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DC Poverty Demographics

Over the past decade, the District has seen job growth, a boom in the real estate market, and improvement of economic conditions by a number of measures. But poverty is still a reality for many of DC's residents. According to estimates using Census Bureau data, one in five District residents lived in poverty, and almost one-fourth of District residents were below 125 percent of poverty, during the time period from 2005 to 2007.

The poverty threshold is set by the federal government and varies by family size. For a family of four, the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) in 2006 equaled roughly \$20,000.

Poverty levels in the District can be broken down by demographics such as age, race/ethnicity, and work status. These distinctions reveal the variations in poverty among different groups of DC residents. (See the table on the following page.) For example:

- Children under the age of 18 are much more likely to live below the poverty level than adults — 29 percent vs. 16 percent.
- Just over eight percent of white District residents lived below poverty, compared with 25 percent of black District residents and 16 percent of Hispanic residents.
- DC has an extremely high rate of poverty among female-headed households – 32 percent.
- DC residents with low levels of educational attainment are more likely to be poor than their counterparts with high school or college degrees. Just over five percent of residents with a bachelor's degree or higher lived below the poverty level, compared to 31.5 percent who did not have a high school diploma or equivalent.

DC Poverty Demographics (2005-2007 Estimates)				
Demographic	Population size	Less than 50% FPL	Less than 100% FPL	Less than 125% FPL
District-wide	555,366	10.3%	18.8%	23.1%
Age				
Children under 18	112,239	16.6%	29.3%	35%
Adults 18 to 64 years	376,519	9.4%	16.3%	19.9%
Adults 65 years and older	66,608	4.2%	15.6%	21.1%
Race/Ethnicity				
Black	313,146	14%	25.4%	31%
White (non-Hispanic)	169,050	5%	8.4%	10.1%
Hispanic/Latino	47,370	6.8%	16.4%	22.7%
Living Arrangement				
Family households	363,788	9.6%	18.3%	22.7%
Married couple	169,570	1.8%	5.6%	8.7%
Female household/no husband present	160,081	18.6%	32.4%	37.6%
Other living arrangement	191,578	11.4%	19.8%	23.8%
Educational Attainment				
<i>Total population 25 years and older</i>	<i>388,908</i>	<i>7.4%</i>	<i>14.3%</i>	<i>17.7%</i>
Less than high-school degree	60,107	13.7%	31.5%	39.4%
High school degree (or equivalent)	82,491	11%	21.2%	26.6%
Some college or associate's degree	67,142	8.2%	14.8%	18.4%
Bachelor's degree or higher	179,168	3.3%	5.2%	6.2%
Disability Status				
With any disability	75,547	13.8%	32.4%	39.7%
Without disability	443,191	9%	16%	19.5%
Work Status				
<i>Total population aged 16 to 64</i>	<i>388,692</i>	<i>9.6%</i>	<i>16.7%</i>	<i>20.4%</i>
Worked full-time, year-round	193,347	0.2%	1.5%	3.1%
Worked less than full-time, year-round	116,156	11.9%	22.1%	27.4%
Did not work	79,189	29.3%	46%	52.2%
Citizenship Status				
Native	483,052	10.7%	19.5%	23.7%
Foreign Born	72,314	7.1%	142.0%	18.8%
Naturalized Citizen	24,454	4.8%	13.6%	15.4%
Source: US Census Bureau 2005-2007 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates				