The Cost of Basics Outpaces Wages

The Household Survival Budget reflects the minimum cost to live and work in the modern economy and includes housing, food, transportation, health care, child care, and a smartphone plan. It does not include savings for emergencies or future goals like college or retirement. In 2021, household costs in every county in Virginia were well above the Federal Poverty Level of $12,880 for a single adult and $26,500 for a family of four.

The Labor Landscape is Challenging for ALICE Workers

A small portion of adults (16 years and older) in Fairfax County are ALICE workers: those who work full or part time, make at least the state minimum wage, and yet still struggle to afford the essentials.

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Financial Hardship Has Changed Over Time in Fairfax County

By total number, groups with the largest population of households below the ALICE Threshold tend to also be in the largest demographic groups. However, when looking at the proportion of each group that is below the ALICE Threshold, it is clear that some groups are more likely to be ALICE than others.

ALICE is an acronym for "A拳头Constrained, Limited, and E多依赖", which means "At Risk of Household Economic Instability." These are individuals who make at least the state minimum wage, work full or part time, but still struggle to afford the essentials.