



# Prosperity Project 2021

A Community Needs Assessment



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**August, 2021**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2021 Prosperity Project is a community needs assessment designed to gain a detailed understanding of the experiences of people living in low-resource households in our service area of Island, San Juan and Whatcom counties in Washington State. This assessment is conducted every three years and is used by Opportunity Council in strategic planning so that our agency's priorities are aligned with the people we aim to serve. Our hope is to provide a rich set of data to help Opportunity Council leaders and stakeholders make key decisions about resource allocation and potential partnerships in advancement of our mission.

This 2021 assessment relied on quantitative and qualitative data from 716 households who were surveyed during an eight-week period in late fall of 2020.

The survey respondents were residents of the local three-county region, with 68% from Whatcom County, 12% from Island County, and 21% from San Juan County. Close to 75% of respondents were female and 12% speak a language other than English in their home. Overall, 26% of respondents are people of color (POC), with 5% Native American, and 17% Latinx.

### **SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FROM THE CLIENT SURVEY**

#### **Employment and income**

***Key findings:*** *The region saw job loss during the pandemic.*

- Forty-four percent of Prosperity Project households experienced a loss of employment income since 3/13/20; this was similar to statewide findings of the Census Pulse Survey
- In our three-county region, POC respondents had higher rates of employment income loss during this period (55%), compared to those who were white only (40%).
- Seventy-five percent of Prosperity Project respondents reported they did not work in the past seven days; this is higher than the statewide findings of the Census Pulse Survey (75% vs. 42%).

#### **Housing**

***Key findings:*** *Affordable housing has been consistently rated over many years as very important and difficult to access.*

- Prosperity Project respondents expressed less confidence in their ability to pay housing costs when compared to statewide findings of the Census Pulse Survey (12% said “no confidence” vs. 4% of Washingtonians in the Census Pulse survey).
- In particular, POC respondents were especially likely to say “no confidence” (14% vs 10% of white and non-Hispanic respondents)

**Health**

**Key findings:** *Affordable dental care has been consistently rated as very important and difficult to access.*

- Forty-two percent of respondents (42%) rated their overall health as fair or poor. The lowest income respondents were especially likely to give unfavorable health ratings (50%).

**Food and nutrition**

**Key findings:** *Food assistance programs are in high demand and relatively available. The lowest income households demonstrate the highest food insecurity. A substantial proportion of respondents or their children are going hungry.*

- One-quarter (25%) of respondents reported that someone in their household had gone hungry because they did not have enough food. The lowest income respondents were especially likely to have gone hungry in the past 12 months (37%).
- Prosperity Project respondents were less likely to have had enough of the foods they wanted to eat in the past seven days (35%) compared with Washingtonians responding to the Census Pulse survey (66%).

**Clients identify gaps in service**

**Key findings:** *Regionwide, clients see gaps in service for dental, jobs and housing*

Respondents rated fifteen service areas on importance and availability. The table below shows the gaps in service for particular sub-segments of the respondent sample.

**Table E1. Gaps in service by segments of client population**

	Dental	Jobs	Housing	Mental health	Childcare	Utilities
Regionwide	✓	✓	✓			
Island	✓	✓		✓		
San Juan	✓	✓	✓			
Whatcom	✓	✓	✓			
Households with young children	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Households with seniors	✓		✓			
Spanish speakers	✓	✓	✓			
POC	✓	✓	✓			

## INTRODUCTION

The issue of poverty is not new, yet it has a significant impact on our entire community. For a long time, communities have been attempting to evaluate and remediate factors that contribute or lead to poverty, targeting both generational issues and situational life events.

Poverty is often defined by quantitative measures, such as a threshold of \$26,500 per year for a family of four (2021 Guidelines, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services). However, many aspects of poverty are not reflected in statistical indicators. Insufficient income to meet basic needs is a typical feature of most definitions of poverty. Nevertheless, this in itself does not take into account the myriad social, cultural, and political aspects of poverty. Poverty is not only deprivation of economic or material resources, but also a violation of human dignity.

### POVERTY BY THE NUMBERS

Table 1 shows federal poverty guidelines, as established by the Federal Office of Management and Budget. The guideline of 125% of the federal poverty level is commonly used as an eligibility criterion for programs that assist people in the Opportunity Council service area.

**Table 1. Federal Poverty Guidelines for 2021**

Family Size	Income per year at 100% of FPL	Monthly eligibility limit at 125% of FPL	Annual eligibility limit at 125% of FPL
1	\$12,880	\$1,342	\$16,100
2	\$17,420	\$1,815	\$21,775
3	\$21,960	\$2,288	\$27,450
4	\$26,500	\$2,760	\$33,125
5	\$31,040	\$3,233	\$38,800
6	\$35,580	\$3,706	\$44,475
7	\$40,120	\$4,179	\$50,150
8	\$44,660	\$4,652	\$55,825

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that there were 30,432 people (14% of the population) in Whatcom County, 6,291 in Island County (8%), and 1,691 in San Juan County (10%) living at or below 100% of the federal poverty level in 2019 (the last year that estimates are available). Washington State, by comparison, is estimated to have 785,244 people, comprising 11% of the overall population, living at or below 100% poverty.

## **PROSPERITY PROJECT BACKGROUND AND HISTORY**

In 2011, Opportunity Council began producing a community-wide low-income household needs assessment, the “Prosperity Project.” This was repeated and improved in 2015 and 2018. This 2021 report is an update of that effort with new survey data and additional, qualitative data.

In part, the Prosperity Project helps Opportunity Council meet its requirement to conduct a community assessment every few years. However, this particular form of community assessment is also intended to produce a report that will be useful to service providers, policy makers and the general community in working to eradicate poverty in our community. Our objectives for how the needs assessment report will be used include:

- Improve coordination and planning between agencies and service providers,
- Identify ways to reduce barriers and increase access to services as well as to adjust program delivery and operations to better meet client needs,
- Prioritize funding and resource allocation by governmental and charitable organizations
- Design and improve prevention and education programming
- Identify potential new and creative approaches based on client needs and perceptions and
- Increase civic engagement and empowerment among the client population and the general public with regard to poverty and related issues

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

Because there is no existing list of all low-income households (or persons) in Whatcom, Island and San Juan Counties, it is not possible to draw a random sample from a well-defined population. The Prosperity Project has addressed this by intensively sampling as many unduplicated households as possible from social and health service sites throughout the three County region. This method of data collection results in a “purposeful” sample, but not a random sample, of low-income households. Nevertheless, we believe that such a sample provides a very useful point-in-time representation of the experiences and characteristics of people living in poverty in the region.

This year, due to the pandemic, we limited the sampling to households served through Opportunity Council and San Juan Resource Centers’ programs.

Historically, the Prosperity Project has surveyed households using paper and pencil surveys, facilitated by staff members on site. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic during the data collection period, we were not able to use in-person strategies for recruiting

participants. Like many other services, we pivoted to a digital format and created a survey that was available online.

To recruit participants, we used a mix of:

- Email wherever possible
- Postcard invitations via US postal service with a printed URL link to the online option as well as a QR code
- Paper surveys distributed in person and by mail

The surveys were available in English, Spanish, and Russian throughout Island, San Juan, and Whatcom County. Data collection occurred during November and December of 2020.

### ***Survey questions***

The 2021 survey repeated many of the same questions asked in prior iterations of the Prosperity Project. In addition to basic demographics, we asked clients about their current situation in the context of housing, health, food, income, and employment. We also asked them to rate the importance and availability of local services and to share open-ended comments on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their household.

This combination of quantitative and qualitative questions provides a rich set of data to help Opportunity Council leaders and stakeholders make key decisions about resource allocation and potential partnerships in advancement of our mission.

New this year was the inclusion of questions from the Census Household Pulse Survey, a national online survey studying how the coronavirus pandemic affects households across the country from a social and economic perspective. This provided a unique opportunity to compare local responses from our client population to Washington State responses from the Census Household Pulse Survey.

### ***Final sample***

Overall, 716 households completed the survey. These households included an estimated total of 1,807 persons. The majority of respondents (62%) completed the survey online, 38% completed the survey on paper.

Please see the appendix for more methodology details.



## FINDINGS OF CLIENT SURVEY

The Prosperity Project presents the findings of a low-income client survey. This report describes the demographic characteristics of the respondents plus analysis of several general categories of need and services: employment and income, housing, health, food & nutrition, and gaps in service. Analysis presents findings by county, and explores prevalence related to race/ethnicity.

Responses to the Prosperity Project survey are presented alongside Washington State responses to the Census Household Pulse Survey where appropriate.

### **RESPONDENTS: WHO ARE THEY?**

Overall, 716 households completed the survey. These households included an estimated total of 1,807 persons. The majority of respondents (62%) completed the survey online, 38% completed the survey on paper.

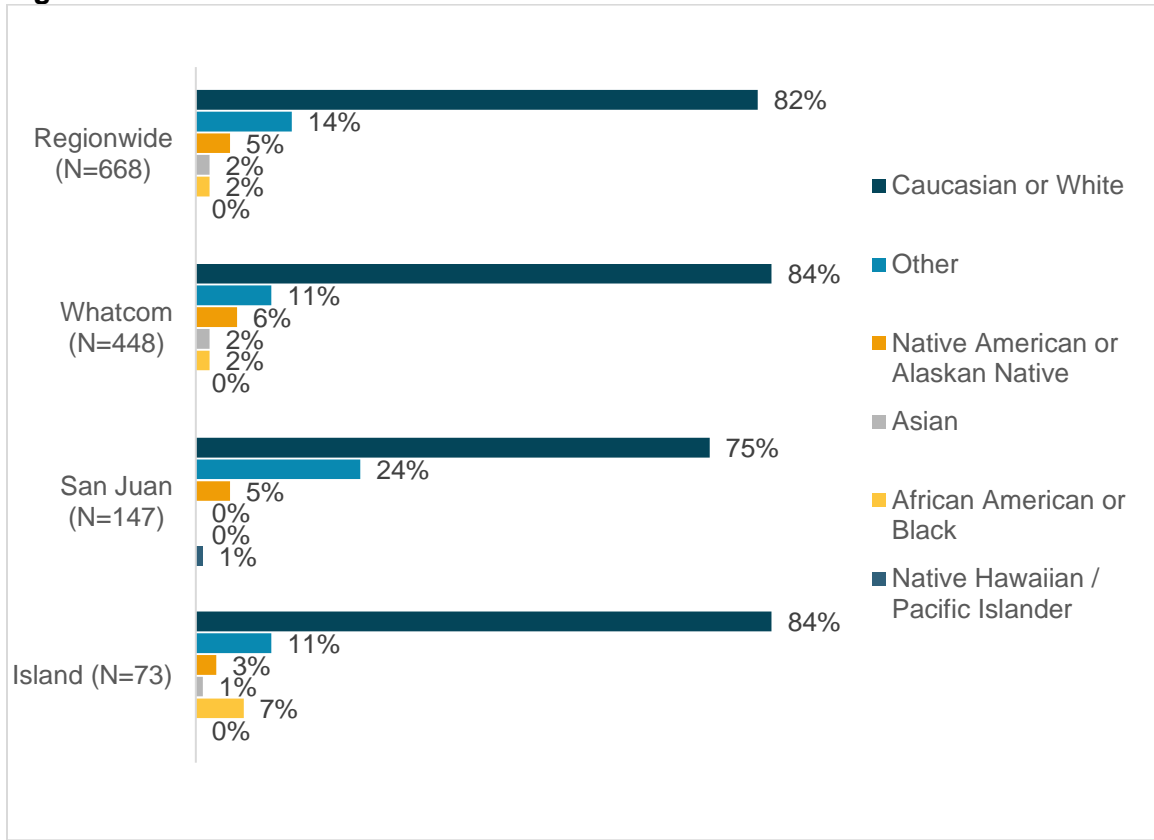
#### ***Gender and age***

Survey respondents were more likely to be female (74%) than male (25%). One percent (1%) of respondents identified as non-binary. Respondents ranged in age from 18 to 90 with a median age of 49. The median age for each county was: Island, 50; San Juan, 46; Whatcom, 49.

**Race, ethnicity and language**

In this study’s three-county survey sample, about five out of six respondents identified as white. Five percent were Native American (5%). A very small minority identified as African American (2%), Asian (2%), or Native Hawaiian (<1%). Fourteen percent identified as “Other” (14%), many of whom specified Latinx backgrounds.

