



# MEASURING COMMUNITIES

Mapping Progress for Military & Veteran Families

## Measuring Communities:

The Financial Well-Being of Veteran Families  
living in Wisconsin

## The Report



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MEASURING COMMUNITIES **SPOTLIGHT REPORT**

# The Financial Well-Being of Military and Veteran Families in the United States

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# Demographics

## Our Nation's Veterans: Five-Year Trends (2017-2022)

Our veteran population includes more **women**, more veterans who identify as part of **racial and ethnic minority groups**, and veterans with more service-connected **disabilities**.

### Average Number of Service-Connected Disabilities per Veteran

	World War II	Korean Conflict	Vietnam Era	Gulf War Era
Average Number of Service-Connected Disabilities per Veteran	2.4	2.5	4.3	8.3

*\*Note: Data in this figure comes from the Veterans Benefit Administration Annual Benefits Report for Fiscal Year 2023.*

# Demographics

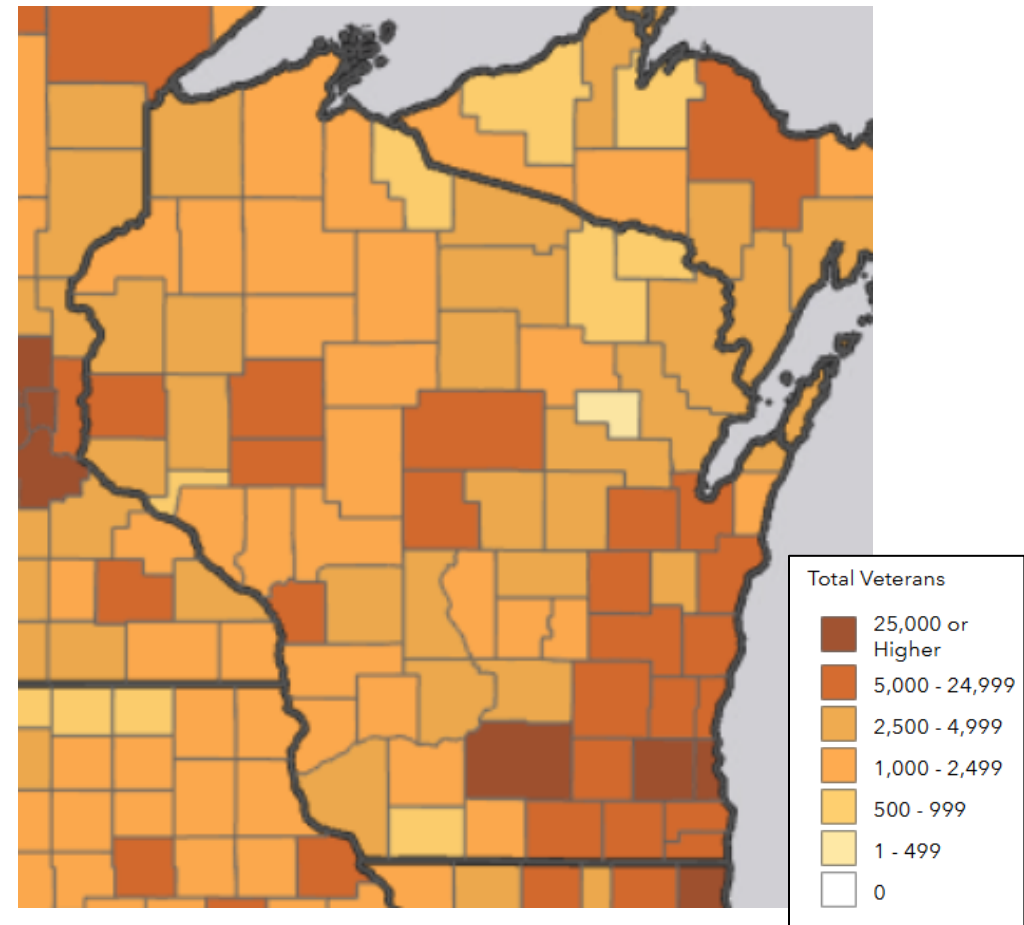
## Our Nation's Veterans: Wisconsin

**297,000 veterans** live in Wisconsin (*declined* by 15% since 2017).

**10% identify as part of a racial and ethnic minority group** in Wisconsin (*increased* by 11% since 2017).

**23,800 women veterans** live in Wisconsin (8% of veteran population) (*declined* by 3% since 2017).

There are **38,000 veteran households** with children in Wisconsin (*declined* by 26% since 2017).



