

DISABILITY & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

What nonprofits and funders need to know



A Disability Lens is Essential to Economic Justice

According to the CDC, 61 million adults in the United States have a disability.¹ As the Century Foundation's Disability Economic Justice Collaborative explains, "Disability can be both a cause and a consequence of economic insecurity." Nonprofits and funders must recognize how existing policies and systems exclude and/or financially penalize people with disabilities, especially those who are BIPOC and LGBTQIA+. The following statistics highlight just some of the many economic inequities disabled people experience.

Education

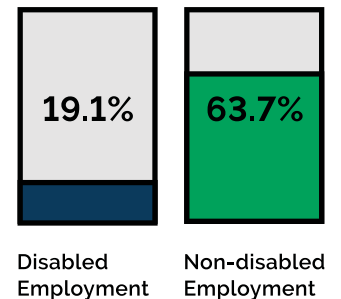
For the 2018-2019 school year, the average graduation rate for students with disabilities was 67.1%, which is 17.5 percentage points lower than the 84.6% rate at which all students graduated.²



Dark Blue = Disabled Students / Green = All Students

Employment

In 2021, only 19.1% of disabled were employed, compared to 63.7% of non-disabled people.³



Healthcare

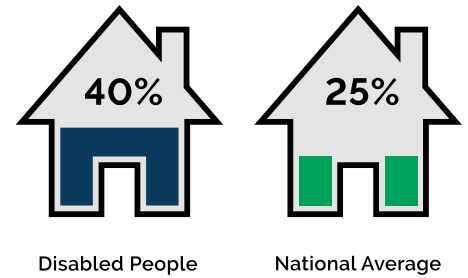
In 2020, 21.6% of disabled people in the U.S. reported they could not see a doctor due to cost barriers.⁴



1. [Disability Impacts All of Us Infographic](#) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities.
2. [Good News, Bad News on Graduation Rates](#) National School Boards Association.
3. [Labor Force Characteristics PDF](#) U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.
4. [Disability and Health Data System](#) (DHDS) Data. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities, Division of Human Development and Disability.

Housing

In 2021, nearly 40% of renters with a disability struggled to pay rent, compared to a national average of 25%.⁵



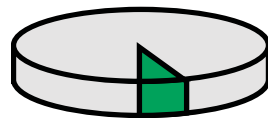
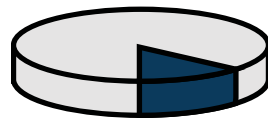
Income

The 2019 median income for disabled people in the U.S. was \$25,270, compared to \$37,262 for non-disabled people.⁶

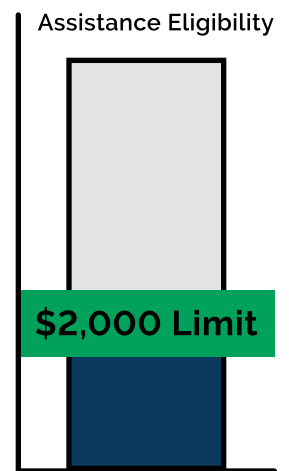


In 2021, the maximum federal Supplemental Security Income benefit was less than the federal poverty level (FPL), at \$794 per month, or about 74% of the FPL for an individual.⁷

In 2019, 21.6% of disabled people were considered poor based on the Supplemental Poverty Measure Census, compared to just over 10% of non-disabled people.⁸



People receiving home and community-based services through Medicaid are not permitted to have financial assets that exceed state-determined thresholds, meaning many disabled people can't have above \$2,000 in assets to maintain eligibility.⁹



5. [Economic Justice is Disability Justice](#) The Century Foundation, Disability Economic Justice Collaborative.

6. [B18140 Census Bureau Table](#) U.S. Census Bureau.

7. [Supplemental Security Income for People with Disabilities](#) Kaiser Family Foundation.

8. [7 Facts About the Economic Crisis Facing People with Disabilities in the United States](#) The Century Foundation, Disability Economic Justice Collaborative.

9. [State Policy Choices About Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services](#) Kaiser Family Foundation.

Join us on the journey to disability inclusion!

The Disability & Philanthropy Forum is committed to expanding philanthropic commitment to disability rights and justice by centering the leadership of the disability community. [Visit our website](#), and if you're eligible, sign up for a [free membership](#).

