

Basic Human Needs

Union of Saints

Basic needs are the essential things people require to survive, maintain health, live safely, and participate in society. These needs include physical necessities, safety and security, and essential social needs.

- **Estimated income needed for a family of four:** \$134,000 per household annually.
- **Median full-time worker earnings:** Approximately \$62,600 per person annually before taxes.
- **Estimated income after taxes:** Approximately \$47,600 annually.
- **Conclusion:** It is not enough. American basic needs are not being met.

1. Essential Physical Needs

- Food and nutrition
- Clean drinking water
- Air and breathable indoor environments
- Shelter and housing
- Clothing and footwear
- Sleep and rest
- Sanitation and hygiene
- Access to toilets and bathing facilities
- Healthcare and essential medicines
- Physical safety from injury, violence, and harmful exposure

2. Essential Living Expenses and Resources

- Housing costs, including rent, mortgages, and necessary property expenses
- Utilities, including electricity, heating, cooling, and water
- Food preparation and storage, including cooking facilities and refrigeration
- Transportation to work, healthcare, grocery stores, and essential services
- Communication, including telephone and internet access where needed
- Household necessities, including cleaning products, basic furnishings, and supplies

- Personal care products, including soap, toothpaste, menstrual products, and similar necessities
- Essential clothing maintenance, including laundry facilities and detergent
- Emergency savings or financial reserves to protect against unexpected necessities

3. Safety and Security Needs

- Personal security
- Protection from abuse, exploitation, and violence
- Stable housing
- Financial security
- Employment or another reliable means of obtaining necessities
- Legal protections and access to justice
- Privacy and personal autonomy
- Protection from environmental hazards, including contaminated water, unsafe buildings, and hazardous chemicals
- Emergency services and disaster preparedness

4. Health and Well-Being Needs

- Physical health
- Mental and emotional health
- Access to preventive care and necessary treatment
- Adequate rest and recovery
- Social connection and companionship
- Dignity and respect
- Freedom of conscience and belief
- Personal freedom and self-determination

5. Education and Participation in Society

- Access to education and essential information
- Opportunities for job training and professional development
- Access to employment opportunities
- Identification and essential legal documentation

- Access to banking and payment systems
- Access to essential digital services
- Access to government services and public benefits when eligible
- Reasonable accessibility accommodations for people with disabilities

6. Financial Security and Independence

- Sufficient income to afford basic necessities
- Wages that reflect the actual cost of living
- The ability to save for emergencies
- The ability to prepare for retirement
- Protection against financial exploitation
- The ability to support dependent children and family members
- The ability to manage unexpected expenses without falling into poverty or unmanageable debt

Conclusion

Basic human needs extend beyond mere survival. People need the resources to maintain their health, secure safe housing, support their families, protect their personal autonomy, and participate meaningfully in society.

When the cost of necessities exceeds what ordinary workers can reasonably afford, the ability to meet basic needs becomes increasingly difficult. The relationship between wages, taxation, housing costs, healthcare, and the cost of living must therefore be considered when evaluating the economic security of American households.