# Demographics

## Our Nation's Veterans: Wisconsin

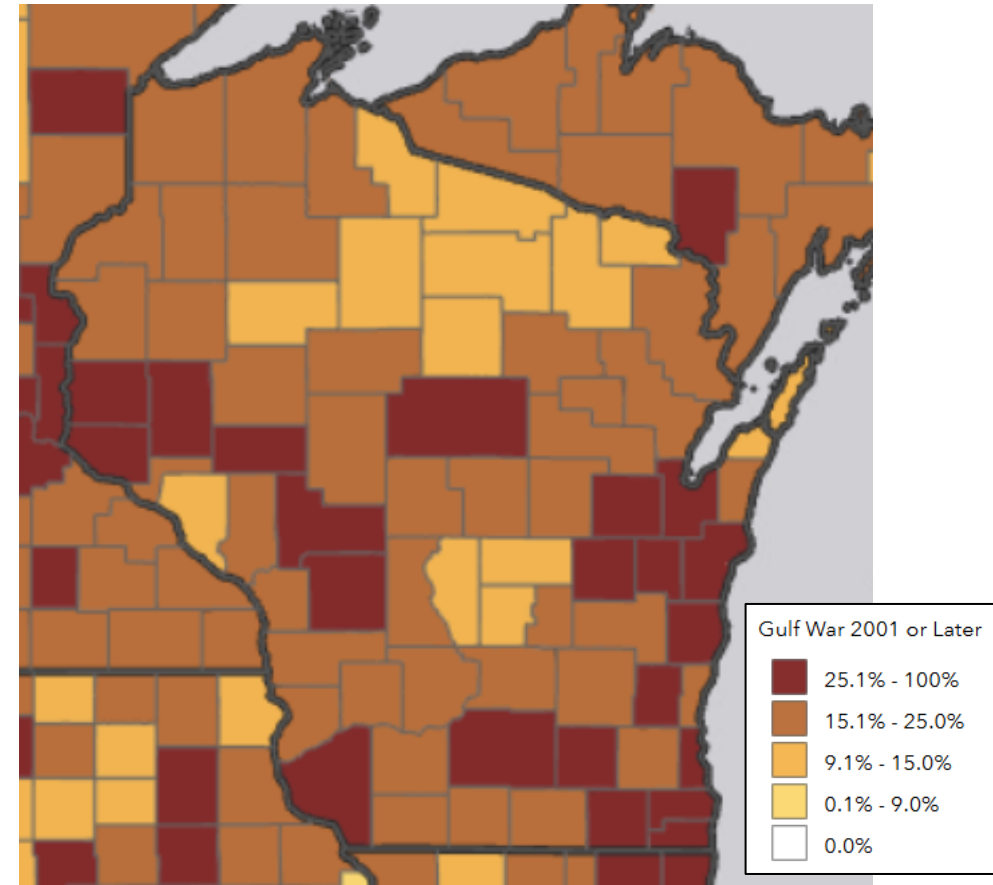
In Wisconsin, **54,000 veterans** served during the Gulf War era (1990 – 2001: pre-9/11) (*increased by 3% since 2017*) and **58,000 veterans** served during the Gulf War era (2001 or later: post-9/11) (*increased by 31% since 2017*).

