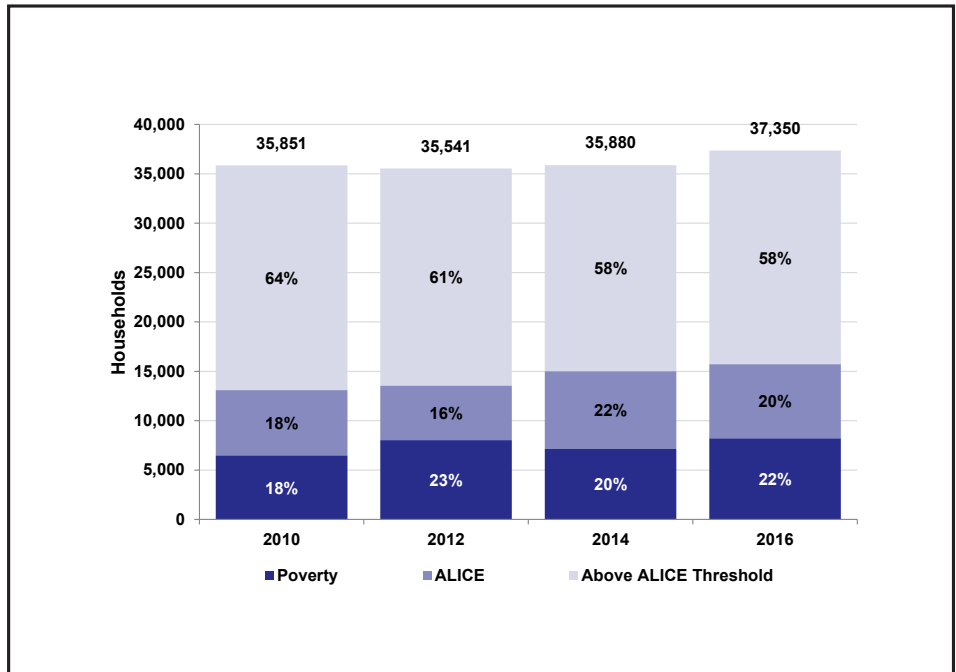# ALICE IN STORY COUNTY

2016 Point-in-Time Data

Population: 97,090 • **Number of Households:** 37,350
Median Household Income: $53,371 (state average: $56,247)
Unemployment Rate: 4.6% (state average: 3.9%)
ALICE Households: 20% (state average: 25%) • **Households in Poverty:** 22% (state average: 12%)

How has the number of ALICE households changed over time?

ALICE is an acronym for **A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mployed – households that earn more than the Federal Poverty Level, but less than the basic cost of living for the county (the ALICE Threshold). Combined, the number of ALICE and poverty-level households equals the total population struggling to afford basic needs. The number of households below the ALICE Threshold changes over time; households move in and out of poverty and ALICE status as their circumstances improve or worsen. The recovery, which started in 2010, has been uneven across the state. Conditions have improved for some families, but with rising costs, many still find themselves struggling.
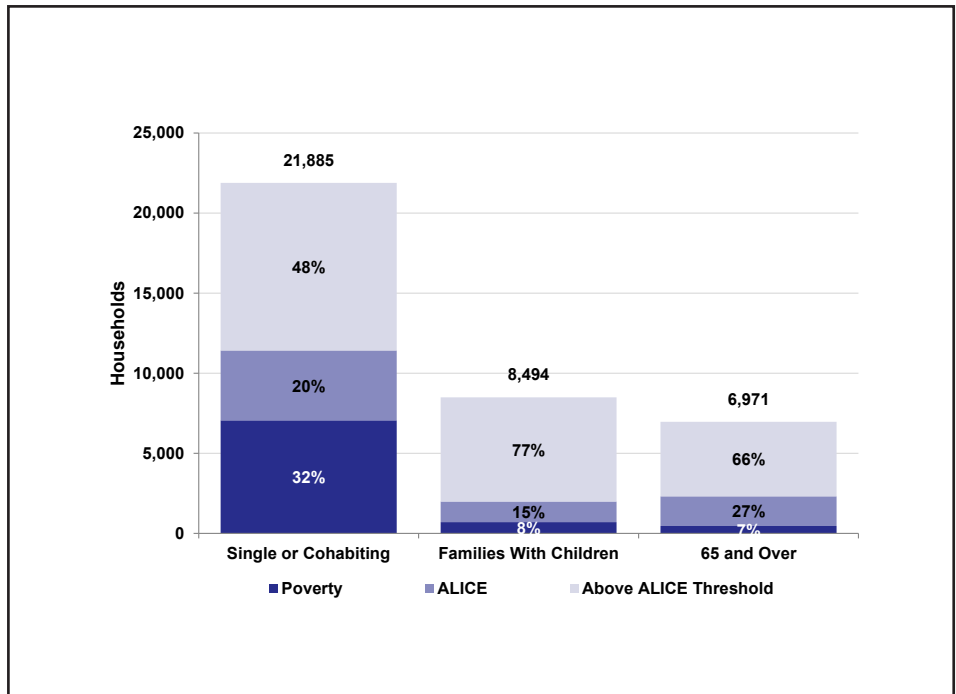
Households by Income, 2010 to 2016

What types of households are struggling?

