



2026 STATE OF HOMELESSNESS REPORT

Wichita & Sedgwick County



UNITED WAY
of the Plains



COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS

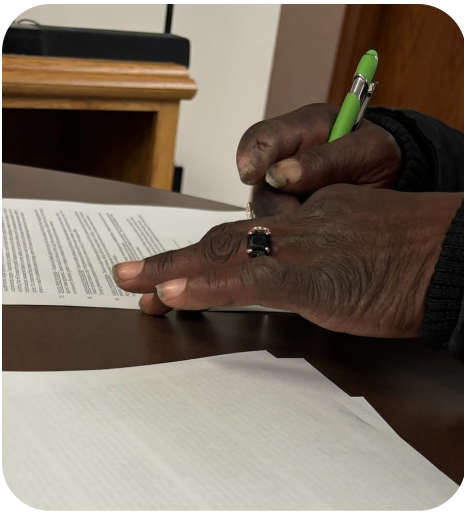
The **Coalition to End Homelessness in Wichita/Sedgwick County** serves as the local response network for homelessness, bringing partners together around a shared goal: ensuring everyone has a safe place to call home. Led by United Way of the Plains and guided by a 16-member board representing service providers, local government, businesses, and individuals with lived experience, the Coalition aligns housing, support services, and community resources to help our unhoused neighbors move toward stability.

Supported in part by a \$3 million grant from the federal Continuum of Care program, this work is carried out by 25 member agencies to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring. Through coordinated entry, housing navigation, data-informed decision-making, and strategic funding, the Coalition is helping Sedgwick County move toward functional zero homelessness, when more people are housed than are becoming homeless.

CONTINUUM OF CARE

The Coalition facilitates a coordinated pathway to permanent housing through a network of community partners committed to making homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring for all our neighbors.





OUR IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

INFLOW

3,577 individuals who were homeless, both first time and returning

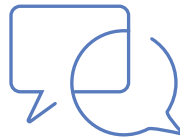
OUTFLOW

3,358 people who were housed or exited
Includes exits to temporary destinations, such as family, friends, hospitals, and jail.



5,082

individuals were served 84,079 times by Coalition members through emergency shelter, transitional housing, and housing services.



565

individuals in priority populations (veterans, youth, unsheltered and chronic) were assessed through case conferencing, a weekly multi-agency meeting to collaborate to remove barriers to housing.



51

average days homeless. *Nationally, people were homeless for an average of 176 days in 2024.*



PRIORITY POPULATION: VETERANS

INFLOW

197

veterans were homeless, both first time and returning.

OUTFLOW

205

veterans were housed or exited.
Includes exits to temporary destinations, such as family, friends, hospitals, and jail.



1,360

individuals exited homelessness to positive housing outcomes.



82%

people housed by the Coalition keep their housing two years after support ends.

Quality Data Recognition



In 2026, Community Solutions, a national nonprofit helping communities achieve and sustain a measurable reduction in homelessness, recognized the Coalition to End Homelessness in Wichita/Sedgwick County for achieving quality data for single adults. This milestone recognizes the processes and systems the Coalition has developed to identify at least 90% of individuals experiencing homelessness in Sedgwick County by name and need, the first step to ending their homelessness.

OUR MOST VULNERABLE NEIGHBORS

Data is revealing specific groups of our neighbors who are facing greater challenges that increase their risk for homelessness.

>> ALICE HOUSEHOLDS

ALICE is an acronym to define and understand the struggles of households with income above the Federal Poverty Level, but less than the cost of necessities. *Data included below reflects 2024, the most recent reporting period.*



