

Essex County Rental Housing Profile

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RUTGERS
Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy
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New Jersey State of Affordable Rental Housing

The New Jersey State of Affordable Rental Housing (NJSOARH) project is exploring the landscape of affordable rental housing in New Jersey. The project has two main areas of focus. First, the team is assembling information about existing government supported affordable rental housing. Second, the team is exploring the processes that shape housing insecurity.

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We Enthusiastically Thank...

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Advisory Committee

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Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey
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Monarch Housing Associates
New Jersey Citizen Action
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This version of the report includes updated federally assisted housing unit totals. The first edition of the report was published in June 2024.

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Executive Summary

More than Half of Households Rent

More than half (59%) of households in Essex County rent rather than own their homes. This is higher than the statewide rentership rate of 39%. Forty-eight percent of all Essex County renters live in Newark, New Jersey's largest city.

Growth in the Number and Share of Renters

Essex County experienced a net increase of 31,523 renter households since 2000. The share of households that rent increased from 54% to 59% of all households during this period. All Essex County municipalities experienced a net increase in the number of renter households since 2000, and in six (Bloomfield, Fairfield, Irvington, Livingston, Newark, and South Orange), the share of renters increased more than 5%.

Housing Differs by Municipality

Housing characteristics vary notably throughout Essex County. Newark and its neighboring municipalities have higher population densities, larger shares of households that rent, and greater numbers of low-income renters than the western and more suburban parts of the county. The county's western and suburban communities tend to have lower numbers and shares of renters, higher rental prices, and larger shares high-income renters. Affordability is a challenge in many communities.

Rents Have Increased

Median gross rent in Essex County increased more than $300 or 27% over the past decade. All Essex County municipalities experienced rent increases during this period.

Rent Burden is Pervasive

More than half of renter households in Essex County are rent burdened, meaning they devote more than 30% of income to rent. Twenty-eight percent are severely cost burdened, meaning they devote more than 50% of household income to rent. Municipalities with the largest shares of cost burdened renters include Newark, Orange, and Belleville where 55% of renter households are cost burdened.

Most Low-Income Renters Are Cost Burdened

Most low-income renters in Essex County are cost burdened, and low-income households are much more likely to live in housing that is unafforable than wealthier households. Among renter households with incomes less than 50% of the area median (less than $53,700 annually), 77% or 76,300 are cost burdened, and 46,700 or 47% are severely rent burdened.

Assisted Housing is Geographically Concentrated

Federally assisted housing is concentrated in the eastern portion of Essex County in Newark and its neighboring communities. Newark contains two-thirds of the county's assisted rental housing units but only 36% of the county's total population.

Some Municipalities have Rent Control

Twelve of Essex County's 22 municipalities have a rent control ordinance that put limits on annual rent increases. Not all rental units qualify and each municipality varies in terms of the types of rental units for which the ordinance applies. Ten municipalities have no rent control ordinance.

Approximately 30,000 Units are Federally Assisted, and Need Outpaces Demand

There are approximately 30,000 federally assisted housing units in Essex County spanning several programs including Public Housing, Section 202 Housing for the Elderly, Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA) housing, and units constructed or preserved using Low- Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). Additionally, roughly 10,000 households receive a Tenant-Based Voucher for use in the private rental market (which may include LIHTC properties). Need for affordable housing greatly outpaces demand. Federal programs serve some of the county's most vulnerable renters including those with very low incomes, older adults, and people with disabilities. However, long wait lists and eligibility requirements mean that many households that need affordable housing do not receive assistance. Nationally, only one in four households eligible for federal housing assistance receives it.

Introduction

The New Jersey State of Affordable Rental Housing (NJSOARH) project is exploring the landscape of affordable rental housing in New Jersey. As part of this project, we are publishing county rental housing profiles that bring together data on rental housing and related information for the county and its municipalities. The aim of these reports is to serve as a resource to better understand the landscape of rental housing in the county, patterns and trends, and affordability challenges. This report is divided into seven sections:

- Section 1: Renter Households
- Section 2: Rental Housing Characteristics
- Section 3: Renter Characteristics
- Section 4: Rental Housing Costs and Affordability
- Section 5: Unhoused Persons and Homelessness Programs
- Section 6: The Landscape of Housing Assistance
- Section 7: Rent Control Ordinances



About Essex County

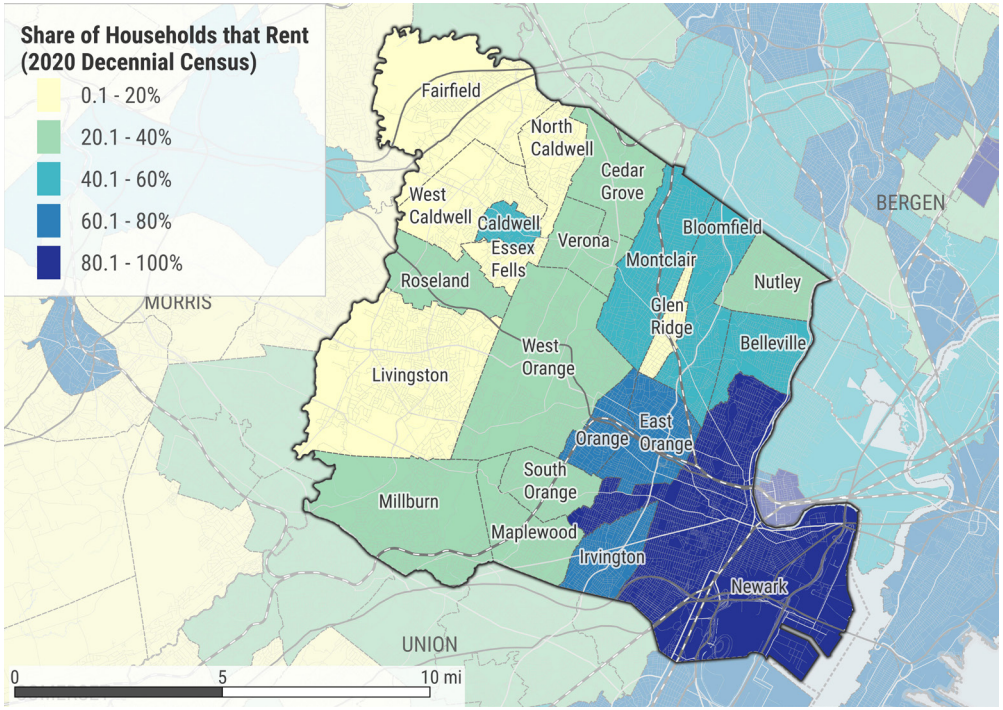
Essex County (population 849,477) is located in northeastern New Jersey, west of New York City and Hudson County. It is home to Newark, New Jersey's largest city (population 305,344). Including Newark, there are 22 municipalities in Essex County (two cities, 15 townships, and five boroughs). It is the state's second most densely populated county, second only to neighboring Hudson County. Essex County is served by excellent transportation access to New York City and the rest of the region and contains Newark Liberty International Airport. The eastern portion of Essex County is very urbanized and has historically struggled with high rates of poverty and unemployment particularly in the wake of deindustrialization. The western portions of the county are more suburban and include many wealthy communities with high housing costs. Essex County's population is very diverse and includes many immigrant families. Housing affordability and gentrification pressures are concerns in many parts of the county.



Section 1: Renter Households

Essex County has 185,821 renter households according to the 2020 Census. The largest number of renter households (89,211) live in Newark, which contains 48% of all renter households in the county. Newark is followed by East Orange (20,902) and Irvington (17,223). The majority (82.0%) of Newark households rent. Other Essex County municipalities with large shares of renter households include Orange (78.5%), East Orange (76.3%), and Irvington (76.1%). Essex County experienced a net increase of 31,532 renter households from 2000 to 2020. The largest increase over this time period is observed in Newark (19,567) followed by Bloomfield at 2,130. The share of households who rent versus own a home also grew during this period, increasing from 54.4% in 2000 to 59.4% by 2020. Fairfield saw the largest increase in the share of households that rent during this period at 7.0%. However, the total number and share of renters in Fairfield, like other municipalities on the western edge of the county, is small. Bloomfield saw a net 6.2% increase in the share of households that rent followed by Irvington, Livingston, and Newark, which all saw increases of 5.8% (see Fig. 1).

Fig. 1: Share of Households that Rent



Data Source: 2020 Census

Table 1: Number and Share of Renter Households Over Time

	2000		2010		2020	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Belleville twp	6,734	49.0	6,253	46.7	7,176	50.2
Bloomfield twp	8,867	46.6	8,461	46.0	10,997	52.8
Caldwell boro	1,673	50.5	1,724	51.3	1,835	51.9
Cedar Grove twp	920	20.9	903	20.0	983	20.7
City of Orange twp	8,860	74.5	8,395	74.9	10,042	78.5
East Orange city	19,106	73.4	18,318	73.4	20,902	76.3
Essex Fells boro	28	3.8	42	5.8	44	5.9
Fairfield twp	151	6.6	343	13.0	373	13.6
Glen Ridge boro	221	9.0	213	8.6	235	9.3
Irvington twp	15,480	70.3	14,329	71.3	17,223	76.1
Livingston twp	604	6.5	811	8.1	1,276	12.3
Maplewood twp	1,854	21.9	1,780	21.6	2,302	26.0
Millburn twp	1,238	17.6	1,225	18.0	1,395	20.2
Montclair twp	6,544	43.6	6,483	43.0	7,000	45.0
Newark city	69,644	76.2	73,633	77.9	89,211	82.0
North Caldwell boro	76	3.7	67	3.2	98	4.3
Nutley twp	3,608	33.1	3,645	32.2	4,363	36.7
Roseland boro	435	20.3	471	20.1	568	22.5
South Orange Village twp	1,540	27.9	1,597	29.0	1,980	33.3
Verona twp	1,278	22.9	1,062	20.0	1,518	25.9
West Caldwell twp	549	13.8	519	13.3	566	14.1
West Orange twp	4,879	29.6	5,092	30.3	5,734	32.3
County total	**154,289**	**54.4**	**155,366**	**54.8**	**185,821**	**59.4**

Data Source: 2000, 2010 and 2020 Census.

Section 2: Rental Housing Characteristics

Building Types

Essex County contains a mix of rental building types. An estimated 13% of rental units are single family (attached or detached) homes, which is lower than the statewide figure of 20%. Thirty-six percent of all rental units are in two to four unit buildings (compared to 30% statewide); 19% are in five to 19 unit buildings (versus 22% statewide); 11% are in 20 to 49 unit buildings (versus 10% statewide), and 21% are in 50 or more unit buildings (compared to 18% statewide). Most municipalities contain a mix of rental building types. In Newark, the largest share (39%) of units are in two to four unit buildings. This is also the case for Irvington, Bloomfield, Belleville, Montclair, West Orange, Nutley, Maplewood, and Millburn. Buildings with 50 or more units are prevalent in East Orange and South Orange. Sixteen percent of rental units in Newark are single family homes. Livingston, Millburn, and West Orange also contain significant shares of single family rental units (see Fig. 2A & 2B).

