

The Insurance Research Council (IRC) has released a report indicating that the increasing frequency and severity of natural disasters, along with rising home repair costs, are making homeowners insurance less affordable in the U.S. The IRC measures affordability by comparing average homeowners insurance expenditures to median household income, revealing that in 2020, U.S. households spent an average of 1.93 percent of their income on homeowners insurance. Utah was identified as the most affordable state, with households spending only 0.92 percent of their income, while Louisiana was the least affordable at 3.84 percent. Factors influencing affordability include the number of claims paid, average claim payments, and risks associated with weather and other natural hazards, as well as costs related to processing and litigating claims. Over the past two decades, average premiums have increased at a rate faster than personal income, leading to a rise in the expenditure share of income from 1.54 percent in the 2000s to 1.99 percent in the 2010s. Although there was a slight decrease in 2019 and 2020, recent data does not reflect the ongoing increases in insurance costs. Some insurers have responded to these challenges by reducing their market exposure or withdrawing from certain areas, resulting in a crisis of availability in some states. The IRC emphasizes the need for insurers and policymakers to understand the cost drivers to improve the affordability and availability of homeowners insurance. The analysis focuses on the general population and does not consider specific demographic or geographic risk profiles, nor does it include flood and earthquake insurance, which are not covered by standard homeowners policies. Premiums can vary significantly based on factors such as location, insured value, coverage options, and the insurer.