ASSET LIMITED
No safety net in times of crisis



INCOME CONSTRAINED
Income falls short of essentials

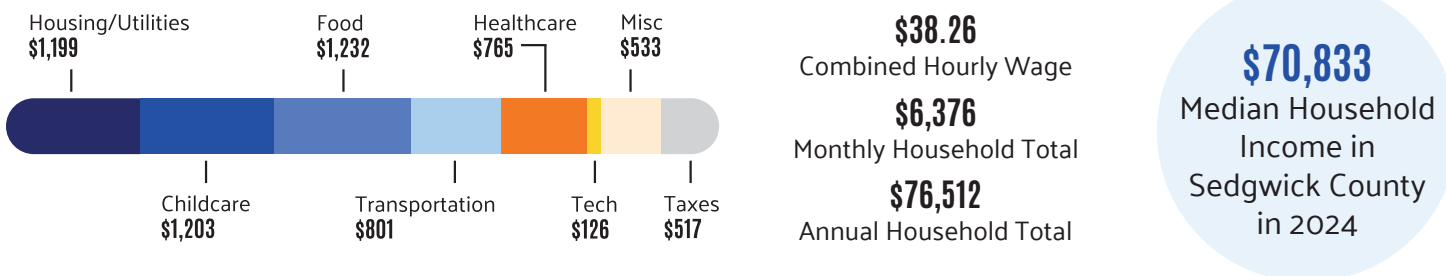


EMPLOYED
Working, yet not earning enough

ALICE workers perform jobs that are critical to our community: cashiers, cleaners, truck drivers, health aids, and many others. When funds run short, they are forced to make impossible choices, such as deciding between quality child care or paying the rent, filling a prescription or fixing the car.

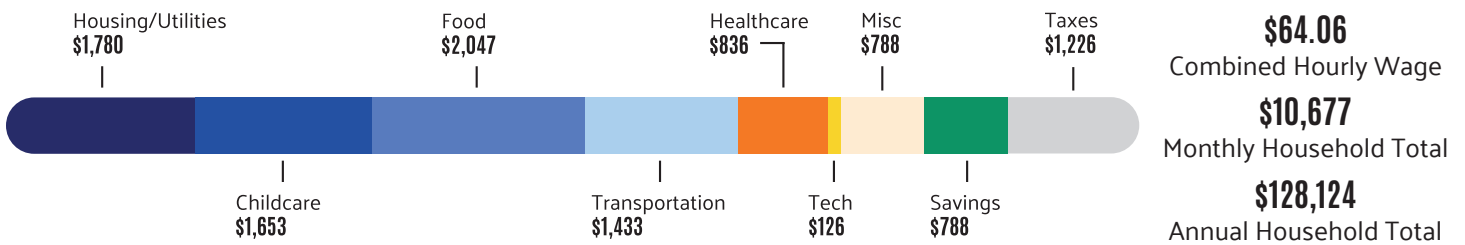
ALICE Monthly Household Survival Budget in Sedgwick County

The ALICE Survival Budget is based on the **bare minimum cost** of household basics needed to live and work for a family of four (two adults, two children in childcare) in Sedgwick County. This budget is the basis for determining whether households are above or below the ALICE threshold.

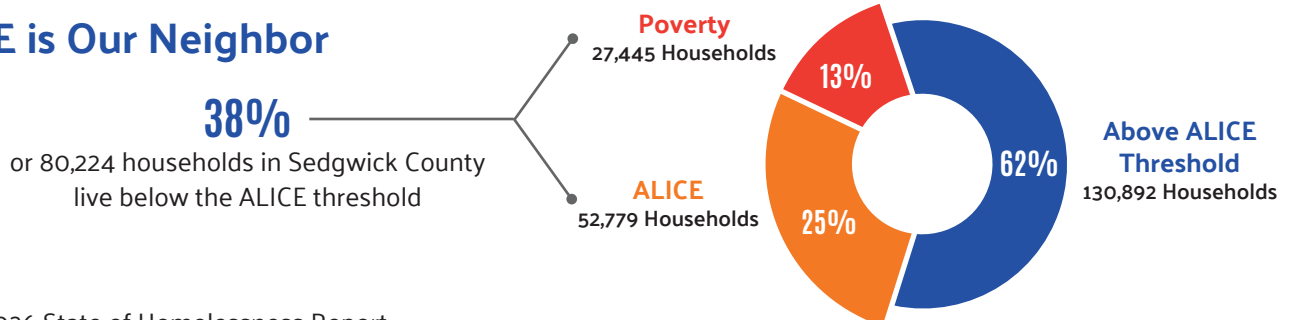


ALICE Monthly Household Stability Budget

The ALICE Stability Budget incorporates the higher costs for maintaining a more financially stable household over time, including a savings category that can be used in an emergency, for additional education, or to buy a home.