**109,000 veterans** served during the Vietnam era (*declined by 16% since 2017*).

**25%** of Wisconsin veterans have a service-connected disability (*increased by 39% since 2017*).

**54%** of Wisconsin veterans are 65 years and older (*increased by 2% since 2017*).

*\*Note: Data on this slide comes from the U.S. Census Bureau (2017-2023).*





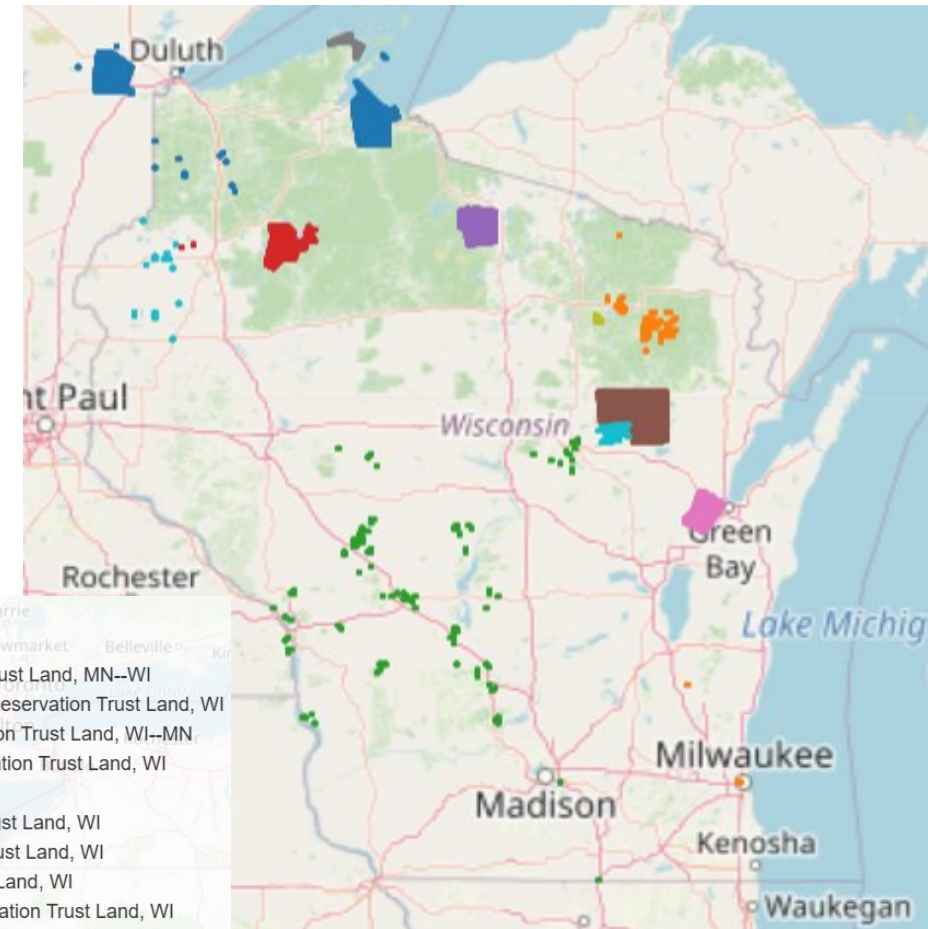
# Demographics

## Our Nation's Veterans: Wisconsin

**2,400 veterans** live on tribal land in Wisconsin (*declined by 17% since 2017*).

Of the veterans living on tribal land in 2023,

- 89% are male and 11% are female.
- 51% are aged 65 years and older.
- 38% served during the Vietnam era, fewer served in other eras.
- 10% are living in poverty.
- 81% have no service-connected disability.
- 62% have at least some college experience.



Reservation_Name
Bad River Reservation, WI
Fond du Lac Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land, MN--WI
Forest County Potawatomi Community and Off-Reservation Trust Land, WI
Ho-Chunk Nation Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land, WI--MN
Lac Courte Oreilles Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land, WI
Lac du Flambeau Reservation, WI
Menominee Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land, WI
Oneida (WI) Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land, WI
Red Cliff Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land, WI
Sokaogon Chippewa Community and Off-Reservation Trust Land, WI
St. Croix Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land, WI
Stockbridge Munsee Community and Off-Reservation Trust Land, WI

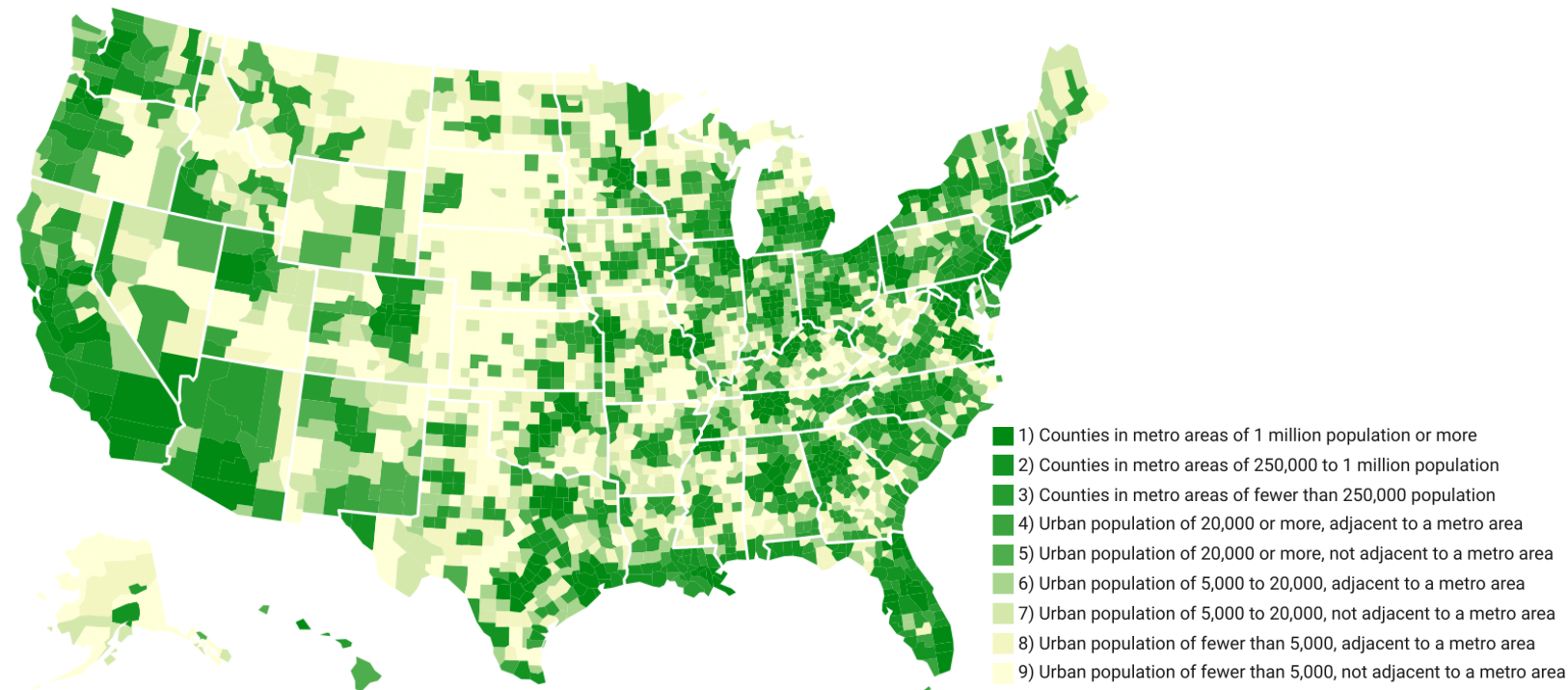
*\*Note: Data on this slide comes from the U.S. Census Bureau (2017-2023).*

## Military-Connected Families and Rural Communities

Approximately **3.1 million service members and veterans live in nonmetro communities**, where access to resources may be more difficult.

In Wisconsin, **98,000 veterans** live in nonmetro (or rural) communities (33% of the veteran population).

