



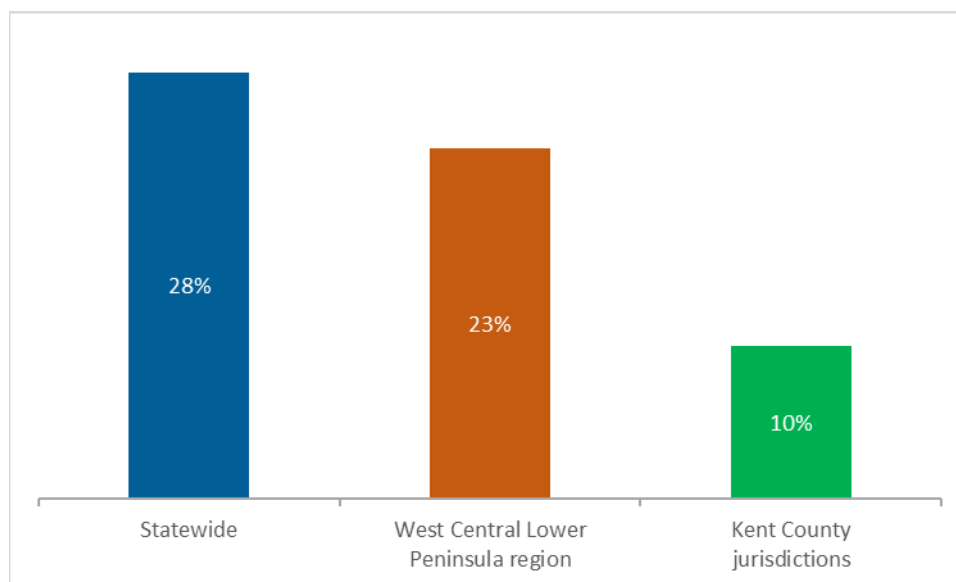
## Economic Hardship and the Struggle to Make Ends Meet For Residents in Kent County Jurisdictions

This fact sheet on poverty issues comes from the Michigan Public Policy Survey (MPPS), an ongoing survey of the top elected and appointed officials in every Michigan county, city, township, and village. The MPPS is designed to gather local leaders' opinions, inform state policymakers and the public regarding local government issues, and show local leaders how peer communities around the state are dealing with a variety of challenges.<sup>1</sup>

The Spring 2018 MPPS included a battery of questions on poverty and related issues, and asked local leaders to estimate the percentage of residents in their communities who struggle to make ends meet.

### Economic hardship: How jurisdictions in your county compare to other parts of the state

#### Percentage of jurisdictions reporting high economic hardship (i.e., more than 30% of their residents are struggling to make ends meet<sup>2</sup>)



The graph above compares reported rates of high economic hardship (more than 30% of residents struggling to make ends meet) in three ways: among all jurisdictions in Michigan statewide; among those in Kent County's region; and finally, among those in Kent County itself. Overall, 28% of jurisdictions across Michigan report that their residents experience these high levels of hardship, compared with 23% in the West Central Lower Peninsula region, and 10% in Kent County. On this measure, Kent County ranks 9th out of Michigan's 83 counties, from lowest reported hardship to highest.

<sup>1</sup> The data in this fact sheet have been combined across all jurisdictions in Kent County. All responses to MPPS surveys are confidential. The MPPS never releases data that can identify individual respondents or their jurisdictions.

<sup>2</sup> Note: 19% of officials from jurisdictions statewide said they don't know what percentage of their residents struggle to make ends meet; by comparison, the percentage was lower among officials in jurisdictions in Kent County (18%).

## The Need for Affordable Housing

The survey also asked about eight different resources or services that might help residents to make ends meet, such as access to affordable housing. For each type of resource or service, the survey asked whether residents have unmet needs in the jurisdiction vs. whether most needs are already being met or there are no such needs in the first place. The table below shows the need for affordable housing among all jurisdictions in Michigan compared with those in the West Central Lower Peninsula region, and with those in Kent County.

- Statewide, 46% of local governments say their residents have some or significant unmet needs for affordable housing. By comparison, 46% say the same in the West Central Lower Peninsula region, while 53% say this among Kent County jurisdictions.

### Assessment of needs for affordable housing

	Statewide	West Central Lower Peninsula Region	Kent County Jurisdictions
<b>Not needed at all, or needs are all/mostly met</b>	45%	41%	40%
<b>Some unmet needs</b>	32%	29%	39%
<b>Significant unmet needs</b>	14%	17%	14%

## Addressing Economic Hardship

The survey also asked if local governments are trying to address the economic challenges their residents face, including whether they have relevant policies or programs of their own, and whether or not they partner with other governments or organizations to provide services or resources. The table below shows the percentage of jurisdictions that partner with others to address poverty and economic hardship among their residents.

- Across the state overall, 36% of jurisdictions partner with others somewhat or a great deal. By comparison, 37% say the same in the West Central Lower Peninsula region, while 42% say this among Kent County jurisdictions.

### Extent to which jurisdictions partner with other organizations to address economic hardship

	Statewide	West Central Lower Peninsula Region	Kent County Jurisdictions
<b>Not at all, or very little</b>	57%	55%	54%
<b>Somewhat</b>	27%	30%	31%
<b>A great deal</b>	9%	7%	11%

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Much more information about poverty is available in the main MPPS report: <http://myumi.ch/LB5Eg> and from the U-M Poverty Solutions Initiative: <http://poverty.umich.edu/>

More information on other MPPS topics is available at <http://mpps.umich.edu> or by contacting CLOSUP by email ([closup@umich.edu](mailto:closup@umich.edu)) or by phone (734-647-4091). Follow CLOSUP on twitter: @closup