

Impact Essex County

An Overview of Key Trends

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Introduction

Impact Essex County is an initiative of [Essex County Community Foundation](#) (ECCF) that uses Community Indicators as measurements of social, environmental and economic factors that affect a community's quality of life. The [Impact Essex County](#) website is aimed at creating a holistic picture of Essex County to deepen knowledge and understanding of our community and its local areas.

The data and analysis of 100 indicators on this website serves as a common source of information on critical topics that affect progress in Essex County. The metrics tracked will inform not only ECCF but also all community stakeholders to facilitate collaboration within Essex County and monitor the impact of collective efforts.

Impact Essex County was developed with assistance from the [Center for Governmental Research](#) (CGR), based in Rochester, New York. CGR is a nonprofit research and consulting firm that has been delivering expert support to the public, nonprofit and private sectors for over a century. CGR has developed community indicator projects across New York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Arkansas.

This project includes data for local areas within Essex County and for three comparison counties wherever available. The comparison counties are Middlesex County, MA, Westchester County, NY and Lake County, IL. These counties are similar to Essex County in key areas, including being part of a larger metropolitan region, having both wealthy areas and pockets of poverty, and sharing some demographic characteristics, such as a highly educated population.

These points of comparison provide context and a reference point for looking at and interpreting Essex County's data. As much as the areas are alike, they also have different factors and characteristics impacting them. Our intention is not to rank the areas or put them in competition with one another, but to provide a frame of reference for making meaning out of Essex County's data.

Overview

Rising costs continue to be a persistent challenge in Essex County. Inflation has pushed the estimated income needed to support a single-parent family with two children to \$143,900. The median value of a home in the county rose from \$502,900 in 2015-19 to \$619,100 in 2020-24.

The refreshed data also points to potential concerns within the educational sector, including continued elevated rates of school absence when compared to pre-pandemic levels and lower test performance on some assessments, particularly among students of color and those who are economically disadvantaged.

While much of Essex County continues to thrive, poverty, low student achievement and unequal access to resources including jobs and transportation continue to disproportionately impact people of color and geographic areas such as the Cities of Lynn and Lawrence. For example, in Lawrence, a quarter of households don't have a vehicle enabling access to jobs, education and health care, compared to 9% of county residents.

Historic and current policies, practices and systems have directly harmed and limited opportunities for people of color. These include housing policies that restrict access, employment discrimination, unequal access to financial services and capital, education systems that fail to equitably educate all students, racism in health care delivery, and racial profiling and inequitable sentencing in policing and criminal justice. Inequities have compounded over generations, impacting decades of family members.

In our county of nearly 824,000 people, many are impacted. While Essex County is 67% White, our population includes about 32,800 African Americans (4%) and 29,500 Asians (3.6%). In addition, people of Hispanic heritage (which is considered by the U.S. Census to be an ethnicity, rather than a race) make up about 24% of our residents, or close to 195,600 people.

When we see children of color passing reading assessments at rates significantly below that of White children, median household incomes for African Americans and Hispanics that are about two-thirds the level for Whites, and homeownership rates that lag Whites by almost 50%, we know that structural racism is at work.

It is important to also take note of Essex County's many incredible assets, including its proximity to the ocean, significant open space, relatively low crime, and rich historic and artistic institutions and communities. Job growth rose modestly from 2023 to 2024, but high-paying sectors like Financial Activities are growing, and average salaries are high.

Below, please find summaries of trends across topics ranging from Demographics to Economy and Workforce to Education to Health.

Demographics

Essex County is home to over 823,900 residents, with [small but fast-growing minority groups](#), a high proportion of [foreign-born residents](#) in some local areas, and an overall [aging population](#). Demographic trends are important to understand because they impact the economy, health care needs and outcomes, what services government and nonprofits provide, and many other local and national concerns.

Essex County is composed of 34 cities and towns, including the cities of Lynn, Lawrence, Amesbury, Beverly, Gloucester, Haverhill, Methuen, Newburyport, Peabody and Salem. Lynn, Lawrence, Haverhill, Methuen, Peabody and Salem are considered Gateway Cities. [Gateway Cities](#) are targeted for increased state investment and have below average incomes and adult education levels and populations between 35,000 and 250,000. Though Lynn, with 103,500 people, and Lawrence, with 89,300, are the largest localities in Essex County, and the fastest growing.

Lynn and Lawrence are two centers of diversity, with [foreign-born residents](#) making up 37% of Lynn's population and 45% of Lawrence's. Lawrence is home to approximately 38% of the county's 195,600 Hispanic residents, and 78% of Lawrence residents [speak a language other than English at home](#).