Rural - Urban Continuum Code, 2023



*\*Note: Data in this figure comes from USDA Rural-Urban Continuum (2023) and is generated by the Purdue Center for Regional Development.*

## Military-Connected Families and the Digital Divide

In 2022, the average Digital Divide Index (DDI) score was **19.5** in Wisconsin, which improved by 4 points from 2020.

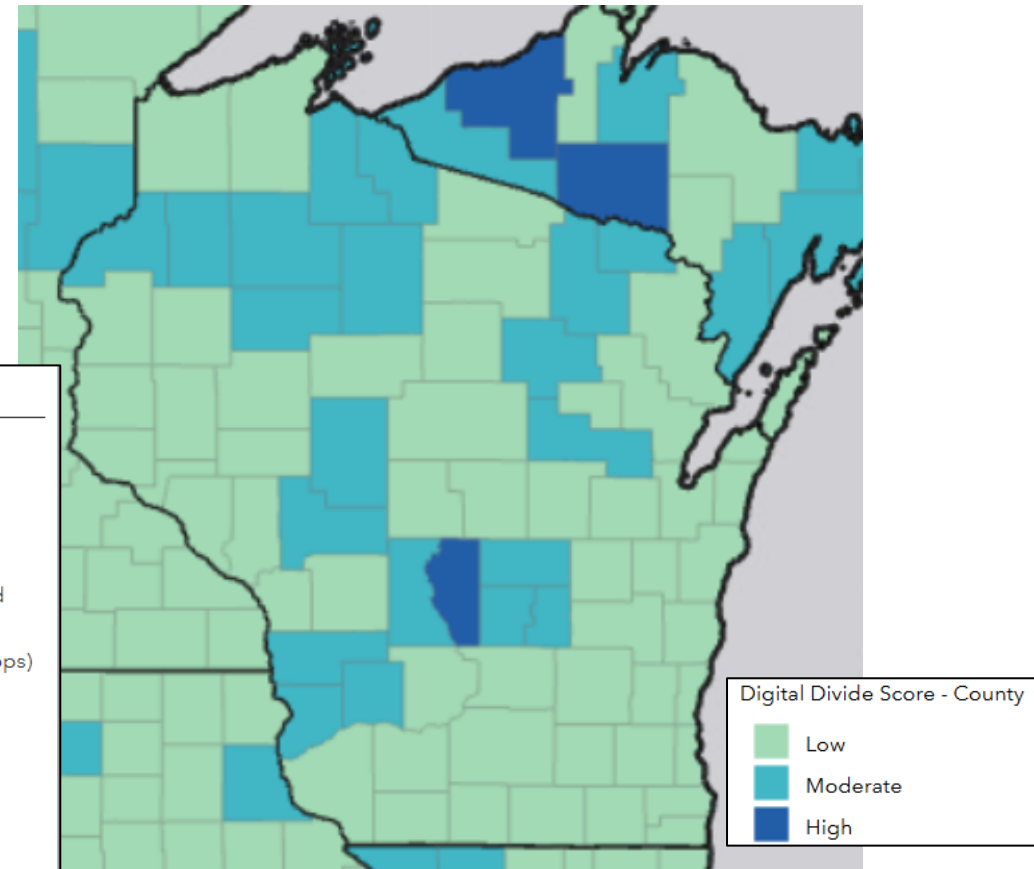
Consistent across these years, the Digital Divide has been largely influenced by **broadband infrastructure**-related issues.

The Wisconsin county with the largest Digital Divide is **Adams County** (DDI score of 30.23).

### Digital Divide Score

#### Adams County, Wisconsin

- 30.23 Digital divide score
- 32.44 Infrastructure score
- 28.71 Socioeconomic score
- 119.63 Average download speed (Mbps)
- 62.69 Average upload speed (Mbps)
- 16.75% No internet access
- 11.65% No computer access
- 11.65% Less than HS degree
- 14.55% Poverty rate
- 30.47% Age 65+
- 21.14% Disability rate
- 5.00 Internet Income ration