The way Americans live is changing. There are more different family and living combinations than ever before, including more adults living alone, with roommates, or with their parents. Families with children are changing: There are more non-married cohabiting parents, same-sex parents, and blended families with remarried parents. The number of senior households is also increasing. Yet all types of households continue to struggle: ALICE and poverty-level households exist across all of these living arrangements.

Household Types by Income, 2016

Why do so many households struggle?

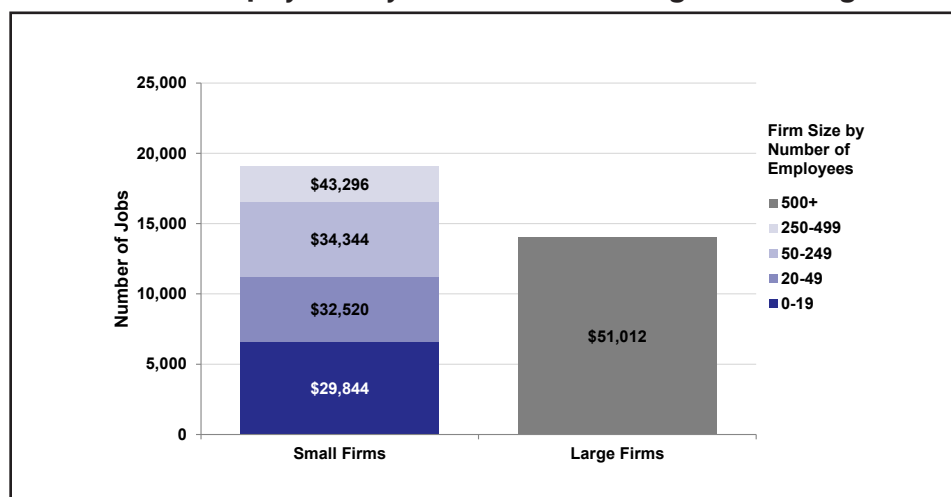**The cost of living continues to increase…**

The Household Survival Budget reflects the bare minimum that a household needs to live and work today. It does not include savings for emergencies or future goals like college. In 2016, costs were well above the Federal Poverty Level of $11,880 for a single adult and $24,300 for a family of four. Family costs increased by 41 percent statewide from 2010 to 2016, compared to 9 percent inflation nationally.

Household Survival Budget, Story County		
	SINGLE ADULT	**2 ADULTS, 1 INFANT, 1 PRESCHOOLER**
Monthly Costs		
Housing	$509	$778
Child Care	$—	$1,147
Food	$158	$525
Transportation	$349	$697
Health Care	$214	$800
Technology	$55	$75
Miscellaneous	$155	$463
Taxes	$266	$603
Monthly Total	$1,706	$5,088
ANNUAL TOTAL	$20,472	$61,056
Hourly Wage	*$10.24*	*$30.53*

…and wages lag behind

Employment and wages vary by location; firms generally pay higher wages in areas with a higher cost of living, although those wages still do not always cover basic needs. Employment and wages also vary by firm size: Large firms tend to offer higher wages and more job stability; smaller businesses can account for more jobs overall, especially in rural areas, but may pay less and offer less stability. Medium-size firms pay more but typically employ the fewest workers.

Private-Sector Employment by Firm Size With Average Annual Wages, 2016

Sources: **2016 Point-in-Time Data**: *American Community Survey.* **ALICE Demographics:** *American Community Survey; the ALICE Threshold.* **Budget:** *U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; U.S. Department of Agriculture; Bureau of Labor Statistics; Internal Revenue Service; Tax Foundation; and Iowa Child Care Resource & Referral, 2016.*

Story County, 2016		
Town	**Total HH**	**% ALICE & Poverty**
Ames	25,185	51%
Cambridge	304	36%
Collins	171	34%
Colo	327	33%
Gilbert	390	19%
Huxley	1,321	26%
Kelley	131	25%
Maxwell	323	26%
McCallsburg	130	48%
Nevada	2,771	32%
Roland	481	18%
Sheldahl	105	30%
Slater	548	26%
Story City	1,497	37%
Zearing	229	38%

Note: Municipal-level data on this page is 5-year averages for Incorporated Places. Totals will not match county-level numbers because some places cross county borders, data is not available for the smallest places, and county-level data is often 1-year estimates.