Fig. 2A: Number of Rental Units by Units in Structure

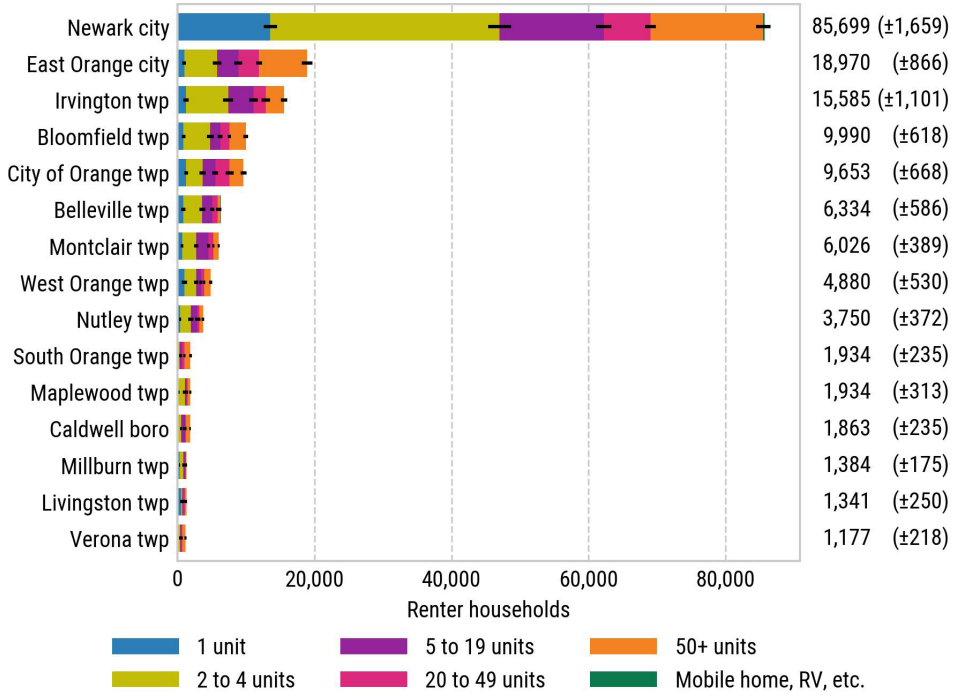
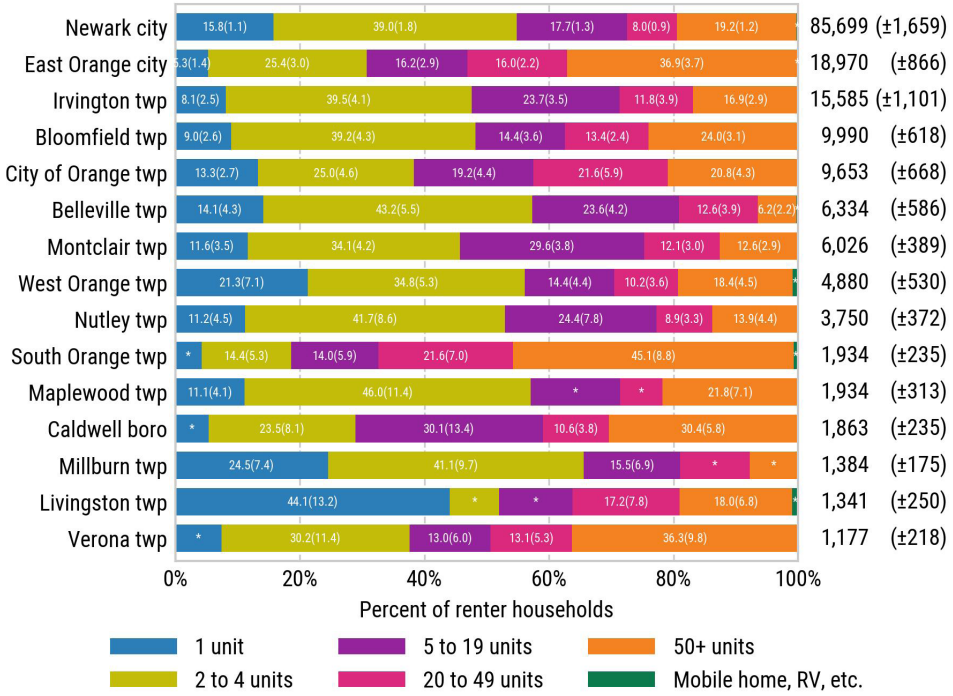


Fig. 2B: Share of Rental Units by Units in Structure



Data Source: 2022 Five-Year American Community Survey. The numbers to the right of the chart represent the estimated total number of renter households, with the margin of error indicated in parentheses. The black bars on the chart indicate the margin of error for each estimate. Municipalities with fewer than 1,000 rental units are excluded from figures. An "*" refers to imprecise estimates resulting from a small number of households.

Section 2: Rental Housing Characteristics, continued

Age of Rental Housing Stock

Data on year of construction provides a timeline as to when each community was developed as well as insights into the quality and safety of the rental housing stock. Older housing units may have stood the test of time as a result of high-quality construction. But, they also may pose health and safety hazards such as lead paint, lead pipes, or asbestos and may be more costly and difficult to maintain.

Rental units in Essex County tend to be slightly older than New Jersey as a whole. Forty-three percent of units in Essex County were constructed prior to 1960 compared to 38% statewide. The largest numbers of units built prior to 1960 are in Newark, East Orange, and Irvington, which are also the county's three largest municipalities. Municipalities with the largest shares of rental units built prior to 1960 include Montclair (63%), Millburn (62%), and Maplewood (56%). Newark contains the largest number of newly constructed units built in or after 2000. Municipalities with large shares of newly constructed units include South Orange (36%), Livingston (28%), Verona (28%), and Bloomfield (19%) (see Fig. 3A & 3B).

Fig. 3A: Number of Rental Units by Year Built

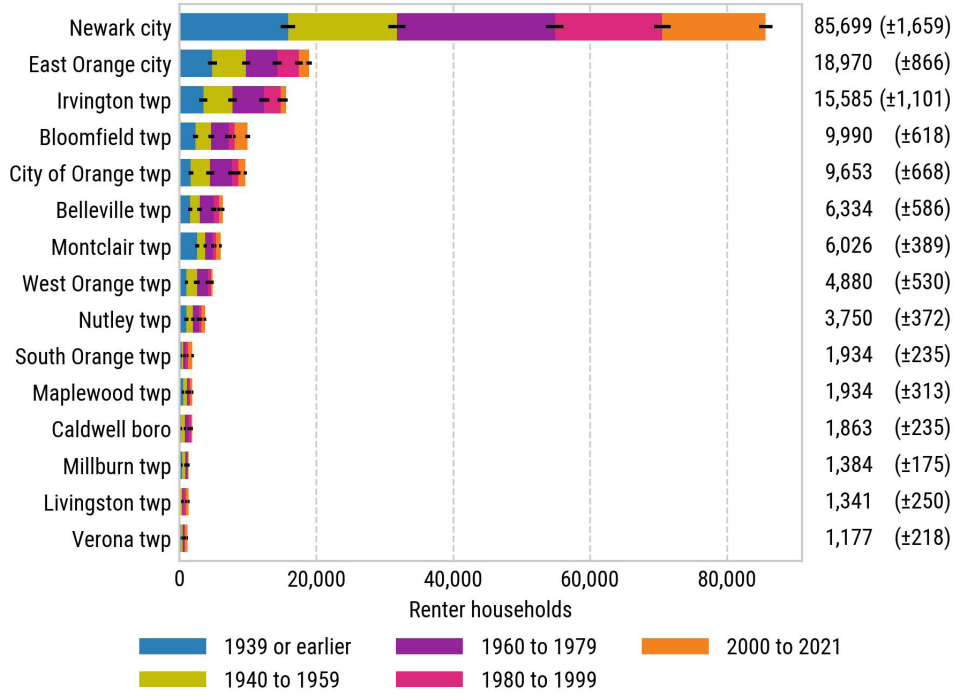
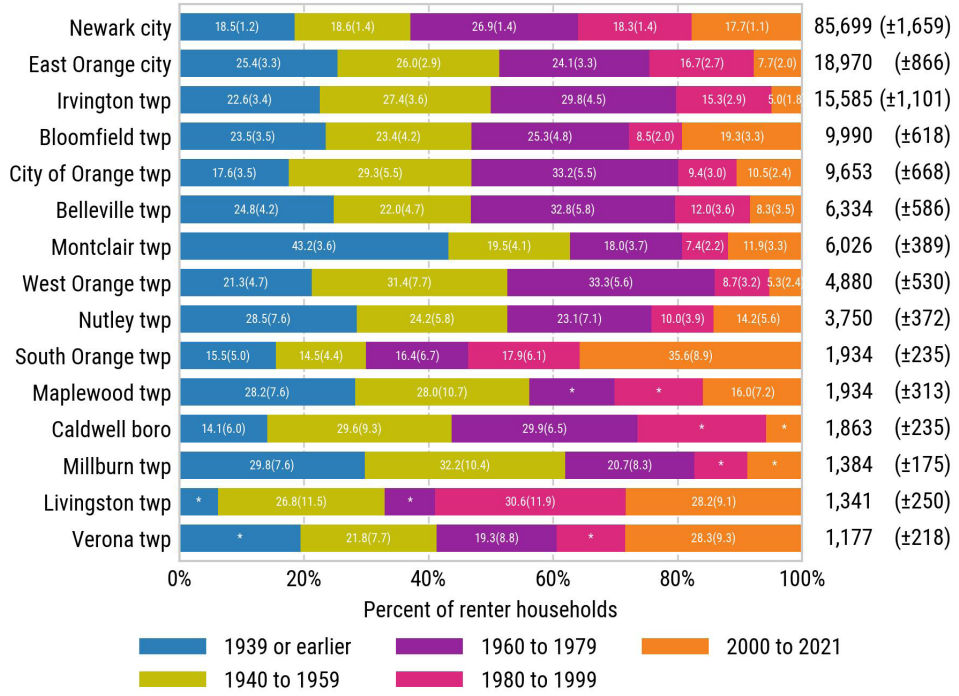


Fig. 3B: Share of Rental Units by Year Built



Data Source: 2022 Five-Year American Community Survey. The numbers to the right of the chart represent the estimated total number of renter households, with the margin of error indicated in parentheses. The black bars on the chart indicate the margin of error for each estimate. Municipalities with fewer than 1,000 rental units are excluded from figures. An "*" refers to imprecise estimates resulting from a small number of households.

Section 2: Rental Housing Characteristics, continued

Rental Unit Size

Different household types have varying rental housing needs. Large families need affordable units with multiple bedrooms while persons living alone or older adults are more likely to need smaller, one-bedroom units.

Approximately 11% of rental units in Essex County are studio apartments, which is higher than the statewide figure of 7%. One bedroom units comprise 32% of the rental housing stock, which is similar to the statewide figure of 33%. Thirty-four percent of rental units have two bedrooms, and 24% have three or more bedrooms. Essex County's three largest municipalities (Newark, East Orange, and Irvington) contain a mix of rental unit sizes. The county's smaller and more suburban municipalities have few studio apartments. One bedroom apartments make up the largest share of rental units in East Orange, Irvington, Bloomfield, West Orange, Nutley, South Orange, Maplewood, Caldwell, Millburn, and Verona. Two-bedroom units comprise the largest share in Newark, Orange, Belleville, and Montclair. The largest number of three or more bedroom units is in Newark, where they comprise 30% of the rental housing stock. Livingston, Millburn, Maplewood, and West Orange also have large shares of three or more bedroom units (see Fig. 4A & 4B).