The county's [population overall has grown](#) 11% since 2010, slightly higher than the state increase of 9% and the nation's increase of 10%. [Growth was fastest among Hispanic residents](#) (47%), Asians (15%), and African Americans (14%), though the county as a whole remained majority White (67%).

Overall, 19% of the county's population was [foreign-born](#) and 29% spoke a language other than English at home – comparable with state and national rates and a bit below rates in some otherwise similar counties.

The age distribution of a population has major implications for what types of services are needed (schools, health care, etc.), and how they are delivered and paid for. In Essex County, there was more growth in the 60-84 age bracket among both males (39%) and females (31%) than any other age group over the last decade in line with America's overall [“graying” trend](#). The age group with the second largest increase for both males and females was 20 to 39 (14% and 10% respectively).

Additionally, about 38% of [people 65 or older in the county live alone](#), which can make it difficult to access services or care. In addition, 12% of Essex County's population has some type of [disability](#) (both rates are similar to state and national rates).

Most [households](#) in Essex County are made up of singles living alone (27%) or married couples without children (28%), followed by married couples with children (20%), similar to state and national proportions. Although singles living with children made up just 10% of all

households in Essex County, they accounted for 34% of all families with children under 18. Of these families with children, 26% were [headed by a female](#). Rates were especially [high among some groups](#) (Hispanics – 63%, African Americans – 56%, Whites – 32%, Asians – 28%).

Children and Youth

Overall, Essex County shows progress in several indicators affecting children and youth, including declining teen birth rates, improvements in lead exposure and relatively low infant mortality. However, disparities in prenatal care and persistent child poverty indicate ongoing challenges for some families and communities.

[Early prenatal care](#) is an important first step toward healthy birth outcomes. In 2024, most mothers in Essex County began prenatal care during the first trimester, including 90% of Asian mothers, 85% of White mothers, 79% of Hispanic mothers and 75% of African American mothers. These rates were generally higher than state and national levels, though disparities among racial and ethnic groups persist.

Preterm birth rates in Essex County have remained relatively stable over time. In 2024, 10% of [births were premature](#), a rate similar to the state and lower than the national rate of 12%. [Infant mortality](#) has also remained relatively low in Essex County with 3.3 deaths per 1,000 births in 2019-23, similar to the state rate and below the national rate.

Exposure to lead remains an important environmental health concern, but progress has been made. In 2024, 76% of children ages 9 months to 4 years were screened for lead poisoning in Essex County. [Elevated blood lead levels](#) were detected in 55 children, representing a rate of 2.7 per 1,000 children – the same as the statewide rate and a 42% decline since 2010.

Economic hardship continues to affect many families. In 2020-24, about 19,900 children in Essex County [were living in poverty](#), representing 12% of all children under age 18. This rate was similar to the state but below the national rate of 16%. Poverty rates were much higher in some communities, including Lawrence (24%) and Lynn (18%), although child poverty rates in these communities have decreased 15 and 13 percentage points respectively since 2010-14. [Disparities continue to exist by race and ethnicity](#). Poverty rates were much higher among Hispanic children (20%) than among White children (8%).

As youth move into adolescence, most remain engaged in school or work. In 2020-24, about 6% of Essex County youth ages [16-19 were not enrolled in school and not working](#), similar to national and state rates. [Teen births](#) have also declined substantially. In 2024, the teen birth rate was 8 per 1,000 females ages 15-19, a 62% decrease since 2010. [Youth involvement with the justice system](#) has declined as well. In 2024, there were more than 1,800 youth arrests in Essex County, a rate of 11 per 10,000 youth, down from 21 in 2010.

Community Life

Transportation, safety, amenities like the arts and the environment all contribute to the quality of life in Essex County. In general, transportation remains a challenge in the County, crime and incarceration rates are relatively low, and citizens are engaged in the community.

Public transportation is limited in the County, and the majority of commuters in Essex County [drove to work](#) in 2020-24, with 81% driving alone to work and another 9% who carpooled. Only 6% biked, walked or used other means, and 4% used public transportation. Compared to Essex County, Massachusetts had a somewhat lower rate of driving alone (75%) and a higher share using public transportation (8%). From 2010-14 to 2020-24, the share of commuters who drove alone or carpooled each increased by 1 percentage point, while public transportation use declined by 2 percentage points.