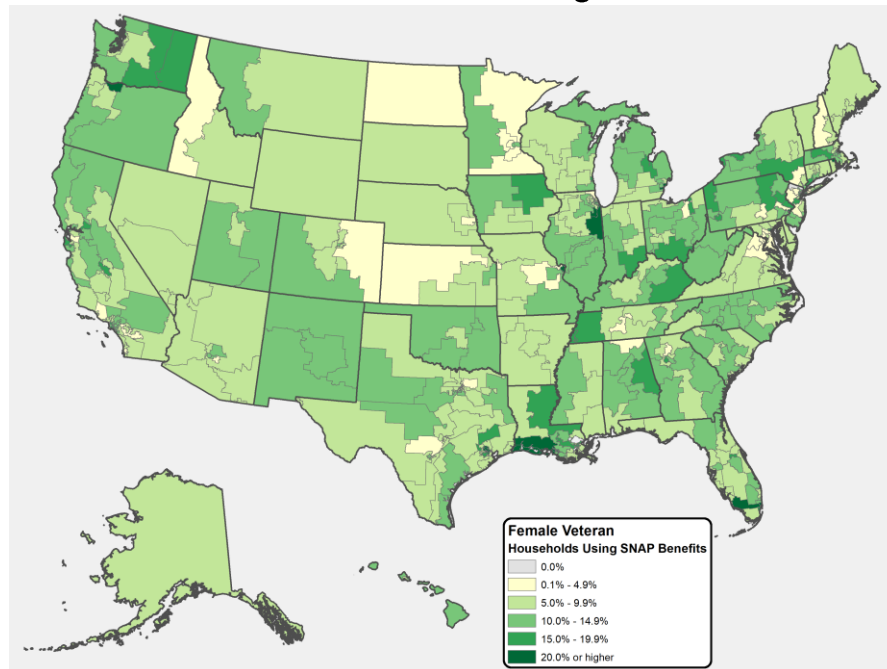




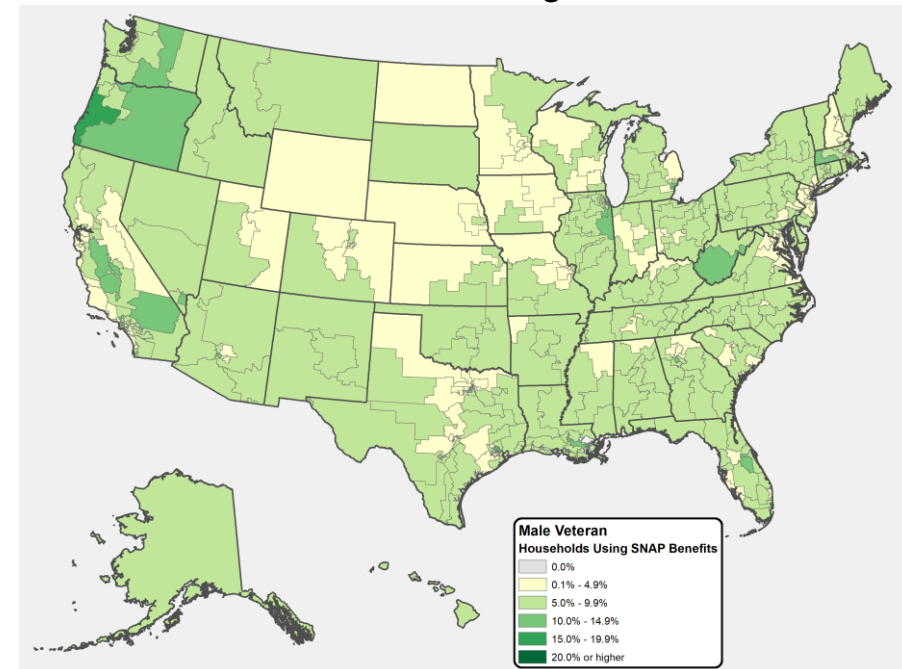
## Veterans and Food Insecurity

Veterans tend to be at high risk for **food insecurity**, yet food-insecure veterans are consistently less likely than nonveterans to use **SNAP benefits**.

Female Veteran Households using SNAP Benefits



Male Veteran Households using SNAP Benefits

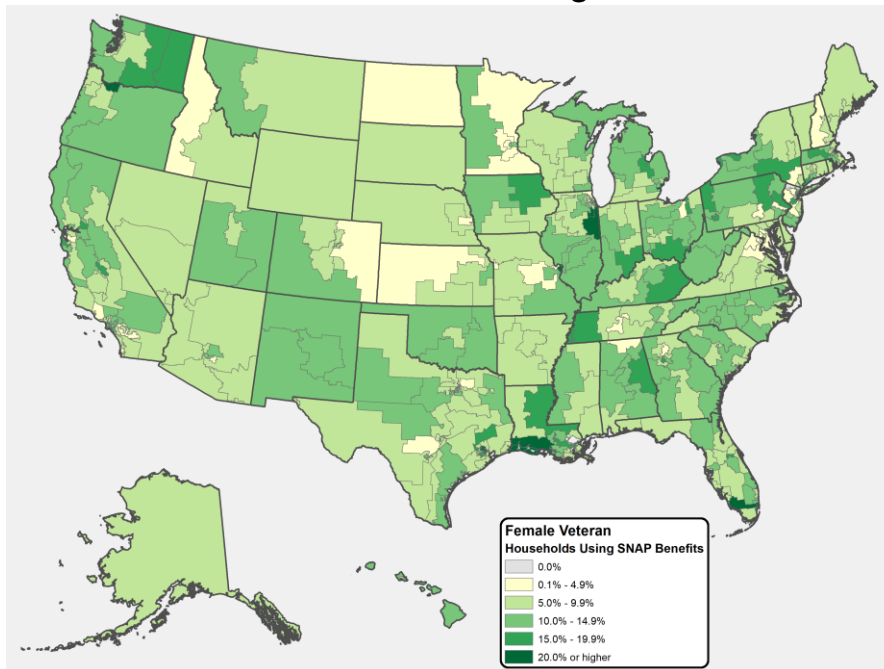


\*Note: Data in this figure comes from US Census Bureau (2022) and is generated by the Purdue Center for Regional Development.

