The Cost of Basics Outpaces Wages

The household budgets of Bay County reflect the minimum cost to live and work in the modern economy and includes housing, food, child care, (if applicable), transportation, health care, and a basic smartphone plan. Households below the ALICE Threshold — ALICE households plus those in poverty — can’t afford the essentials.

The Labor Market is Challenging for ALICE Workers

Households in Bay County were unemployed and a large number were working in 2021. As circumstances change, households may find themselves below or above the ALICE Threshold at different times. While conditions have improved for some households, many continue to struggle, especially as income fails to keep pace with the rising cost of household essentials (housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, and a basic smartphone plan). Households below the ALICE Threshold — ALICE households plus those in poverty — can’t afford the essentials.