



## poverty in the district *who lives in poverty?*

According to data released from the US Census Bureau, 19.2% or nearly 110,000 District residents live below the poverty line, or an income below \$22,314 for a family of four, in 2010. Since 2007, poverty has been on a steady climb here in DC, with an additional 17,500 DC residents falling into poverty.

At the same time, the data show that income for other DC households is rising. Median income – the income of the household in the middle of the distribution – rose from \$57,100 in 2007 to \$60,900 in 2010. The fact that both incomes were rising for some while poverty was getting worse means that the recession is hitting some groups in DC harder than others. The data show huge jumps in poverty among children, single-parent female headed households and Black DC residents since the start of the recession. In 2010, one in three kids, two in five single parent female households, and one in four black residents lived in poverty.

Looking ahead, leading indicators for poverty changes — like food stamp participation and employment — show that more people are struggling. In the first half of 2011, food stamp participation in the District was up by 13 percent when compared to 2010, and employment levels have been steadily falling since early 2011.

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### **The FACTS:**

- **30% of District children**, ages 5-17, live in poverty.
- **13% of District adults**, aged 18-64, live in poverty.
- **Almost 10% of District seniors**, age 65 and older, live in poverty
- **More than two in five District households with children** reported that they did not have enough money to buy food at some point during 2008 and 2009.

## ***the federal poverty line is \$22,314 for a family of four***

The current federal poverty measure was developed in the 1960s and is based on taking the cost of an emergency food diet and multiplying it by three.



1960s



At the time, food constituted one-third of the average family's budget.

Now



Now it amounts to around one-seventh as the costs of housing, childcare, and health care have all risen disproportionately.

### poverty by race

- One-third, or 34 percent, of black DC residents are low-income.
- 24 percent of Hispanics residents live in poverty.
- 12 percent of Asian Americans residents live in poverty.
- 9 percent of white District residents live in poverty.

### poverty by age

- 30 percent of children, under age 5-17, live in poverty.
- Children under 18 in DC are almost twice as likely to be low-income as non-elderly adults.
- 20 percent of adults in the District age 16-64 are low-income.
- 24 percent of elderly adults in the District are low-income.