



United Way Report Finds More Than Third Of Maryland Households Unable To Afford Basic Needs

Monday, January 9, 2017
Tyler Waldman, WBAL NewsRadio 1090

More than a third of Maryland households don't make enough to afford the state's cost of living and afford basic necessities, a United Way report released Monday found.

"In central Maryland alone, 36 percent of households are at or below the ALICE Threshold," Franklyn Baker, president and CEO of United Way of Central Maryland, said in a statement. "This report brings to light the many challenges ALICE faces, gives a face to our neighbors in need and underscores the need for the development and expansion of health and human services and the policies that support them."

The ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) report released by the state's United Way organizations (<http://www.uwcm.org/main/alice/>) found the earnings of nearly 750,000 households aren't enough to support a "survival budget" of more than twice the federal poverty level. Many of the people who fall into this category include cashiers, administrative assistants, security guards and retail employees.

A four-person family in Maryland requires a survival budget of \$61,224, well above the 2014 federal poverty limit of \$23,850, which United Way officials contend doesn't account for local costs of living. That same family of four needs a stability budget of \$121,656 to make room for major repairs, medical emergencies or other hardships.

The report found the percentage of households living below the survival budget threshold varies from county to county. In Baltimore City, 45 percent of households fall into this category, with 40 percent in neighboring Baltimore County. It's lower in Anne Arundel (28 percent), Carroll (28 percent), Harford (34 percent) and Howard (22 percent) counties.

"This report strongly supports United Way of Central Maryland's vision to provide the building blocks for long-term self-sufficiency—housing, employment, health and education—for those in need throughout our region," Baker said. "But we can't do it alone. We need the help of our supporters and volunteers to help us put more Maryland families on the path to stability."