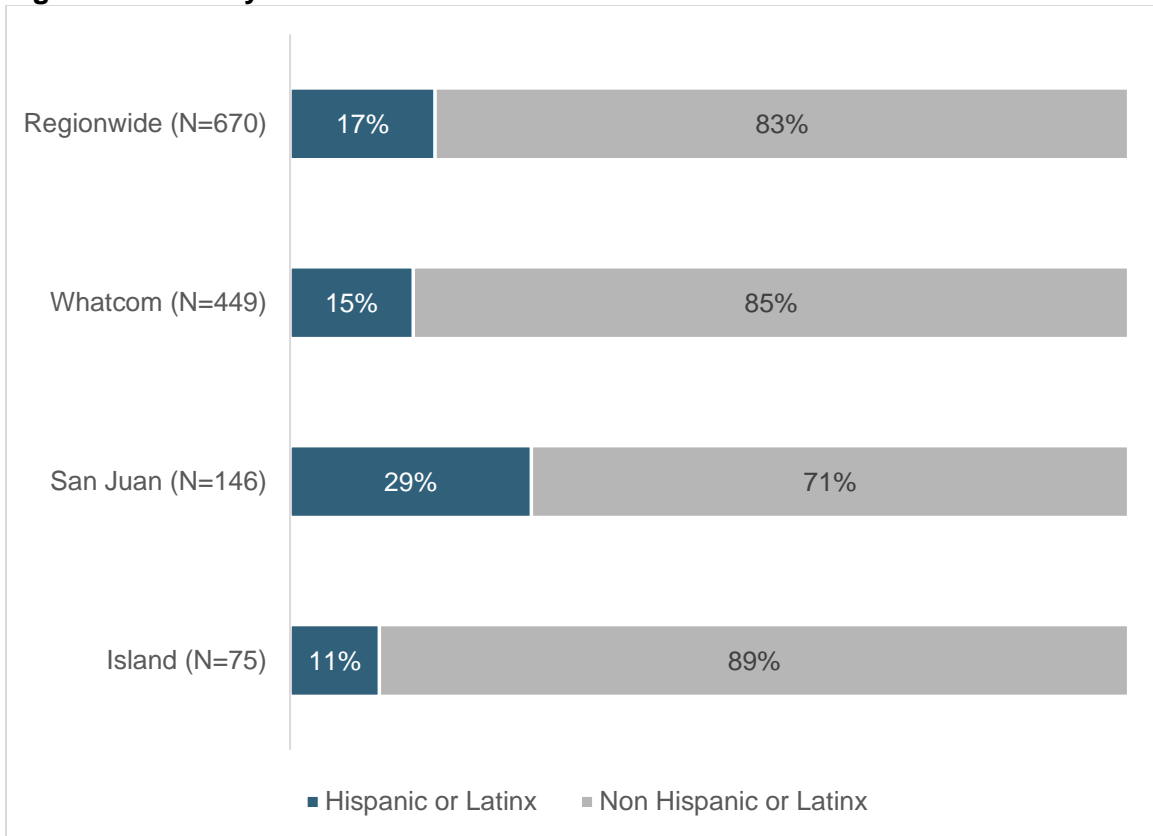
**Figure 1. Race**



*Note: Respondents could identify as more than one race; Percentages total more than 100%*

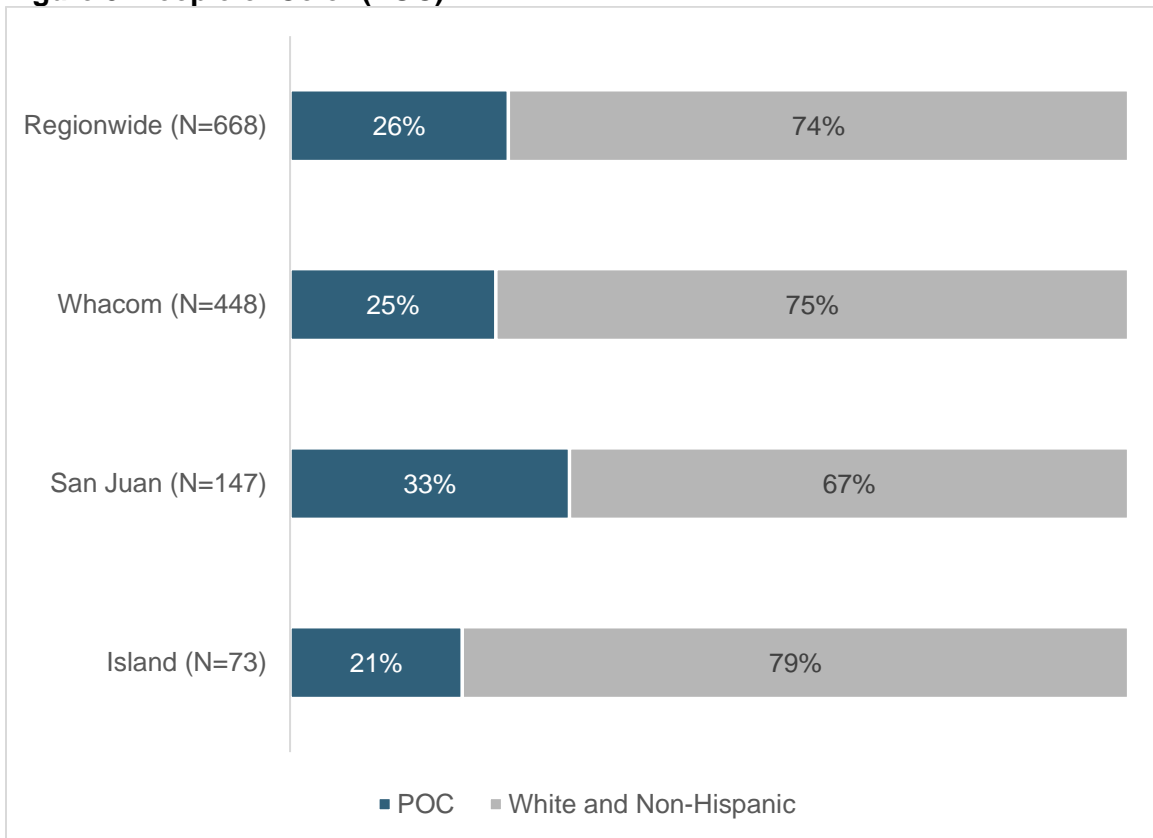
In this study’s three-county survey sample, 17% of respondents identified as Hispanic or Latinx. The proportion was notably higher in San Juan County (29%) and we believe this is related to more intensive outreach to Latinx clients by the Lopez Island Family Resource Center.

**Figure 2. Ethnicity**



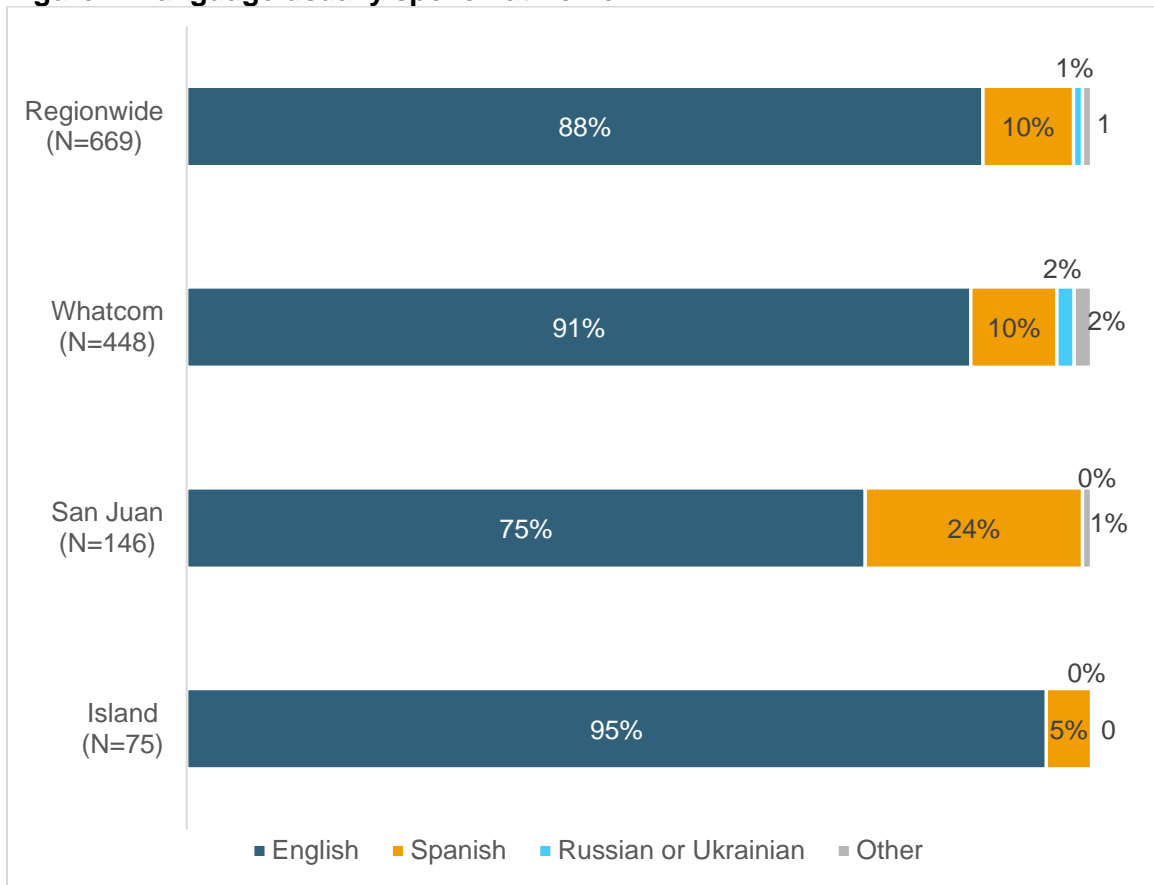
To do additional analysis on how race and ethnicity impact the households surveyed we created a POC variable. This variable classified anyone who identified as Latinx/Hispanic, or with race categories other than white, as POC (people of color). Respondents who indicated they were white and non-Hispanic were classified as White and Non-Hispanic. See Figure 3.

**Figure 3. People of Color (POC)**



Most respondents said they typically speak English at home (88%) and the remaining 12% said they speak a different primary language. Ten percent (10%) said they speak Spanish at home and 1% said they speak Russian or Ukrainian. The remaining 1% identified another language not listed. When asked to specify, respondents mentioned German, Farsi, Vietnamese, and Chinese as well as several other single mentions. It is noted that the sample of respondents from San Juan County had a higher proportion of Spanish speakers than the other two counties.

**Figure 4. Language usually spoken at home**



## COVID-19 IMPACT

Respondents were asked “How has COVID-19 affected your household?” A total of 606 people offered a comment. These qualitative responses were reviewed for general themes, and themes were tallied and are presented in Figure 5.

People often commented on multiple themes at a time. While 49 people made a comment to indicate that their lives have not changed very much (8%), the remaining respondents (92%) did not qualify their comments as minimal, and in many cases indicated a perception that their household has been affected in moderate and substantive ways.

The most frequent theme was **employment**. People talked about being laid off, reduced hours, and that it has been harder to find work (31%).

Sixteen percent of comments referenced **children** (babies through teenagers) and the complications of having them stay at home (16%). Most prominently, respondents talked about challenges associated with a lack of childcare and juggling the oversight of online school with other competing priorities. Other issues included children struggling with the online format of school and children’s mental and physical health.

Respondents talked about the **social isolation**- being separated from family and friends (16%). Examples ranged from general lack of interpersonal contact, families unable to rely on support they typically get from extended family in other households and even families with loved ones across the border.

Closely related to employment were discussions of **money** (15%). Respondents talked about how tight it has been during the pandemic and how some expenses have gone up. For example, having people spending more time at home has resulted in higher costs for power and groceries.

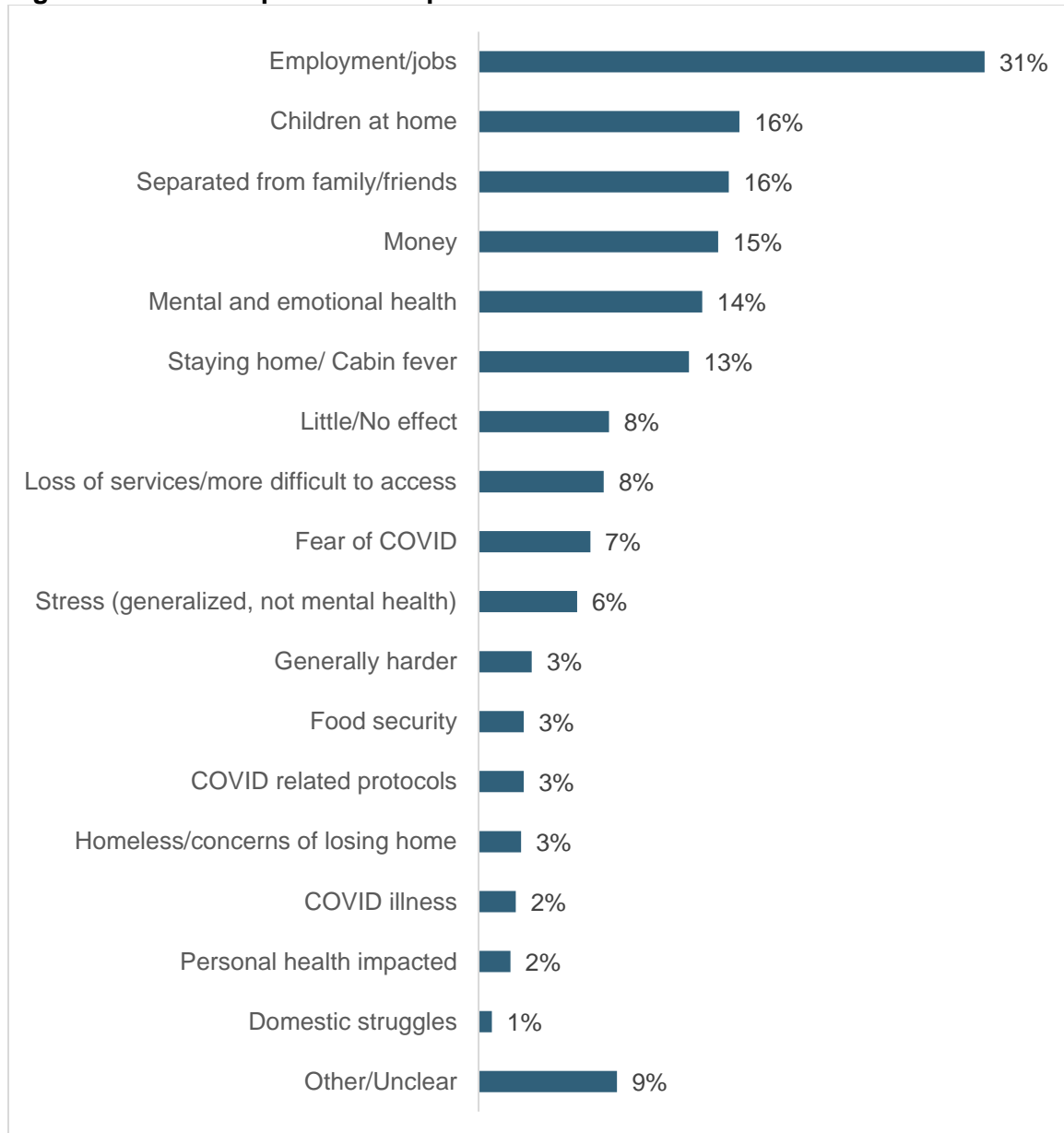
Issues of **mental and emotional health** was also one of the top themes (14%), including references to anxiety, depression, and extreme loneliness.