Additionally, about 29,200 people or 9% of households in Essex [did not have access to a vehicle](#). About 1 in 5 households in Lawrence (20%) and Lynn (17%) were without cars.

In 2020-24, 92% of households in Essex County had [access to the Internet](#), similar to the state (93%) and national (91%) rates. However, access varied within the county. While 92% of households in Lynn had Internet access, only 85% of households in Lawrence were connected, well below county and state levels.

The rate of reported [crimes against people](#) in Essex County was 9.3 per 1,000 residents in 2024. This represents slight decline from a recent peak of 9.9 in 2022. More notably, the rate of reported [property crimes](#) in Essex County in 2024 was 15.4 per 1,000 residents, a decrease from 2020, when the rate was 19.5. Rates for both crimes against people and against property in Essex were lower than the state rates.

In 2024, nearly 740 people were arrested for [drug-related crimes](#) in Essex County, a rate of about 0.9 per 1,000 residents, slightly above the statewide rate of 0.8. In general, the rate of arrests for drug-related crimes in the County has remained fairly steady since 2020, while rates in Haverhill and Lawrence have consistently remained above the county average during this same time period.

In 2024, there were 3.7 reported [victims of domestic violence](#) per 1,000 residents in Essex County, similar to 2020 but below the statewide rate of 4. Essex County's rate was higher than Middlesex, MA (2.0 per 1,000).

In 2024, approximately 12 residents per 10,000 were [incarcerated](#) in Essex County, down from 24 per 10,000 in 2014 but higher than the statewide rate of 10 per 10,000. The recidivism rate in Essex County also declined. Among inmates released in 2019, 29% were returned to prison within 3 years, down from 42% in 2009. The decline in Essex matches a similar statewide decline over this same time period.

[Voter participation](#) in Essex County was 62% in the 2024 presidential election and 45% in the 2022 midterm election. The 2024 turnout was lower than in all presidential elections since 2012, though slightly higher than the statewide rate of 61%. Essex County's turnout was higher than all comparison counties in 2024.

In 2022, Essex County residents contributed over \$502 million, or about 1% of their income, to [charitable organizations](#). This was lower than both the state (1.3%) and national (1.4%) rates.

In 2024, nearly \$1.2 billion was spent on [travel and tourism](#) in Essex County, or about \$1,450 per resident. This represents an 8% increase since 2010, less than the statewide increase of 13%. Essex County accounted for about 5% of the more than \$24 billion spent statewide.

In 2025, 81% of days with air quality measurements in Essex County were classified as good air days, down slightly from 2024 but a 20-percentage point improvement since 2010. Essex County had the lowest share of [good air days](#) among comparison counties. Lake County, IL had the highest at 85%, while Middlesex, MA and Westchester, NY were similar to Essex at 82%.

Economy and Workforce

Essex County's economy has rebounded from the depths of the Covid-era and several key sectors are gaining jobs, but salaries have only kept pace with inflation.

[Total jobs](#) increased 0.6% from 2023 to 2024 representing rebound from a 9.3% job loss from 2019 to 2020 due to the Covid pandemic. That rate of growth was above the state, but below the nation.

[Growing sectors](#) in Essex County include Financial Activities, which increased 107% in total jobs from 2010 to 2022, and Healthcare and Social Assistance (45%). Trends in Essex County were very similar to statewide and national trends, as well as to comparable counties.

The largest sectors in Essex County were very similar to the state and nation, with 18% of jobs in Trade, Transportation and Utilities, 14% in both Health Care and Social Assistance and Professional and Business Services, and 11% in Financial Activities.

The [highest paid sector](#) in Essex County was Financial Activities, with an average annual salary of \$122,000 in 2024. This was followed by Information (\$119,200) and Manufacturing (\$109,300). The lowest paid sector was Leisure and Hospitality (\$32,700).

Overall, [yearly salaries](#) in Essex County averaged \$75,500 in 2024 and increased 6% from 2010 after adjusting for inflation. This is in contrast to the state, where the average salary has increased by 16% and the nation, with a 12% increase over the same time period. (All financial data is presented in real terms.)

From 2010 to 2024, [salaries grew the most](#) in Essex County in the Other Services category (34%), Information (33%) and Natural Resources and Mining (29%) sectors, while the Health Care and Social Assistance sector had the largest decrease (-4%). Essex County, the state and nation had similar changes in many sectors.

In Essex County, as in the state and nation, [women's earnings](#) lag men's earnings in the same occupations. For all occupations, Essex County women earned 80% of men's earnings in 2020-24. The largest difference was in the Service occupations, where women earned \$0.66 to every dollar earned by men.

