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|  **Contact:** NameUnited Ways of TexasW: C: Email:  |





**Despite Bigger Paychecks, Struggling Households in Texas Continue to Increase**

*New ALICE Update shows wage growth was no match for inflation*

*after a decade of falling behind*

*Callout Box: United Ways of Texas is collecting audio testimonials from ALICE individuals about the difficult financial choices they continue to face today given the high cost of essentials and ongoing inflation. Stories can be recorded at: ALICEvoices.org.*

**Austin, TX —** Though wages for the lowest paid jobs have risen across the country at the fastest rate in four decades, the number of households struggling to get by in Texas grew by nearly 150,000 from 2021 to 2022. As a result, a total of 4,708,860 million households or 43% were living paycheck to paycheck, according to a new Update from United Ways of Texas and its research partner United For ALICE.

That calculation includes the 1,492,785 Texas households in poverty as well as another 3,216,075 defined as **ALICE** (**A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mployed), earning above the Federal Poverty Level but less than what’s needed to survive in the current economy. ALICE workers include child care providers, home health aides and cashiers — those working low-wage jobs, with little or no savings and one emergency from poverty.

*ALICE in the Crosscurrents: An Update on Financial Hardship in Texas* shows that while wages were increasing, so too were costs. For a family of four with an infant and a preschooler, the basic costs to live and work in Texas, excluding tax credits, rose from $75,000 in 2021 to $78,012 a year later. Compounding the issue in 2022 was the loss of up to $15,000 in federal child tax credits and stimulus payments that this family had access to in 2021.

“There is no doubt, bigger paychecks helped, but inflation and the loss of pandemic supports converged to keep ALICE trapped,” said United Way of Anytown CEO Name. “This latest data is a reminder that while we have made some progress, our work is far from over.”

The findings in this one-year period are consistent with a more than decade-long trend: Since the end of the Great Recession, despite some ups and downs, the number of ALICE households in Texas has been steadily growing. From 2010 to 2022, the total number of households rose by 26%, households in poverty increased by 9% — and the number of ALICE households grew by 38%.

“The data is showing persistent and widespread financial hardship — a red flag that the current system isn't working for ALICE,” said Stephanie Hoopes, Ph.D., United For ALICE National Director. “Current policy has not been enough to break down the barriers that trap ALICE households in financial hardship, from lack of access to housing and child care that’s affordable, to inadequate community supports such as broadband internet."

Additional insights include:

* From 2010 to 2022, people age 65 and over made up the fastest-growing age group in Texas — and the group with the largest increase (54%) in the number of households struggling to make ends meet.
* Racial disparities persisted in the rates of financial hardship; 57% of Black and 52% of Hispanic households in Texas were either in poverty or ALICE in 2022, compared to 35% of white households.
* Food assistance continued to elude many vulnerable families in Texas. Partly due to the SNAP income eligibility level in the state (165% of the Federal Poverty Level), only 38% of all Texas households in poverty and 17% of all ALICE households participated in SNAP in 2022.

To read the Update and access online, interactive dashboards that provide data on financial hardship at the state, county and local levels, visit UnitedForALICE.org/Texas

**About United Way of Anytown**

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**About United For ALICE**

United For ALICE is a U.S. research organization driving innovation, research and action to improve life across the country for ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) and for all. Through the development of the ALICE measurements, a comprehensive, unbiased picture of financial hardship has emerged. Harnessing this data and research on the mismatch between low-paying jobs and the cost of survival, ALICE partners convene, advocate and collaborate on solutions that promote financial stability at local, state and national levels. This grassroots ALICE movement, led by United Way of Northern New Jersey, has spread to 31 states and includes United Ways, corporations, nonprofits and foundations in Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawai‘i, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington, Washington, D.C., West Virginia and Wisconsin; we are United For ALICE. For more information, visit: [UnitedForALICE.org](https://www.unitedforalice.org/).

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