

ALICE IN POLK COUNTY



2023 Point-in-Time Data

Population: 505,255 • **Number of Households:** 207,757

Median Household Income: \$78,979 (state: \$71,433)

Labor Force Participation Rate: 71.8% (state: 66.3%)

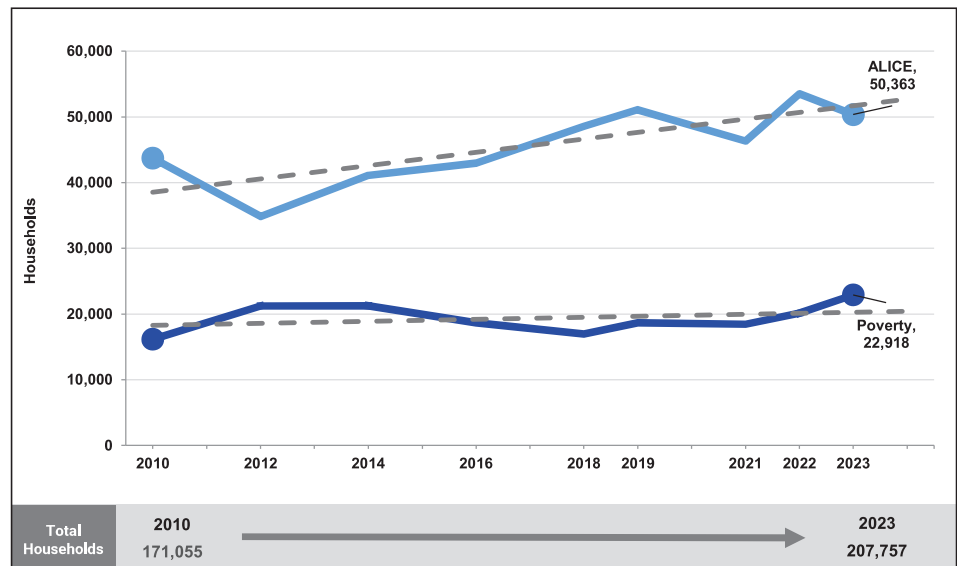
ALICE Households: 24% (state: 25%) • **Households in Poverty:** 11% (state: 11%)

Trends in Financial Hardship

ALICE is an acronym for **A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mployed – households that earn more than the Federal Poverty Level, but less than the basic cost of living for the county (the ALICE Threshold). Households below the ALICE Threshold – ALICE households plus those in poverty – can't afford the essentials.

Households move below or above the ALICE Threshold as economic factors and circumstances change. The line graph to the right shows the number of ALICE and poverty-level households (solid blue lines), as well as the trend over time (dotted gray lines). **By 2023, 73,281 households (35%) were below the ALICE Threshold in Polk County.**

ALICE and Poverty-Level Households, Polk County, 2010–2023



Note: See an interactive version of this data at [UnitedForALICE.org/iowa](https://www.unitedforalice.org/iowa)

Sources: ALICE Threshold, 2010–2023; American Community Survey, 2010–2023

The Cost of Basics Outpaces Wages

The Household Survival Budget reflects the minimum cost to live and work in the current economy and includes housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, technology, and taxes. It does not include savings for emergencies or future goals like college or retirement. The Household Survival Budget is calculated at the county level and by household composition, as costs can vary greatly depending on location and household needs.

In 2023, household costs in Polk County were well above the Federal Poverty Level of \$14,580 for a single adult and \$30,000 for a family of four.

To see costs for different household compositions in Polk County, visit [UnitedForALICE.org/Household-Budgets/Iowa](https://www.unitedforalice.org/Household-Budgets/Iowa)

Household Survival Budget, Polk County, 2023

	Single Adult	2 Adults, 1 Infant, 1 Preschooler
Monthly Costs		
Housing	\$870	\$1,181
Child Care	–	\$1,386
Food	\$494	\$1,341
Transportation	\$383	\$930
Health Care	\$209	\$714
Technology	\$86	\$116
Miscellaneous	\$204	\$567
Taxes	\$382	\$772
Monthly Total	\$2,628	\$7,007
ANNUAL TOTAL	\$31,536	\$84,084
Hourly Wage*	\$15.77	\$42.04