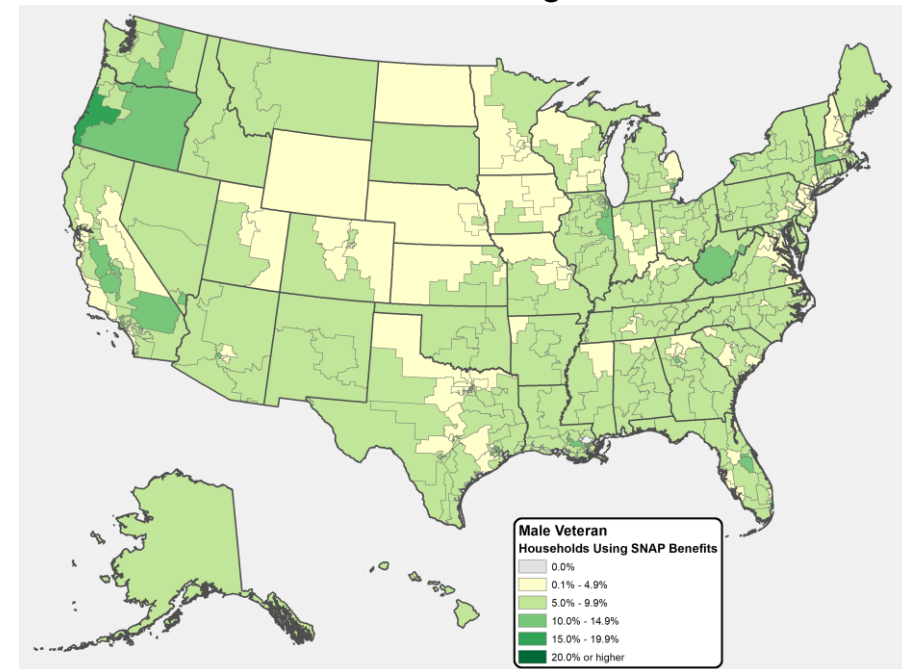
## Food Insecurity: Wisconsin

In Wisconsin, **2,500 (10%)** female veteran-led households and **14,700 (5%)** male veteran-led households used SNAP benefits in 2022.

Female Veteran Households using SNAP Benefits



Male Veteran Households using SNAP Benefits



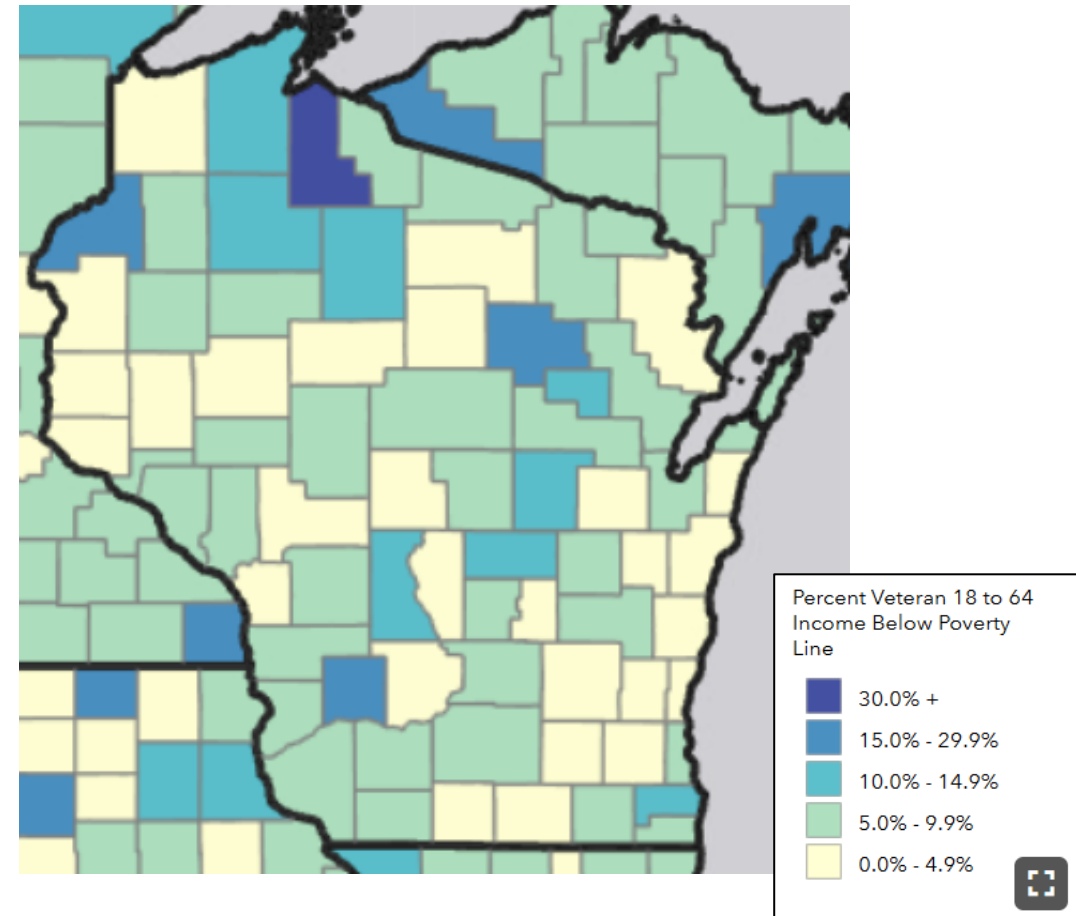
\*Note: Data in this figure comes from US Census Bureau (2022) and is generated by the Purdue Center for Regional Development.

## Veteran Median Income: Wisconsin

In Wisconsin, **the veteran median household income is \$67,500** (*increased by 19% since 2017*), compared to the nonveteran median household income of \$65,900 (*increased by 18% since 2017*).

