



Housing Alliance  
of Pennsylvania

# It's a COVID Market! The Pandemic's Impact on Rental Housing

Homes Within Reach Conference

December 2, 2021

# Presenters



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- Tom Campbell, Director of Housing Initiatives, Pocono Mountains United Way
- Matthew Hess, Executive Director, Columbia County Housing & Redevelopment Authorities
- Moderator: Gale Schwartz, Associate Director, Policy & Strategic Initiatives, Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania

# Renters Before COVID 19

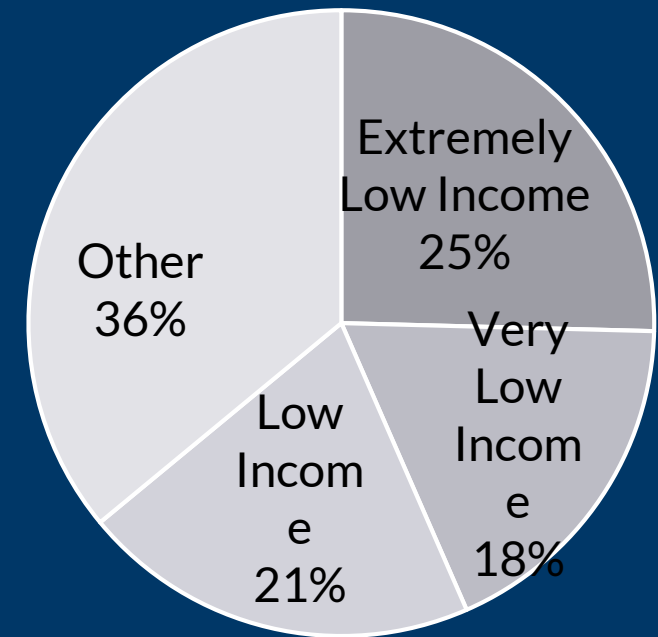


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## Of all Pennsylvania households :

- 12 % live in poverty
- 27 % were Asset Limited Income Constrained and Employed (ALICE) households.
- Combined, 39 % living at best paycheck to paycheck
- Low Income are disproportionately renters, minority, and vulnerable populations like seniors, persons with a disability, justice involved, and veterans
- 68% of ELI Renters are severely housing cost burdened

