



# HUNGER & POVERTY FACTS AMONG VETERANS

## VETERANS: HUNGER & POVERTY FACTS

INCLUDES MOST RECENT DATA AVAILABLE AS OF OCTOBER 2024

### FOOD INSECURITY

Food security means access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life.

Source: Food Insecurity  
Among Working-Age  
Veterans. USDA

#### General Overview

- Food insecurity among veterans is notably high, influenced by both socioeconomic challenges and limited access to support programs. Estimates suggest that **11 percent** of working-age veterans nationwide experience food insecurity, often at higher rates in urban areas like NYC. This food insecurity is linked to lower rates of participation in food assistance programs like SNAP, which are less accessible for veterans compared to the general population. Barriers include income thresholds influenced by VA benefits, limited awareness, and logistical challenges in program access.

### SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

Source:  
United States  
Department of  
Agriculture (USDA).  
Characteristics of  
Supplemental  
Nutrition Assistance  
Program Households:  
Fiscal Year 2023.

- The way the USDA calculates household incomes for SNAP eligibility disqualifies many otherwise eligible military families from accessing federal nutrition benefits. The *Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH)* is counted as income for the purposes of SNAP eligibility while the monetary value of in-kind housing is not. ***This means that a military family living off-based, even a military family living in privatized military housing on base—is considered by the USDA to have a higher income and is less likely to qualify for SNAP benefits than a military family living in military housing on base, even if the on- and off-base service members earn the same base pay.***

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Therefore, exempting a service member's *BAH* from income would increase SNAP eligibility among active-duty households by as much as **70 percent**.

- An annual survey conducted by *Military Family Advisory Network (MFAN)* found that **30 percent** of military families that did not have enough food said that they did not seek assistance. *Blue Star Families* found that the most common reason food-insecure families did not seek access was because they did not think they were eligible.
  - Participation in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is **three times higher** for families who have left the military service during the prior year in comparison to active-duty personnel. This suggests that the transition out of military service is a high-risk time for new veterans.
  - **Additionally, some groups of food-insecure veterans are falling through the cracks in SNAP access with:**
    - Only 29 percent of food-insecure veterans age 70 and older were likely enrolled in SNAP, compared with 39 percent of their nonveteran counterparts.
    - Among food-insecure veterans who were not in the workforce as a result of a disability, 45 percent were likely enrolled in SNAP, compared with 54 percent of similarly disabled food-insecure nonveterans.
  - A lack of state-level policies facilitating SNAP enrollment is associated with lower rates of SNAP enrollment among veterans than among nonveterans.
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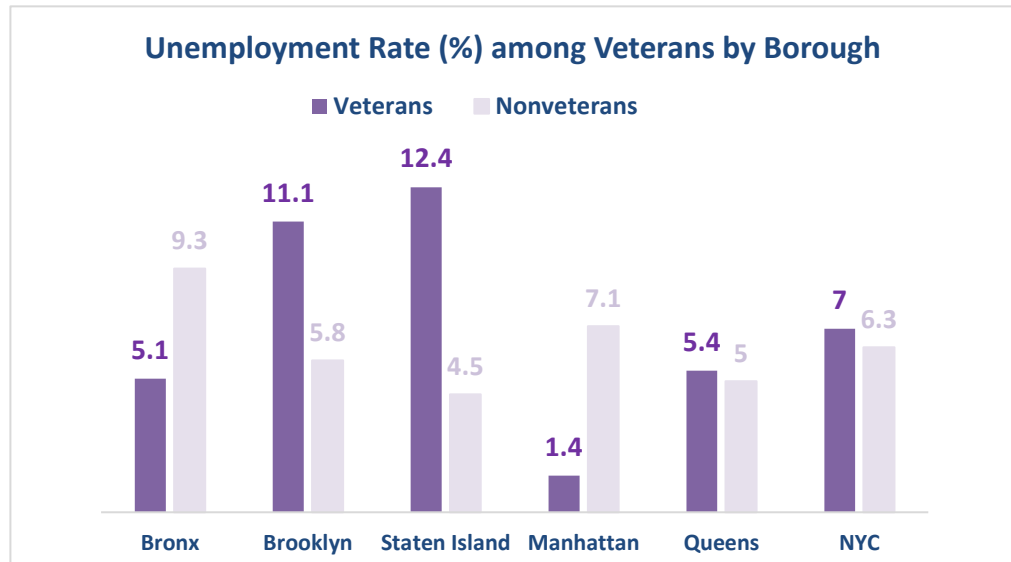
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## UNEMPLOYMENT

*Source: 2023 American Community Survey. U.S. Census Bureau. 2024.*

### NYC

- **7 percent** of New York City veterans are unemployed, which is 0.9 percentage points higher than the city's overall unemployment rate of 6.1 percent.