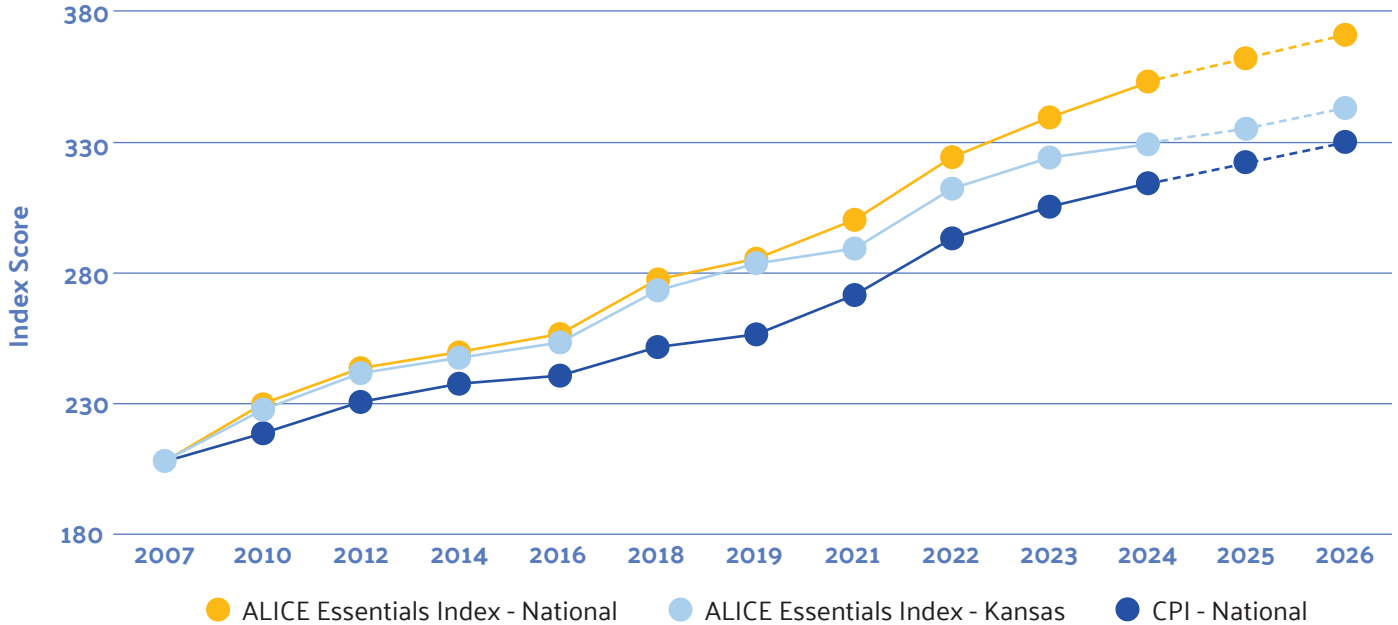


ALICE is Our Neighbor



Inflation Indices, Kansas and U.S.

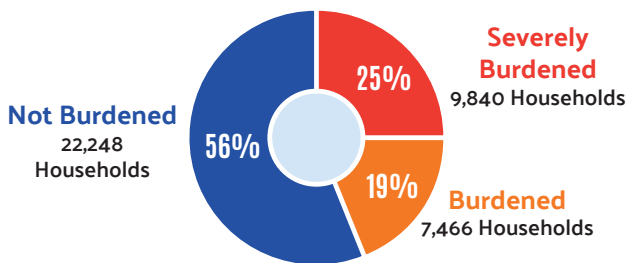
The ALICE Essentials Index measures change over time in the cost of the household essentials that matter most to ALICE and poverty-level households: housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, and basic technology. The standard measure of inflation in the U.S., the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Price Index (CPI), tracks a much larger basket of over 200 categories of goods and services, including items that financially insecure households can't afford on a regular basis, like full-service meals at restaurants, wine, major appliances, travel, and jewelry. **Nationally, the ALICE Essentials Index has outpaced the broader CPI since 2007. In Kansas, the ALICE Essentials Index also increased faster than the national CPI.**



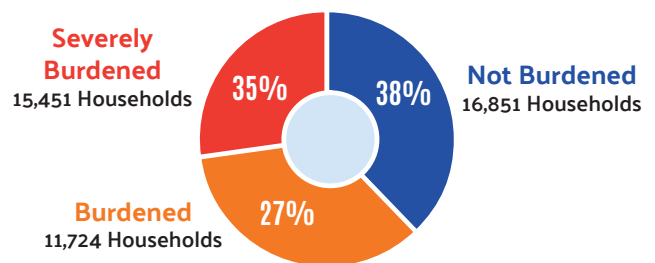
Sedgwick County Cost Burdened Households

Housing cost burden is a metric used to measure housing affordability. A household is considered **cost burdened** when they spend 30% or more of their income on housing. They are considered **severely cost burdened** when they spend 50% or more of their income on housing.

