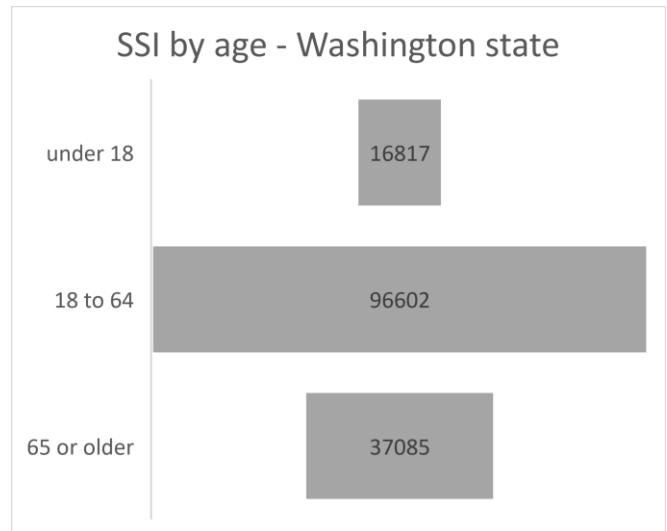
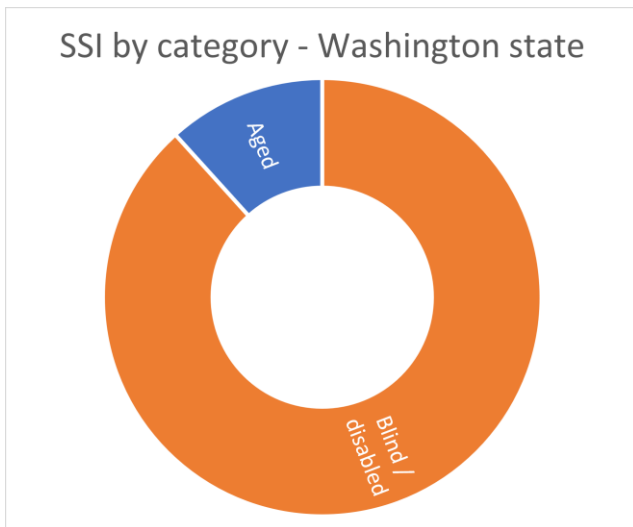


SOURCES: U.S. Census, SSA 2017

In 2017, there were **150,504** individuals in Washington state receiving SSI.

What does it mean to be on SSI?

- Your disability impacts your ability to be employed.
- People on SSI are not temporarily housing unstable; they are permanently housing unstable



SOURCE: SSA 2017

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Set aside units for people who are living on incomes below 30% AMI. Increase vouchers for this population
- Develop guidelines for accessibility that factor in issues such as light and noise considerations, or safety barriers near roads, as well as the more typical considerations around wheelchair access

WHAT WE ARE SEEING: The Arc of King County is a non-profit serving people with developmental disabilities across their lifespan; typically, we engage in human services, health care and education. But housing is now the top issue people with disabilities contact us about and is in the top five issues that families contact us about.



Not vulnerable enough?

There are different tools in play used to assess vulnerability and prioritize people for housing. We have found that people with developmental disabilities often score low on the tool used by King County – the VI-SPDAT (Vulnerability Index - Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool). This means they are not prioritized for housing or stability services offered by King County.

This is even though people with developmental disabilities are often extremely low income; need specific and accessible living quarters; have challenges with communication and problem-solving skills; often have co-occurring mental health disorders or other complex medical requirements; are more likely to experience abuse and exploitation; are more likely to be negatively affected by trauma; and require more support to stabilize.

We asked the Downtown Emergency Service Center in Seattle to check for people with developmental disabilities who had both a VI-SPDAT score (the county tool) and a score using their in-house assessment, the DESC Vulnerability Assessment Tool.

- Since 2016, only 13 percent of people with developmental disabilities who would have been prioritized for housing under the DESC tool were prioritized under the King County tool.

MORE THAN HALF REPORT A DISABILITY: In King County’s 2018 Point in Time Count of people experiencing homelessness:

- 53 percent identified as having a disability – this was up from 50 percent in 2017. The overall rate of people with disabilities in the US population is about 13%, according to the American Community Survey
- **Chronic homelessness increased 28 percent** between 2017 and 2018. “Chronic homelessness” in these counts means disability + long or repeated bouts of homelessness. Disability is part of the definition
- 7 out of 10 people experiencing chronic homelessness were living unsheltered

STATE DOES NOT DISAGGREGATE FOR DISABILITY. At the state level, the Department of Commerce reports homelessness counts by gender, ethnicity and race. It does not breakout disability.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Gather consistent disability data in the local point in time surveys and have Commerce report out**
- Assess vulnerability tools in play – who is being under-assessed?
- **Reform the eviction process**
- Enforce anti-discrimination law
- **Increase options for supportive shared living, for instance by creating regulations for adult family homes tailored to people with developmental disabilities** under age 65
- Ensure shelters are accessible to people with a variety of disabilities
- Ensure housing options do not segregate people with disabilities or increase potential for abuse (For instance, no more than 6 adults in a group home or adult family home setting)
- Update labor law to make it easier for people with disabilities to earn higher incomes (For instance, lift the income limit for Healthcare for Workers with Disabilities, the state’s Medicaid buy-in program; end subminimum wage for people with disabilities)

