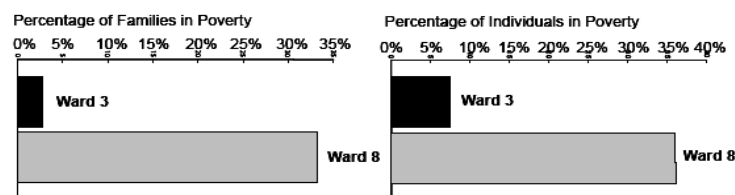


POVERTY IN WASHINGTON, D.C.



So Others Might Eat

- **Nearly 1 out of 5 of D.C. residents lives at or below the poverty level.** This represents an increase of nearly one-third since 1999–2000.¹ In 2005, the D.C. poverty rate was 19.8%—the 3rd highest of any jurisdiction in the nation. The poverty rate in Maryland was then 8.2%, in Virginia 10% and in the U.S. as a whole 13.3%.²
- **D.C. has the highest rate of children in poverty of any jurisdiction in the U.S.** 33% of D.C. children live in families with incomes below the official poverty level, as compared to 10% in Maryland, 12% in Virginia and 18% in the U.S. as a whole.³
- **Estimated costs of living in D.C. are three times the official poverty level.** In 2006, it cost a family of two parents with two children an estimated \$63,192 a year for just the basic costs of living in D.C.⁴ The poverty level for that family then was \$20,000.⁵ The family would have had to spend about \$14,700 a year to rent a modest two bedroom apartment, leaving them \$5,300 for all other living expenses.⁶
- **Between 1999 and 2005, the basic living costs for a single-parent D.C. family with two young children increased by 26%.** Working full time at what was then the D.C. minimum wage, this family could afford only 36% of its basic expenses.⁷
- **The income gap between high-wage and low-wage D.C. households is at an all-time time high.⁸** This gap is reflected in wide disparities among local communities. 33.1% of families and 36% of individuals in Ward 8 live in poverty, as compared to only 2.7% of families and 7.4% of individuals in Ward 3.⁹



- **Poverty is linked to numerous social problems that affect the entire community.** Rates of poor health, violence, low school performance and teen parenthood are all higher in neighborhoods with high poverty levels. In 2000, 34% of violent crimes in D.C. occurred in the poorest fifth of D.C. neighborhoods, as compared to 6% in the top fifth.¹⁰

¹ DC Fiscal Policy Institute, *DC's Two Economies: Many Residents Falling Behind Despite the City's Revitalization* (October 2007).

² Anna E. Casey Foundation, Kids Count Data Center, Children in Poverty (100%) Percent: 2006.

³ National Center for Children in Poverty, *Low-Income Children in the United States: National and State Trend Data, 1995-2005*.

⁴ Economic Policy Institute, *Guide to Creating a Basic Family Budget* (2006).

⁵ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, HHS Poverty Guidelines.

⁶ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2006 Fair Market Rents.

⁷ Wider Opportunities for Women, *The Self-Sufficiency Standard for the Washington DC Metropolitan Area* (2005)

⁸ DC Fiscal Policy Institute, *DC's Two Economies*.

⁹ D.C. Office of Planning State Data Center, *Income and Poverty in the District of Columbia: 1990-2004* (2005).

¹⁰ DC Fiscal Policy Institute, *Disparities in the District: Poverty is Major Cause of Social Problems in the District of Columbia* (November 2006).