ALICE Owner Cost Burden Households



ALICE Renter Cost Burden Households

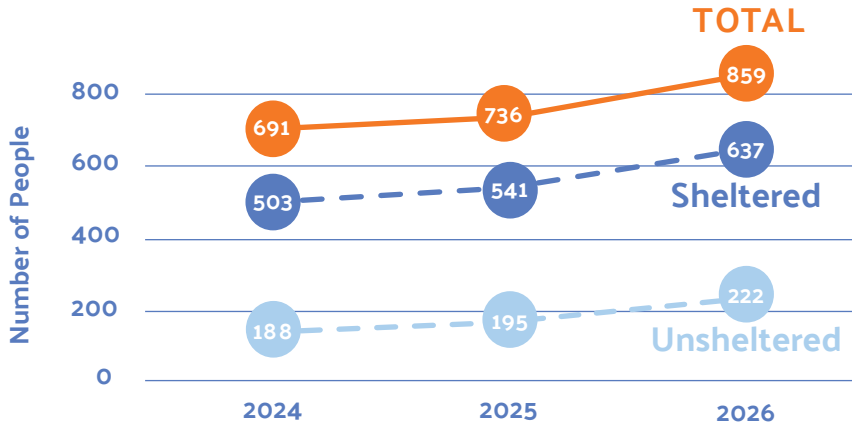


2026 HOMELESS CENSUS

This single-day snapshot provides a look into homelessness in Wichita/Sedgwick County.

The Point-in-Time (PIT) Count is an annual effort that gives our community a snapshot of how many people are experiencing homelessness in Wichita and Sedgwick County on a single night. On Jan. 29, 2026, more than 120 trained volunteers canvassed the county in frigid temperatures to find, survey, and engage with individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness. The night before, local staff recorded sheltered guests in our Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

The information collected helps us better understand the needs of our unhoused neighbors, allocate resources effectively, and measure progress toward making homelessness rare, brief, and non-reoccurring. As a recipient of a \$3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Coalition is required to conduct a count each year.



Sheltered Count: Persons in shelters are counted the night before through the HMIS database.

Unsheltered Count: The unsheltered count is a simultaneous count where surveyors visit locations where unhoused neighbors are likely to be found.

Factors Influencing Count Results: Colder weather conditions can cause more people to seek shelter on the day of the count. Continuous improvements to count methodology and volunteer training also influences results.

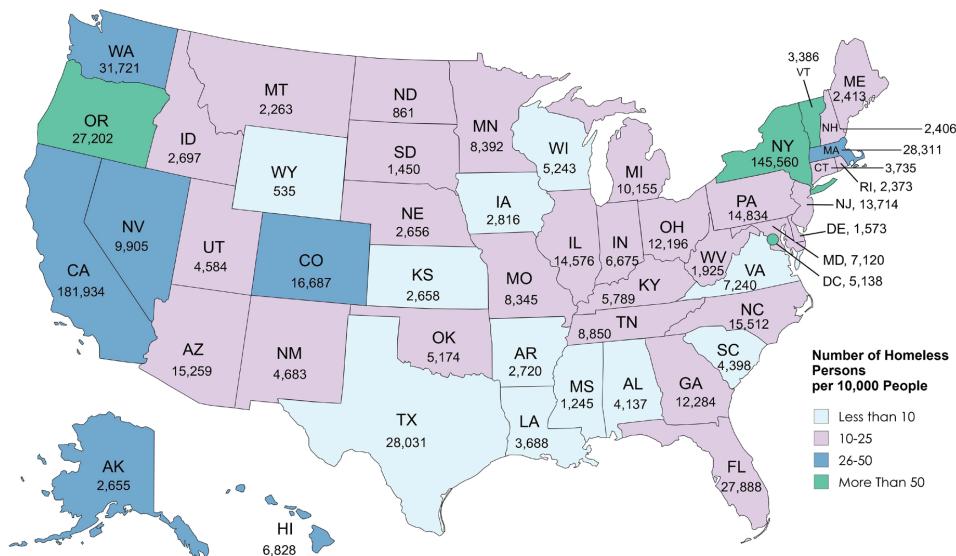
Annual Housing Inventory Count

On the same night as the PIT Count, the Coalition conducts a Housing Inventory Count to determine how many shelter beds and permanent housing resources our community has.