Here are some selected illustrative comments that touch on multiple themes:

- *“My family rarely leaves the house now. I'm immunocompromised so we don't see our family and friends, to protect me. It's very sad and confining.”*
- *“Isolation, not being able to choose my own foods from the food bank, fear of being infected”*

- *“Having kids home from school. All bills have gone up- power, food, overages on internet. Kids behavior problems. Have lost extended family due to covid-19. My anxiety is sky high.”*

**Figure 5. COVID-19 pandemic impacts**



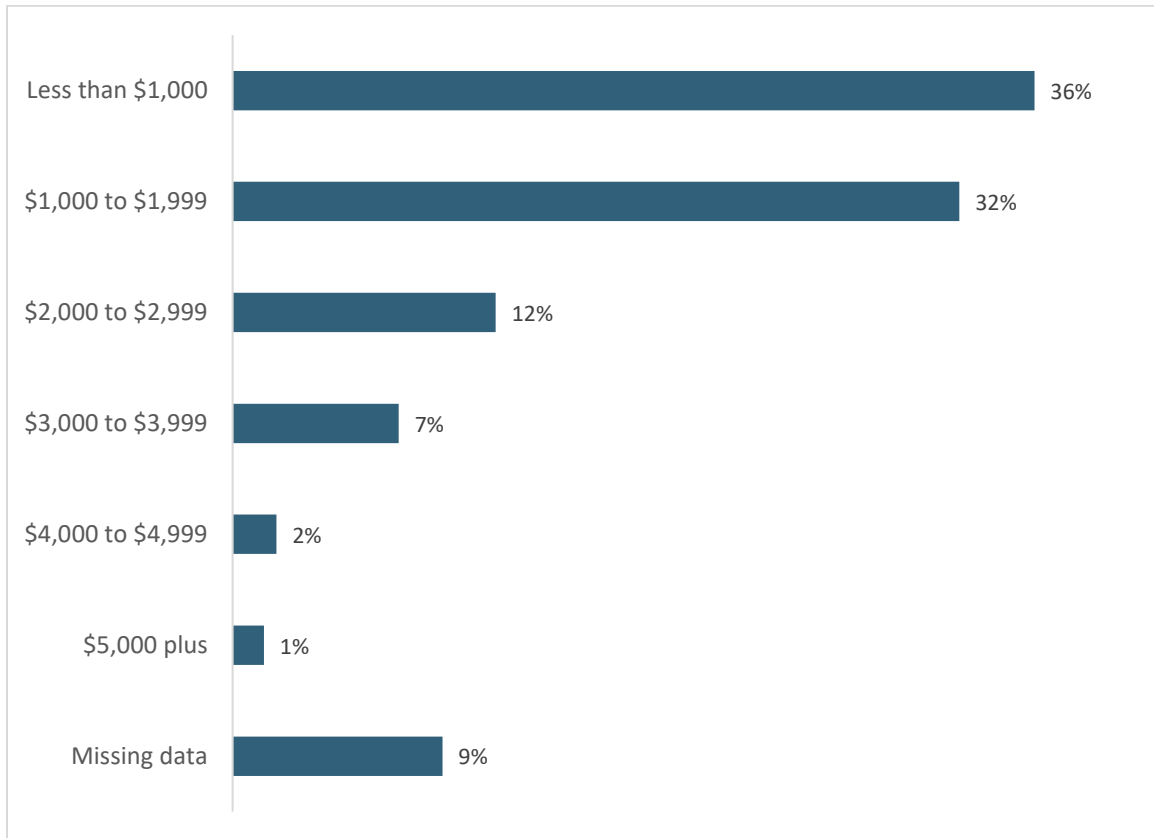
*N=606 Respondents who offered a comment*

## EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME

### *Income and poverty status*

For the three-county region, the mean monthly income from all sources for survey respondent households was \$1,422 and the median was \$1,195. Monthly household incomes ranged from \$0 to \$7,000 per month. The median income ranged from \$892 for single person households to \$2,000 for six-person households. Table 2 shows that 82% of clients surveyed were below 125% of the federal poverty level.

**Table 2. Monthly Household Income – Region Wide**





**Table 2. Household income by household size**

	Household size	Number of households	Mean monthly income	Median monthly income	% below 125% of poverty level
All	1	235	962	892	87%
	2	112	1,493	1,365	76%
	3	91	1,715	1,500	75%
	4	73	1,907	1,596	77%
	5	50	1,913	1,800	82%
	6	27	1,924	2,000	96%
	All HH sizes	588	1,422	1,195	82%
Whatcom	1	163	876	843	73%
	2	75	1,257	1,195	56%
	3	55	1,442	1,200	52%
	4	50	1,801	1,600	63%
	5	29	1,656	1,200	80%
	6	20	1,953	2,050	100%
	All HH sizes	392	1,259	1,000	66%
San Juan	1	41	1,084	1,087	91%
	2	25	2,078	1,700	81%
	3	23	2,263	2,000	87%
	4	16	2,331	2,000	80%
	5	15	2,300	2,400	86%
	6	5	2,020	2,020	95%
	All HH sizes	125	1,843	1,500	87%
Island	1	31	1,257	998	84%
	2	12	1,745	1,567	83%
	3	13	1,904	1,700	62%
	4	7	1,703	1,500	86%
	5	6	2,192	2,450	67%
	6	2	1,400	1,400	100%
	All HH sizes	71	1,585	1,255	79%

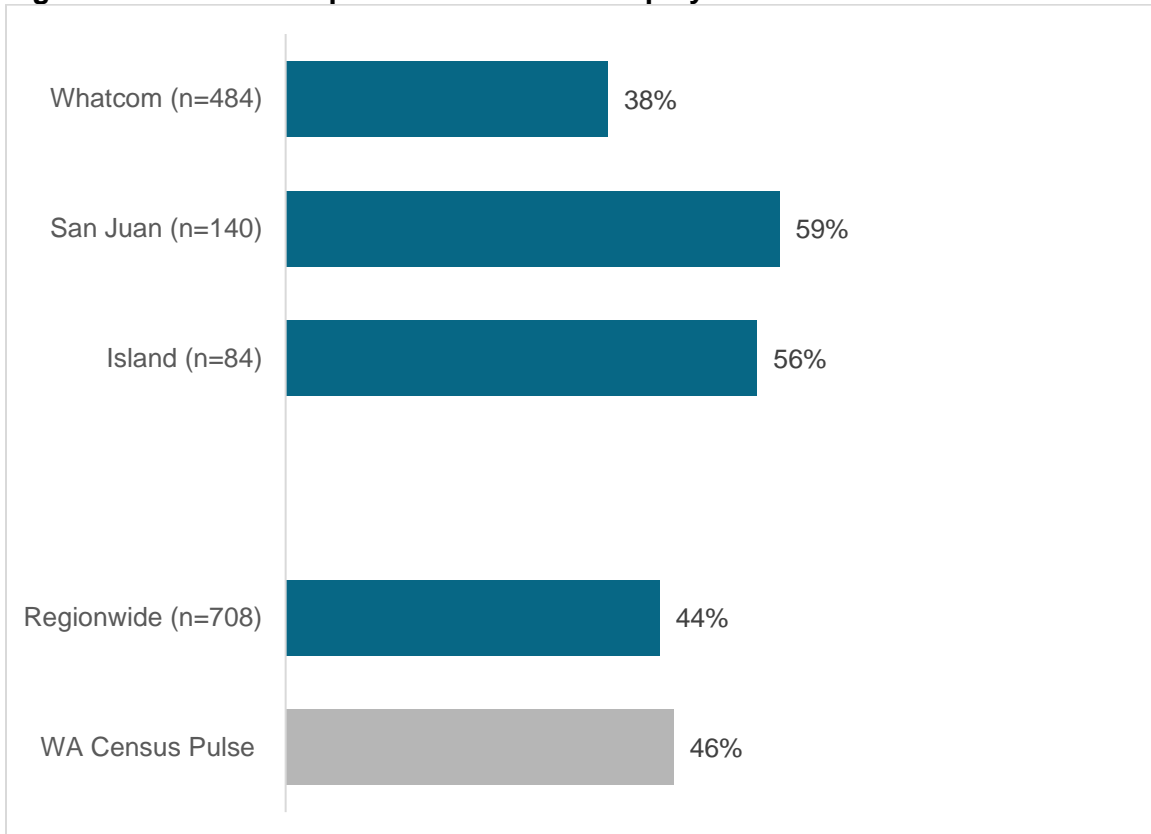
Note: Only households of six or smaller that provided household size and income figures were included (N=588)

### **Financial situations**

Respondents were asked a series of questions that were also included on the Census Household Pulse survey, a national 20-minute online survey studying how the coronavirus pandemic impacted households from a social and economic perspective. We were then able to compare how respondents who seek services in our region compared to a statewide sample.

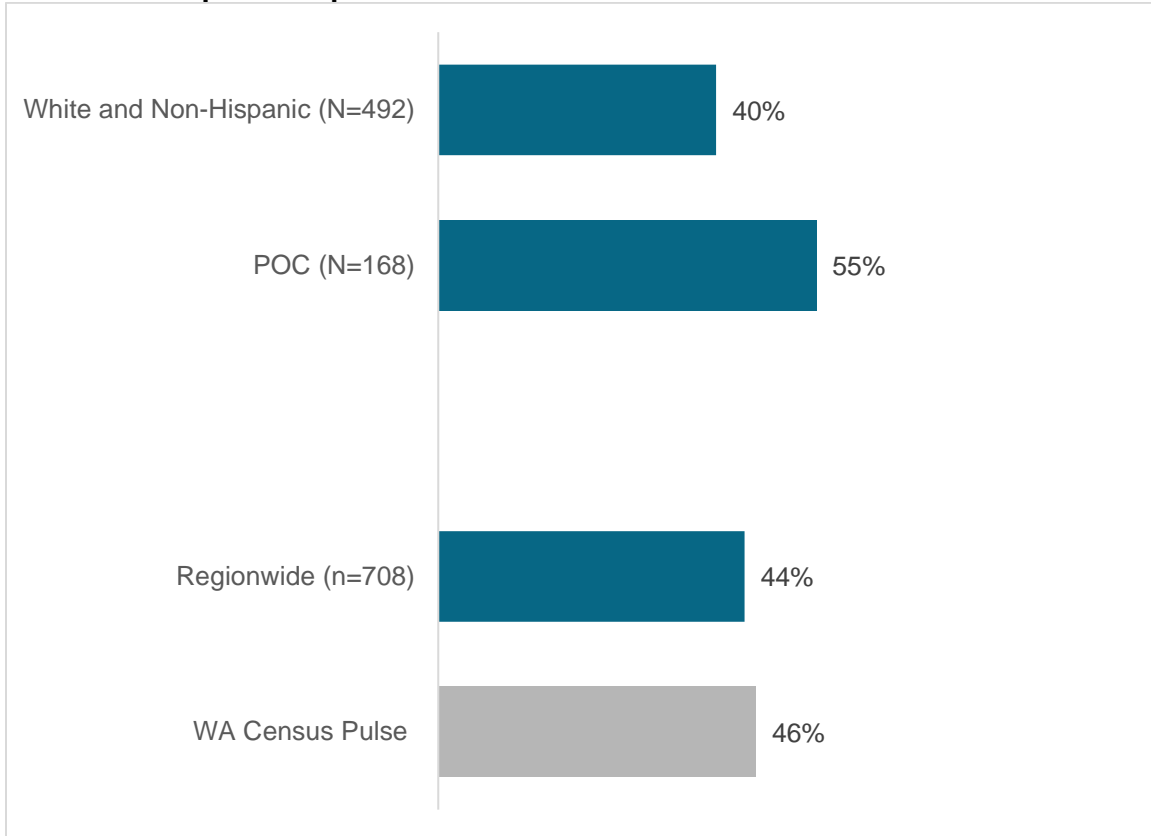
Respondents were asked if they or anyone in their household had experienced a loss of employment income since 3/13/20. Figure 6 shows that Island and San Juan respondents were more likely to have experienced a loss in employment income as compared to respondents in Whatcom County and Census Pulse respondents in Washington State.