Fig. 4A: Number of Rental Units by Number of Bedrooms

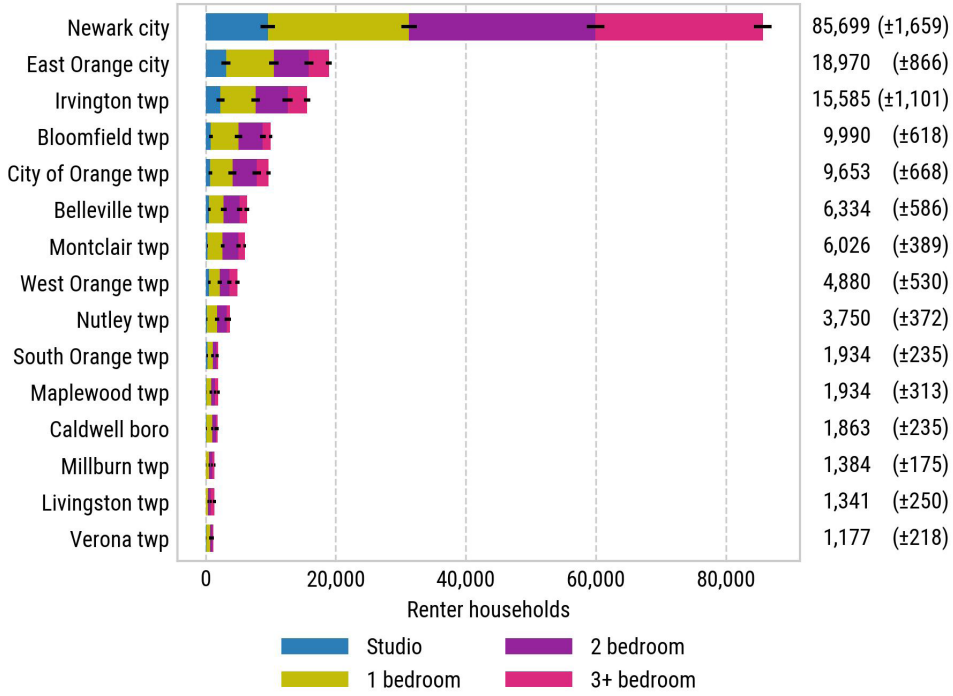
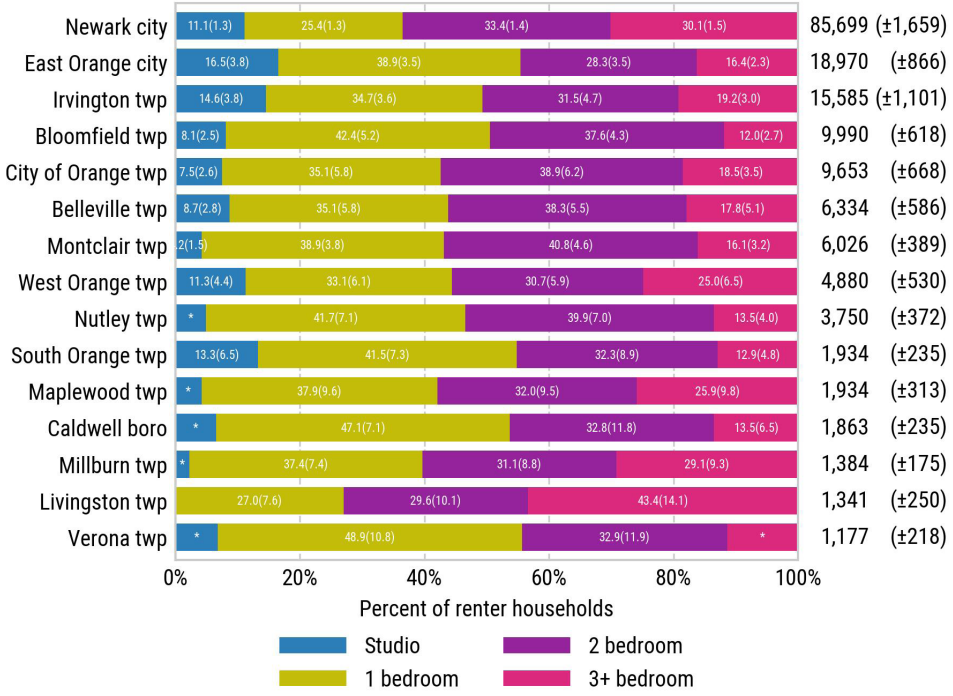


Fig. 4B: Share of Rental Units by Number of Bedrooms



Data Source: 2022 Five-Year American Community Survey. The numbers to the right of the chart represent the estimated total number of renter households, with the margin of error indicated in parentheses. The black bars on the chart indicate the margin of error for each estimate. Municipalities with fewer than 1,000 rental units are excluded from figures. An "*" refers to imprecise estimates resulting from a small number of households.

Section 3: Renter Characteristics

Size of Renter Households

Understanding patterns in local household composition illuminates demand for certain types of rental units and whether the existing landscape of rental units is meeting that demand. Figure 5A contains the number of renter households by the size of the household, and Figure 5B contains the share of renter households by size.

In Essex County, 40% of renters are single person households, which is slightly higher than the statewide figure of 36%. Twenty-five percent are two person households, 15% are three person households, and 20% are four or more person households. Most municipalities contain a mix of household sizes. Single person households comprise the largest share of renter households in all Essex County municipalities except for Millburn and Livingston. The largest shares of large (three or more person) households are in Livingston, Orange, and Newark. In Newark, 38% of renters are single person households, 23% are two-person households, 16% are three person households, and 23% are three or more person households (see Fig. 5A & 5B).

Fig. 5A: Number of Renter Households by Size

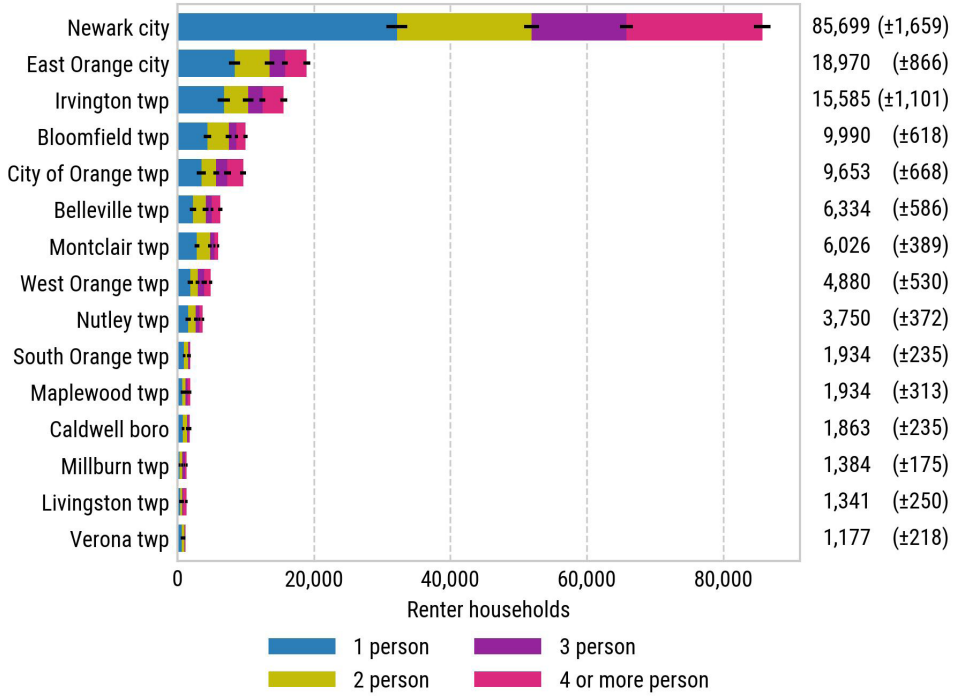
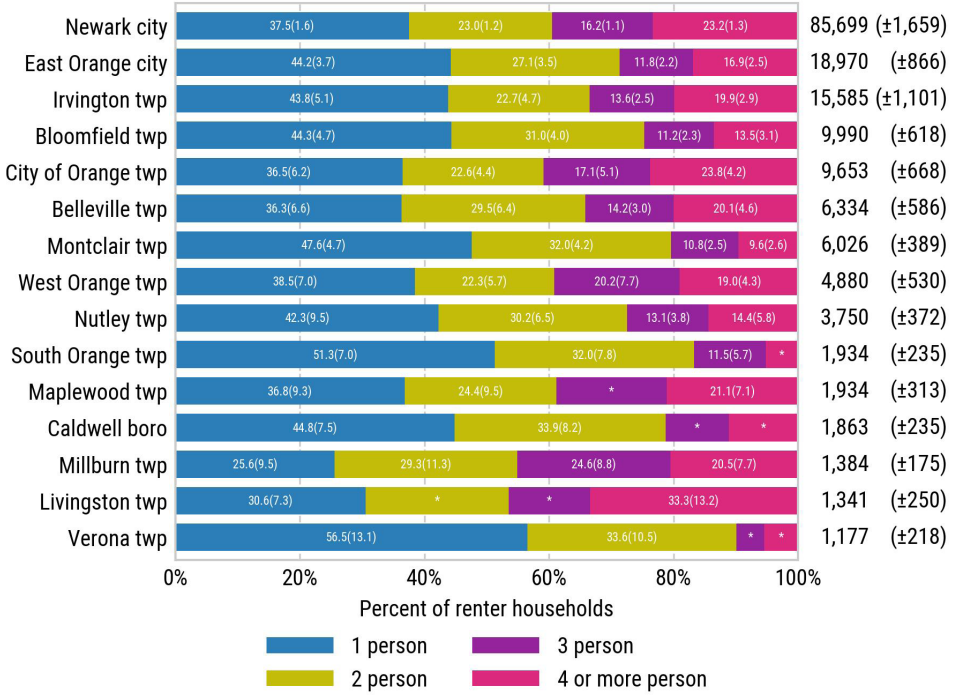


Fig. 5B: Share of Renter Households by Size



Data Source: 2022 Five-Year American Community Survey. The numbers to the right of the chart represent the estimated total number of renter households, with the margin of error indicated in parentheses. The black bars on the chart indicate the margin of error for each estimate. Municipalities with fewer than 1,000 rental units are excluded from figures. An "*" refers to imprecise estimates resulting from a small number of households.

Section 3: Renter Characteristics, continued

Householder Race

Essex County is very racially and ethnically diverse, and that diversity is reflected in the county's renter demographics. The Census Bureau treats race and ethnicity as separate categories. Therefore, Figures 6A and 6B show householder race for all ethnicities, and Figures 7A and 7B on the following page contains information about householder ethnicity. Black renters make up the largest share of renter households in East Orange (85%), Irvington (84%), Orange (64%), Newark (50%), and Maplewood (45%). Millburn and Livingston have large shares of Asian renters (25% and 14%, respectively). White renters make up more than half of renter householders in Verona (93%), Livingston (81%), Nutley (74%), Caldwell (68%), South Orange (67%), Montclair (62%), and Belleville (55%). Renters who identify as some other race (who are largely Hispanic/Latino) live in West Orange (20%), Newark (19%), Orange (15%), and Belleville (15%). Large shares of householders who identify as two or more races live in Orange (12%), Belleville (11%), and Newark (11%) (see Fig. 6A & 6B).

Fig. 6A: Number of Renter Householders by Race

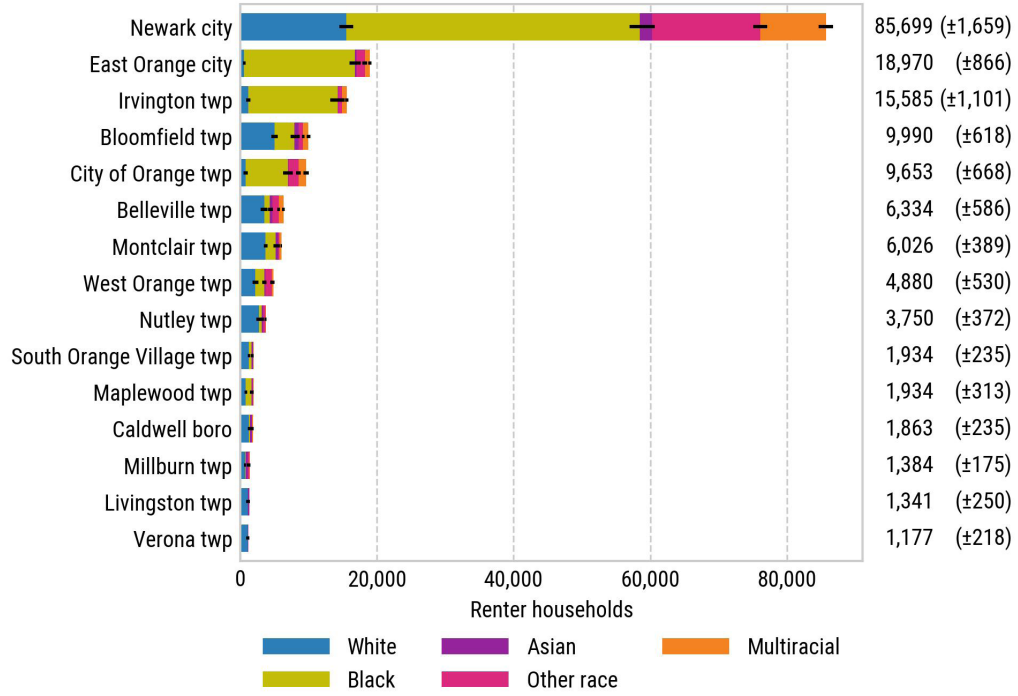
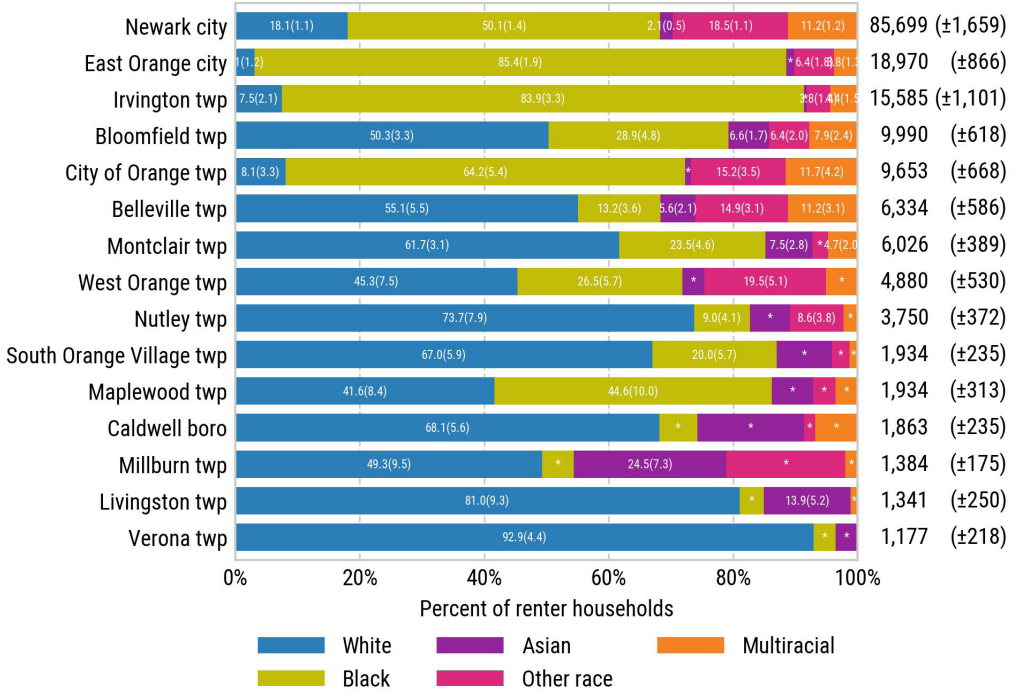


Fig. 6B: Share of Renter Householders by Race



Data Source: 2022 Five-Year American Community Survey. The numbers to the right of the chart represent the estimated total number of renter households, with the margin of error indicated in parentheses. The black bars on the chart indicate the margin of error for each estimate. Municipalities with fewer than 1,000 rental units are excluded from figures. An "*" refers to imprecise estimates resulting from a small number of households.

