

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Transportation

Transportation patterns vary across the EMA. While most residents rely on private vehicles to commute, public transportation is utilized much higher in Philadelphia (16.7%) than suburban counties. Lower-income individuals are more likely to rely on public transportation, walking, or ride services, while higher-income individuals are more likely to drive or work from home. These differences suggest that access to reliable transportation may differ between populations in the EMA.

Food Insecurity

Food insecurity remains a significant issue across the EMA, particularly in Philadelphia where approximately 1 in 5 residents experience food insecurity. Despite this, many people experiencing food insecurity do not qualify for SNAP benefits due to eligibility thresholds. Recent policy changes have expanded work requirements with fewer groups qualifying for exemptions. As a result, more individuals are losing eligibility, widening the gap between food insecurity and available support.

Housing

From 2020 to 2024, both rent and home values have increased across every county in the EMA, outpacing growth in household income. In 2024, on average, more than 2 in 5 renter households in the EMA spend 35% or more of their income on rent, with Philadelphia having 48.2% of units being renter-occupied. This widening gap is causing housing to be increasingly unaffordable to households. In Philadelphia, there was a 22.9% increase in people experiencing homelessness from 2022 to 2025.