### BRONX

- The unemployment rate for veterans living in the Bronx is **5.1 percent**, which is 2.7 percentage points lower than the overall unemployment rate in the Bronx, which stands at 7.8%.

### BROOKLYN

- The unemployment rate for veterans living in Brooklyn is **11.1 percent**, which is 4.6 percentage points higher than the overall unemployment rate in Brooklyn, which stands at 6.5%.

### MANHATTAN

- The unemployment rate for veterans living in Manhattan is **1.4 percent**, which is 4.1 percentage points lower than the overall unemployment rate in Brooklyn, which stands at 5.5%.

### QUEENS

- The unemployment rate for veterans living in Queens is **5.4 percent**, which matches the overall unemployment rate for the borough at 5.4%.
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### STATEN ISLAND

- The unemployment rate for veterans living in Staten Island is **12.4 percent**, which is 6.6 percentage points higher than the overall unemployment rate in Staten Island, which stands at 5.8%.

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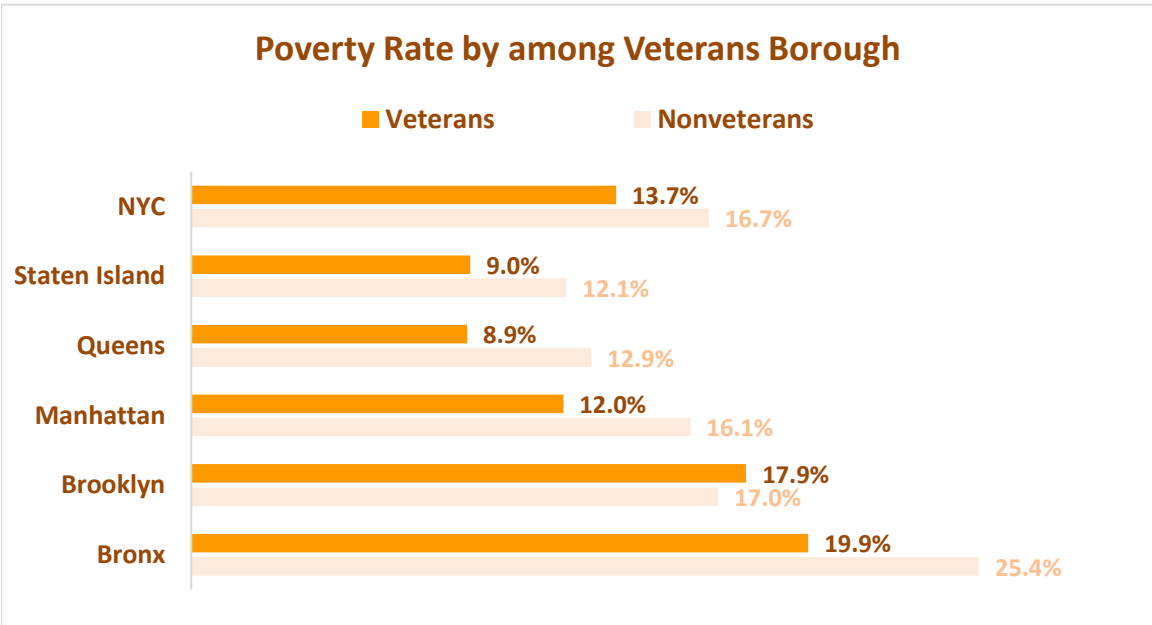
### POVERTY

*Source: 2023 American Community Survey. U.S. Census Bureau. 2024.*

The U.S. poverty threshold is approximately \$21,960 annually for a household of three.

### NYC

- **13.7 percent**, or more than **15 thousand (15,330)** veterans in New York City are considered living below the federal poverty level. The poverty rate among New York City veterans is **25 percent lower** than New York City's overall poverty rate of 18.3 percent.