**6.5%** of the veterans (aged 18-64) are living in poverty in Wisconsin (*decreased by 20% since 2017*).

**5.8%** of the veterans (aged 65 and older) are living in poverty in Wisconsin (*increased by 18% since 2017*).



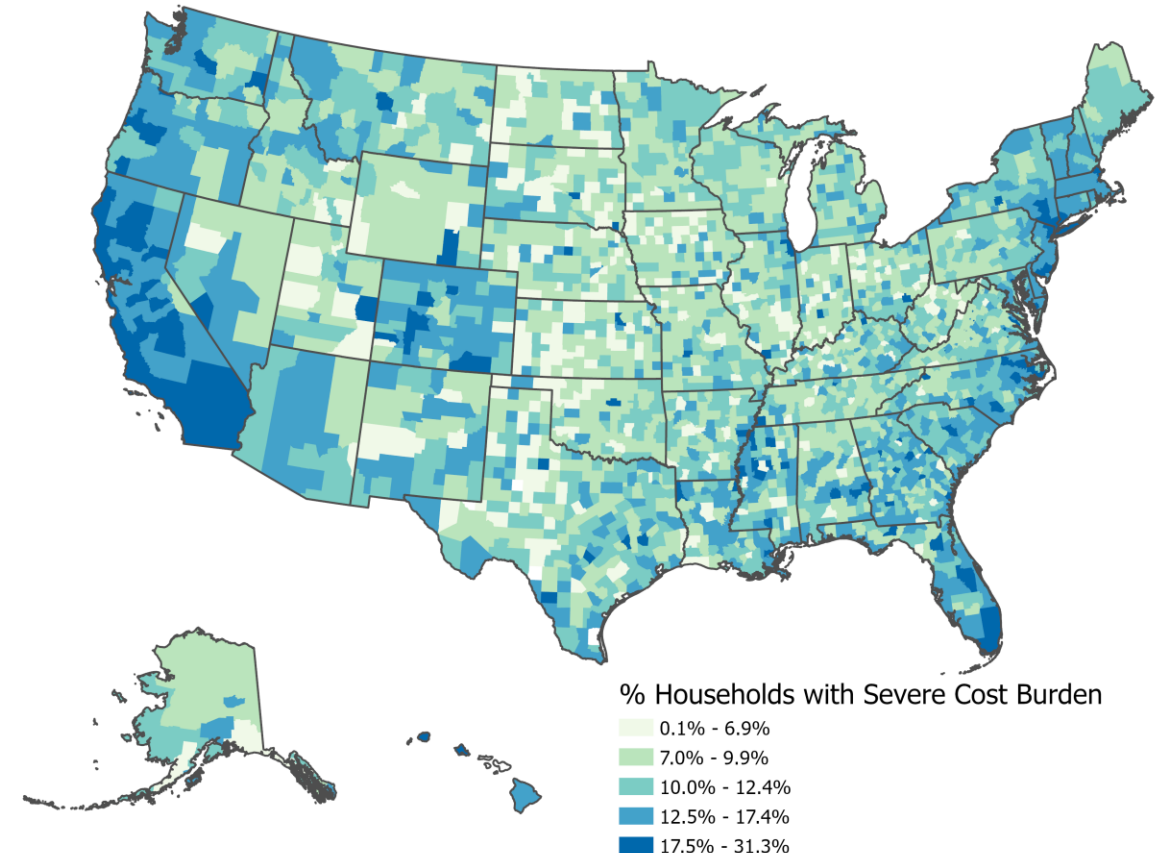
## Military-Connected Community and Housing Burden

Service members and veterans alike are facing significant **housing cost burdens**.

**Milwaukee County**, Wisconsin is the county with the largest percentage of households experiencing severe housing cost burden (16.9%).

**335 veterans** in Wisconsin were experiencing homelessness in a point-in-time in 2023 (remaining fairly consistent since 2017).

## Severe Housing Cost Burden



*\*Note: Data in this figure comes from the County Health Rankings (2024), the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (2023), and is generated by the Purdue Center of Regional Development.*

# Employment

## Military-Connected Community and Employment

Women veterans with **service-connected disabilities** experienced rising unemployment rates between 2022 to 2023.

In Wisconsin, the unemployment rate for women veterans with service-connected disabilities is varied.

Disability Rating	Female Veteran Population in WI (2022)	Unemployment Rising or Improving (since 2017)
0%	270	Improving
10-20%	1,700	Rising
30-40%	1,300	Improving
50-60%	800	No issue
70% and more	2,300	Improving
No Rating	19,500	Improving

*\*Note: Data is from the US Census Bureau (2017-2022).*



# Data Findings

## Data Implications and Takeaways

- ❑ Consistent with national patterns, the Wisconsin veteran population is diversifying in terms of **race and ethnicity**. Continue to incorporate the unique perspectives and experiences of veterans.
- ❑ Across the nation, the **women veteran** population is growing – yet, in Wisconsin, this population has declined slightly since 2017. Investigate reasons for a declining women veteran population, and continue to incorporate their voices, perspectives, and experiences into veteran-specific initiatives.
- ❑ The Wisconsin veteran population is largely made up of those who served during the **Vietnam era**. Recognize unique experiences and possible health challenges or benefits specific to this era of veterans. This includes veterans living on tribal land.
- ❑ While the percent of veterans with a **service-connected disability** is rising across Wisconsin, continue to explore outreach opportunities for veterans to become VA-connected (this serves as a protective factor for wellbeing). This includes, when appropriate, connecting with the veterans living on tribal land.
- ❑ One-third of the Wisconsin veteran population lives in a nonmetro (or **rural**) community. Promote opportunities for social and resource support for these veterans – and ensure outreach efforts incorporate potential barriers to **digital access**.