Like the state and nation, Essex County's economy is dominated by [small employers](#). In 2023, over half (56%) of businesses in Essex County employed 1-4 people, 19% employed 5-9 people, 12% employed 10-19 people and the remaining 14% employed 20 people or more. Only 2% of employers, fewer than 500 businesses, had 100 or more employees. This has not changed substantially since 2010.

[Self-employment](#) in Essex County brings in more revenue per resident than for the nation as a whole. Essex County had about \$9,700 in self-employment revenue per resident in 2023, above the state and over \$1,000 higher per resident than the nation. Essex County's level was up 24% since 2010.

The majority of businesses in Essex County were [owned](#) by White people (83%), followed by Hispanic (10%), and Asian (7%). No African American owned businesses were reported.

[Unemployment](#) in the county was 4.1% in 2024 similar to the state and nation. This represents an increase from the previous year when the rate was at 3.5%, and a decrease from 2010 when it was 8.5%. In 2020-24, [unemployment was higher among Hispanic](#) residents at 7.6% compared to 4.4% for White residents, similar to the disparities seen at the state and national levels.

In 2023, around 141,200 workers (43%) entered Essex County for work each year, and 217,300 residents (54%) left for work each year.

Education

Children's development and educational success hinges upon a myriad of factors, including prekindergarten participation, school attendance, the adequacy of school funding, and student performance. Additionally, educational attainment levels are associated with greater earnings and standard of living. In Essex County, pre-kindergarten participation and school spending is increasing, as is chronic absenteeism. Disparities in academic achievement remain significant, while the percent of adults with a bachelor's degree is increasing.

Prekindergarten helps prepare children both socially and academically for school and can fill in gaps for children exposed to a less rich vocabulary or lacking in other resources. In Essex

County, 46% of 4-year-olds were [enrolled in public or private prekindergarten programs](#) in 2024, up from 43% in 2007.

School attendance is increasingly measured by the share of students who miss 10% or more of the school year and are deemed "[chronically absent](#)." In 2023, 23% of students were chronically absent in Essex County. This is a decrease from 29% in 2022 but was still higher than pre-pandemic levels that typically ranged between 13% and 15%. Some local districts had rates near or above 30%, including Lynn, Haverhill, Lawrence, and Saugus.

[School spending](#) in Essex County across public school districts was \$22,400 per student in 2024, close to the statewide level of \$23,100 and below Middlesex, MA, (\$23,400 per student) and Westchester, NY (\$35,400). Spending in Essex County has increased 22% since 2010, after adjusting for inflation. The highest spending districts in Essex County were some of the vocational schools, with per-student spending levels at or above \$25,000.

Measures of academic achievement can elevate student learning and identify achievement gaps. Disparities in academic achievement in Essex County remain significant, though some groups have made considerable progress over the last decade.

Third grade is an important milestone, particularly in the development of students' literacy skills. Through third grade, many students are learning to read; from third grade on, they need to be able to read to learn. In Essex County in 2025, 37% of [3rd graders were considered proficient on the state's English Language Arts exams](#), down 2 points from 2022.

Proficiency was lower among low-income and Hispanic students (both 20%) and African American students (23%) compared with those who were not low income (54%), White (52%) or Asian students (51%). Proficiency declined from 2022 among most groups, with the largest decline of 7 percentage points among Black or African American students.

Similarly, 8th grade is an important benchmark for the development of math skills, as students are studying or will soon move into study of algebra and other high school-level math courses. In 2025, 35% of Essex County [8th graders were considered proficient on the state's math exam](#), slightly higher than in 2022. But on this exam as well, rates were lower among some groups: 18% among low-income students, 19% among Hispanic students, and 23% among African American students. Proficiency rates remained fairly steady among most groups from 2022, except for proficiency among Asian students which increased by 6 percentage points.

Massachusetts requires students to pass 10th grade level state tests in math and English in order to graduate. In 2025, 45% of [10th graders passed the state's language arts exam](#) and 37% passed the [math exam](#). Disparities were less pronounced on the English exam, with 28% of both low-income students and Hispanic students, and 35% of African American students passing in 2025.

[High school graduation rates](#) in Essex County have been rising, with 89% of the 2021 cohort graduating in 2025, up 9 percentage points from 2010 and on par with the state graduation rate. Within the county, Lawrence had the largest gain since 2010, with a 36-point increase. Fifteen districts in the county had graduation rates of 95% or higher. The lowest graduation rates were in Lynn (76%) and Lawrence (82%).