### BRONX

- **19.9 percent**, or **nearly 4 thousand (3,748)** veterans in the Bronx are considered living below the federal poverty level. The poverty rate among Bronx veterans is **28 percent lower** than Bronx' overall poverty rate of 27.7 percent.
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## **BROOKLYN**

- **17.9 percent**, or **more than 5 thousand (5,036)** veterans in Brooklyn are considered living below the federal poverty level. The poverty rate among Brooklyn veterans is **10 percent lower** than Brooklyn's overall poverty rate of 19.8 percent.

## **MANHATTAN**

- **12 percent**, or **nearly 3 thousand (2,881)** veterans in Manhattan are considered living below the federal poverty level. The poverty rate among Manhattan veterans is **31 percent lower** than Manhattan's overall poverty rate of 17.3 percent.

## **QUEENS**

- **8.9 percent**, or **nearly 3 thousand (2,643)** veterans in Queens are considered living below the federal poverty level. The poverty rate among Queens' veterans is nearly **34 percent lower** than Queens' overall poverty rate of 13.5 percent.

## **STATEN ISLAND**

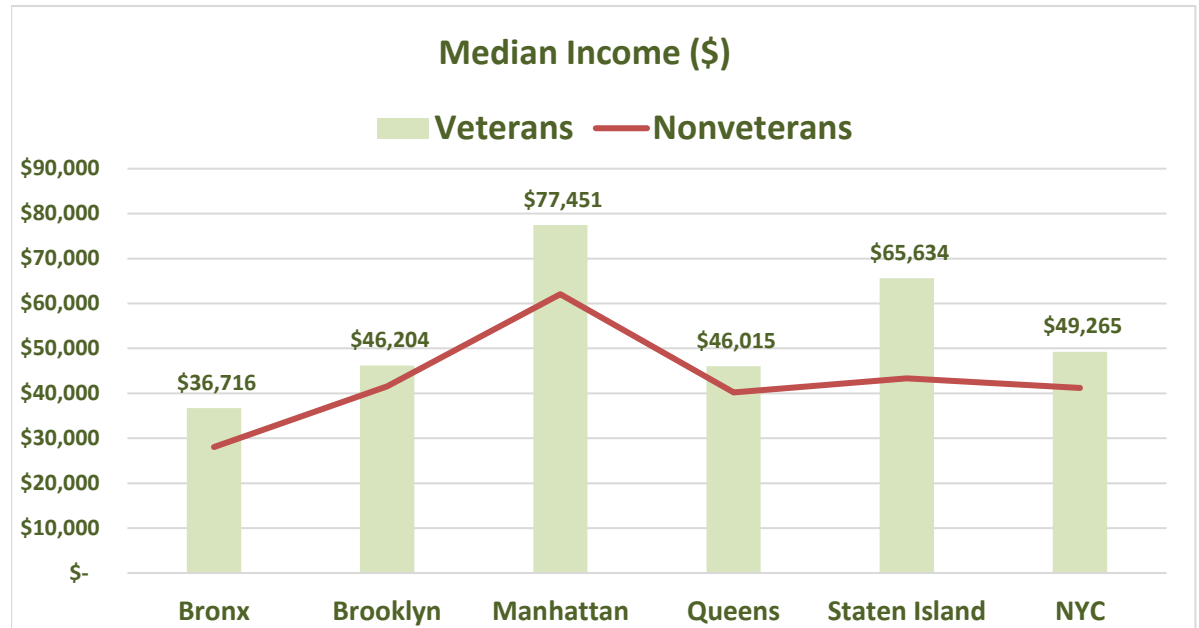
- **9.0 percent**, or **more than one thousand (1,022)** veterans in Staten Island are considered living below the federal poverty level. The poverty rate among Staten Island veterans is **23 percent lower** than Staten Island's overall poverty rate of 11.0 percent.
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## MEDIAN INCOME

*Source: 2023 American Community Survey. U.S. Census Bureau. 2024.*

### NYC

- The median household income for veterans in New York City is **\$49,265**, which is **34 percent below** New York City's overall median household income of \$74,694.



### BRONX

- The median household income for veterans in the Bronx is **\$36,716**, which is **19 percent below** Bronx' overall median household income of \$45,517.

### BROOKLYN

- The median household income for veterans in Brooklyn is **\$46,204**, which is **38 percent below** Brooklyn's overall median household income of \$73,951.

### MANHATTAN

- The median household income for veterans in Manhattan is **\$77,451**, which is **19 percent below** Manhattan's overall median household income of \$95,866.