Section 3: Renter Characteristics, continued

Householder Ethnicity

Figures 7A and 7B contain information about the ethnicity of renter householders. Data are for all ethnicities regardless of race. For example, a renter who is of Hispanic/Latino origin could identify as white, Black, or some other race. The largest numbers of Hispanic/Latino renters in Essex County are in Newark, Belleville, and Orange. The largest shares of renters who identify as Hispanic/Latino live in Belleville (45%), Newark (34%), Orange (28%), and West Orange (24%). Over 90% of renters are not of Hispanic/Latino origin in East Orange, Irvington, Montclair, South Orange, Maplewood, Livingston, and Verona. Small numbers of renter households and correspondingly large margins of errors (reflected with an "*" in Fig. 7B) make it difficult to produce estimates for smaller municipalities (see Fig. 7A & 7B).

Fig. 7A: Number of Renter Households by Ethnicity

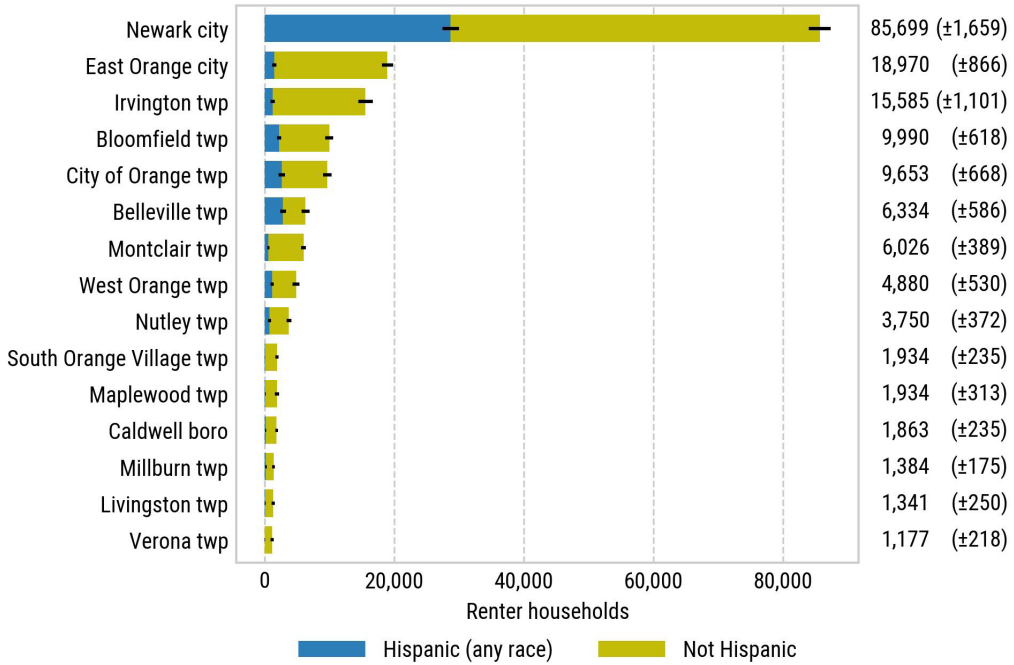
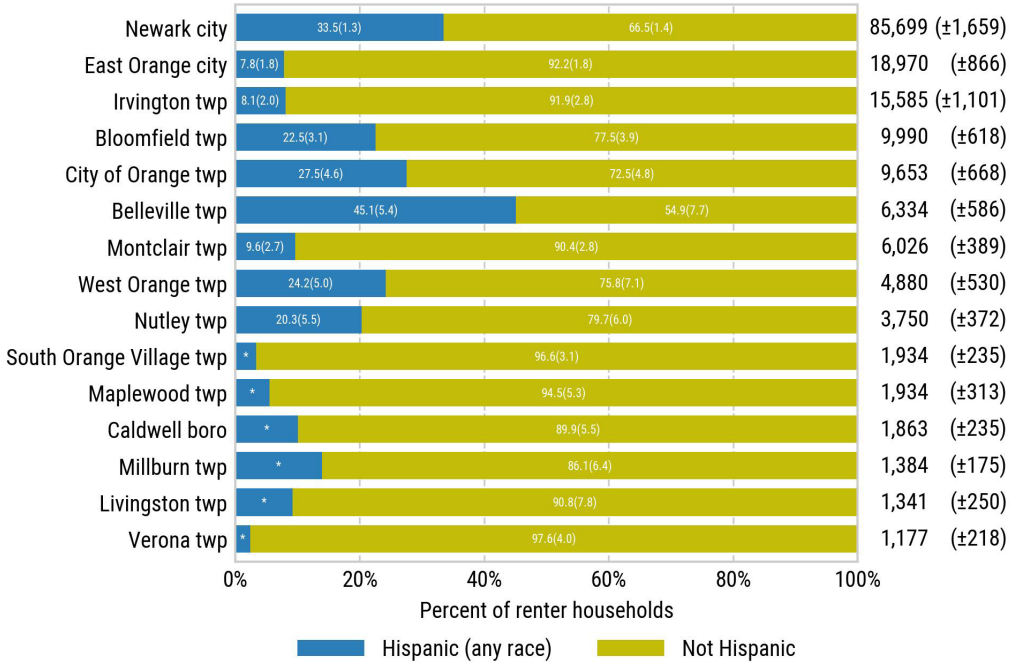


Fig. 7B: Share of Renter Households by Ethnicity



Data Source: 2022 Five-Year American Community Survey. The numbers to the right of the chart represent the estimated total number of renter households, with the margin of error indicated in parentheses. The black bars on the chart indicate the margin of error for each estimate. Municipalities with fewer than 1,000 rental units are excluded from figures. An "*" refers to imprecise estimates resulting from a small number of households.

Section 3: Renter Characteristics, continued

Age of Householder

Renters of different age groups have varying housing needs. Older adults may require units that are physically accessible for people with mobility impairments as they age and housing in close proximity to services and amenities like grocery stores. Younger households might face affordability and other challenges.

Most municipalities in Essex County contain a mix of renter ages. As the state's largest city, Newark contains the largest number of renters age 65 and older. However, the share of renters age 65 and older in Newark (16%) is small compared to other municipalities in Essex County, and is the second smallest only to Bloomfield (14%). The largest shares of renter householders age 65 and older are in Verona (39%), Livingston (34%), West Orange (32%), Caldwell (27%) and South Orange (25%). Large shares of younger renters (under age 35) reside in Bloomfield, Maplewood, Montclair, and East Orange (see Fig. 8A & 8B).

Fig. 8A: Number of Renter Households by Age of Householder

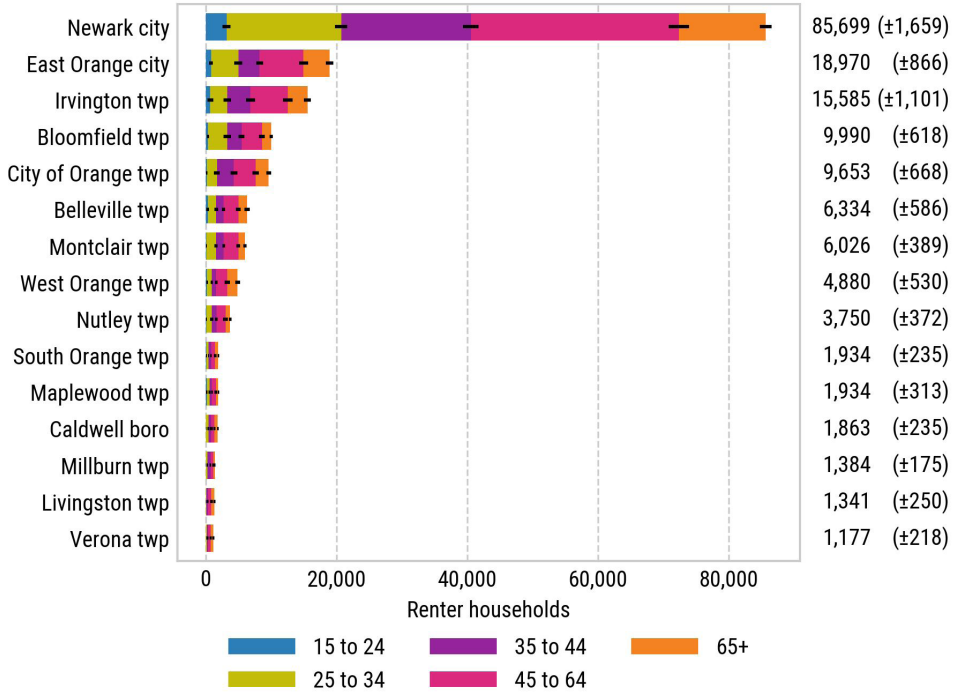
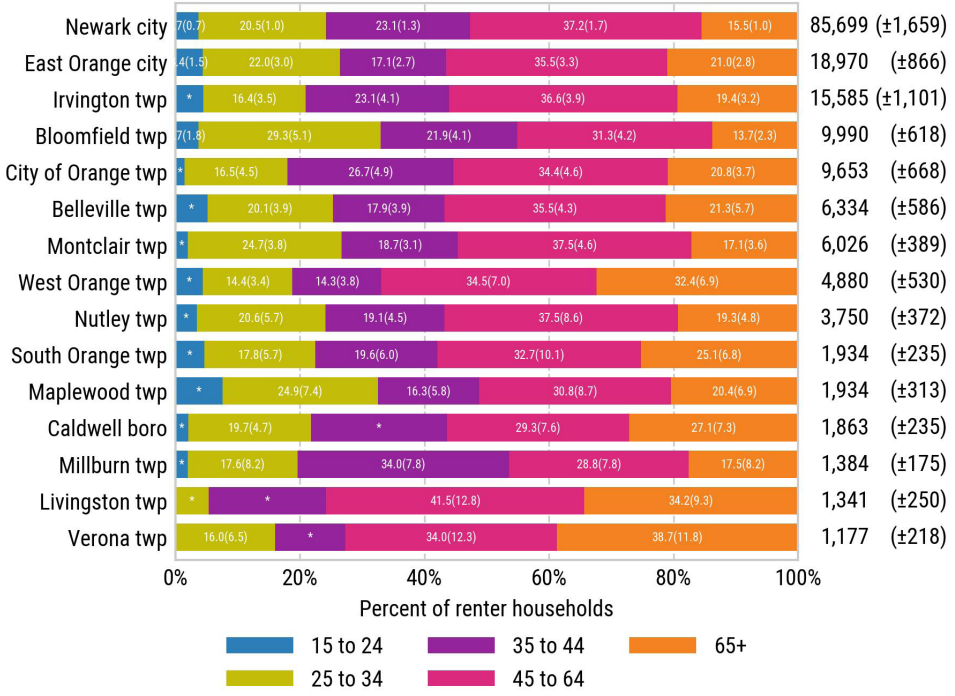


Fig 8B: Share of Renter Households by Age of Householder



Data Source: 2022 Five-Year American Community Survey. The numbers to the right of the chart represent the estimated total number of renter households, with the margin of error indicated in parentheses. The black bars on the chart indicate the margin of error for each estimate. Municipalities with fewer than 1,000 rental units are excluded from figures. An "*" refers to imprecise estimates resulting from a small number of households.

