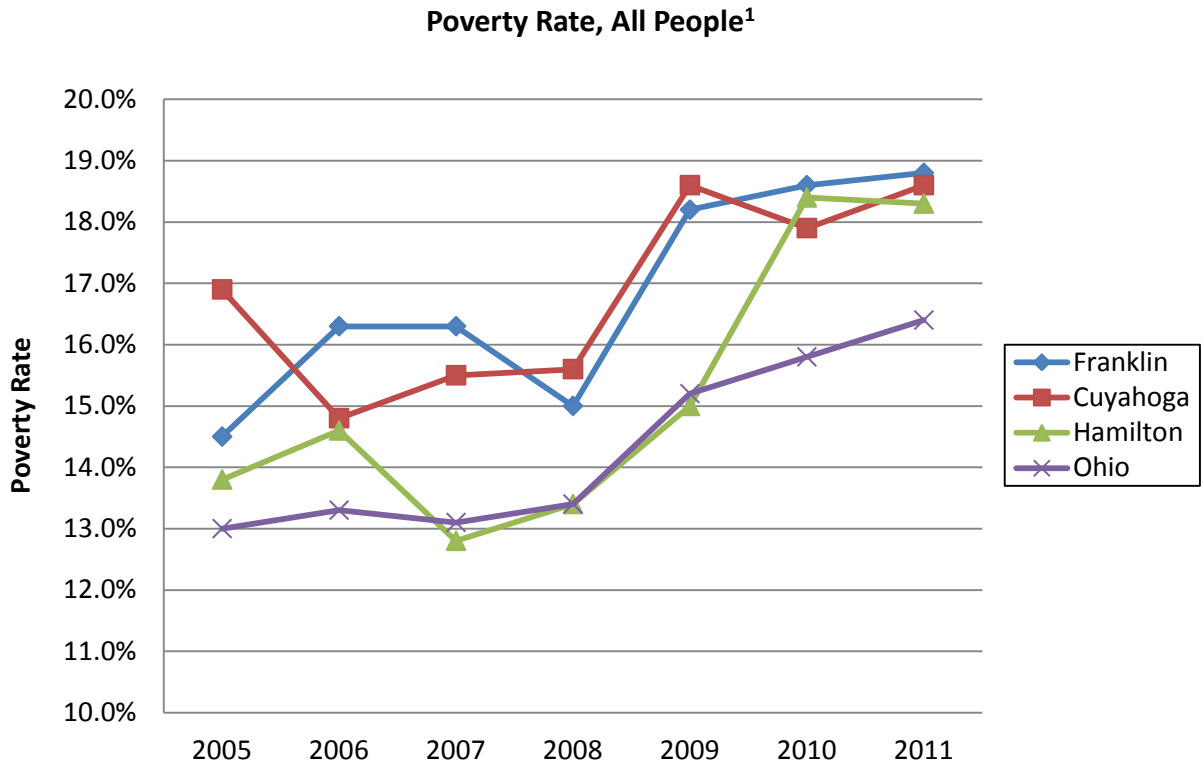


Impact of Poverty in Franklin County

While Franklin County has seen some improvement in the unemployment rate since the recession, the poverty rate continues to rise. The poverty rate for all residents was 16.3% in 2007. That number increased to 18.2% in 2009 and 18.8% in 2011.¹ As seen in the table below, the State of Ohio and the major urban counties in Ohio have all seen an increase in poverty following the recession. In 2010 and 2011, Franklin, Cuyahoga, and Hamilton had poverty rates at least two percentage points higher than Ohio statewide. The poverty rate for all Franklin County residents for the same time period exceeded the rate of its peer counties.



The poverty rate for children grew at a greater rate than all residents between 2007 and 2011 in Franklin County. Residents under 18 years had a poverty rate of 21.5% in 2007. That number increased to 26.4% in 2011. Currently, one in every four children in Franklin County lives in poverty.

The Census Bureau uses a set of dollar value thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is in poverty. Further, poverty thresholds for people living alone or with nonrelatives (unrelated individuals) and two-person families vary by age (under 65 years or 65 years and older). For 2011, the poverty threshold for a person under the age of 65 living alone was \$11,702. A family of four with two parents and two related children under the age of 18 had a poverty threshold of \$22,811.

¹ American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

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The number of Franklin County households receiving public assistance also increased during the recession and has remained high. The percentage of households who received cash public assistance income in 2007 was 2.1%. That rate increased to 3.3% in 2011. In 2007, the percentage of households receiving Food Stamps/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in the past 12 months was 9.2%. Those receiving food assistance increased to 15.2% in 2011.

The “Map the Meal Gap” report by Feeding America estimated that 208,940 people in Franklin County faced food-insecurity in 2011, meaning they were unsure where their next meal would come from. The food-insecurity rate has been increasing from 16.6% in 2009 to 17.3% in 2010 and to 18.1% percent in 2011. Meanwhile, the statewide rate dropped to 17.8 % in 2011 from 18.1% in 2010.