### QUEENS

- The median household income for veterans in Queens is **\$46,015**, which is **43 percent below** Queens' overall median household income of \$80,557.

### STATEN ISLAND

- The median household income for veterans in Staten Island is **\$65,634**, which is **30 percent below** Staten Island's overall median household income of \$93,164.

## DISABILITY

Source: 2023  
American Community  
Survey. U.S. Census  
Bureau. 2024.

### NYC

- **29.1 percent**, or nearly **33 thousand (32,261)** veterans in New York City are living with a disability.

### BRONX

- **40.3 percent**, or more than **7 thousand (7,600)** veterans in the Bronx are living with a disability.

### BROOKLYN

- **26.8 percent**, or more than **7 thousand (7,557)** veterans in Brooklyn are living with a disability.

### MANHATTAN

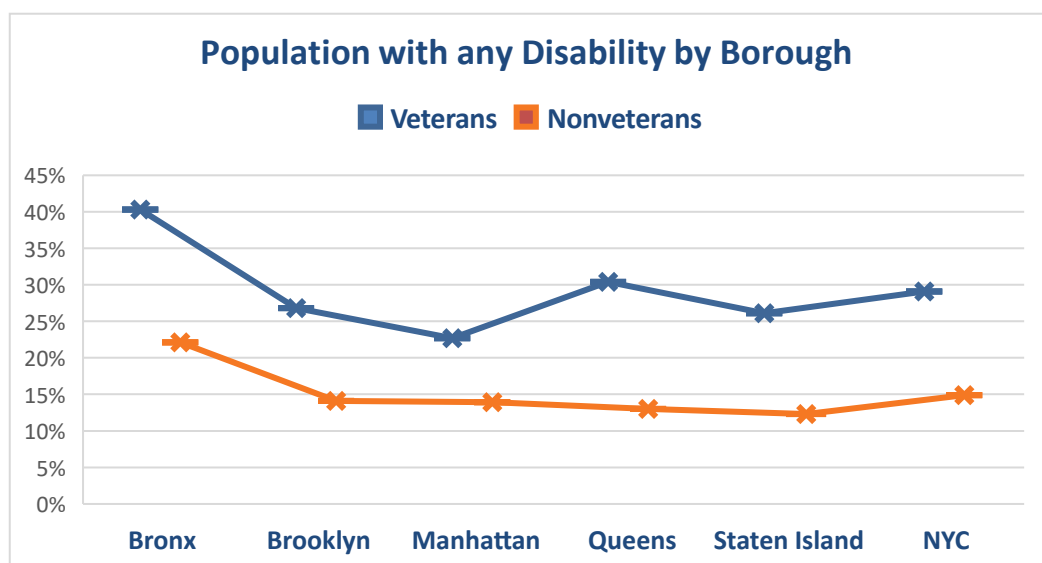
- **22.7 percent**, or more than **5 thousand (5,459)** veterans in Manhattan are living with a disability.

### QUEENS

- **30.4 percent**, or more than **9 thousand (9,048)** veterans in Queens are living with a disability.

### STATEN ISLAND

- **26.1 percent**, or nearly **3 thousand (2,957)** veterans in Staten Island are living with a disability.



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## POPULATION

Source: 2023  
American Community  
Survey. U.S. Census  
Bureau. 2024.

### U.S.

- There are **more than 16.5 million (16,501,502)** veterans in the United States, accounting for **6.4 percent** of the total U.S. population.

### NYS

- There are **more than 614 thousand (614,289)** veterans in New York State, accounting for **3.9 percent** of the total New York State population.

### NYC

- There are **more than 133 thousand (133,383)** veterans in New York City, accounting for **2.0 percent** of the total New York City population.

### BRONX

- There are **nearly 24 thousand (23,748)** veterans in the Bronx, accounting for **2.2 percent** of the total Bronx population.

### BROOKLYN

- There are **nearly 31 thousand (30,889)** veterans in Brooklyn, accounting for **1.5 percent** of the total Brooklyn population.

### MANHATTAN

- There are **nearly 27 thousand (26,921)** veterans in Manhattan, accounting for **2.0 percent** of the total Manhattan population.

### QUEENS

- There are **nearly 40 thousand (39,662)** veterans in Queens, accounting for **2.1 percent** of the total Queens population.

### STATEN ISLAND

- There are **more than 12 thousand (12,163)** veterans in Staten Island, accounting for **3.2 percent** of the total Staten Island population.
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