Section 4: Rental Housing Costs and Affordability

Household Annual Income

Low-income households face significant challenges finding housing that is safe and affordable. Moderate and middle-income households can also face affordability challenges in communities with high rents and a scarcity of affordable units. However, devoting a large share of household income to housing is most challenging for low-income households who have less income left over for other household expenses such as food or healthcare. Understanding renter income distribution can help communities plan for future rental housing needs.

Figures 9A and 9B show the number and share of renter households in each municipality by household income. Essex County has a larger share of low-income renters compared to New Jersey as a whole. One in four renter households has an income of less than $20,000 annually compared to 18% statewide. Newark has the largest number and share of renter households with incomes less than $20,000 at 29%. Orange (28%), East Orange (26%), and Irvington (25%) also have large shares of very low-income households. High income renters with incomes at or above $100,000 make up more than 40% of renter households in Millburn (50%), Livingston (48%), Montclair (43%), and South Orange (42%) (see Fig. 9A & Fig. 9B).

Fig. 9A: Number of Renter Households by Income

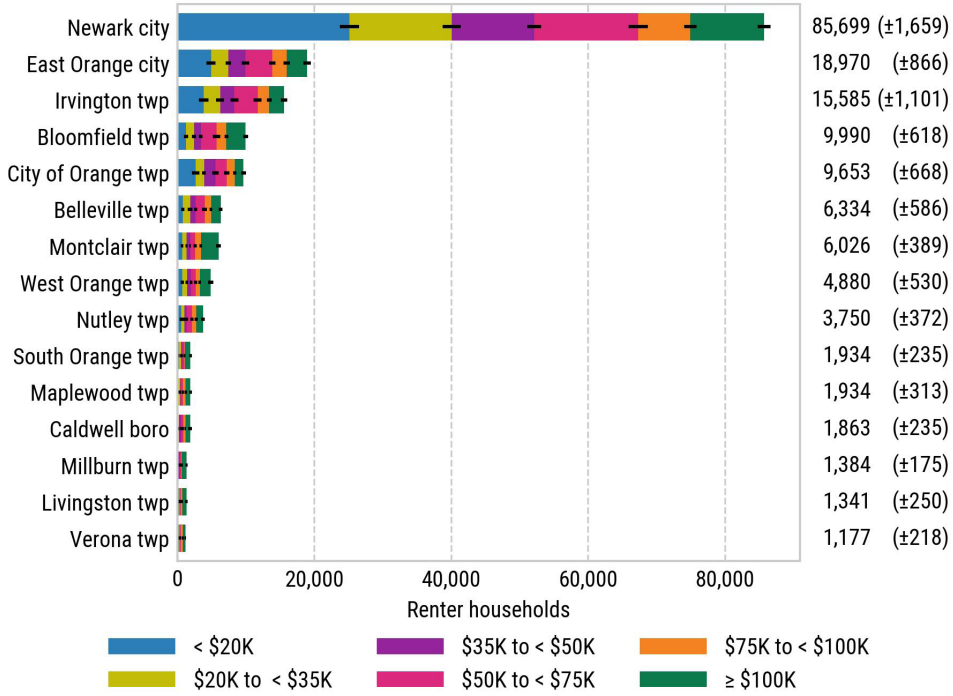
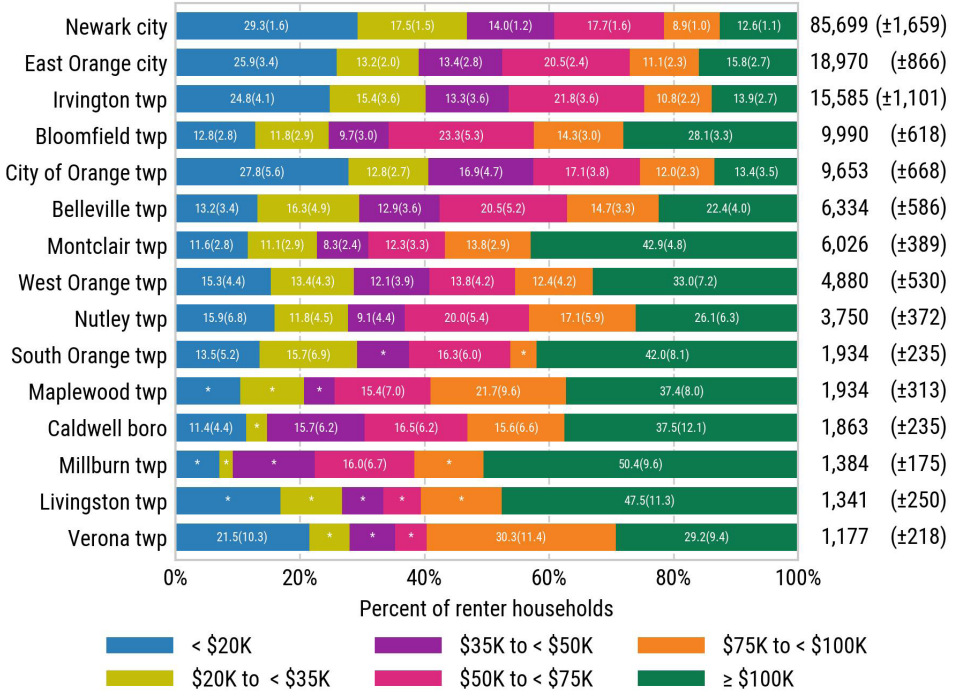


Fig. 9B: Share of Renter Households by Income



Data Source: 2022 Five-Year American Community Survey. The numbers to the right of the chart represent the estimated total number of renter households, with the margin of error indicated in parentheses. The black bars on the chart indicate the margin of error for each estimate. Municipalities with fewer than 1,000 rental units are excluded from figures. An "*" refers to imprecise estimates resulting from a small number of households.

Section 4: Rental Housing Costs and Affordability, continued

Rental Costs

Median gross rent in Essex County is $1,404 according to data from the 2022 Five-Year American Community Survey, which is slightly lower than the New Jersey median of $1,577. Rental prices vary greatly in Essex County based on municipality. In some suburban communities, the majority of units rent for over $1,500 per month. In Livingston, 70% of units rent for over $2000 followed by South Orange (54%), Millburn (53%), Maplewood (49%), Montclair (48%), and Verona (46%). The largest number and share of units renting for less than $800 per month are in Newark (20%), East Orange (18%), and Orange (16%) (some of these units may be federally assisted units with below-market rents). Municipalities with the largest shares of units renting from $800 to $1,249 include Irvington (36%), Newark (27%), East Orange (24%), and Orange (20%). Large shares of units with gross rents between $1,250 and $1,499 are in Belleville (25%), Irvington (22%), and Nutley (22%). Municipalities with large shares of units renting for $1,500 to $1,999 include Caldwell (39%), Nutley (37%), West Orange (37%), Orange (34%), and Millburn (34%). Note that large margins of error in smaller communities, indicated by an "*" in Fig. 10B, make estimates less reliable (see Fig. 10A & Fig. 10B).

Fig. 10A: Number of Rental Units by Gross Rent

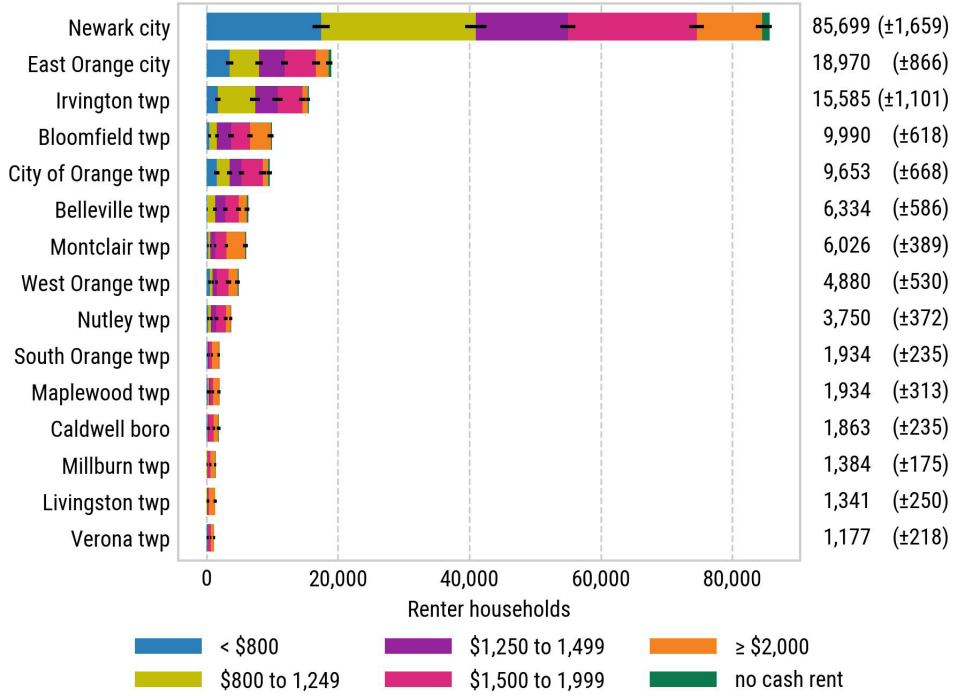
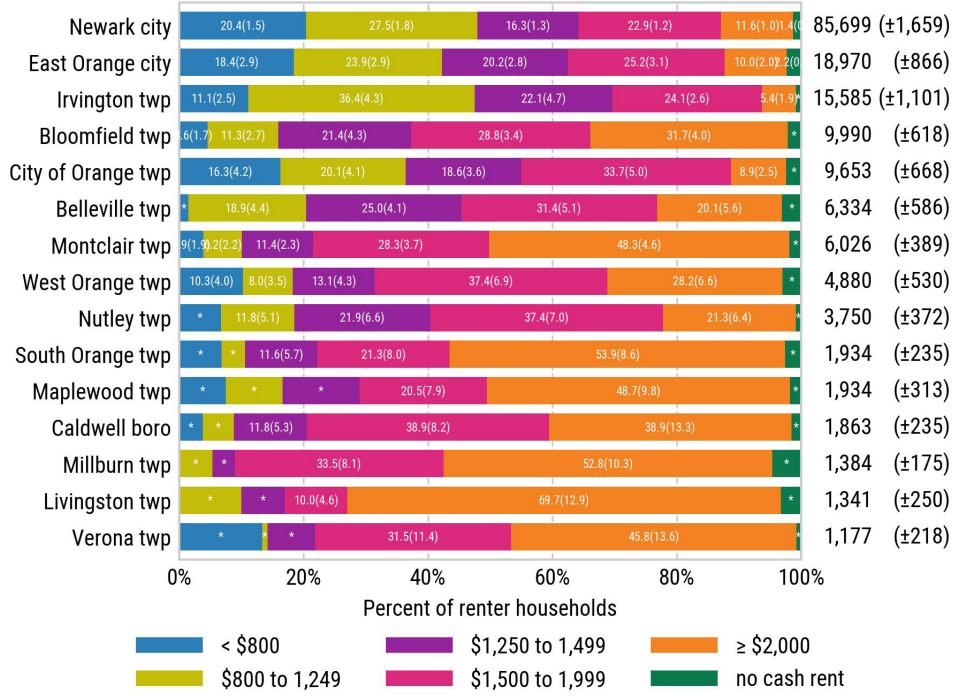


Fig. 10B: Share of Rental Units by Gross Rent



Data Source: 2022 Five-Year American Community Survey. The numbers to the right of the chart represent the estimated total number of renter households, with the margin of error indicated in parentheses. The black bars on the chart indicate the margin of error for each estimate. Municipalities with fewer than 1,000 rental units are excluded from figures. An "*" refers to imprecise estimates resulting from a small number of households.