## PA Renter Households



**39 Affordable and Available  
Rental Units per ELI 100  
Households**

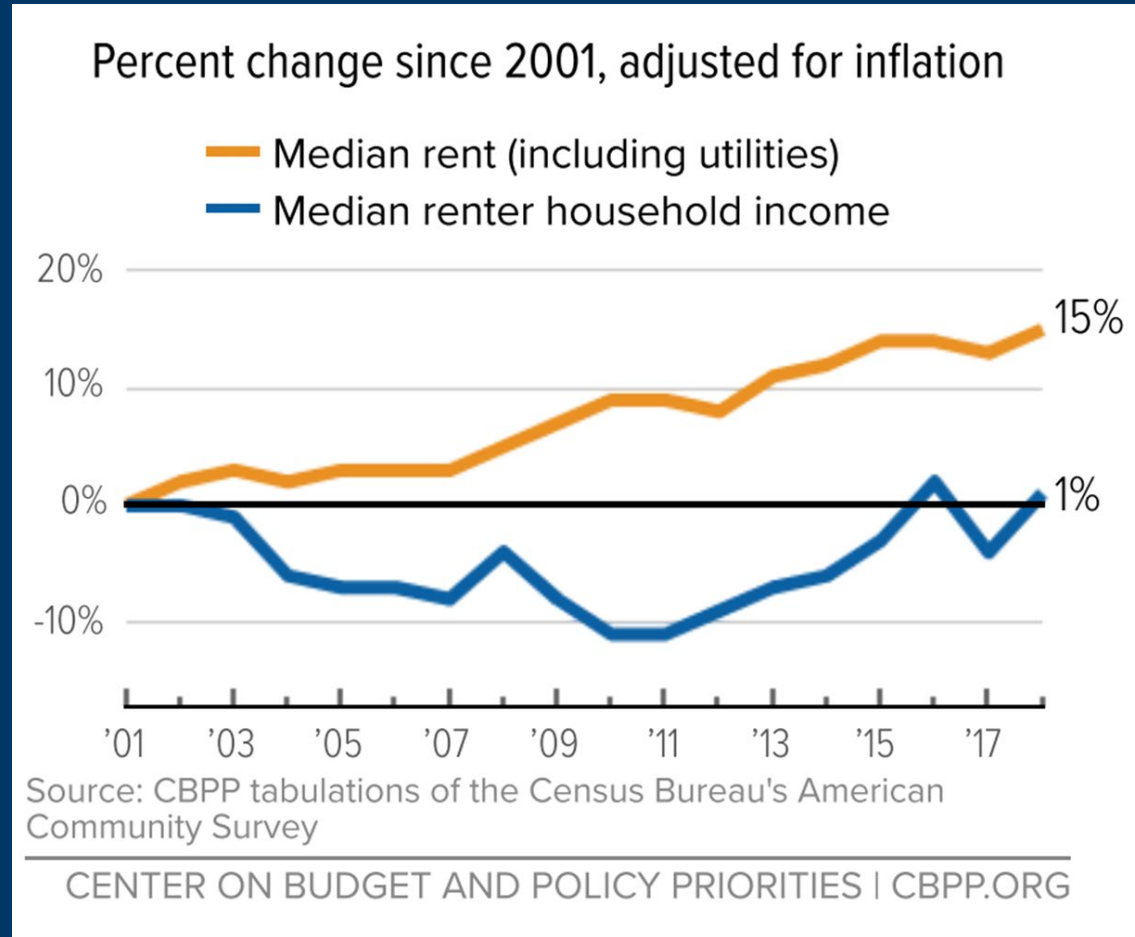
# Renters Before COVID 19



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Average renter wage  
**\$16.43**

Two bedroom housing wage  
**\$19.95**



# Landlords before COVID 19



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- Landlords of two-to-four-unit buildings earn less than those who own single-family homes or large multifamily buildings
- Small rental units have the largest share of owners of color;
- A third of landlords of two-to-four-unit buildings are older than 65 and are mostly retired and unlikely to have another source of income.
- 40% of seniors who live in and own two-to-four-unit buildings have a mortgage.
- Individual investors own nearly three-quarters of all rental properties and nearly half of all rental units.
- Small landlords have less liquidity and operate on thinner margins than corporate landlords
- Small landlords do not have payrolls like larger companies are less likely to have accessed small business support or payment protection programs

# Policy Blind Spots



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- Prior to COVID not a lot of research on landlords and smaller investors
- Most rental data comes from sources using data a few years old
- No good mechanism that gives timely easily accessible data on rental markets
- Rental markets trends and fluctuations are not easily tracked at the local level

# Allegheny County



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- 1,218,412 Residents
- Urban/Suburban
- Main employers: Healthcare, Higher education, and Food/Hospitality
- 12% Poverty Rate; 26% ALICE Rate
- 193,411 Renter Households
- Median Renter Wage \$17.97
- Housing Wage 2 bedroom \$18.08

# Columbia County

- 65,456 Residents
- Rural
- Main employers: Healthcare, education, and manufacturing
- 16% Poverty Rate; 23% ALICE Rate
- 8,113 Renter Households
- Median Renter Wage \$11.47
- Housing Wage 2 bedroom \$16.08



UNITED WE FIGHT.  
UNITED WE WIN.

LIVE UNITED

# Monroe County, PA

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170,000 residents

Suburban/rural

Main Employers: Hospitality/Tourism, Manufacturing, Healthcare

13% poverty, 30% ALICE

~ 18,000 renter households (23% of all households)

Median renter wage \$13.02/hour (2021)

Housing wage for 2 bedroom \$21.10 (2021)