

# THE ECONOMIC STATE OF BLACK WORKERS AND FAMILIES IN THE U.S.

## EMPLOYMENT

# 5.4%

## UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR BLACK WORKERS

While Black unemployment rate stands near a record low, it remains above the rate for white workers (3.1%)

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# 62.9%

While the labor force participation rate of Black workers reached a record low of 58.4% in April 2020, **62.9% of Black workers were actively working or looking for work in January 2023.**

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# 2X

## BLACK WORKERS REMAIN ALMOST 2X AS LIKELY TO BE UNEMPLOYED AS WHITE WORKERS

This disparity is the result of structural barriers to Black employment, including discrimination in hiring, educational disparities, and mass incarceration.

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# BELOW THE HISTORICAL AVERAGE

In January 2023, the Black unemployment rate was **1.7 times** the white rate, below the historical average of about 2-to-1 since 1972.

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# INCOME

## 11.3% INCREASE IN PAY

The typical Black worker's weekly pay increased by 11.3% in 2022, **rising to \$896 from \$805 a year earlier**. This record wage growth outpaced inflation significantly and was higher than the wage growth of the typical white worker.

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## UNEQUAL PAY FOR BLACK HOUSEHOLDS

While the typical Black household income has also increased over the years, Black households **earned just 62 cents for every dollar earned by white households** in 2021.

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## 63 CENTS FOR EVERY DOLLAR

**Black women earn 63 cents for every dollar earned by white men in 2021**, considerably lower than the overall gender wage gap, which is 83 cents on the dollar. This difference is illustrative of the double wage gap faced by Black women, given the price they pay for discrimination in the labor market based on their sex and race.

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# POVERTY

## ↓ RECORD LOW OF 11.2%

Over the last few decades, Black poverty rates have fallen significantly as a result of public investments. The year 2021 saw a sharp decline in poverty rates, with the Black poverty rate reaching a record low of 11.2%, down from 21.6% in 2018.

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## THE BLACK CHILD POVERTY RATE REACHED AN ALL-TIME LOW

Falling to 8.3% in 2021 from 25.3% in 2018. This decline was primarily driven by the American Rescue Plan's one-year expansion of the Child Tax Credit and other pandemic assistance.

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## 3X MORE LIKELY TO LIVE IN POVERTY

Despite the recent progress, Black children are still **three times as likely** to live in poverty than white children, and Black Americans are nearly twice as likely as white Americans to fall below the poverty line.

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## EDUCATION AND HEALTH

### THE BLACK GRADUATION RATE MORE THAN DOUBLED

The Black graduation rate more than doubled from 11% in 1990 to 28% in 2021—though white students are still far more likely to graduate college (42%).

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### ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

While the Affordable Care Act increased access to health insurance, Black Americans (9%) remain more likely to be uninsured than white Americans (5%).

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### 2X MATERNAL MORTALITY RATE IS TWICE AS HIGH FOR BLACK WOMEN

As a result of gaps in health care and disparities in treatment, the U.S. falls behind peer nations in maternal mortality, particularly hurting Black women who experienced **47 deaths out of every 100,000 births from 2016 to 2020.**

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## WEALTH

### 20% OF BLACK HOUSEHOLDS HAVE RETIREMENT ACCOUNT SAVINGS

Black households ages 65+, with retirement account savings, hold a median value of \$38,600, which represents **one-quarter of the median value** of their white counterparts' savings.

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### LESS THAN HALF OF BLACK FAMILIES OWN THEIR HOMES

While Black households made gains in homeownership in 2021, **less than half (45%) of Black families own their homes**, compared to three-quarters (75%) of white families.

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### 87.2% BEHIND WHITE FAMILY WEALTH

In 2019, the median wealth of Black families (\$24,100) was approximately one-eighth that of white families (\$188,200). Education may help narrow wealth disparities, **but structural solutions that help Black families build wealth are needed to close it.**

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### 3X MORE LIKELY TO BE UNBANKED OR UNDERBANKED

Which forces Black Americans to rely on alternative, and costly, financial services for everyday transactions.