Students from low-income and Hispanic backgrounds graduated at somewhat lower rates, 83% and 82% respectively in 2025, compared to 95% of Asian students, 94% of White students, and 92% of African American students. These disparities were comparable to rates at the state level, although Essex County's rate among African American students was 5 points higher than the state. The rate among African American students in Essex increased the most since 2014, by 13 points, followed by Hispanic students with an increase of 8 points.

[Essex County is a highly educated county](#) in terms of the adult population, with 44% of adults in 2020-24 having at least a bachelor's degree, up from 37% in 2010-14. That is above the national rate (36%) but below Massachusetts' rate of 47% and below the rates in comparison counties: 60% in Middlesex, MA, 53% in Westchester, NY, and 48% in Lake, IL.

The share of Essex County adults with a bachelor's degree or higher was highest among Asian residents (56%) and White residents (49%) compared to 31% of African American residents and 17% of Hispanic residents.

Financial Self-Sufficiency

Despite generally low poverty rates, Essex is an expensive county that requires a level of income that data suggests many residents and families lack.

In 2020-24, 9% of Essex County residents had [incomes at or below the poverty level](#), similar to the state rate and less than the national level of 12%. Essex County has pockets of poverty and [stark disparities among racial and ethnic groups](#). In the cities of Lawrence and Lynn, poverty rates are higher. Countywide, 14% of African Americans and 17% of Hispanics were living in poverty, compared to 7% of both Asians and Whites.

[Median incomes for most racial and ethnic groups](#) in Essex County were higher than national levels, with the exception of Hispanic households who trail the national level. Median household incomes are far higher for Asians and Whites (in the \$111,000-\$140,000 range) than for African Americans and Hispanics (\$65,000-\$73,000). [Single-parent households](#) are particularly disadvantaged, with a median income for female-headed households with children of just \$48,000 in 2020-24.

Actual incomes are far below what is needed to make ends meet in Essex County for some residents and families. [Living wages](#) for a family of three with a single earner (a working parent and two children) would require an annual income nearly \$143,900 in Essex County –

far above the actual median income for either single female- or male-headed households (which is \$48,000 and \$73,500 respectively).

While not an exact match, data from MIT's living wage model, which focuses on households, and the Census Bureau's American Community Survey's income statistics which focuses on individuals, suggest that the high cost of living prevents many from being economically secure. For example, a family of four with two earners (two working parents and two children) needs \$154,600 annually, or nearly five times the poverty level, which is \$31,812 for such a family. In Essex County, 66% of residents have incomes that are triple the poverty level, and 25% have incomes between 100% and 299% of poverty.

In terms of participation in programs to help individuals and families facing financial challenges, Essex County has seen increases in the share of [households receiving federal food assistance](#) (SNAP). In 2020-24, 17% of households received SNAP benefits, with higher levels in Lawrence (45%) and Lynn (29%).

About 11% of residents filed for the [Earned Income Tax Credit in 2022](#), which provides tax credits or refunds to low-income workers. That was a bit higher than the state and lower than the nation, likely reflecting that incomes in Essex County are above national incomes.

In 2026, 46% of Essex County students were [economically disadvantaged](#), up from 32% in 2017. Here too, Essex County was above the state rate (41%).

A lack of financial self-sufficiency shows up in Essex County's statistics on homeownership and housing affordability.

[Home values](#) in Essex County have risen 34% since 2010-14, and at \$619,100, the median home value in the county in 2020-24 was higher than both the state and the nation. This is good for homeowners, but the rising costs of homeownership can make it difficult for residents to purchase their first home. [Housing affordability for homeowners](#), as determined by the ratio of median home value to median household income, shows that homeownership is becoming increasingly unaffordable in the county, with the value of homes rising faster than household incomes.

The same is true for [renters](#) in Essex County, who spent 39% of their household income on rent in 2020-24, higher than the state level (35%) and renters nationwide (32%).

[Homelessness](#) data for Essex County is no longer reported separately and is now included in the statewide rate which was 41 per 10,000 people in 2024. Lynn's data is collected separately, and its rate of homelessness was 106 per 10,000 people, a slight increase from 103 in 2020.