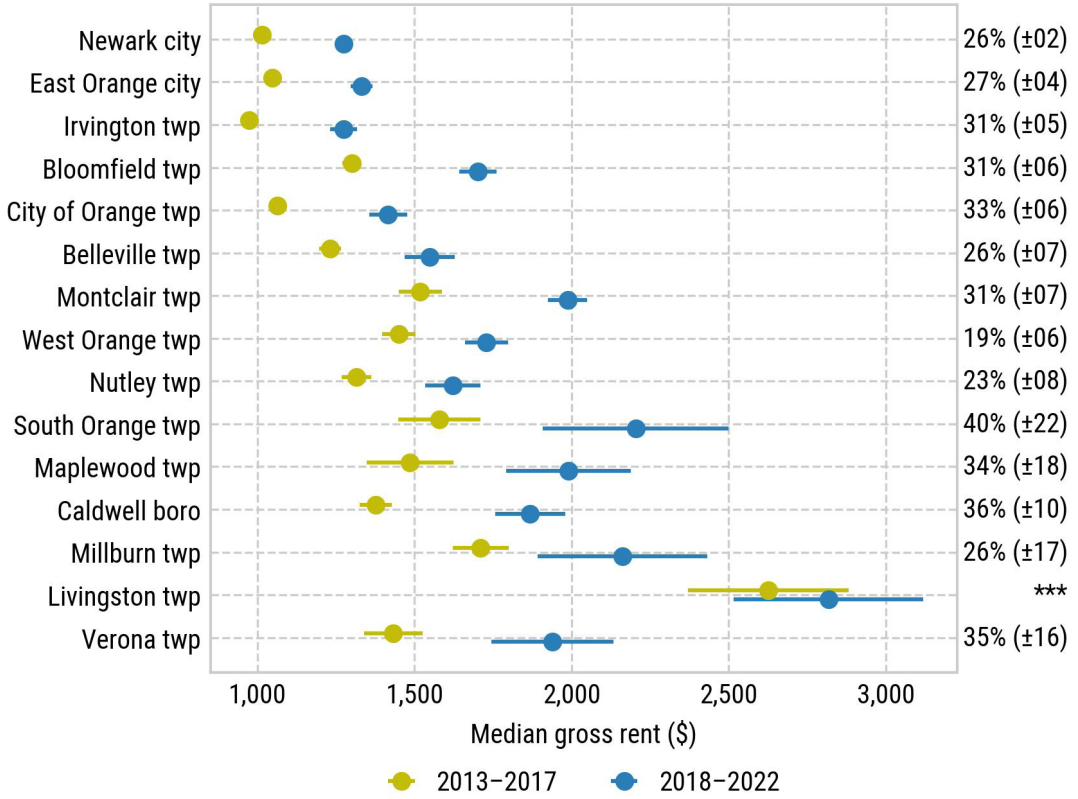
Section 4: Rental Housing Costs and Affordability, continued

Median Gross Rent over Time

Median gross rent in Essex County grew from $1,107 per the 2017 Five-Year American Community Survey (ACS) to $1,404 per the 2022 Five-Year ACS, which is an increase of $297 or 27%. Figure 11 shows the change for each municipality over this period. The green dots show median gross rent from the 2017 ACS in 2017 adjusted dollars, which includes survey responses from 2013 to 2017. The blue dot shows median gross rent for the 2022 Five-Year ACS in 2022 adjusted dollars, which includes survey responses from 2018 to 2022.

All municipalities in Essex County saw increases in median gross rent over this period. In Newark, where 48% of the county's renters live, median gross rent increased 26%. The largest increase was observed in South Orange at 40%. However, high margins of error, particularly for the 2022 figure, make discerning trends over time difficult. Other municipalities with large increases include Caldwell (36%), Maplewood (34%), and Orange (33%) (see Fig. 11).

Fig. 11: Change in Median Gross Rent Over Time



Data Source: 2017 and 2022 Five-Year American Community Survey. The numbers to the right of the chart represent the estimated percentage increase in median gross rent, with the margin of error indicated in parentheses. The blue and green horizontal bars on the chart indicate the margin of error for each estimate. Increases for Livingston were not calculated given high margins of error. Municipalities with fewer than 1,000 rental units are excluded from the figure.

Section 4: Rental Housing Costs and Affordability, continued

Rent Burden

According to criteria established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), households are considered rent burdened if they devote more than 30% of their income towards housing costs. Severely rent burdened households are those that spend 50% or more of income on housing costs.

In Essex County, more than half (52%) of renters are rent burdened, which is higher than the statewide figure of 48%. Twenty-eight percent are severely rent burdened (compared to 25% statewide). All Essex County municipalities contain rent burdened and severely rent burdened households. Rent burdened households outnumber those in units considered affordable in half of Essex County municipalities. The largest number and share of rent burdened households live in Newark where 55% of renter households are rent burdened and 31% are severely rent burdened. Newark is followed by Orange (55% and 30%), and Belleville (55% and 30%) (see Fig. 12A & Fig. 12B).

Fig. 12A: Gross Rent as a Pct. of Household Income (# of Households)

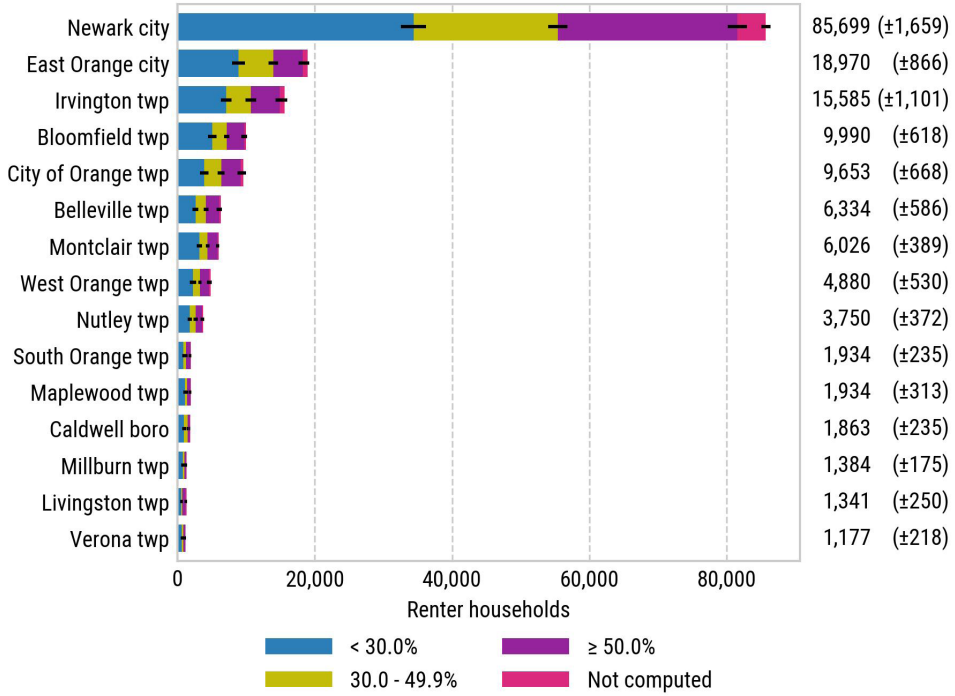
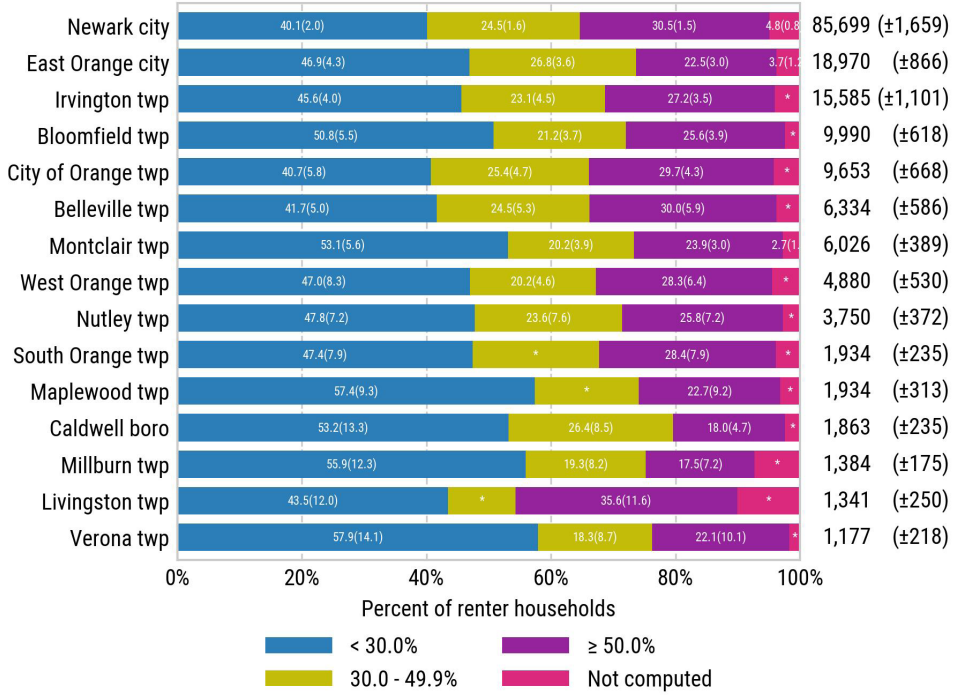


Fig. 12B: Gross Rent as a Pct. of Household Income (% of Households)



Data Source: 2021 Five-Year American Community Survey. The numbers to the right of the chart represent the estimated total number of renter households, with the margin of error indicated in parentheses. The black bars on the chart indicate the margin of error for each estimate. Municipalities with fewer than 500 rental units are excluded from figures. An "*" refers to imprecise estimates resulting from a small number of households.

Section 4: Rental Housing Costs and Affordability, continued

Rent Burden by Income

Low-income households are more likely to be rent burdened than their wealthier counterparts. Figures 13A and 13B present gross income as a percentage of household income by area median income (AMI). Data are available at the Public Use Microdata (PUMA) level and represent all renters in Essex County. According to HUD guidelines, households are considered rent burdened if they devote more than 30% of their income toward rent, and severely rent burdened if they devote more than 50% of income to rent.

The majority (79%) of Essex County's estimated 67,687 renter households with incomes less than 30% of the area median (less than $32,220 annually) are rent burdened, and 60% are severely rent burdened. The orange bars in Figures 13A & 13B represent households with zero or negative incomes, many of whom may be receiving some form of federal housing assistance. For households with incomes between 30% and 49% of AMI, an estimated 73% are rent burdened and 20% are severely rent burdened. Combined, this means roughly 76,300 or 77% of renter households with incomes below 50% of AMI (less than $53,700 annually) are rent burdened, and 46,700 or 47% are severely rent burdened in Essex County.

Few higher-income renters are rent burdened. Almost all renter households with incomes above 80% of the area median have rental costs that are less than 30% of household income.

Fig. 13A: Rent Burden by Household Income in Essex County (# of Households)

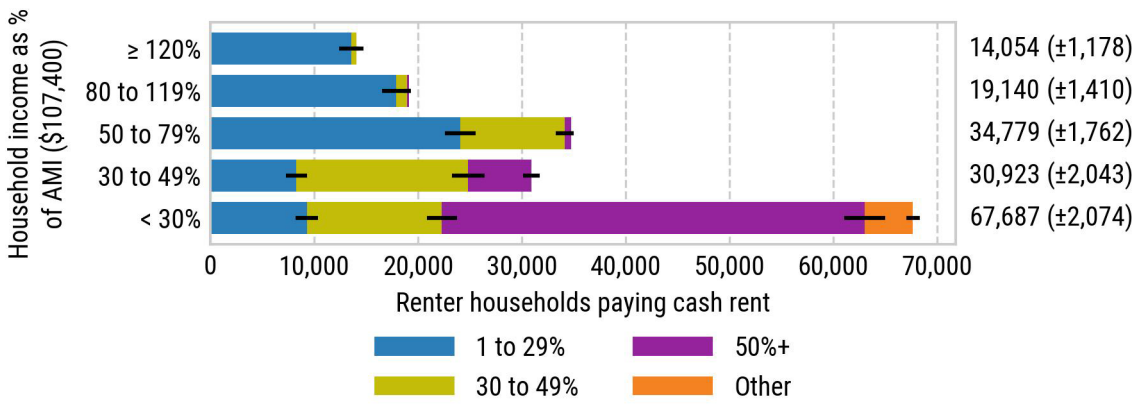
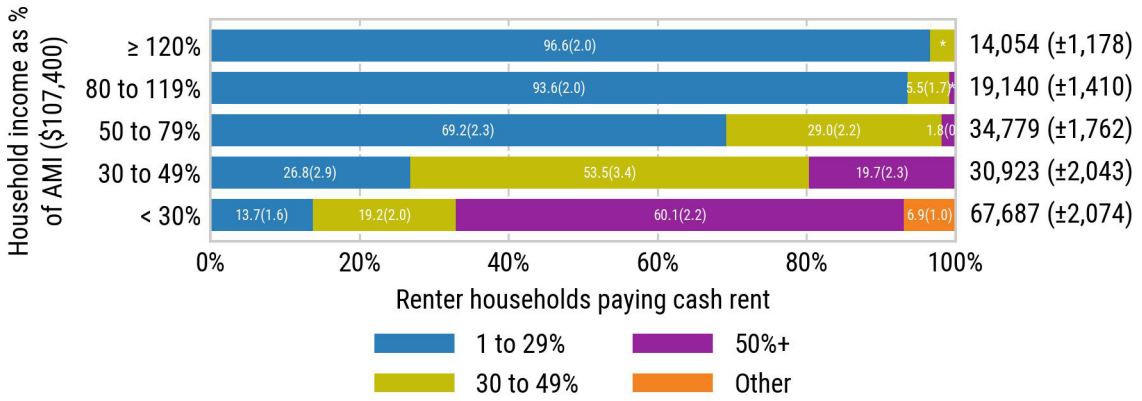


Fig. 13B: Rent Burden by Household Income in Essex County (% of Households)



Data Source: 2021 Five Year American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMA). The black bars on the chart indicate the margin of error for each estimate. An "*" refers to imprecise estimates resulting from a small number of households.