*Full-time wage required to support this budget

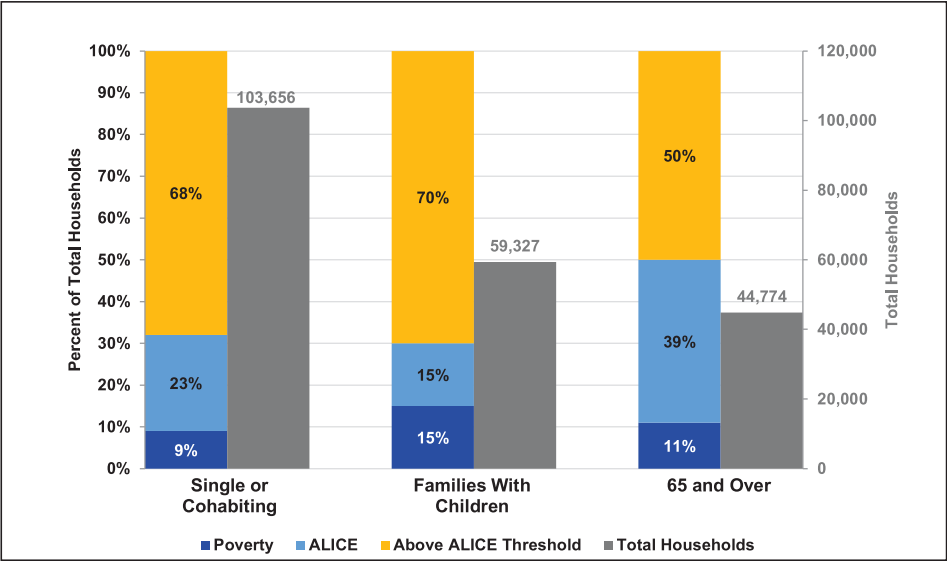
For ALICE Household Survival Budget sources, visit [UnitedForALICE.org/Methodology](https://www.unitedforalice.org/Methodology)

Financial Hardship is Not Evenly Distributed

The largest demographic groups in the county also tend to have the largest number of households below the ALICE Threshold. However, when looking at the percentage of each group that is below the Threshold, some groups face higher rates of hardship.

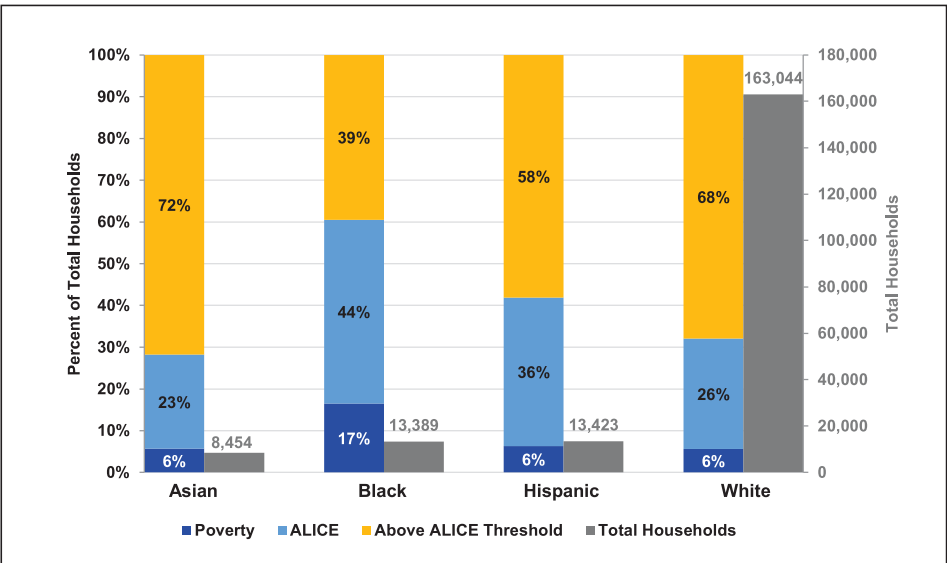
Explore more demographic data at UnitedForALICE.org/Iowa and visit UnitedForALICE.org/Mapping-Tool to see ALICE data for all available geographies.

Household Financial Status by Household Type, Polk County, 2023



Note: Families with children include married-parent, single-female-headed, and single-male-headed households.
Sources: ALICE Threshold, 2023; American Community Survey, 2023

Household Financial Status by Race/Ethnicity, Polk County, 2023



Note: Asian, Black, and White racial categories are for one race alone. Race and Hispanic ethnicity are overlapping categories. The Asian and Black groups may include Hispanic households; the White group includes only White, non-Hispanic households. The Hispanic ethnic group may include households of any race.
Sources: ALICE Threshold, 2023; American Community Survey, 2023

Polk County, 2023		
Town	Total Households	% ALICE & Poverty
Alleman city	160	10%
Altoona city	7,865	28%
Ankeny city	27,493	21%
Bondurant city	2,779	17%
Clive city	7,101	21%
Des Moines city	90,465	46%
Elkhart city	283	27%
Grimes city	6,133	23%
Johnston city	9,552	26%
Mitchellville city	712	35%
Pleasant Hill city	4,035	25%
Polk City city	2,032	18%
Runnells city	159	19%
Saylorville CDP	1,400	32%
Sheldahl city	126	42%
Urbandale city	17,040	21%
West Des Moines city	31,825	31%
Windsor Heights city	2,066	25%

Note: Municipal-level data on this page is 1- or 5-year averages for U.S. Census Bureau Places, which include Incorporated Places and Census Designated Places (CDPs). Counties and Places with populations over 65,000 are 1-year averages; otherwise, they are 5-year averages. Geographies with fewer than 100 households are not included. Therefore, totals will not match the county-level numbers.