

CONNECTICUT UNITED WAYS



2019 POLICY AGENDA

WE STAND WITH ALICE®.

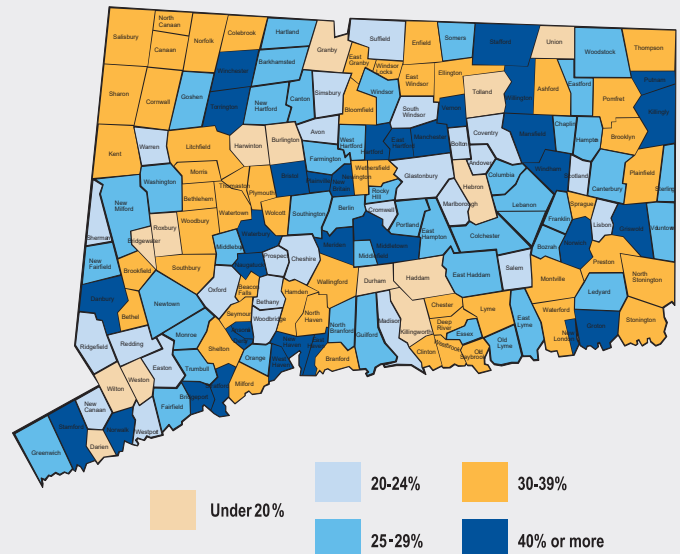
LIVE UNITED



ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) represents the more than 400,000 Connecticut households (30% of all households) with income above the federal poverty level but below a basic cost of living. Despite working hard, ALICE households live paycheck to paycheck and struggle to afford life's most basic necessities such as housing, food, child care, transportation, technology and health care. When combined with households living in poverty, 40% of households in Connecticut cannot make ends meet. Connecticut United Ways are committed to standing with households that struggle financially.

ALICE LIVES AND WORKS IN EVERY TOWN.

Percentage of households below the ALICE threshold by town, 2016



In 138 of Connecticut's 169 towns and cities, at least 1 in 5 households are ALICE households.

DO YOU KNOW ALICE?

ALICE cares for our children and aging parents, fixes our cars and works in our local grocery stores, retail stores, and restaurants. ALICE is our friend, neighbor, coworker and family member. We lean on ALICE for support; yet, many ALICE households are one emergency away from a financial crisis impacting their ability to feed their family, heat their home, maintain their housing, and secure medical care.

40%

40% of Households in Connecticut struggle to make ends meet.

36%

36% of families with children live below the ALICE threshold.

43%

43% of 65+ households live below the ALICE threshold.

60+%

63% of Black households and 66% of Hispanic households live below the ALICE threshold.



Learn more about ALICE at <http://alice.ctunitedway.org>

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS



Drawing from the in-depth research in the ALICE Report and from the work of nonprofit, business, and government leaders, Connecticut United Ways developed the following policy recommendations to help working families and individuals that struggle financially.

Connecticut United Ways advocate for the health, education and financial stability of every person in every community.

FINANCIAL STABILITY

Access to good jobs, affordable housing and asset building resources will allow ALICE households to work towards a more secure financial future.

- Fund programs that enable families to meet basic needs and succeed including Care 4 Kids child care subsidies, and HUSKY health care.
- Connect families to financial coaching and education, asset-building supports, and credit counseling to help build emergency savings.
- Support workforce development that aligns with the needs of leading and emerging industries and address employee skills gaps.
- Invest in non-degree technical courses that lead to industry-recognized credentials in leading and emerging industries.
- Establish and expand work based learning opportunities such as apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships which provide onsite training for entry level employees.
- Continue to Increase the supply of affordable housing with government financing and subsidies, development incentives in towns with a shortage of affordable housing and streamline the permitting and development process.
- Work with the State Department of Education, Office of Early Childhood and key community partners to identify homeless youth, connect them with resources and ensure they stay in school.

COMMUNITY

- Protect the tax exempt status for nonprofits that serve the most vulnerable populations across the state.

EDUCATION

A quality education is one of the best predictors of career and financial success. For many children, that path begins with quality, affordable child care. Many families earning below the ALICE threshold struggle to pay for child care.

- Support more funding for early care and education and improve access to reliable, affordable and quality child care. (i.e. Care 4 Kids)
- Increase access to reliable, affordable and quality care and expand supports available to family child care providers that may better meet the cultural, scheduling (including more second shift and weekend hours) and financial needs of working parents.
- Support initiatives that enable more children to read at grade level by 3rd grade.

HEALTH

Overall health is highly correlated with income. Many ALICE households are forced to forgo regular, preventative health care because the cost of health care and health insurance is too high, causing them to go uninsured or underinsured.

- Ensure that children enter school ready to learn through investments in strategies to increase early screening and connection to supports as needed (i.e. Help Me Grow, Birth to Three).
- Streamline access to health and human services, and provide coordinated and consistent access to services by maintaining and growing support for 2-1-1.
- Increase access to affordable health insurance and good health care.

Last year, Connecticut United Ways mobilized thousands of volunteers and partnered with hundreds of community organizations to help Connecticut residents meet their basic needs. More than 20 million dollars was invested in helping children meet developmental milestones, youth success, jobs skills training, economic mobility, and access to resources that promote good health. Millions of additional dollars were invested in child care, early learning, housing and financial stability.

If you have questions or would like to discuss this policy agenda, please contact:

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Can you walk in ALICE's shoes? To find out, visit www.MakingToughChoices.org