Section 5: Unhoused Persons & Homelessness Programs

The Newark/Essex County Continuum of Care (CoC) is the local planning body that coordinates housing and services for homeless families and individuals in Essex County. Each year, every CoC must submit "Point-in-Time" (PIT) data to HUD on the number of persons experiencing homelessness within the CoC's jurisdiction on a designated night in January. "Homelessness" is defined in the PIT data as residing in emergency shelters or transitional housing or sleeping in places not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation (e.g., abandoned buildings, train stations, or camping grounds) on the night of the count. This is a narrow definition of homelessness and does not capture those who are unstably or impermanently housed such as "couch surfers" or persons staying temporarily with family or friends. There were 1,595 unhoused persons in Essex County on the evening of the 2023 PIT count. Note not all shelters report PIT data (i.e., shelters not receiving HUD funding and some domestic violence shelters). Most unhoused persons (70%) were residing in emergency shelters, 22% were in transitional housing, and 8% were unsheltered (see Table 2).

Table 2: Number of Unhoused Persons (Sheltered and Unsheltered)

	Unhoused Persons	
	#	%
Emergency Shelters	1,119	70%
Transitional Housing	350	22%
Unsheltered	126	8%
Total	**1,595**	**100%**

Data Source: 2023 HUD PIT count as published by the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Financing Agency (NJHMFA) and Monarch Housing Associates.

Of the 1,153 households counted in the PIT, 210 or 18% were households with children under age 18. Of these, 141 were in emergency shelters, 67 were in transitional housing, and two were unsheltered. Of the 930 households comprised of only adults, 72% were in emergency shelters, 15% were in transitional housing, and 116 households were unsheltered. There were 12 unaccompanied minors in emergency shelters and one in transitional housing (see Table 3).

Table 3: Household Characteristics for Unhoused Persons

	Households w/ Adults & Children	Households with Only Adults (Incl. Single Adults)	Households with Only Children	Total
Emergency Shelters	141	673	12	826
Transitional Housing	67	141	1	209
Unsheltered	2	116	0	118
Total	**210**	**930**	**13**	**1,153**

Data Source: 2023 HUD PIT count as published by NJHMFA and Monarch Housing Associates.

Unhoused persons in Essex County span all age groups. One in four unhoused persons was a child under age 18. Nine percent or 136 were young adults age 18 to 24. Eighty-six (5%) were adults age 65 and older, including 14 persons who were unsheltered (see Table 4).

Table 4: Age of Unhoused Persons

Age	Emergency Shelters	Transitional Housing	Unsheltered	Total
0-5	134	53	4	191
6-17	132	77	0	209
18-24	113	17	6	136
25-34	183	54	18	255
35-44	151	53	30	234
45-54	158	34	29	221
55-64	180	46	22	248
65+	56	16	14	86
Info missing	12	0	3	15
Total	**1,119**	**350**	**126**	**1,595**

Data Source: 2023 HUD PIT count as published by NJHMFA and Monarch Housing Associates.

Section 5: Unhoused Persons & Homelessness Programs, continued

There are 32 emergency shelter programs in Essex County. Thirty are brick-and-mortar emergency shelters and two are voucher programs. Essex County has 11 transitional housing programs, all of which are single-site programs. There are 41 permanent supportive housing programs in the county, which are a mix of site-based and tenant-based/voucher programs. Essex county has 20 rapid re-housing programs, all of which are tenant-based/voucher programs, and one other permanent supportive housing tenant-based/voucher program. Some beds in certain programs are reserved for special populations including 328 reserved for veterans, 756 for those who are chronically unhoused, and 129 for youth (see Table 5).

Table 5: Beds and Units by Program Type

			Year-Round Beds						Subset of Total Bed Inventory		
	# of Facilities/ Programs	Family Units	Family	Adult-Only	Child-Only	Total	Seasonal	Overflow/ Voucher	Chronic	Veteran	Youth
Emergency Shelters	32	218	603	660	0	1,263	0	78	na	34	48
Transitional Housing	11	114	304	144	0	448	na	na	na	4	16
Permanent Supportive Housing	41	257	509	633	0	1,142	na	na	756	281	61
Rapid Re-Housing	20	58	154	446	0	600	na	na	na	9	4
Other Permanent Housing	1	30	55	12	0	67	na	na	na	0	0
Total	**105**	**677**	**1,625**	**1,895**	**0**	**3,520**	**0**	**78**	**756**	**328**	**129**

Data Source: 2023 HUD Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Programs Housing Inventory Count Report.

Section 6: The Landscape of Housing Assistance

Federally Assisted Units

Multiple federal programs together comprise the landscape of assisted housing in Essex County. There are roughly 30,000 brick-and-mortar assisted units in Essex County. In addition, there are roughly 12,000 Housing Choice Vouchers (see Table 7 on page 20). Vouchers exist in two forms: 1) Tenant-Based Vouchers for use in the private rental housing market (which may include LIHTC properties); and 2) Project-Based Vouchers tied to units in specific buildings (of which there are at least 2,269 in Essex County).

The first column of Table 6 on the next page contains the total number of units with select federal project-based assistance by municipality. Subsequent columns contain the number of units with each type of federal subsidy. Roughly 7,000 or 23% of units receive multiple forms of federal assistance (e.g., a Public Housing unit with a LIHTC subsidy). Therefore, some units are counted more than once in the "Units Assisted" columns, but are only counted once in the first column of Table 6. In Essex County, 13,696 units receive LIHTC subsidies. 12,774 units are supported through the Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA) program. 6,937 units are Public Housing. At least 2,269 units receive a Project-Based Voucher. 1,462 units are funded through the Section 202 Housing for the Elderly program, and 106 are Section 811 units for people with disabilities. Eighteen of Essex County's 22 municipalities contain project-based federally assisted housing units. Four contain Public Housing units, with most units located in Newark. Nine contain LIHTC units; 13 have Section 8 PBRA units; 12 have 811 units; 10 have Section 202 units; and at least four have Project-Based Vouchers.

Section 6: The Landscape of Housing Assistance, continued

Federally Assisted Units, continued

Roughly 16% of all rental units in Essex County receive some form of project-based federal housing assistance. Shares of units with assistance varied by municipality. In North Caldwell, which has a small overall number of rental units, half of all units are federally assisted. In Newark, 23% of units are federally assisted, and in Orange, 22% are federally assisted. Municipalities with small shares of rental units that are federally assisted include Belleville (1%), Glen Ridge (1%), Livingston (1%), West Caldwell (2%), and Bloomfield (3%) (see Table 6).

Table 6: Select Federally Assisted Project-Based Units by Municipality

	Total Units	Units Assisted by Select Programs (units can be assisted by more than one program)						% of Rental Units with Federal Assistance
		LIHTC	Section 8 PBRA	Public Housing	RAD PBV	Section 202	Section 811	
Belleville	91	85	0	0	0	0	6	1%
Bloomfield	335	99	99	0	131	99	6	3%
Caldwell	159	0	159	0	0	0	0	9%
Cedar Grove	149	0	149	0	0	149	0	15%
City of Orange	2,230	1,560	699	262	0	99	0	22%
East Orange	3,397	2,089	2,136	63	400	76	4	16%
Glen Ridge	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	1%
Irvington	1,417	302	453	662	0	134	0	8%
Livingston	11	0	0	0	0	0	11	1%
Maplewood	122	0	113	0	0	0	9	5%
Montclair	455	109	354	0	0	276	0	7%
Newark City	20,790	9,086	7,970	5,950	1,580	18	40	23%
North Caldwell	49	49	0	0	0	0	0	50%
Nutley	208	0	134	0	0	205	3	5%
South Orange	71	65	65	0	0	65	6	4%
Verona	162	0	159	0	0	0	3	11%
West Caldwell	11	0	0	0	0	0	11	2%
West Orange	621	252	284	0	158	341	4	11%
Total	**30,281**	**13,696**	**12,774**	**6,937**	**2,269**	**1,462**	**106**	**16%**

Data Source: NJHMFA 2022 and HUD 2024. Data were compiled using an NJSOARH process which involved geocoding datasets, triangulating with other data sources, and manually checking uncertain results. The first column contains the total number of units with select federal project-based assistance. Subsequent columns contain the number of units with each type of federal subsidy. Some units have multiple subsidies and are counted more than once in the "Units Assisted" columns, but are only counted once in the first column. Share of rental units with federal assistance is estimated by dividing the total number of assisted units by the number of rental units per the 2020 Census. Not included are 40 Pension Fund units, all located in Newark. "RAD" refers to Rental Assistance Demonstration, and "PBV" refers to Project-Based Vouchers. Note these data have been updated from an earlier version of this report for a net addition of 43 units in the county.

Section 6: The Landscape of Housing Assistance, continued

Location of Federally Assisted Units

Figure 14A depicts the number of project-based federally assisted brick-and-mortar units by census tract in Essex County. Reflecting in part Essex County's density patterns, federally assisted units exist in large numbers in the eastern portion of the county in Newark, particularly the Central Ward and northern and southern portions of the city, East Orange, Orange, and parts of Irvington. Fewer units are located in the county's western and more suburban communities.

Fig. 14B shows the share of all rental units that have some form of federal assistance by census tract (excluding private market tenant-based Housing Choice Vouchers). For several tracts in Newark, more than 60% of all rental units have some form of federal assistance. Other parts of the county with large shares (greater than 40%) of units with federal assistance include multiple tracts in East Orange, the northern part of Orange, a tract in the central part of Irvington, and North Caldwell. Many tracts throughout the county include no federally assisted units and are depicted in white.