**Figure 6. Household experienced a loss of employment income**



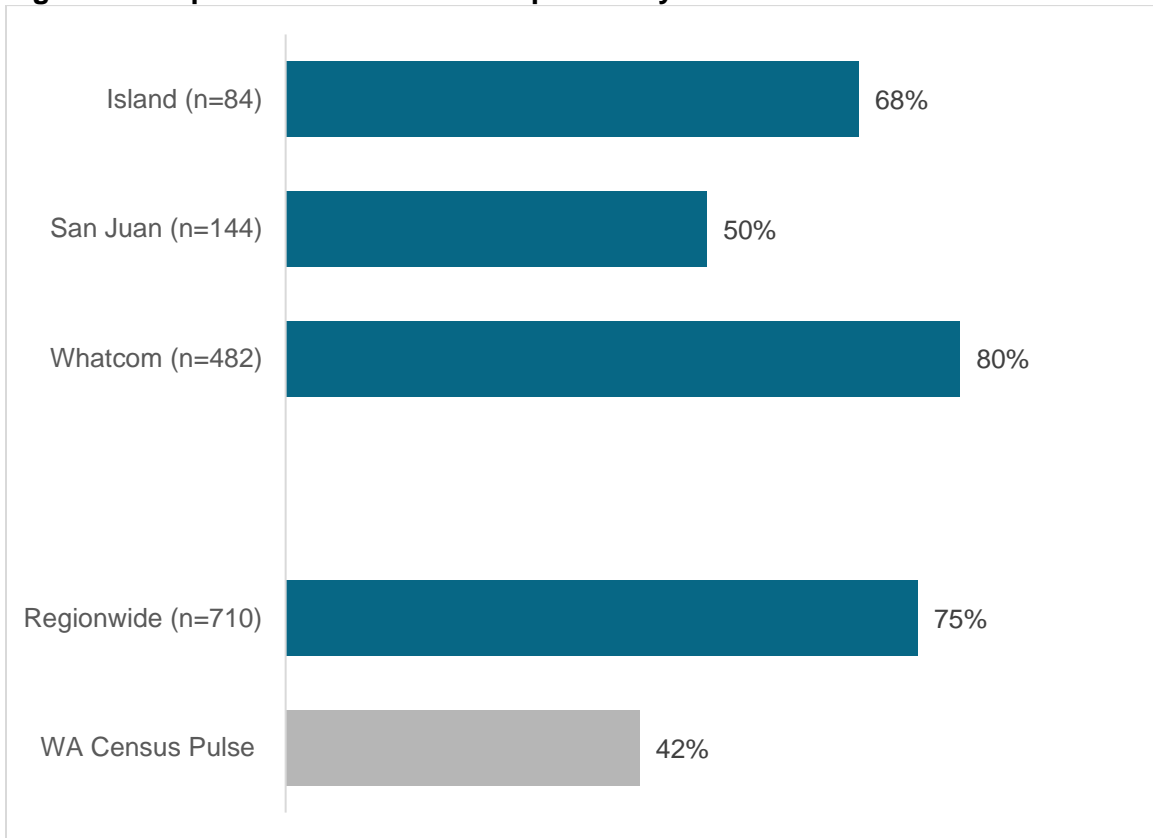
Additional analysis found that POC respondents were more likely to have experienced a loss of employment income (55% of POC respondents compared to 40% of White/Non-Hispanic respondents).

**Figure 7. Household experienced a loss of employment income, POC compared to white Non-Hispanic respondents**



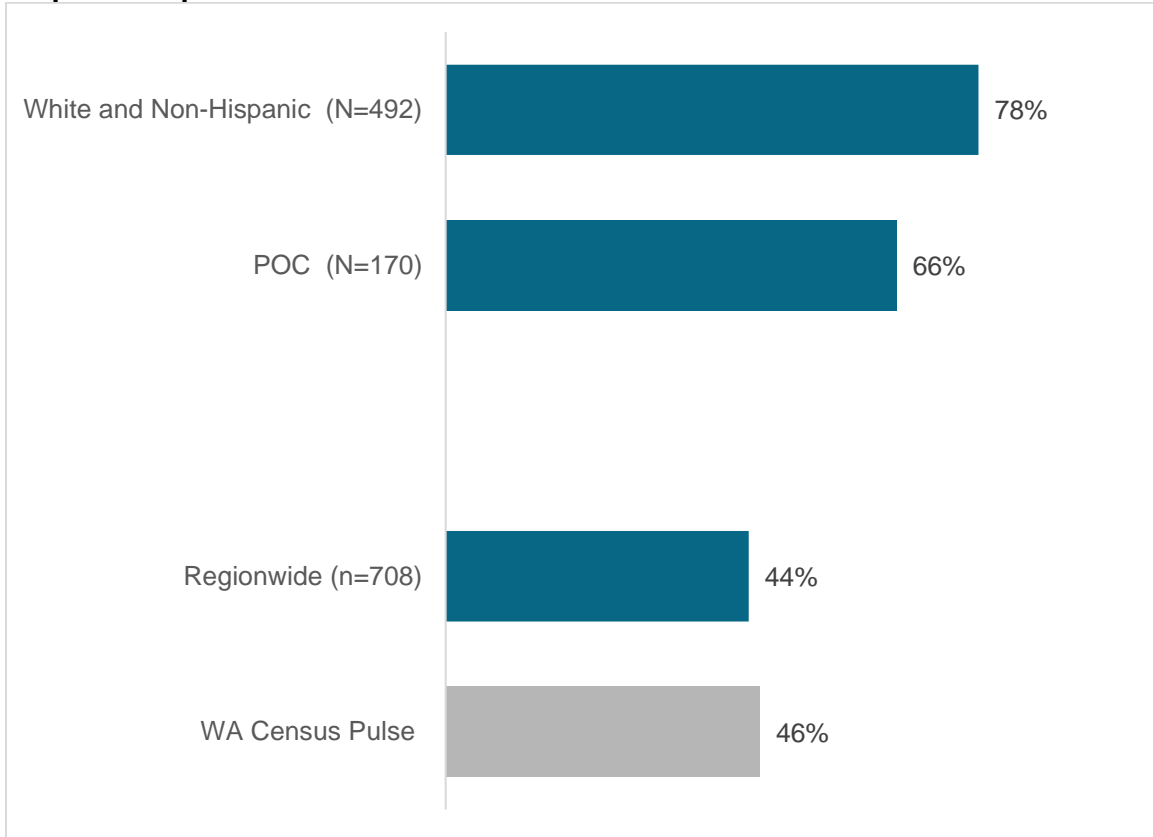
Respondents were asked if they worked in the past 7 days. Respondents in the three County region were more likely than Census Pulse respondents to say they have not worked in the past 7 days (75% vs 42%).

**Figure 8. Respondent did not work in past 7 days**



Additional analysis found that respondents who identified as white and non-Hispanic were more likely to say they have not worked in the past 7 days when compared to POC respondents (78% vs 66%).

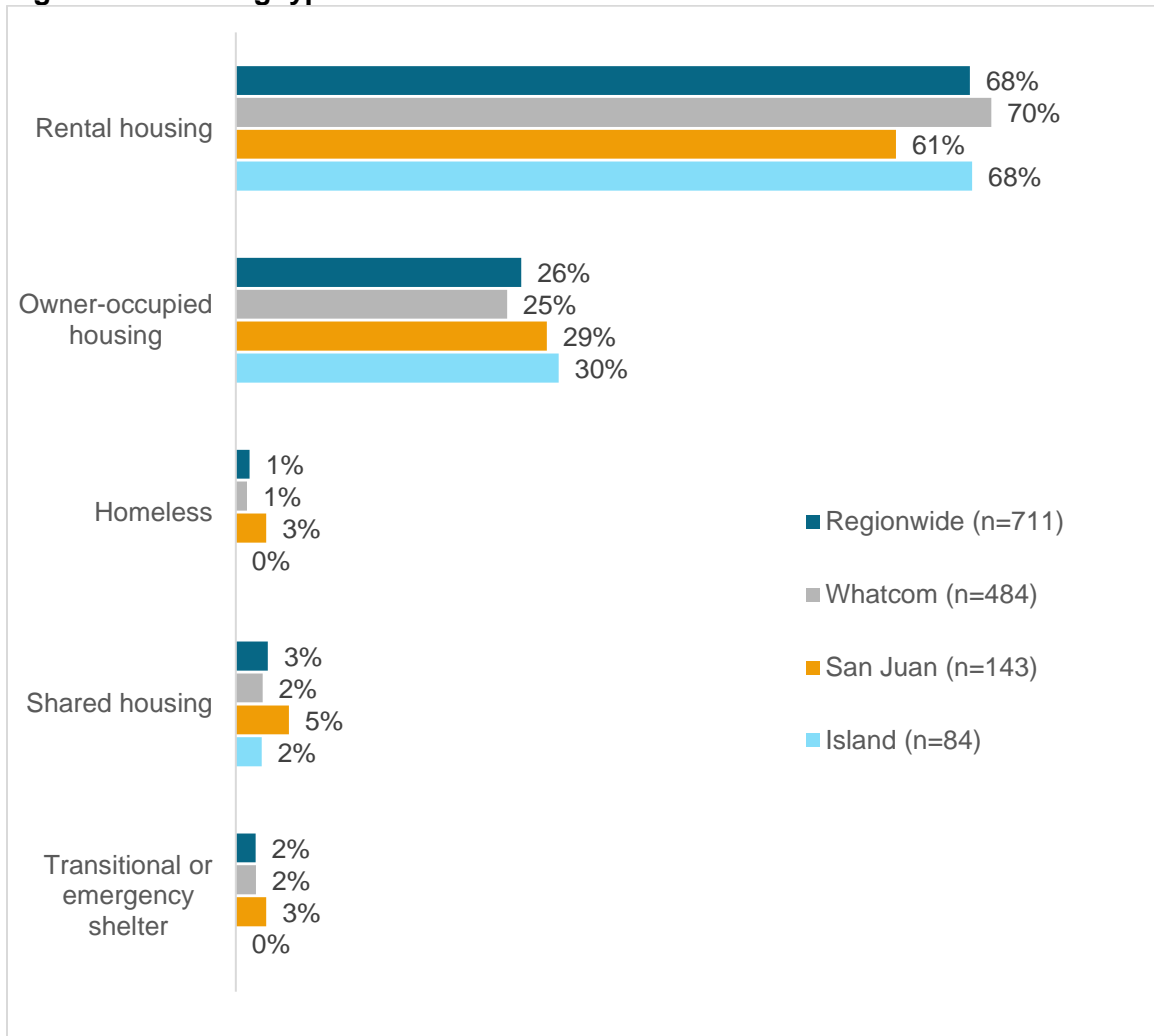
**Figure 9. Respondent did not work in past 7 days, POC compared to white Non-Hispanic respondents**



## HOUSING

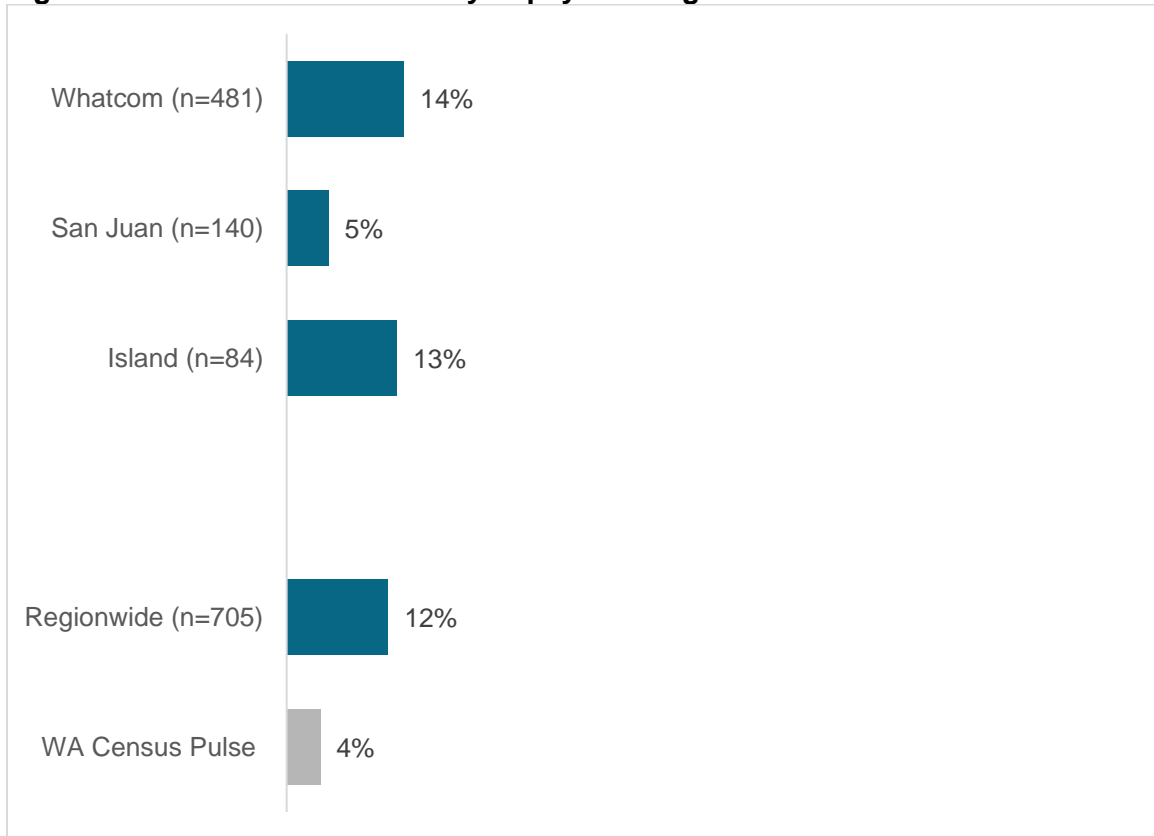
Regionwide, two thirds of respondents said they rent their home (68%). The proportion who said they own their home ranged from 25% in Whatcom County up to 30% in Island County. Regionwide, the respondents who said they do not rent or own fell in the categories of homeless (1%), shared housing (3%) or transitional/emergency housing (2%). For more details by county see Figure 10.

