**2021 State of Rental Housing in Cook County**

**Data and Methodology**

This report brings together data products from the United States Census Bureau, including the American Community Survey (ACS) Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) data for the years 2000 through 2019 and American FactFinder summary data from 2000 through 2019. Please note, the time period of this report overlaps Census Bureau population estimates as ACS data prior to 2012 use 2000 Census population estimates while data from 2012 and after use 2010 Census population estimates.

The American Community Survey is a survey conducted every year by the Census Bureau based on a geographically stratified sample of about 1 percent of the United States population. PUMS data is a publicly available package of the original survey responses. PUMS data may be used to develop custom tables and conduct original analysis using standard statistical software. PUMS data are provided to the public at the Public Use Microdata Area (PUMA) level, which is a special geography that generally contains between 40,000 and 100,000 households. Please note, data calculated for the City of Chicago excludes parts of O’Hare, Norwood Park, and Edison Park. These areas are included in Suburban Cook County PUMAs.

The 34 submarkets that IHS maps in this report are based on PUMA geographies. Depending on the size of the geography that is being analyzed, ACS data are available in 1-year and 5-year varieties. In order to produce statistically valid estimates at smaller geographies, the Census Bureau combines multiple years of survey responses to increase the sample size. Each year, the Census Bureau publishes 1-year estimates for places with populations above 65,000 and 5-year estimates for smaller geographies. For this analysis, the PUMS data was processed using IBM SPSS 24 and the standard weights provided by the United States Census Bureau. All estimates are based on 1-year PUMS data. Any estimates presented at the PUMA level, such as the map in this report, are based on averages from 2012 through 2014 and 2017 through 2019 using 1-year PUMS data.

Income levels were calculated using household median income for the Chicago-Naperville-Elgin metropolitan statistical area (MSA) tables using American FactFinder tables generated using 1-year ACS estimates. The Chicago-Naperville- Elgin MSA includes the Illinois counties of Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will, the Indiana counties of Jasper, Lake, Newton and Porter and Kenosha County in Wisconsin. The appendix of the report also uses an additional AMI category, splitting “Greater than 120% AMI” into categories for “120-200% AMI” and “Greater than 200% AMI.” Table 1 displays median income values by year, followed by Table 2 displaying income levels for 2019.

Table 1. Chicago Metropolitan Statistical Area Household Median Income

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year | 2007 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
| Median Household Income |  $59,255  |  $57,267 |  $59,261 |  $60,564 |  $61,598  |  $63,153  |  $66,020  | $68,403 | $70,760 | $75,379 |

Source: American Community Survey Data 1-Year, 2007-2019

Table 2. 2019 Income Levels based on Chicago Metropolitan Statistical Area Household Median Income

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| <30% AMI | 30-50% AMI | 50-80% AMI | 80-120% AMI | 120-200% AMI | >200% AMI |
| $0.00- $22,613.69 | $22,613.70-$37,689.49 | $37,689.50-$60,303.19 | $60,303.20-$90,454.79 | $90,454.80-$150,757.99 | $150,758.00 and Greater |

Source: American Community Survey Data 1-Year, 2019

**Rent Burden** calculates the annual percentage of household income spent toward rent payments. This report classifies any household with zero or negative values for household income as “Severely Burdened.” Additionally zero or missing values for monthly rent payments are classified as “No Burden,” as are households with missing values for household income. This methodology is in line with comparable analysis, including the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University’s annual report on the national rental housing market[[1]](#footnote-1).

**Rental Stock** is calculated by combining renter-occupied housing units and vacant housing units for rent. More specifically, based on PUMS Data Dictionary 2019, it includes renter-occupied housing units, renter-occupied housing units without payment of rent, vacant housing units for rent and rented housing units that are not occupied.

**The Affordability Gap** represents the difference between the number of renter households that demand affordable housing and the available supply of affordable rental housing. In this analysis, housing affordability is marked to the federal poverty threshold for a four-person household in a given year. An affordable unit is a unit with gross rent less than or equal to 30 percent of the income of a household earning 150 percent of the poverty level. A household that demands affordable housing is any household with income less than or equal to 150 percent of the poverty level, or a household paying gross rent that is affordable to households earning 150 percent of the poverty level. This means that affordable demand includes higher-income households. The affordability gap is the difference between these two figures.

This report provides affordability gap data for the 34 PUMA-level submarkets in Cook County as well as an aggregate total at the county level, for the City of Chicago, and for Suburban Cook County. Table 3 below displays the figures used to calculate affordable units and households that demand affordable rental housing.

Table 3. Federal Poverty Level and Affordable Monthly Rent

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year | Federal Poverty Threshold | 150% of Poverty Level | Affordable Gross Monthly Rent  |
| 2007 |  $ 21,203.00  |  $ 31,804.50  |  $ 795.11  |
| 2011 |  $ 23,021.00  |  $ 34,531.50  |  $ 863.29  |
| 2012 |  $ 23,492.00  |  $ 35,238.00  |  $ 880.95  |
| 2013 |  $ 23,844.00  |  $ 35,766.00  |  $ 894.15  |
| 2014 |  $ 24,230.00  |  $ 36,345.00  |  $ 908.63  |
| 2015 |  $ 24,257.00  |  $ 36,385.50  |  $ 909.64  |
| 2016 |  $ 24,563.00  |  $ 36,844.50  |  $ 921.11  |
| 2017 |  $ 25,094.00  |  $ 37,641.00  |  $ 941.00  |
| 2018 | $ 25,701.00  |  $ 38,551.50  |  $ 964.00  |
| 2019 | $ 26,172.00  |  $ 39,258.00  |  $ 981.00  |

Source: US Census Bureau, 2007, 2011-2019

1. Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University. The State of the Nation’s Housing 2021. Cambridge, MA, 2021. https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/state-nations-housing-2021 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)