



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Cleveland is now the Poorest Big City in the Country**

*Pre-COVID data shows Cleveland overtaking Detroit, also the worst large city for child poverty*

CLEVELAND, OH – New data released today by the U.S. Census Bureau shows Cleveland is the poorest large city in the country, overtaking the city of Detroit. Cleveland also ranks number one for the share of children living in poverty

The data, released Thursday in the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey results, reflects poverty rates from 2019, **before** the pandemic hit. It shows that last year, 30.8 percent of Cleveland’s population lived in poverty – more than 114,000 people. Living in poverty means **a family of three makes no more than \$21,330 per year**

“The poverty **rate** in Cleveland actually improved from last year, when 33.1 percent of Clevelanders lived in poverty, but other large cities – like Detroit – improved even more,” said Community Solutions’ Associate Director Emily Campbell. **“Since this data is from before the pandemic, we’re concerned about what this means for our neighbors now.”**

The change in Cleveland’s ranking is driven in part by an increased rate of poverty in older adults. The number and share of people older than 65 living in poverty in Cleveland grew last year, while it fell in most other cities across the country.

**“This also shows just how important it is to have strong safety-net programs to support our neighbors in need,”** said Campbell.

Previous Community Solutions analysis found that since Ohio’s current minimum wage is \$8.70 an hour, people could work full-time, year-round and still live in poverty. In 2019 more than 6,500 Cleveland adults lived below the poverty line and worked full-time for the full year. And largely due to the pandemic, more than twice as many people are unemployed today in Cuyahoga as were one year ago, when this data was collected.

For more information or to speak with Campbell please contact Dani Carlson at [dcarlson@communitysolutions.com](mailto:dcarlson@communitysolutions.com).

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