**Figure 10. Housing type**



Respondents were asked “How confident are you that your household will be able to pay your next rent or mortgage payment on time?” The Prosperity Project survey found that, regionwide, 12% said they had *no confidence*. Figure 11 shows the portion of households who had *no confidence* in their ability to pay their housing costs, comparing the three counties, alongside the statewide data from the Census Household Pulse survey. Although San Juan County responses were in line with the state findings, Whatcom and Island County rates were more than triple the state.

**Figure 11. No confidence in ability to pay housing costs**

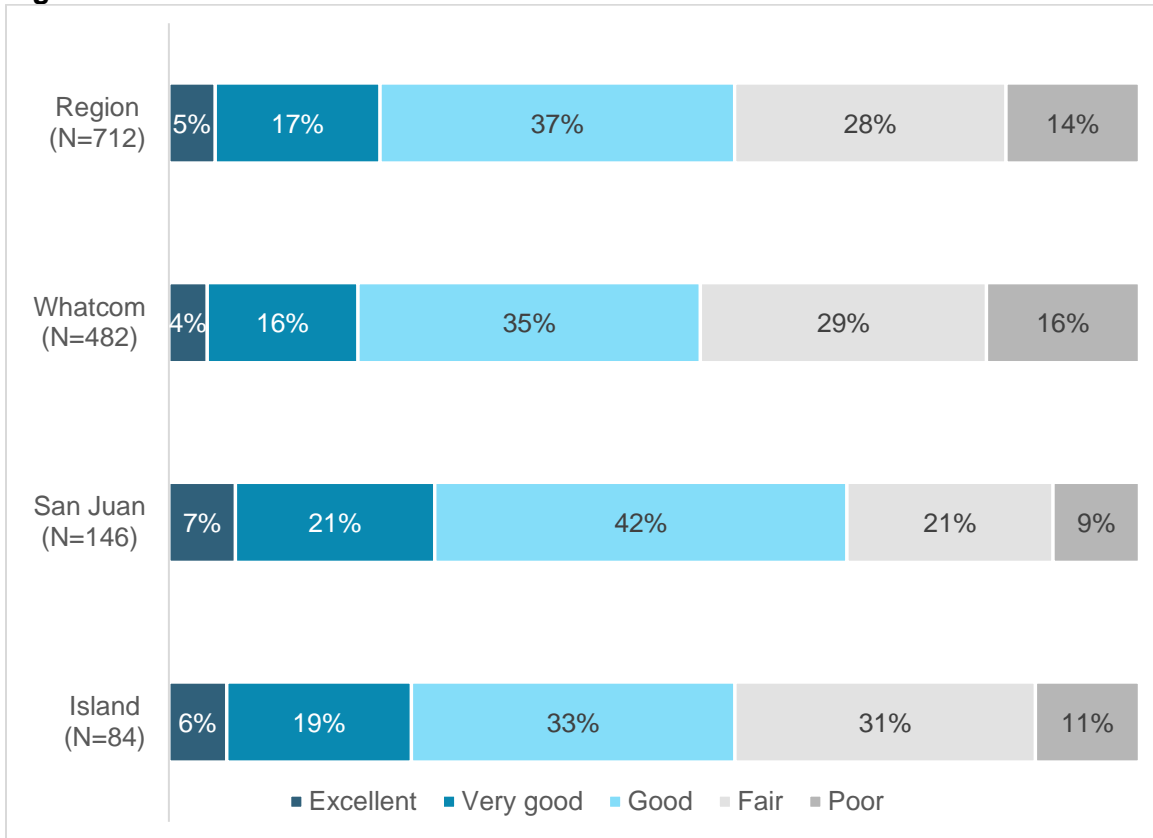


We looked to see how POC respondents answered questions about housing costs. Analysis found that their responses were very similar to white/non-Hispanic respondents.

**HEALTH**

Respondents were asked to rate their overall health. Just over half of respondents (58%) rated their health favorably (as *excellent*, *very good*, or *good*). The remaining described their health unfavorably, as *fair* or *poor* (42%).

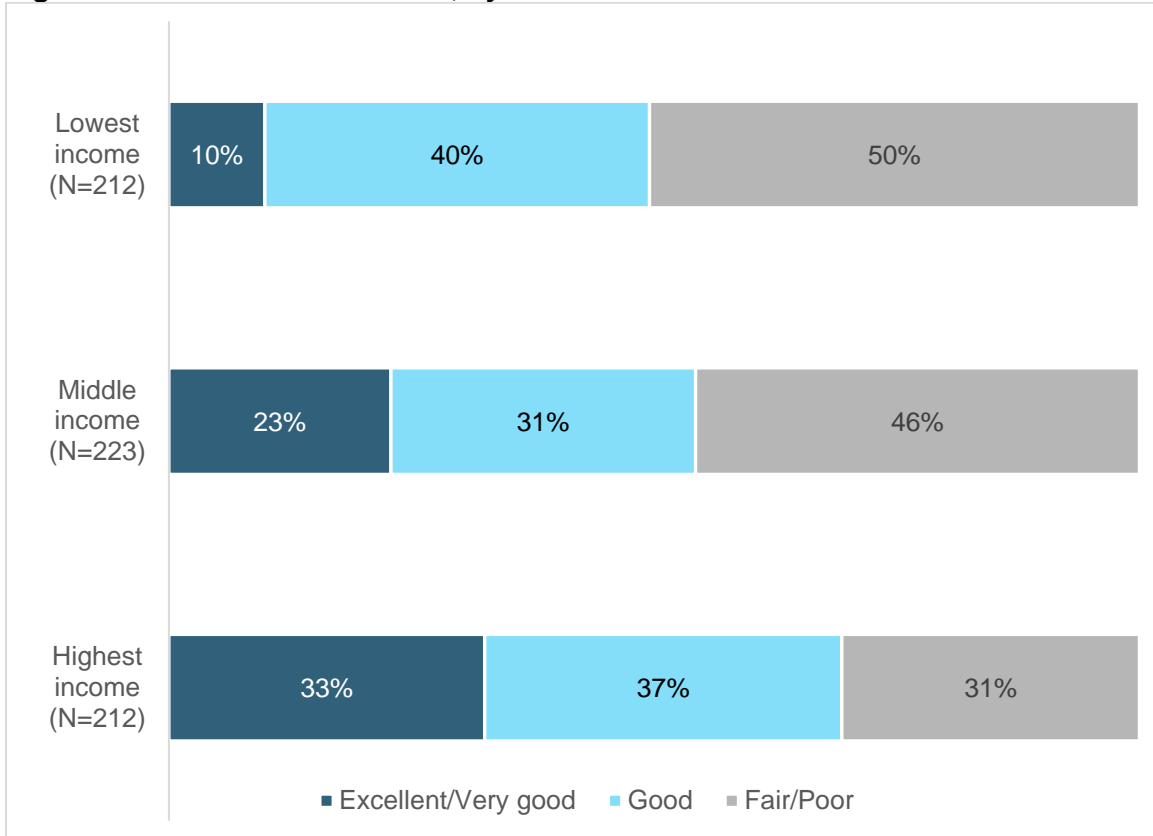
**Figure 12. General health status**





Analysis found that household income was associated with general health status. Sampled households were divided into three roughly equally sized groups based on income. Those in the lowest income group (\$0 through \$860/month) were twice as likely to describe their health unfavorably when compared to those in the highest income group (\$1600 and up). See Figure 14.

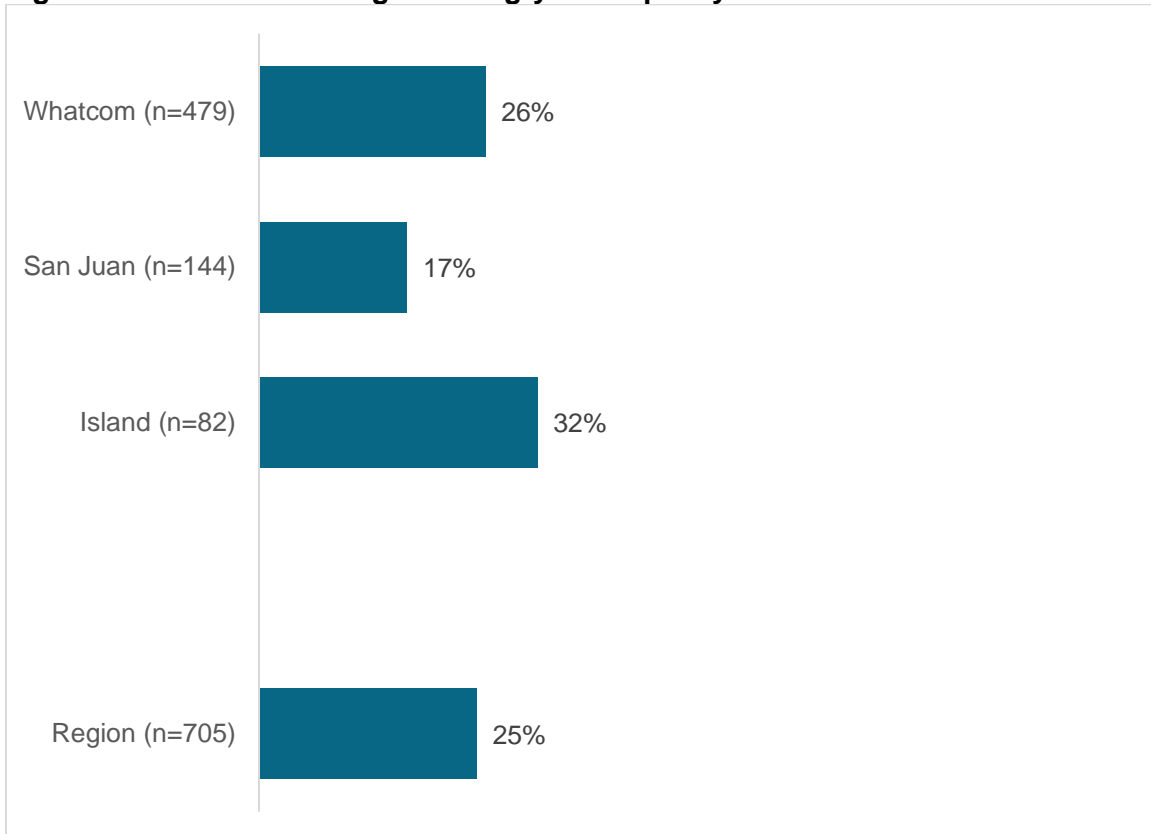
**Figure 13. General health status, by income level**



