

THE CRITICAL LINK BETWEEN HOUSING AND PUBLIC HEALTH

Access to safe and affordable housing is a fundamental determinant of public health. Housing quality, affordability, and stability directly impact individuals' and communities' physical and mental health outcomes. The lack of affordable housing can lead to overcrowding, substandard living conditions, and increased exposure to environmental hazards, contributing to a range of health issues, including respiratory illnesses, chronic diseases, and mental health disorders. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), housing instability and homelessness are associated with higher rates of infectious diseases, such as tuberculosis and influenza, as well as increased risk of injuries and violence. Investing in affordable housing improves health outcomes, reduces healthcare costs, and promotes overall well-being for individuals and communities.

WHAT THE DATA SAYS

52 PERCENT

cost burdened renter households in Pierce County that pay over 30% of their income on housing.¹

MENTAL HEALTH

A stable and safe place to live is a critical element to recovery for individuals diagnosed with serious mental illness.²

HOUSING IMPACTS HEALTH

Limited affordable housing options may compel individuals with low incomes to rent substandard housing, increasing their exposure to health and safety hazards like vermin, mold, water leaks, and inadequate heating or cooling.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Homeless children often rely on emergency services due to the absence of a regular healthcare provider.³

47 PERCENT

of Washington homes were built before 1978 and may contain lead-based paint; over 14% are estimated to have existing lead hazards.⁴

1,075 DEATHS

In 2020, unintentional falls were responsible for approximately 1,075 deaths of Washingtonians over the age of 65.⁵

RACIAL DISPARITIES

In Washington, BIPOC individuals are more likely to have asthma than their counterparts in other racial groups⁶



SUPPORT HEALTH AND HOUSING

Implementing housing-first approaches and supportive housing models can address housing insecurity as a social determinant of health, leading to improved health outcomes and reduced healthcare costs.

FIND MORE INFORMATION

- [Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department: Healthy Homes](#)
- [How to Clean and Disinfect Your Home](#)
- [A Healthy Home for Everyone - The Guide for Families and Individuals - CDC](#)
- [The Principles of a Healthy Home - National Center for Healthy Housing](#)
- [Pierce County Community Health Needs Assessment 2022](#)
- [Mary Bridge Community Health Needs Assessment 2022](#)
- [Housing and Urban Development's Housing and Health Data](#)

HOW TO HELP

Advocate for increased funding for affordable housing and supportive services, and collaborate with healthcare providers to integrate housing interventions into public health strategies.



PARTNERS SUPPORTING HEALTH AND HOUSING



AFFORDABLE HOUSING CONSORTIUM

The Affordable Housing Consortium is effecting change through community education, advocacy, and the provision of resources to advance the development and preservation of housing that is affordable, accessible, and free of discrimination. Because everyone deserves a place to call home.



1. 2022: ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles
2. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2019, January 14). Recovery and Recovery Support. Retrieved July 10, 2019, from <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/recovery>
3. Jolleyman, T., and Nicholas Spencer. 2008. "Residential Mobility in Childhood and Health Outcomes." *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 62 (7): 584-592.
4, 5, 6. National Center for Healthy Housing: Washington 2022 Healthy Housing Fact Sheet