Fig. 14A: Total Federally Assisted Units by Census Tract

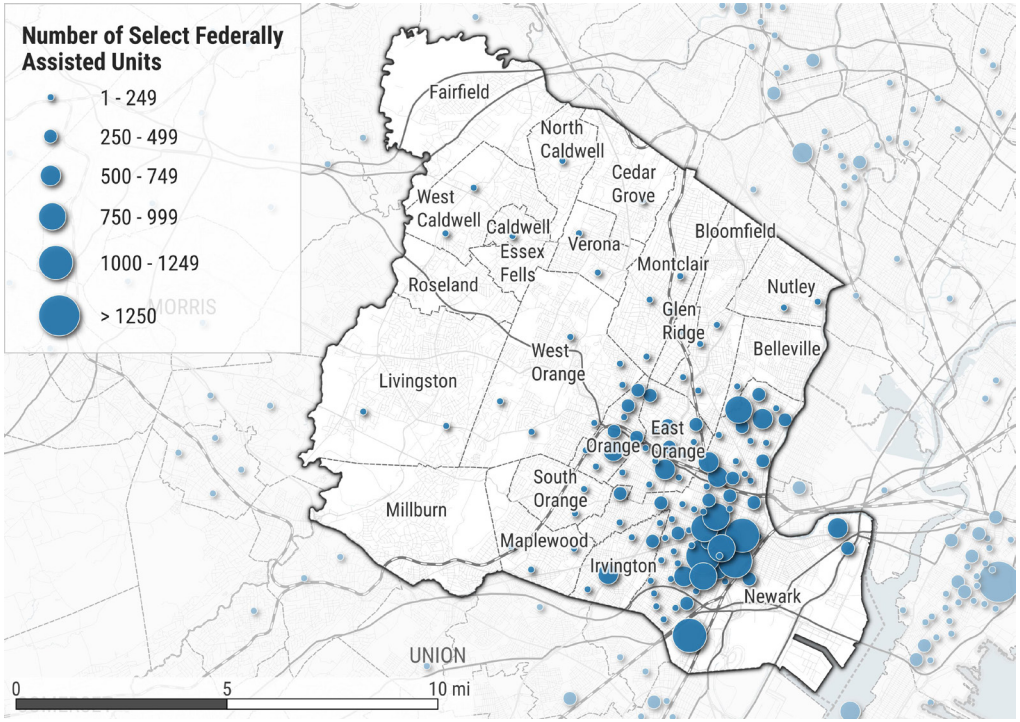
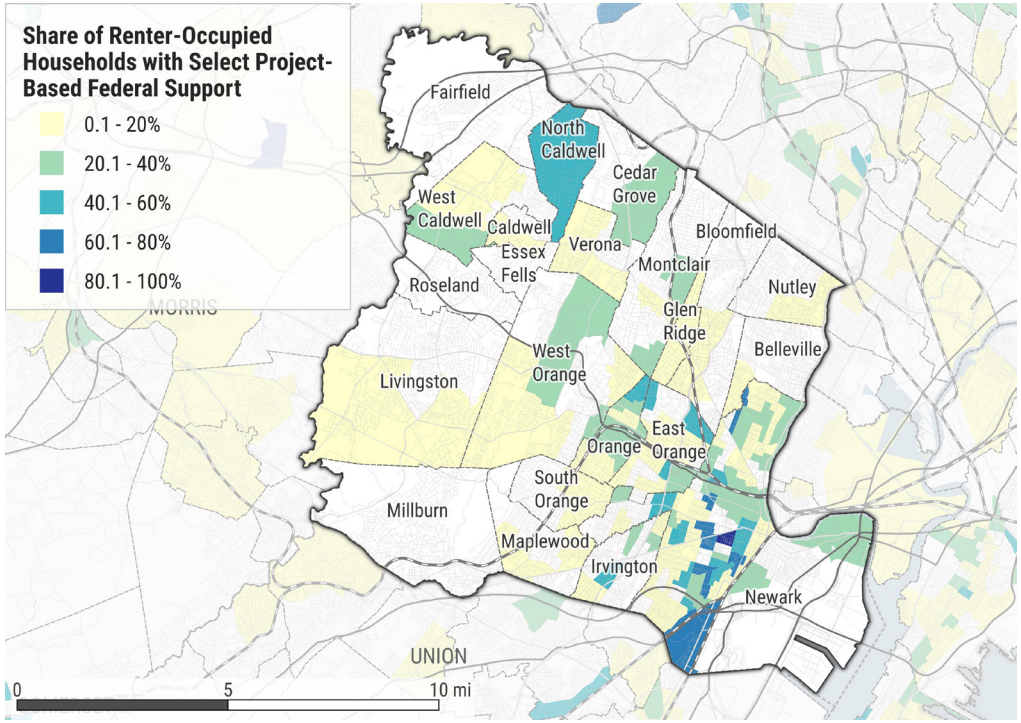


Fig. 14B: Share of Rental Units with Federal Assistance by Census Tract



Data Source: NJHMFA 2022 and HUD 2024. Data were compiled using an NJSOARH process which involved geocoding datasets, triangulating with other data sources, and manually checking uncertain results. Total renter occupied units used to calculate shares in Fig. 14B is from the 2020 Census.

Section 6: The Landscape of Housing Assistance, continued

Housing Choice Vouchers

There were approximately 12,816 Tenant- and Project-Based Vouchers in use in Essex County in 2023. Newark had the largest number of vouchers at 8,393 followed by East Orange at 1,866. Four municipalities had no vouchers (see Table 7).

Table 7: Number of Housing Choice Vouchers by Municipality

Municipality	Number of Vouchers	Municipality	Number of Vouchers
Belleville	137	Maplewood	20
Bloomfield	396	Millburn	2
Caldwell	4	Montclair	199
Cedar Grove	2	Newark city	8,393
City of Orange	597	North Caldwell	3
East Orange	1,866	Nutley	22
Essex Fells	0	Roseland	0
Fairfield	4	South Orange Village	11
Glen Ridge	0	Verona	3
Irvington	915	West Caldwell	0
Livingston	6	West Orange	236
County Total			**12,816**

Data Source: 2023 HUD Picture of Subsidized Households (PSH) and represent total reported households. In cases where a geography had fewer than 11 reported households and the data are suppressed, total units is reported.

Characteristics of HUD Units and Households

HUD programs house roughly 55,000 people across four programs in Essex County. The average number of people per unit ranged from 1.1 for 202 and 811 units to 2.1 for Housing Choice Vouchers, reflecting the different populations they serve. More than half (54%) of units are studio/efficiency/one bedroom units, 24% are two bedroom units, and 22% are three or more bedroom units (see Table 8). The average time tenants spent on a waiting list before receiving a HUD-assisted unit was 53 months (over four years). This is higher than the statewide average of 33 months, or 2.75 years. The average length of time a household has been in their unit is over 9 years (116 months). Long waiting lists and little turnover reflect the difficulty of accessing HUD housing and the strong need for affordable units. Average gross rent in assisted units was $453, which for most programs is set at 30% of a household's income. HUD rents are considerably lower than market rate rents, and if these units are lost, it is unlikely households would be able to find unsubsidized units that are affordable (see Table 9).

Table 8: Characteristics of HUD-Subsidized Units

	# of Units	# of People	People Per Unit	Bedroom Size		
				0-1BR	2BR	3+BR
Public Housing	6,093	8,983	1.7	54%	22%	25%
Hsg. Choice Vouchers	12,816	27,314	2.1	36%	31%	33%
Mod Rehab	50	-	-	-	-	-
Proj. Based Sec. 8	12,625	18,186	1.5	73%	18%	10%
S236/BMIR	123	-	-	-	-	-
202/PRAC	277	298	1.1	100%	0%	0%
811/PRAC	106	99	1.1	100%	0%	0%
All HUD Programs	**32,090**	**54,979**	**1.8**	**54%**	**24%**	**22%**

Data Source: 2023 HUD PSH. Voucher totals, which includes total reported households, may differ from Table 7 given the data come from different geographic aggregations. Mod Rehab and S236/BMIR units are not included in subsequent tables due to a lack of data.

Table 9: HUD Program Waiting List and Tenure

	Months on Waiting List	Months Since Moved In	Avg. Gross Rent
Public Housing	60	168	$434
Housing Choice Vouchers	51	105	$500
Proj. Based Sec. 8	na	113	$413
202/PRAC	na	100	$408
811/PRAC	na	150	$321
All HUD Programs	**53**	**119**	**$453**

Data Source: 2023 HUD PSH.

Section 6: The Landscape of Housing Assistance, continued

HUD programs serve some of Essex County's most vulnerable renter households. Average annual household income (irrespective of household size) ranged from $13,571 for residents in 811/PRAC units to $20,163 for Public Housing residents. Fifteen percent of households have annual incomes less than $10,000, and 79% of households have incomes less than 30% of area median family income (see Table 10).

Table 10: HUD Program Household Income Characteristics

	Avg. Household Income	Share with Incomes <$10k	Share with Inc. <30% AMI
Public Housing	$19,659	13%	81%
Hsg. Choice Vouchers	$20,163	17%	76%
Proj. Based Sec. 8	$17,655	14%	82%
202/PRAC	$18,394	8%	80%
811/PRAC	$13,571	12%	96%
All HUD Programs	**$19,045**	**15%**	**79%**

Data Source: 2023 HUD PSH.

Forty-four percent of Essex County households in HUD subsidized housing had a householder or spouse age 62 or older, and 4% had a householder or spouse age 85 or older. Twenty-nine percent of households include children under age 18, and 22% of residents have a disability (see Table 11).

Seventy percent of householders in HUD assisted housing identify as Black (both Hispanic/Latino and non-Hispanic/Latino), 22% are Hispanic/Latino (of any race), 7% are White and Non-Hispanic/Latino, and 1% are Asian/Pacific Islander (see Table 12).

Table 11: HUD Program Household Demographics

	Pct. Age 62+	Pct. Age 85+	Pct. of Households with Children	Pct. with a Disability
Public Housing	38%	2%	24%	37%
Housing Choice Vouchers	28%	2%	40%	22%
Proj. Based Sec. 8	63%	8%	20%	14%
202/PRAC	100%	20%	0%	9%
811/PRAC	41%	2%	4%	94%
All HUD Programs	**44%**	**4%**	**29%**	**22%**

Data Source: 2023 HUD PSH.

Table 12: Householder Race/Ethnicity

	Public Housing	Hsg. Choice Vouchers	Proj. Based Sec. 8	202/ PRAC	811/ PRAC	All HUD Progr.
Non-Hispanic/Latino	80%	84%	71%	84%	98%	**78%**
Black	75%	78%	56%	36%	58%	**68%**
Nat. Amer./AK Nat.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	**0%**
Asian/Pacific Isl.	0%	0%	1%	4%	1%	**1%**
White	5%	5%	8%	39%	37%	**7%**
Hispanic/Latino	20%	16%	29%	16%	2%	**22%**
Black	2%	3%	2%	0%	0%	**2%**
White	17%	13%	12%	6%	0%	**13%**
Other	0%	1%	14%	9%	2%	**6%**
Multiple Races	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	**0%**

Data Source: 2023 HUD PSH. Note that missing data and rounding may result in figures not totaling to 100%.

Section 7: Rent Control Ordinances

Over 100 municipalities in New Jersey have some form of a rent control ordinance that limits the amount rent can increase each year for certain units. Sixteen of Essex County's 22 municipalities have some form of rent control. Rent increase caps range from 2.5% to 5.5% or are pinned to the Consumer Price Index. Some ordinances specify different limits based on certain conditions, such as whether heat is included in rent or if the landlord resides in the building. Six municipalities (Essex Fells, Fairfield, Glen Ridge, Livingston, Millburn, and North Caldwell) do not have rent control ordinances. For a more comprehensive discussion of rent control in New Jersey, see NJSOARH's report Rent Control in New Jersey.

Table 13: Municipalities with Rent Control

Municipality	Units Covered	Link to Ordinance	Municipality	Units Covered	Link to Ordinance
Belleville	4+	https://ecode360.com/36464465	Montclair	2+	https://ecode360.com/35904165
Bloomfield	6+	https://www.bloomfieldtwpnj.com/DocumentCenter/View/7590/Township-Code---Chapter-435---Rent-Control-PDF	Newark city	3+	https://ecode360.com/36623772
Caldwell	2+	https://caldwell-nj.com/vertical/sites/%7B6BAC054F-223B-4082-A606-DE1D76D33F98%7D/uploads/RentOrdinance.pdf	Nutley	4+	https://ecode360.com/12133328
Cedar Grove	2+	https://ecode360.com/9245509	Roseland	3+; 2+ with non-resident owner	https://ecode360.com/34667016#34667016
City of Orange	4+	https://ecode360.com/34549023	South Orange	3+	https://southorange.municipalcodeonline.com/book?type=ordinances#name=Ch_254_Rental_Property
East Orange	4+	https://ecode360.com/9565553	Verona	4+	https://ecode360.com/VE0815/laws/LF1315140.pdf
Irvington	3+	https://ecode360.com/30526708	West Caldwell	2+	https://ecode360.com/35357803#35357803
Maplewood	3+	https://ecode360.com/9420567	West Orange	4+	https://ecode360.com/35629993

Data Source: 2022 NJ Department of Community Affairs Rent Control Survey

Conclusion

The Essex County rental housing profile is intended to provide easy access to information about rental housing. The report provides this information at the county level, while also presenting a within-county analysis of municipal conditions. Many of the figures contained in the report rely on American Community Survey data, which, as a survey, has a margin of error. As such, one should proceed with caution when interpreting data for municipalities with small populations. Together, these data can be used with other information to further a holistic understanding of rental housing conditions and challenges in the county.



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