## FOOD AND NUTRITION

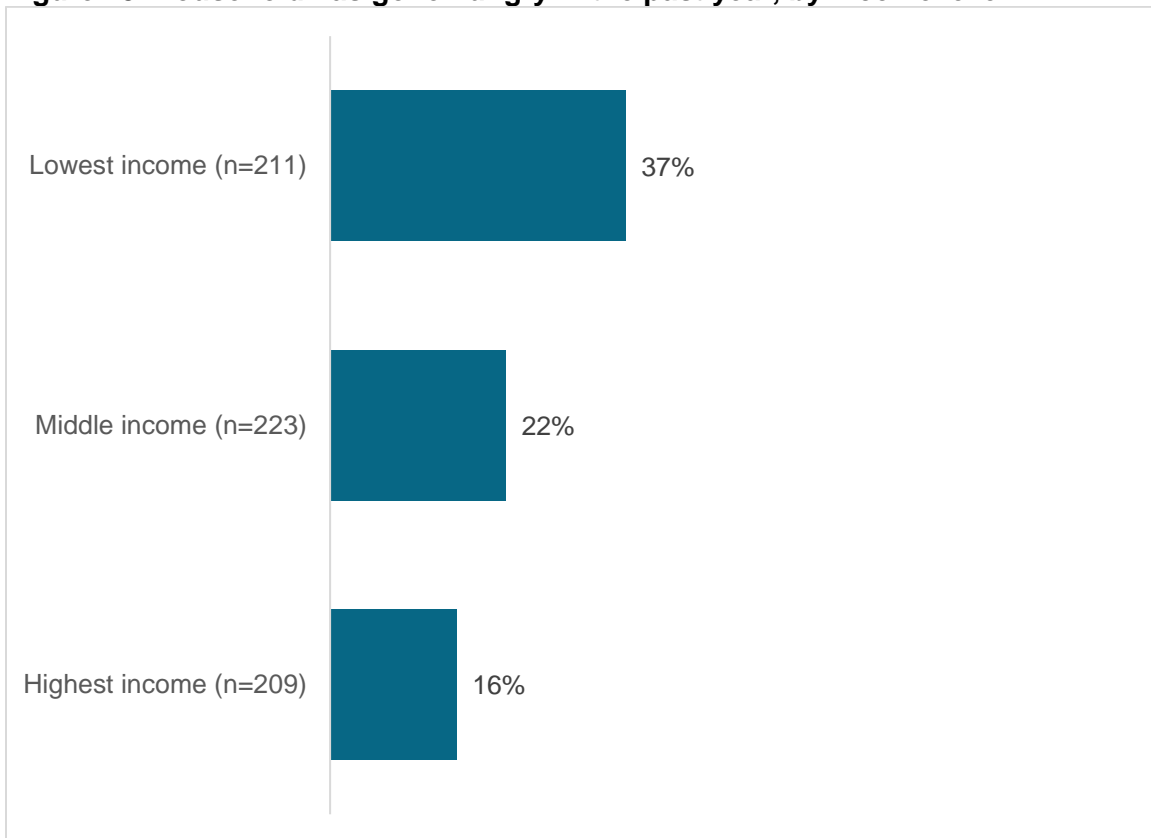
Respondents were asked if anyone in their household had gone hungry (in the past 12 months) because they were not able to get enough food. A quarter of respondents indicated affirmatively. This proportion was highest in Island County (32%).

**Figure 14. Household has gone hungry in the past year**



Analysis found that household income was associated with food security. Sampled households were divided into three roughly equally sized groups based on income. Those in the lowest income group (\$0 through \$860/month) were more than twice as likely to say someone in their household went hungry when compared to those in the highest income group (\$1600 and up). See Figure 16.

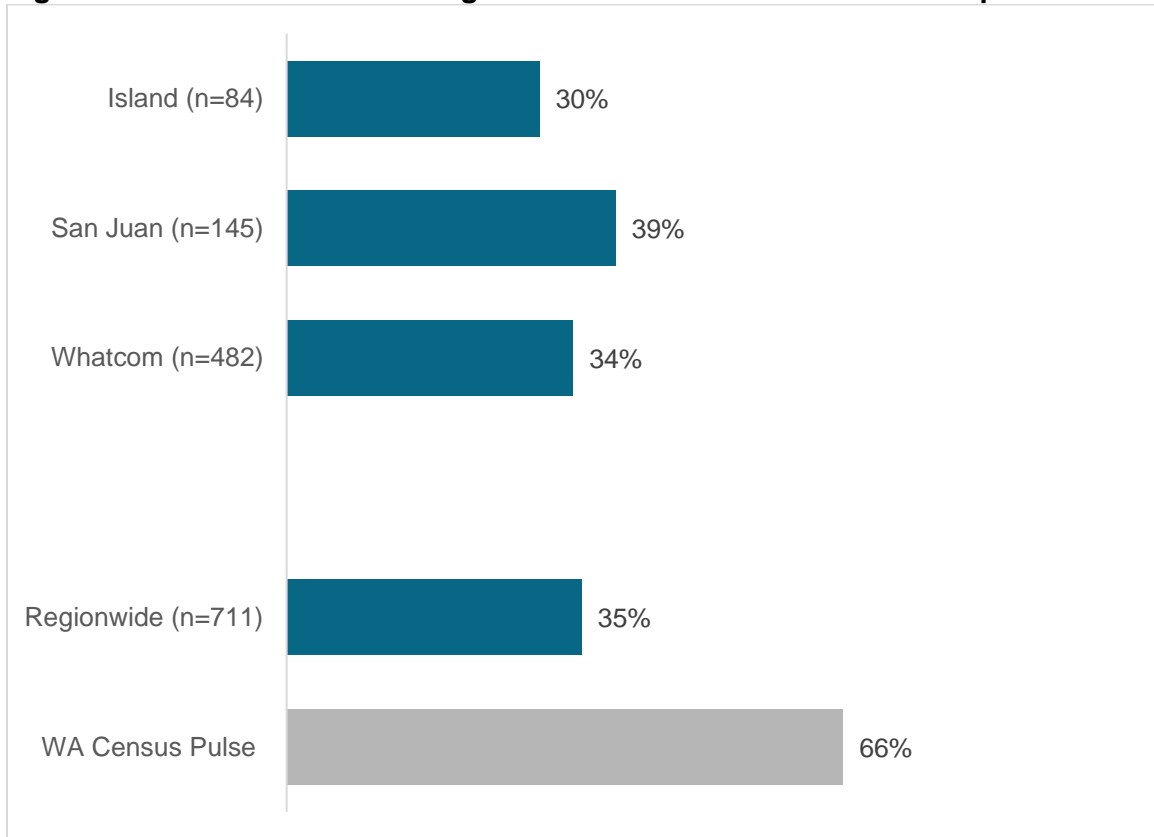
**Figure 13. Household has gone hungry in the past year, by income level**



In a second measure of food security, respondents were asked if, during the past week, their household had enough of the kinds of food they wanted to eat. The Prosperity Project survey found that, regionwide, just over one-third agreed they had enough of the kinds of food they wanted (35%). This was almost half the rate demonstrated statewide (66%), as measured in the Census Household Pulse survey.

The Prosperity Project analysis found similar levels across the three counties, see Figure 17.

**Figure 146. Household had enough of the kinds of food wanted in the past week**



We looked to see how POC respondents answered questions about food and nutrition. Analysis found that their responses were very similar to white/non-Hispanic respondents.

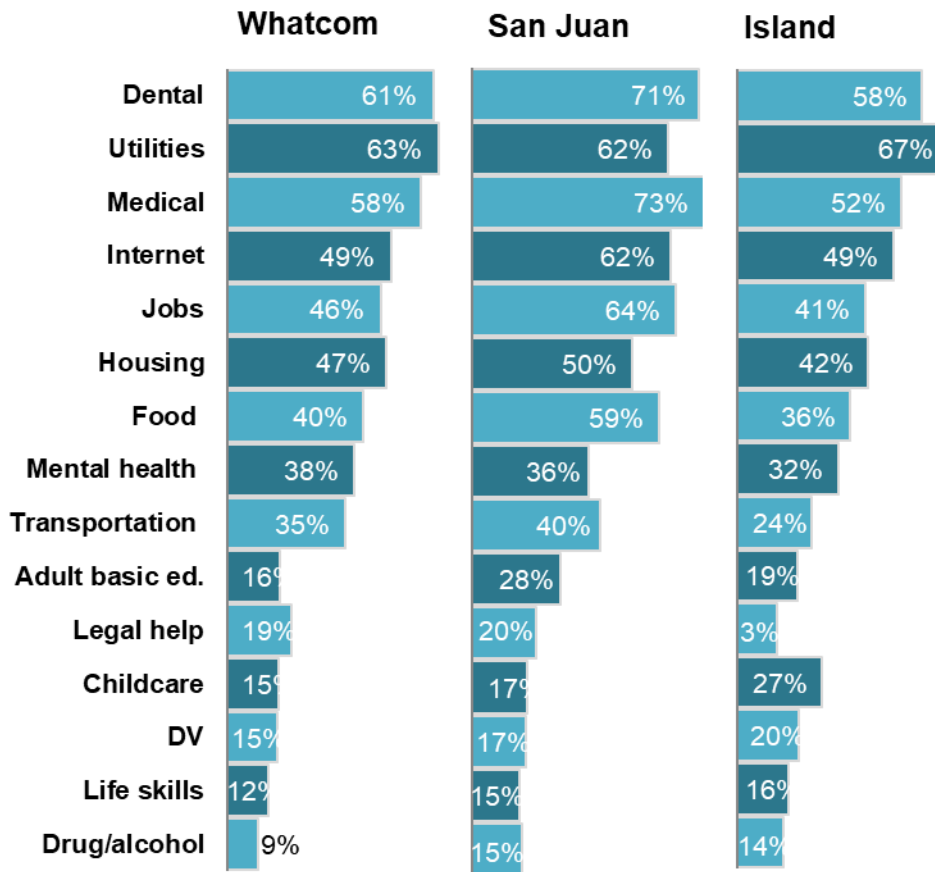
## COMMUNITY SERVICES ASSESSMENT

Survey respondents rated both the importance and the availability of 15 categories of community-based services to their own household. This section of the report presents the consumer perspectives as a method of analyzing local low-income service gaps<sup>1</sup>.

### Importance of services

The services rated as most important to respondent households included Dental, Utilities, Medical, Internet, and Jobs, though the order of rank was slightly varied among the three counties. Whatcom and Island county respondents ranked utilities as the most important, followed closely by dental. San Juan County respondent ratings pointed to Medical as the most important service. See Figure 18.

Figure 17. Proportion of “extremely important” service ratings



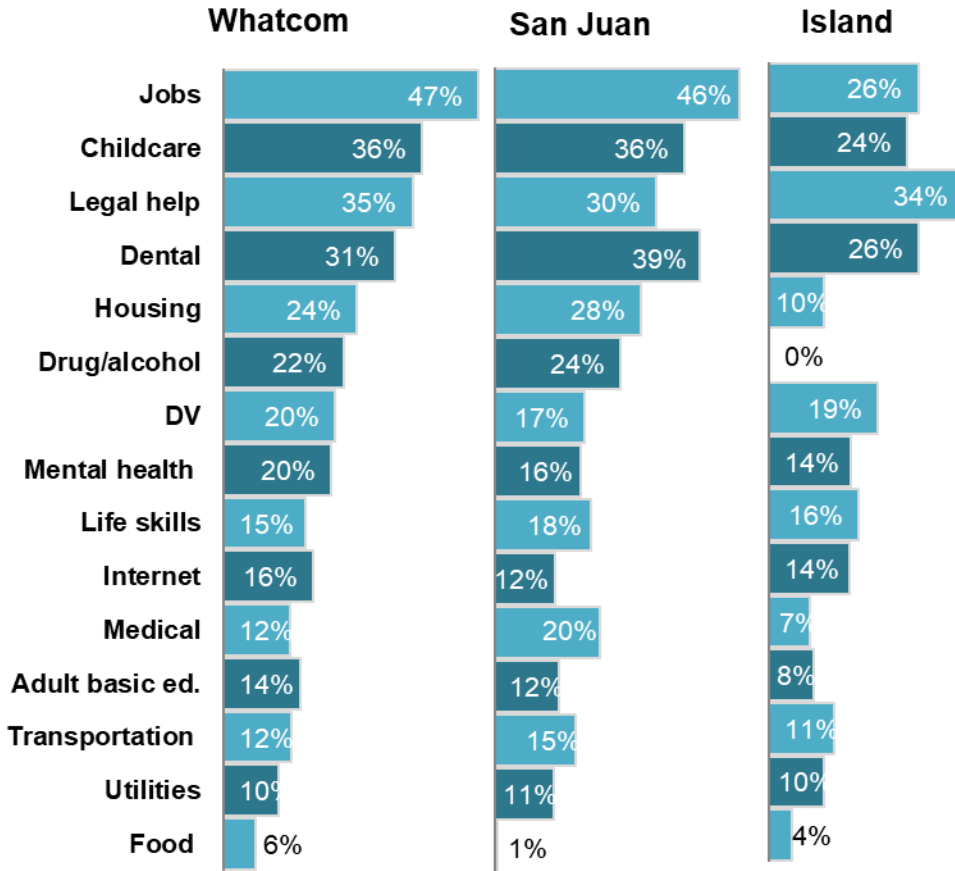
Services sorted by region-wide rating, not shown

<sup>1</sup> The number of respondents who provided importance and availability ratings of services fluctuated between services. The range of Ns: Island, n=20 to 78; San Juan, n=57 to 143; Whatcom, n=146 to 441.

**Availability of services**

Regionwide, the services rated as most difficult to access included Jobs, Childcare, Legal Help, and Dental. The order of rank varied somewhat among the three counties. See Figure 19 for details by county.

**Figure 158. Proportion of "very hard to get" service ratings**



*Services sorted by region-wide rating, not shown*

Because survey respondents rated these services on a five-point scale<sup>2</sup>, another way to analyze the data is to calculate the average importance and availability scores for each service area. These data form the basis of an “importance-availability” coordinate rating system (Figures 19 through 23). The average importance and availability ratings among the clients and providers were calculated and plotted on graphs. The lines making up the crosshairs of each graph represents the average importance score and the average availability score for each group of survey respondents.