95% of all available beds (shelter, transitional, and permanent combined) were utilized on the night of the PIT Count.

National Trends

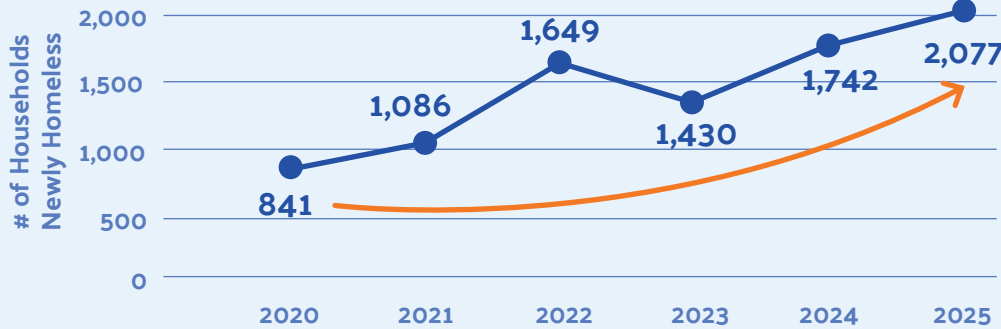
Kansas remains one of only 11 states with fewer than 10 individuals experiencing homelessness per 10,000 residents.



EMERGING TRENDS IN SEDGWICK COUNTY

>> NEWLY HOMELESS HOUSEHOLDS

As the cost of housing and other basic necessities increases, so too does the number of people experiencing homelessness for the first time.

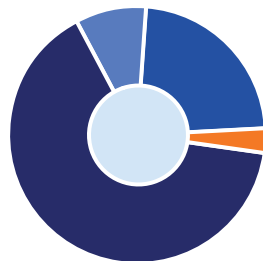


The number of newly homeless households has grown by 147% in Sedgwick County over the last six years.

>> AGING POPULATION

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index, the cost of everyday expenses, like groceries, housing, transportation, medical care and more, has increased 25.3% from 2020 to 2025 in the midwest. In 2024, 30% of residents in Sedgwick County lived on a fixed income through Social Security. An increase in homelessness in those age 65+ can be seen since 2020 due to rising constraints on their budget:

Age Demographics of Unhoused Individuals in 2020



3.1% Seniors (65+)
65% Adults (25-64)
9% Youth (18-24)
22.8% Children (under 18)

Age Demographics of Unhoused Individuals in 2025

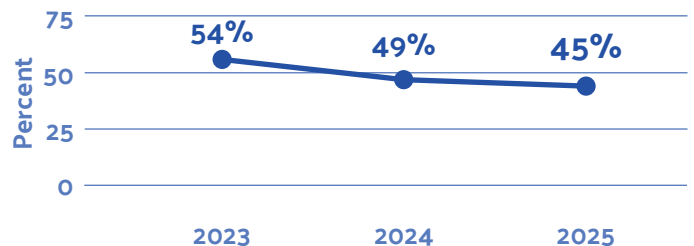


6.3% Seniors (65+)
71.5% Adults (25-64)
9.7% Youth (18-24)
12.4% Children (under 18)

The unhoused senior population doubled from 2020 to 2025.

>> INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

The percentage of people in Sedgwick County reporting at least one disabling condition at the time of intake has slowly decreased over the last three years. This illustrates that more people are entering homelessness due to general economic conditions, such as ALICE, rather than the inability to work due to disability.



RESOURCES TO LEARN MORE

ALICE

ALICE is an acronym to define and understand the struggles of households facing financial hardship: **A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mployed. To download the ALICE in Kansas report, explore trends in hardship, and discover interactive data tools, scan the QR code or visit UnitedForAlice.org/Kansas.



Coalition to End Homelessness in Wichita/Sedgwick County

To learn about how the Coalition is working to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring for all our neighbors, explore monthly dashboards tracking progress and trends, and sign up for the bi-monthly email digest, scan the QR code or visit CoalitionToEndHomelessness.org.



Questions? Matt Lowe, Director of Community Impact for United Way of the Plains, at (316) 267-1321, ext. 4233, or endhomelessness@unitedwayplains.org.

Data contained in this report comes from the following sources: 2025 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress: Part 1 Point-in-Time Estimates of Homelessness, 2025 HUD Longitudinal Systems Analysis, 2026 Point-in-Time Count, and the 2026 State of ALICE in Kansas Report.