# Data Findings

## Data Implications and Takeaways

- ❑ Consistent with national patterns, the percentage of women veteran-led households who use **SNAP benefits** is higher (in this case, double) the percentage of veteran men-led households who use SNAP benefits. The total number of male veteran-led households using SNAP is still higher (14,700). Consider women in food insecurity-related initiatives. Work, also, to reduce any stigmas associated with accessing food-related resources for men.
- ❑ While the percent of veterans (aged 18-64) living in poverty is decreasing in Wisconsin, the percent of veterans (aged 65 years and older) **living in poverty** is increasing. Specialize financial-based efforts to this veteran age group.
- ❑ Explore housing-related efforts in higher **housing cost burdened** communities (such as, Milwaukee or Dane counties). Consider supporting efforts to alleviate housing affordability concerns for veterans and their families.
- ❑ Overall, the unemployment rate for **women veterans with disabilities** is improving – which is possibly in opposition from national patterns. Consider specifically supporting this group of women in Wisconsin to encourage employment opportunities and successes.

# Measuring Communities

## Access the Online Data Portal

1. Navigate to [www.measuringcommunities.org](http://www.measuringcommunities.org)
2. Click **Explore Web Based Data**.
3. Enter your Member ID (or **VCAN2023**).
4. Enter you name + work email address.
5. Click **Submit**.



# Measuring Communities



Military Family Research Institute

## Data Indicators in the online data tool

[www.measuringcommunities.org](http://www.measuringcommunities.org)

Domain	Indicator
Behavioral Health	Behavioral Health Professional Shortage Area
Behavioral Health	Star Behavioral Health Providers (SBHP) Registry
Behavioral Health	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Mental Health Facilities
Behavioral Health	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Substance Abuse Facilities
Behavioral Health	Suicide Rates By State Vet And Non-Vet
Behavioral Health	Suicide Counts by State Vet and Non-Vet
Behavioral Health	VA Behavioral Health Facilities
Post-Secondary Education	DoD Voluntary Education Partnership Institutions
Post-Secondary Education	State Benefits - Post Secondary Education
Post-Secondary Education	VA Education Benefits
Post-Secondary Education	Veteran/Non Veteran Educational Attainment
Post-Secondary Education	Yellow Ribbon Institutions
Medical Care	Health Professional Shortage Areas in Civilian System
Medical Care	Insurance Coverage By Age
Medical Care	Medical Care VA Benefits (From VA)
Medical Care	Veteran Disability Ratings
Medical Care	VA Medical Facilities
K-12 Education	JROTC Schools
K-12 Education	Purple Star Schools
K-12 Education	Schools With Military Support Groups
Housing	HVRP Grantees
Housing	Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)
Housing	Veteran Homeless State by Sex
Housing	Veteran Homeless State by Race
Housing	Veteran Homeless Continuum of Care (CoC) by Sex
Housing	Veteran Homeless Continuum of Care (CoC) by Race
Financial	Veteran Expenditures By VA (From VA)
Financial	Veteran Households on SNAP by Congressional District
Financial	Veteran Service Officers
Financial	Veteran State Tax Benefits
Financial	Veteran Owned Businesses by State
Financial	Veteran Non Veteran Median Income

Domain	Indicator
Community	Active Duty Military Installations
Community	American Red Cross Emergency Assistance Cases by County
Community	Community Support Groups
Community	Military Family Assistance Centers
Community	Military Family Life Survey
Community	National Guard Family Programs
Community	National Guard Locations
Community	Population Trend Veteran Non Veteran
Community	Poverty Rate
Community	Rural Urban Continuum
Community	Digital Divide Index by County
Community	Veteran and Non Veteran Income below the Poverty Line
Demographics	Active Duty Dependents
Demographics	Active Duty Dependents by Congressional District
Demographics	Active Duty Population
Demographics	Active Duty Population by Congressional District
Demographics	Military Caregiver survey data
Demographics	Era of Service
Demographics	Selected Reserve Dependents
Demographics	Selected Reserve Dependents by Congressional District
Demographics	Selected Reserve Population
Demographics	Selected Reserve Population by Congressional District
Demographics	Veteran Households With and Without Children
Demographics	Veteran Race By Congressional District
Demographics	Veteran Race By State
Demographics	Veteran Sex and Age by County
Demographics	Institutionalized Veterans by State
Employment	County Unemployment Rate By Age for Veterans and Non Veterans
Employment	County Unemployment Rate for Veterans and Non Veterans
Employment	State Unemployment Rate by Age for Veterans and Non Veterans
Employment	State Unemployment Rate for Veterans and Non Veterans
Employment	VA Facilities Employment Support
Legal	VA Accredited Civilian Attorneys
Legal	Veteran Treatment Courts



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## Measuring Communities

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