The importance-availability charts are divided into quadrants that rate the services as follows:

Quadrant I: Above average importance and below average in availability

Quadrant II: Above average in importance and availability

Quadrant III: Below average in importance and availability

Quadrant IV: Below average in importance and above average in availability

Individuals and organizations planning for future services may want to pay particular attention to the services that appear in the upper left quadrant (Quadrant I) of the graphs. These are services that are both more important than average, yet most challenging to access.

Technical note about these figures: Readers will note that the quadrants for each chart are of different size. This is because the crosshairs that delineate each chart’s quadrants are positioned at the average importance and availability scores for survey respondents within each segment. Additionally, the low and high ends of the scale vary slightly in order to maximize the spread of the services in each illustration (so services are less clustered and easier to read).

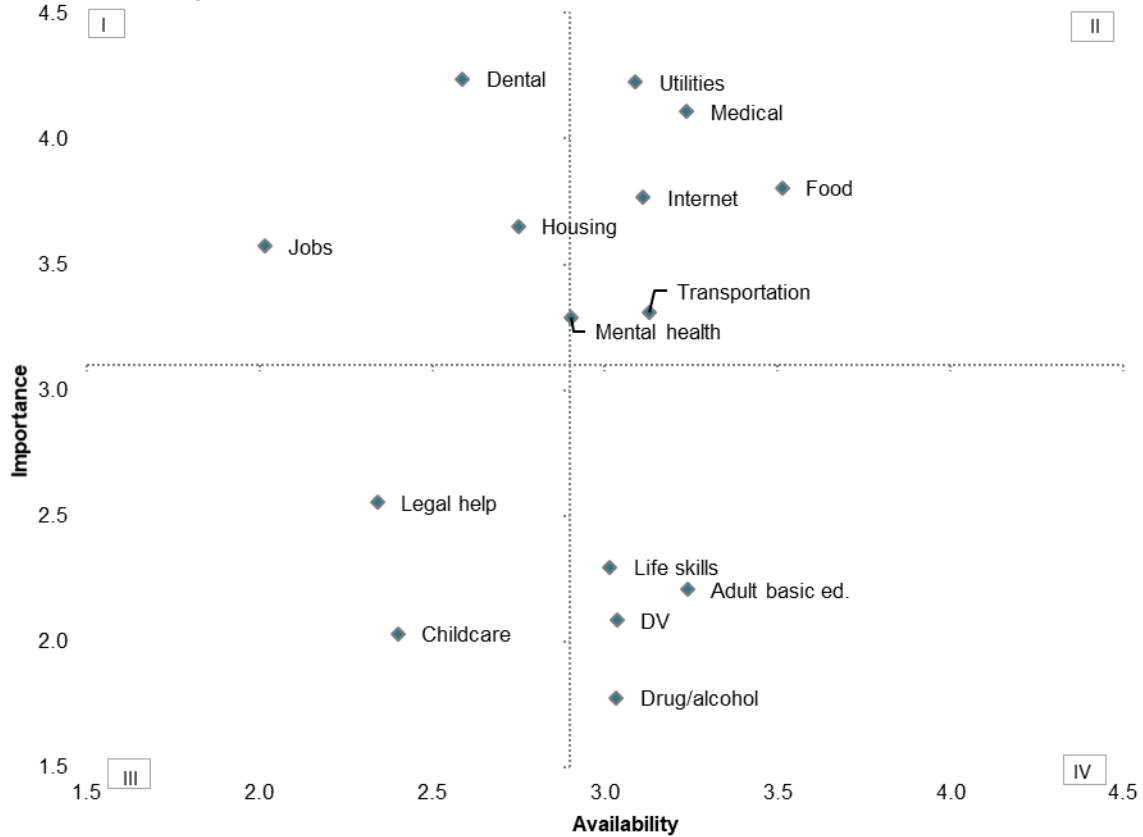
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<sup>2</sup> Importance scale: 5=Extremely important, 1= Not important; Availability scale: 5=Very easy to get, 1=Very hard to get

**Three-county region**

*Dental, housing, and living wage jobs* appear to be high priority service areas across the general population of low-income households surveyed across all three counties. All three of these service areas were rated as more important and more difficult to access than average.

**Figure 19. Three-county region respondent perspectives on relative importance and availability of services**



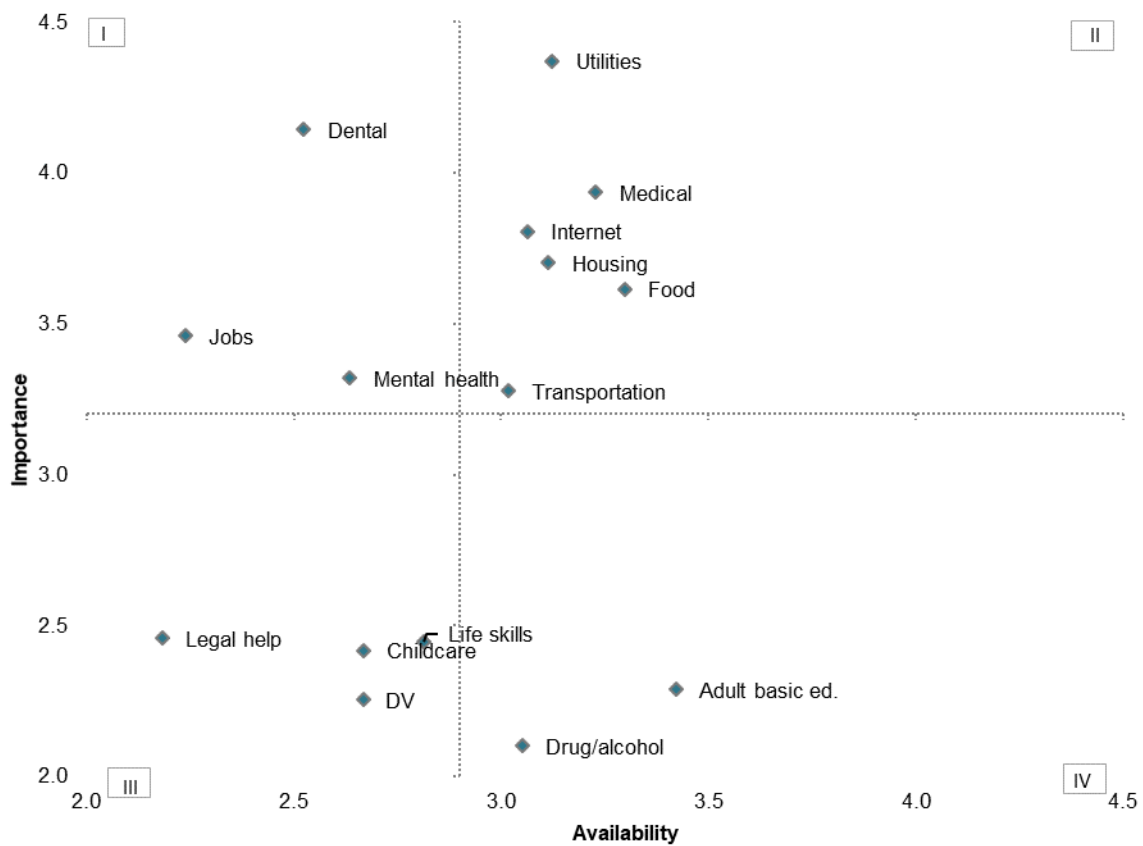


**Service gap analysis using importance-availability index**

**Island County**

*Dental, living wage jobs, and mental health* were all rated as above average in importance and below average in availability in Island County. Mental Health did not emerge in the high priority quadrant in the 2018 analysis (but *Housing* did). In comparison, mental health services were rated as harder to get this time around.

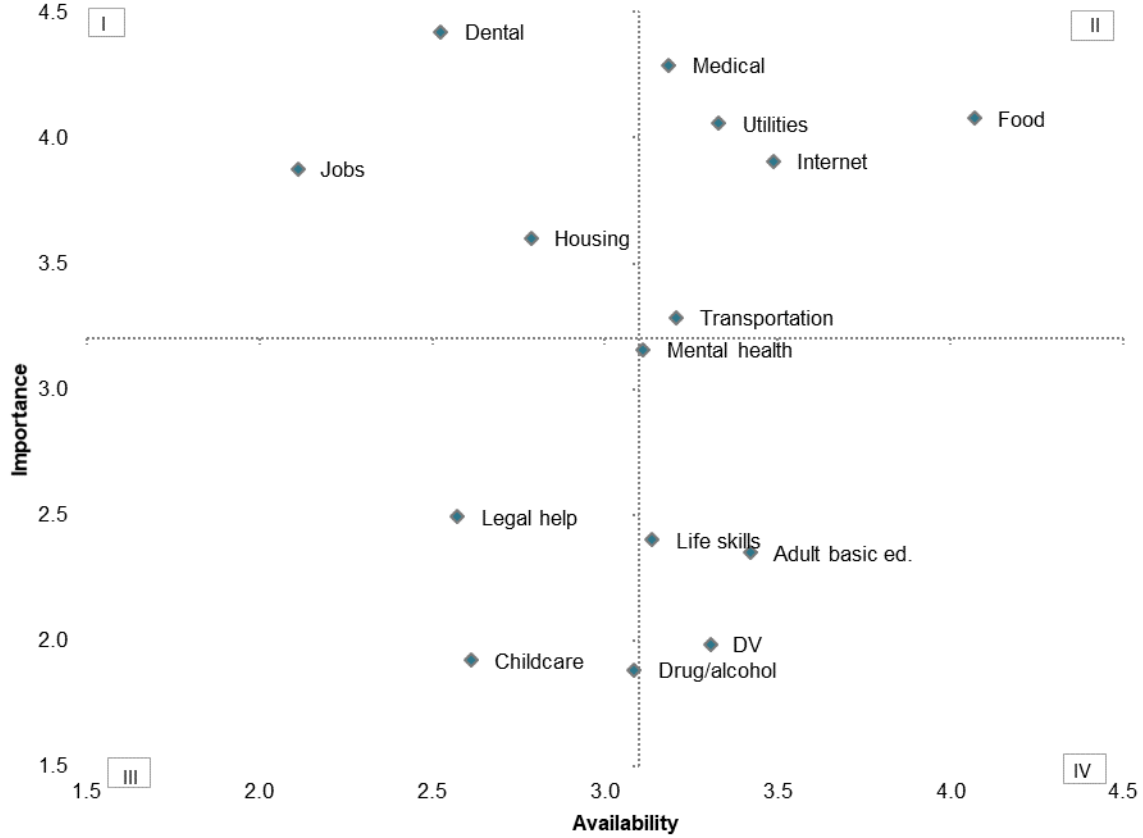
**Figure 20. Island County respondent perspectives on relative importance and availability of services**



**San Juan County**

*Dental, housing, and living wage jobs* were rated as above average in importance and below average in availability in San Juan County. These three services were also prioritized in the 2018 analysis.

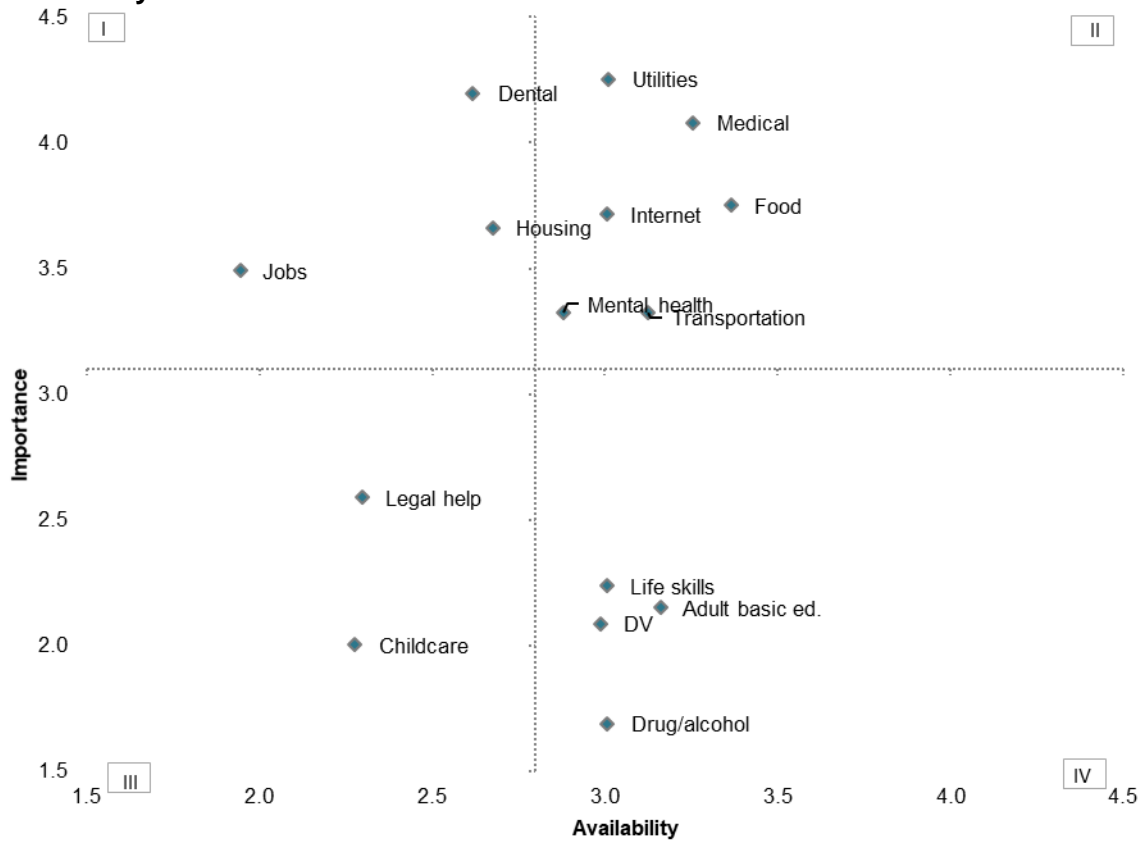
**Figure 161. San Juan County respondent perspectives on relative importance and availability of services**



### Whatcom County

Dental, housing, living wage jobs, and utility assistance were rated as above average in importance and below average in availability in Whatcom County. These were the same service areas prioritized in the 2018 analysis.