Other measures indicate that there is increasing poverty in Franklin County among those who are employed and live in the suburbs. Poverty is not just a result of unemployment. Many residents worked full- or part-time, yet their wages did not break the poverty threshold. For all Franklin County families with one worker in 2011, one in five (20.5%) were below the poverty level. Of the families with two workers, 3.5% lived in poverty. For those Franklin County residents age 18 to 64 in the labor force and employed in 2011, 14.6% did not have health insurance coverage. The Brookings Institution lists metropolitan Columbus, including surrounding counties, among 15 regions in the nation with the fastest-growing poverty rates in its suburbs between 2000 and 2010. The suburban poverty rate in Central Ohio had risen 4.5 percentage points from 6.0% in 2000 to 10.5% in 2010, which was the ninth highest rate in the nation.

The Franklin County Board of Commissioners partner with agencies in the community to address issues related to poverty, such as food insecurity, homelessness, and access to health care. The goal of Community Partnerships is that area residents will have access to goods and services that help them meet their basic human needs, live safely, and have access to institutions and the programs they provide, in order to help residents realize a higher quality of life and earn a sustainable income. Between 2006 and 2010, the Mid-Ohio Foodbank saw a 28.0% increase in the number of people seeking emergency food assistance. The Board of Commissioners awarded a community partnership contract to the Mid-Ohio Foodbank in 2013 in the amount of \$85,500. The Foodbank provides 130,200 meals to Franklin County residents, of which 37% are children, 5% are seniors, and 77% fall below the poverty threshold. All Foodbank recipients fall under the 200% poverty threshold. Matt Habash, CEO of the Mid-Ohio Foodbank, reported that the biggest increase in food pantry use since the recession has been in the suburbs.²

Another impact of poverty is increased homelessness. According to the Community Shelter Board (CSB), a public-private partnership organization that creates collaborations, innovates solutions and invests in quality programs to end homelessness in Columbus and Franklin County, reported that the single adult homeless population grew 20.0% since 2011. While the

² “Central Ohio on Brookings list of fastest-growing suburban poverty rates,” Columbus Business First, (May 20, 2013)

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CSB has had successful outcomes with families experiencing homelessness, more single adults face repeated homelessness. Single men and women make up 60.0% of the homeless population in the County. The waiting list for a Franklin County shelter in 2013 can be as high as 125 people. A waiting list means the number of individuals who were being turned away from the shelters because capacity was met. The CSB projects that 7,200 persons will be served in emergency shelters and 1,260 will be provided supportive housing in 2013. The Board of Commissioners awarded a community partnership contract to the CSB for \$3.3 million in 2013 to develop and implement strategies that decrease homelessness and increase the placement of homeless individuals in permanent housing in the community. The CSB is currently working towards addressing the cycle of homelessness for single adults with the implementation of a new system using case managers as navigators who connect homeless individuals with community services.

Individuals who are at or below the poverty level are often uninsured or underinsured and therefore lack access to healthcare and prescription services. Franklin County's preterm birth rate of 13 percent is almost double the U.S. public health goal of 6.9 percent and higher than Ohio overall. Infant mortality is a decisive indicator of a community's health status because it reflects in part the general health of women in the community, access to medical services (or lack thereof) for young women, and care provided to infants. Since 2010, the Board of Commissioners has partnered with Nationwide Children's Hospital in support of the Ohio Better Birth Outcome (OBBO) Initiative. With OBBO, Nationwide Children's Hospital employs medical intervention and education strategies through the Center for Child and Family Advocacy Nurse Family Partnership and the Safe Spacing Program. These programs are improving pregnancy outcomes by helping women engage in good pre- and post-natal health practices and to prolong inter-pregnancy intervals. The total commitment to the OBBO by the Board of Commissioners in the multi-year community partnership agreement is \$7 million through 2015, with \$1 million provided in 2013.

Columbus Neighborhood Health Centers (CNHC) is a key provider of quality health care to the uninsured/underinsured individuals and families in Franklin County, with special emphasis on critical women's health services and support services that enable adults and children to live healthy lives. CNHC has had a significant increase in the number of patients in the Women's Health Program. Through a \$475,000 community partnership contract with the Board of Commissioners, CNHC will provide pre- and post-natal services to at least 465 women, monitor 100 low birth weight babies, and conduct regular gynecological exams for 200 women.

The Physicians CareConnection (PCC) is the largest coordinator of voluntary health care services in Franklin County with over 1,000 primary/specialty care doctors and 12 hospitals participating. Through its Voluntary Care Network program, the PCC connects low-income, uninsured residents with medical homes, improves access to specialty care, provides for access to affordable prescription drugs and other needed services, and thereby helps keep medical conditions more manageable and lowers the cost of care. In 2013, PCC received a \$250,000 community partnership contract to provide at least 3,500 patients with referrals for specialty care and diagnostic services and coordinate access to at least 11,000 affordable prescriptions for low-income uninsured people.