

MINNESOTA RENTER SNAPSHOT SERIES: MAY 2022

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated housing insecurity for millions of households, especially for low-income, Black, Indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC) households. However, the solutions are not elusive—when given access to emergency rental assistance, the renters most in need experienced housing stability.

Households of color have been more likely than white households to apply for assistance, a difference that likely reflects income disparities by race and ethnicity, as Black households are more than twice as likely to report being behind on rent compared to white households. Despite the success of emergency rental assistance in addressing housing instability, more resources are needed; over half of low income renters behind on rent have not applied for rental assistance.

Key Minnesota Facts: Rent Insecurity and Rent Debt

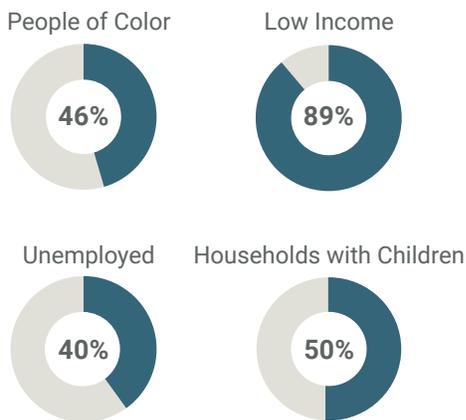
Rent Debt Data

Those behind on rent are overwhelmingly low-income households who've had job and income losses during the pandemic.

Estimated total rent debt: \$144,700,000

Households behind in rent: 75,000

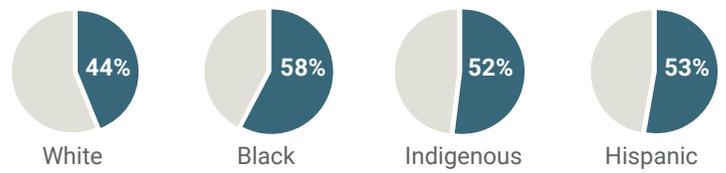
Children in behind households: 66,000



Renter Cost Burden

In Minnesota a significant number of low income households and Black, Indigenous and renters of color faced housing insecurity even before the pandemic began.

Minnesota Cost Burdened Renters:



Minnesota Severe Cost Burdened Renters:



Housing Insecurity's Inequitable Impact

Percent households behind on rent:



Even before the COVID-19 pandemic Black, Latino, and Native American renters faced disproportionately high rent burdens. These same groups often face systemic barriers when trying access housing assistance programs; the economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic has only compounded these inequities.

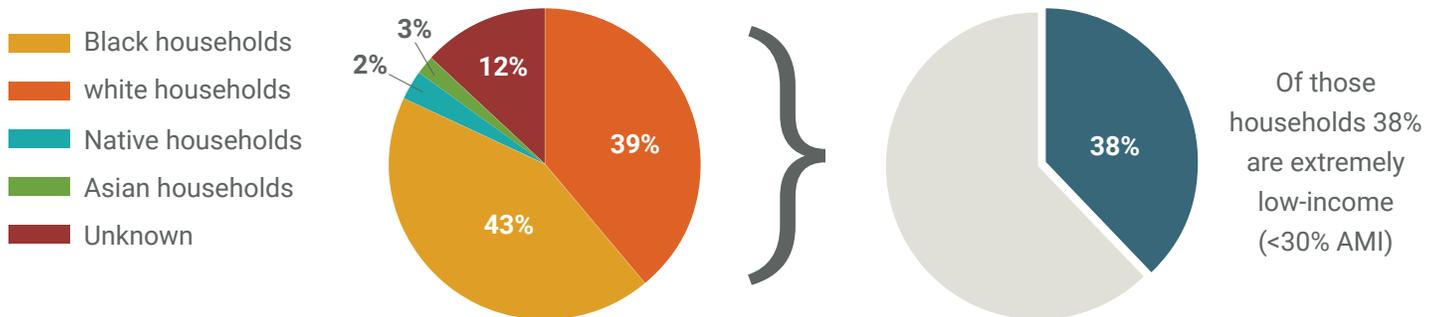
In March, 32% of Minnesota Black renters were behind on rent, up from 30% in December and more than 3x greater than the 10% of white renters behind on rent. Black renters in Minnesota suffer the harm of rent debt at a rate greater than the national average of 24%. As 75% of Minnesota Black households rent, compared to 23% of white households, this data starkly shows a housing crisis in Minnesota which disproportionately harms Black families.

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Key Minnesota Facts: Emergency Rental Assistance

RentHelpMN, the state's program for distributing federal emergency rental assistance, predominantly assisted low-income households and households of color, serving those most in need of pandemic emergency rental assistance.

The information below does not include application data from Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, or Washington counties, or the cities of Minneapolis and St Paul; these are local jurisdictions that have received their own federal allocations of ERA. **Of 75,833 household applicants through March 24, 2022:**



Of white households that received rental assistance, 51% (10,742) are extremely low-income. Of Black households that received rental assistance, 54% (12,933) are extremely low income.

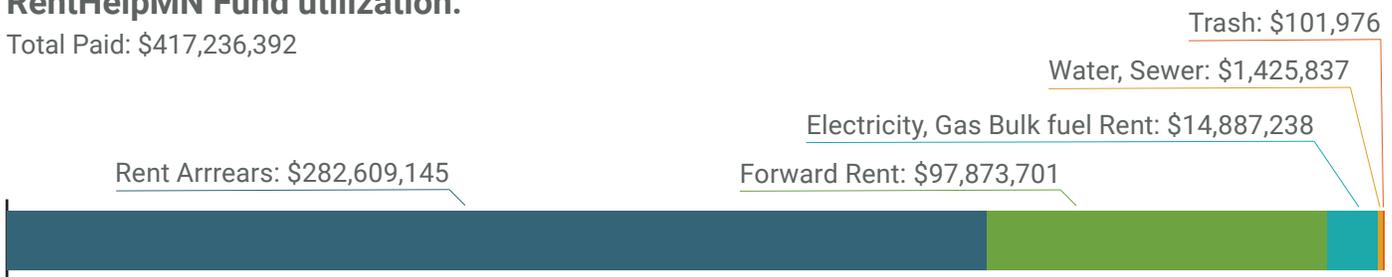
Additional characteristics of applicants:

Households who applied for rental assistance had the following attributes.



RentHelpMN Fund utilization:

Total Paid: \$417,236,392



27,124 applications were denied payment. The second-most-frequent reason for denial cited—after the applicant not having back rent due at the time of application—was that the applicant was missing required information and did not respond after 3 times contacted within 14 days.

Data Sources Used to Determine Rent Debt

National Equity Atlas, Rent Debt in America Database: <https://nationalequityatlas.org/rent-debt>, based on the most recent U.S. Census Household Pulse Survey (March 30-April 11, 2022) and U.S. Treasury February Report.

Other Data Sources

- American Community Survey (ACS) microdata of March 2-14, 2022
- Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, "Emergency Rental Assistance has Helped Stabilize Struggling Renters," 2022, <https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/blog/emergency-rental-assistance-has-helped-stabilize-struggling-renters>
- Minnesota Housing data on emergency rental assistance through March 24, 2022
- U.S. Treasury's February 2022 Report on Emergency Rental Assistance: <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/assistance-for-state-local-and-tribal-governments/emergency-rental-assistance-program>

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