The [homeownership rate](#) in Essex County has remained steady since 2010-14. In 2020-24, 63% of all homes were owner-occupied, the same rate as 2010-14. Despite this consistency, homeownership rates vary greatly among local areas. Only 28% of homes in Lawrence were

owner-occupied in 2020-24, along with 48% in Lynn and 50% in Salem. By contrast, the homeownership rates in Boxford, Middleton, and West Newbury were over 90%. Essex County has greater [racial and ethnic disparities in homeownership](#) than the nation. In 2020-24, 71% of White and Asian residents owned their home, compared to 41% of African Americans and 34% of Hispanics. Nationwide, homeownership was higher among African American and Hispanic residents at 44% and 51% respectively.

Health

While health insurance is widespread in Essex County, as it is throughout Massachusetts, the county continues to face a range of health concerns including: asthma, diabetes, cancer, heart disease, and mental health challenges.

In 2023, just 4% (or about 23,200 residents) of Essex County residents under 65 [lacked health insurance](#). That was similar to the state and below the national rate of 9%.

Among children, 8% of Essex County [students in grades K-8 had asthma](#) in 2025, slightly below the statewide rate of 10% and down from 2012. About 25% of Essex children were considered [overweight](#) in 2022, slightly above the state rate but 10 percentage points lower than in 2011.

In 2021-23, a national survey found rates of [drug use among adults](#) and [youth](#) were similar to the state, but that marijuana use was a bit higher in Essex than in the nation for both groups. In 2024, Essex County's [overdose death](#) rate was 2.3 per 10,000 residents, lower than in 2018, on par with both the state and nation, but higher than all comparison counties.

State treatment data show that substance use remains a serious problem, though [treatment admissions](#) have declined. Essex County had 101 substance abuse treatment admissions per 10,000 residents in 2024, down 37% from 2018 and below the state rate. Heroin and alcohol were the most common primary drugs, making up nearly three-quarters of admissions.

In other areas of behavioral health and general health, Essex County more closely mirrors other areas:

- About 5% report suffering from [mental illness](#), similar to the state and continuing a steady increase from 2010-12.
- The rate of new [cancers](#) was 43 per 10,000 and similar to the state, slightly below the nation.
- The county's [cancer mortality](#) rate was 18 deaths per 10,000 residents in 2024, similar to the state and nation.
- [Heart disease mortality](#) was 17 deaths per 10,000 residents in 2024, similar to the state rate and slightly lower than the national rate.
- In 2024, the [suicide rate](#) was 1.1 deaths per 10,000 residents, higher than the state rate of 0.8.

Essex County had a relatively high rate of newly diagnosed [diabetes](#) cases in 2023, at 65 per 10,000 residents, above both state and national rates. Despite that, the county's rate has declined 13% since 2014.

Racial Equity

Systemic racism is a global, national and local issue, underlying and amplifying many of our most critical social challenges. As detailed in the sections above, we observe racial and ethnic disparities within such areas of life as Children & Youth, Economy & Workforce, Education and Financial Self-Sufficiency.

The disparity data reflects the effects of centuries of structural racism in America, starting with the simultaneous genocide of indigenous peoples and enslavement of Africans and moving through the development and institutionalization of racist ideology and policies impacting nearly every facet of life in this country. In the United States, long-standing and far-reaching structural systems have been created and sustained over centuries to hinder access to economic, educational and social opportunities for people of color and their families, while also facilitating greater access to those opportunities for White people and their families.

These historic and current policies, practices and systems include housing policies that restrict access to people of color, employment discrimination, unequal access to financial services and capital, education systems that fail to equitably educate all students, racism in health care delivery, racial profiling and inequitable sentencing in policing and criminal justice and many others. These inequities have compounded over generations, impacting decades of family members. This is significantly illustrated by the [redlining practices](#) of the 1930s that blocked Black people and people of color from securing real estate, leaving them unable to benefit from a critical opportunity to create and transfer wealth across generations.

In our county of nearly 824,000 people, many are impacted. While Essex County is 67% White, our population includes about 32,800 African Americans (4%) and 29,500 Asians (3.6%). In addition, people of Hispanic heritage (which is considered by the U.S. Census to be an ethnicity, rather than a race) make up 24% of our residents, or close to 195,600 people.

We recommend the following resources to learn more about structural racism: The New Jim Crow by Michelle Alexander (<https://newjimcrow.com/>), Isabel Wilkerson's Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents, The Color of Law by Richard Rothstein and Stamped from the Beginning by Ibram X. Kendi. There are also data resources such as the [National Equity Atlas](#); racial equity-focused research from organizations like the [Urban Institute](#); tools for learning and change such as those available at [Racial Equity Tools](#), and personal narratives from writers such as [Ta-Nehisi Coates](#).