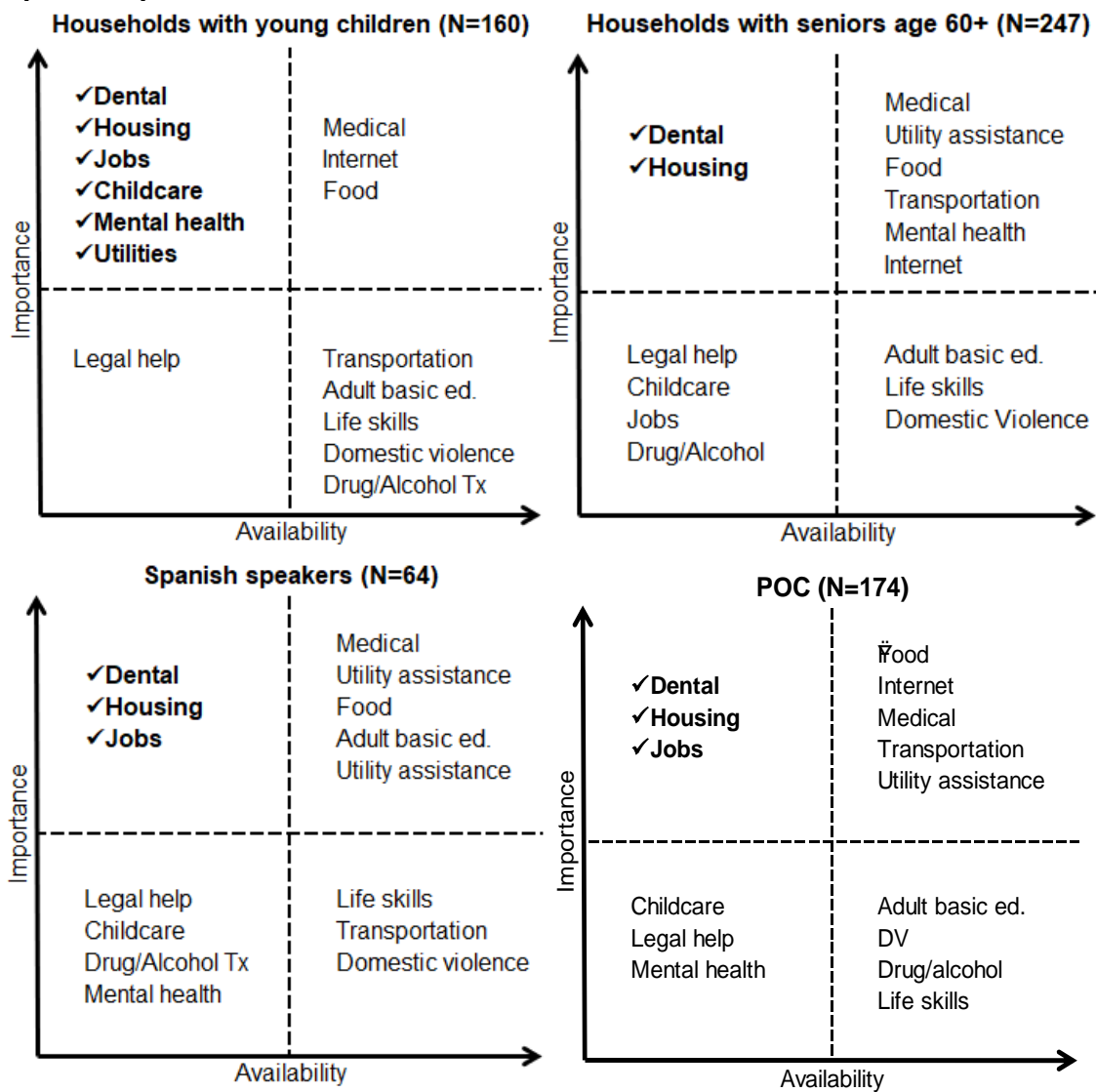
**Figure 172. Whatcom County respondent perspectives on relative importance and availability of services**



**Subsample populations: Young children, seniors, Spanish speakers, and POC**

Demographic and situational information provided by respondents allows a look at how different segments of the population view the importance and availability of services. Given that these segments of the population are not mutually exclusive, there is significant overlap in the importance and availability of services. All four of the segments identified in Figure 24 expressed a gap in services for dental and housing. However, families with young children (under age 6) also identified gaps in jobs, childcare, mental health, and utilities. Respondents who speak Spanish at home and POC respondents identified a gap in jobs.

**Figure 23. Households with young children ages 5 and under, seniors 55+, Spanish speakers, and POC**





## APPENDIX A: RESEARCH METHODS

Historically, The Prosperity Project has surveyed households using paper and pencil surveys, facilitated by staff members on site. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic during the data collection period, we were not able to use in-person strategies for recruiting participants. Like many other services, we pivoted to a digital format and created a survey that was available online.

Because of the availability of address information for clients enrolled in the Opportunity Council Energy Assistance Program, we sent postcard invitations via US postal service to those participants, who often are also clients in other Opportunity Council programs. We also contacted clients via email wherever possible.

In addition, paper surveys were distributed by Opportunity Council programs and the Family Resource Centers in San Juan County. Paper surveys were also mailed to Opportunity Council housing clients.

The paper and pen and online surveys were administered to as many unduplicated households as possible in the three-county region. We surveyed clients participating in Energy Assistance, Early Learning, Housing and homeless programs, and other OC programs as well as clients accessing services at the Family Resource Centers in San Juan County.

Data collection occurred during November and December of 2020. Paper surveys were available in English, Spanish, and Russian throughout Island, San Juan, and Whatcom County. The online version was available in English and Spanish.

### ***Survey development***

We reviewed the survey questions from 2018 with the goal of reducing the number of items, to decrease the burden on respondents. The final 2020 instrument contained:

- Twenty questions addressing current basic demographics and client situation regarding food, housing, health, employment and income
- Ratings of fifteen different service areas on two attributes: availability and importance
- One open ended item regarding the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

The final survey included 23 questions that gathered 51 points of data.

Included in the instrument were questions from the Census Household Pulse Survey, a national 20-minute online survey studying how the coronavirus pandemic is impacting households across the country from a social and economic perspective. The inclusion of these items allowed us to compare our data to the findings from respondents across Washington State during a comparable period of time (11/25/20 to 12/2/20).

### ***Final sample***

Overall, 716 households completed the survey. These households included an estimated total of 1,807 persons.

The final sample slightly underrepresented Island County and slightly overrepresented San Juan County. See Table 3.

**Table 3. Final sample compared to county population estimates**

	Surveys		Population	
	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Island	84	12%	85,141	26%
San Juan	147	21%	17,582	5%
Whatcom	485	68%	229,247	69%
<b>Regionwide</b>	<b>716</b>		<b>331,970</b>	

Table 4 shows that a majority of respondents (62%) completed the survey online; 38% completed the survey on paper.

**Table 4. Final sample survey methods**

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Online	447	62%
Paper	269	38%
<b>Total</b>	<b>716</b>	

## APPENDIX B: SURVEY

### FOOD AND HOUSING

1. **What County do you live in? (CHECK ONLY ONE)**
  - Island
  - San Juan
  - Whatcom
  
2. **Which best describes your current home? (CHECK ONLY ONE)**
  - Rental housing
  - Owner-occupied housing
  - Sharing a home with another household
  - Transitional or emergency shelter
  - I am experiencing homelessness
  
3. **How confident are you that your household will be able to pay your next rent or mortgage payment on time? (CHECK ONLY ONE)**
  - No confidence
  - Slight confidence
  - Moderate confidence
  - High confidence
  - Payment is/will be deferred
  
4. **In the last 12 months, have you or anyone in your home gone hungry because you were not able to get enough food? (CHECK ONLY ONE)**
  - Yes
  - No
  - Don't know
  
5. **Getting enough food can be a problem for some people. Which of these statements best describes the food eaten in your household before March 13, 2020? (CHECK ONLY ONE)**
  - Enough of the kinds of food (I/we) wanted to eat
  - Enough, but not always the kinds of food (I/we) wanted to eat
  - Sometimes not enough to eat
  - Often not enough to eat
  
6. **In the last 7 days, which of these statements best describes the food eaten in your household? (CHECK ONLY ONE)**
  - Enough of the kinds of food (I/we) wanted to eat
  - Enough, but not always the kinds of food (I/we) wanted to eat
  - Sometimes not enough to eat
  - Often not enough to eat



**YOUR HEALTH**

7. **Would you say that in general your health is...? (CHECK ONLY ONE)**

- Excellent
- Very good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

**EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME**

8. **What is your MONTHLY household income from all sources?**

Dollars per **MONTH**      \$ \_\_\_\_\_       Don't know

9. **Have you, or has anyone in your household experienced a loss of employment income since March 13, 2020? (CHECK ONLY ONE)**

- Yes
- No

10. **In the past 7 days, did you do any work for either pay or profit? (CHECK ONLY ONE)**

- Yes (skip to question 12)
- No

11. **If you did NOT work in the past 7 days: What is your main reason for not working for pay or profit? (CHECK ONLY ONE)**

- I did not want to be employed at this time
- I am/was sick with coronavirus symptoms
- I am/was caring for someone with coronavirus symptoms
- I am/was caring for children not in school or daycare
- I am/was caring for an elderly person
- I was concerned about getting or spreading the coronavirus
- I am/was sick (not coronavirus related) or disabled
- I am retired
- My employer experienced a reduction in business (including furlough) due to coronavirus pandemic
- I am/was laid off due to coronavirus pandemic
- My employer closed temporarily due to the coronavirus pandemic
- My employer went out of business due to the coronavirus pandemic
- Other reason, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**SERVICES**

The following questions will help us find out which of the following services are the most important to you.

- 12. On a scale of 1 to 5, how important is this service to your household now? Use 1 for “not important” and 5 for “extremely important”**

PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH SERVICE OR CHECK “Don’t know”

	Not important					Extremely important
a. Housing help	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
b. Childcare I can afford	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
c. Basic Education/English (ESL)/GED	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
d. Legal help	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
e. Food (help getting enough food)	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
f. Transportation that meets my needs	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
g. Affordable medical care	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
h. Affordable dental care	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
i. Living wage jobs	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
j. Help with heating & electric bills	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
k. Mental health services or family counseling	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
l. Domestic violence shelter and/or counseling services	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
m. Drug/alcohol treatment & counseling	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
n. Help with life skills (such as budgeting, preparing meals, time management, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
o. Access to internet	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know

PLEASE GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE

**13. Next we would like to know how easy it is to access these services. On a scale of 1 to 5, how easy is it for your household to locate and receive these services? Use 1 for “very hard to get” and 5 for “very easy to get”**

PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH SERVICE OR CHECK “Don’t know”

	Very hard to get ----- Very easy to get					
	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
a. Housing help				know		<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
b. Childcare I can afford				know		<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
c. Basic Education/English (ESL)/GED				know		<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
d. Legal help				know		<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
e. Food (help getting enough food)				know		<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
f. Transportation that meets my needs				know		<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
g. Affordable medical care				know		<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
h. Affordable dental care				know		<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
i. Living wage jobs				know		<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
j. Help with heating & electric bills				know		<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
k. Mental health services or family counseling				know		<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
l. Domestic violence shelter and/or counseling services				know		<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
m. Drug/alcohol treatment & counseling				know		<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
n. Help with life skills (such as budgeting, preparing meals, time management, etc.)				know		<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
o. Access to internet				know		<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know

**14. What service do you or your household need that you cannot get?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**COVID-19 IMPACT**

15. How has COVID-19 affected your household? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

- 16. Where do you live now? CITY \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 17. Including yourself, how many people are in your household? \_\_\_\_\_
- 18. INCLUDING YOURSELF, how many persons in your household are...?  
0-5 years old \_\_\_\_ 6-17 years old \_\_\_\_ 18-59 years old \_\_\_\_ 60+ years old \_\_\_\_
- 19. What is your gender? (CHECK ONLY ONE)  
 Man  
 Woman  
 Non-binary  
 Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Prefer not to say
- 20. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_ YEARS OLD
- 21. Which best describes your race? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)  
 American Indian or Alaska Native  
 Asian  
 Black or African American  
 Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander  
 White or Caucasian  
 Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 22. Are you of Hispanic, Latinx, or Spanish origin?

- Yes
- No

**23. What language do you usually speak in your home? (CHECK ONLY ONE)**

- English
- Spanish
- Russian or Ukrainian
- Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_