



UNITED WAY OF GREENVILLE COUNTY

Greenville County Quick Facts

ALICE

ALICE is an acronym for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed – hardworking households that earn more than the Federal Poverty Level, but less than the basic cost of living for Greenville County. While conditions have improved for some, many more continue to struggle, especially as wages fail to keep pace with the rising cost of housing and other essentials in Greenville County (childcare, food, transportation, healthcare, and a basic smartphone plan).

In 2022, 39 percent of Greenville County households (86,380) earned below the ALICE Threshold (ranging from \$31,152 for a single adult to \$80,724 for a family of two adults and two children in childcare) and struggle to make ends meet every month.

For a family of 4 in Greenville County, the household survival budget is \$71,808. For a family of four with 2 children in childcare, the household survival budget is \$80,724.

57% of black households are ALICE, 48% of Hispanic households are ALICE, compared to 37% of white households.

In South Carolina in 2022, 64% of households below the ALICE Threshold were rent burdened (paying more than 30% of their income on rent) and 39% were severely rent burdened (paying more than 50% of their income on rent). According to the Household Pulse Survey, 17% of renter households below the ALICE Threshold in South Carolina were behind on rent payments in October 2023, up from 9% in August 2020.

HOUSING

Over the past decade, Greenville County has seen a population increase of 21 percent, which far outpaces the national growth rate of 7.7 percent. With this surge in population, the demand for housing has skyrocketed, leading to a shortage of affordable homes and rental units.

It is estimated that 22 percent of Greenville County homeowners are considered cost-burdened by housing (spending more than 30 percent of their annual income on housing), while 37 percent of renters are severely burdened (spending 50 percent or more of annual income on housing).

In 2023, nearly half (48 percent) of the 23,000 calls to United Way's 211 resource line were from community members facing crises with housing, including rent and utility assistance.

According to rent.com, the average monthly rent for a one-bedroom apartment in the Greenville County market in March of 2024 was \$1,297.

According to the S.C. Upstate Continuum of Care's [2023 State of Homelessness report](#), there were nearly 700 people identified as homeless last year. With about 450 beds in the area's emergency shelters, most of those identified as homeless found shelter, but about 20 percent lived in areas considered unfit for human habitation.



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EDUCATION

In Greenville County, less than half (47 percent) of working-age adults have a post-secondary credential or degree.

Relevant skills, knowledge, opportunities and credentials are critical to a person's ability to support themselves and their families long-term – with a bachelor's degree earning an average of \$20–30,000 more annually than someone with just a high school diploma.

55.7 percent of students in Greenville County Schools are considered "Pupils in Poverty" (determined by eligibility for government food support, Medicaid, or status as a foster, migrant or homeless student).

While the overall graduation rate across Greenville County Schools has remained stable, hovering around 85 percent over the last four years, the graduation rate in two of our highest poverty high schools was between 14 and 17 points below that number in 2023.

CHILDCARE

19,100 children ages infant to 3 years old in Greenville County

15 percent of young children in South Carolina were in families in which a parent quit, changed or reduced a job because childcare was difficult to find or afford -- [Annie E. Casey Foundation's 2023 Kids Count Book](#).

According to a 2022 survey by the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce, 27 percent of respondents said either a lack of childcare or the need to stay with a child was a top barrier to work.

\$1.4 Billion: South Carolina's estimated economic cost for the infant/toddler care crisis (ReadyNation).

TRANSPORTATION

22 percent of employed people in Greenville County reported having trouble getting to their job due to transportation and 21 percent had trouble getting to the grocery store or pharmacy.

Nearly half of car owners said, at least a few times a month, they could not drive due to the cost of gas or maintenance.

According to ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) Survival budget, in Greenville County a family of four must spend an average of \$1,063 a month to sustain reliable transportation.

Greenville Connects estimates that fully funding Greenlink's 10-year expansion plan would result in \$2 billion in new economic activity.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, childcare is considered affordable when the cost doesn't exceed 7 percent of a family's income. In Greenville County, the average household spends 18 percent of its income on childcare. That number balloons to nearly 27 percent for a single parent.

The median annual price of childcare is \$9,049 per child in the Greenville area, according to the nonprofit Children's Trust of South Carolina

Childcare educators are poorly compensated, with annual mean wages in South Carolina of \$25,050, compared to \$33,520 for preschool teachers, and \$52,960 for kindergarten teachers.