

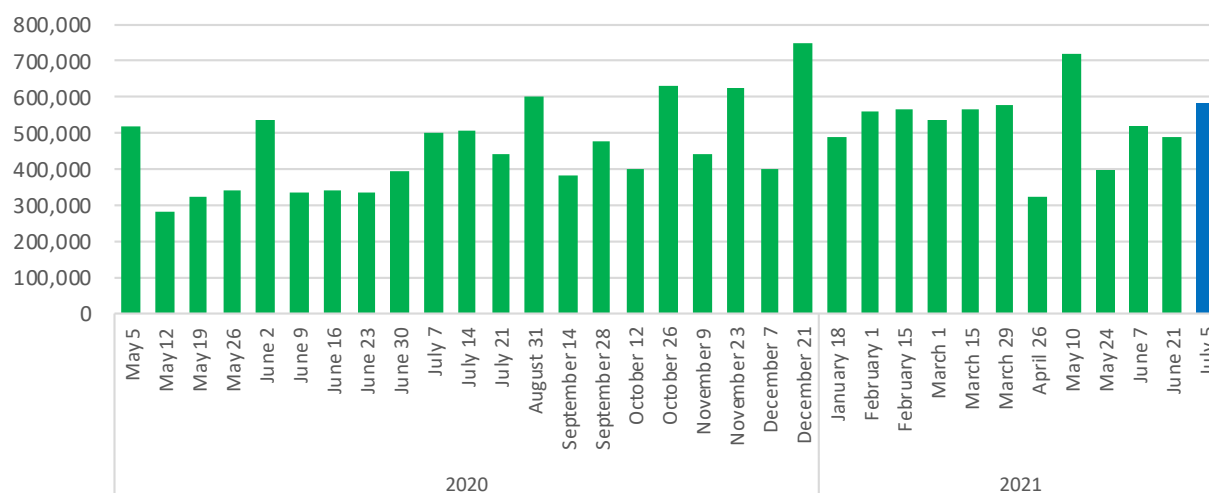
# Data Spotlight: Older renters struggling to make their rent payments during the pandemic

Since April 2020, the Census Bureau has tracked the number and characteristics of renters struggling to make their payments. As of July 2021, an estimated 583,400 older renters, defined as renters age 65 and older, were behind on their rent payments.

## Hundreds of thousands of older renters are still behind on their rent payments even as the economy improves

In July 2021, approximately 583,400 older renters were behind on their payments. While this figure is lower than other points during the pandemic, the survey data suggest that even as the economy begins to recover, there has been no consistent decline in the number of older renters behind on their payments. Furthermore, there are nearly 144,400 older renters who are current in their payments but are not confident that they will be able to make next month's payment on time.

*Trends in the number of older adults who are behind on rental payments*

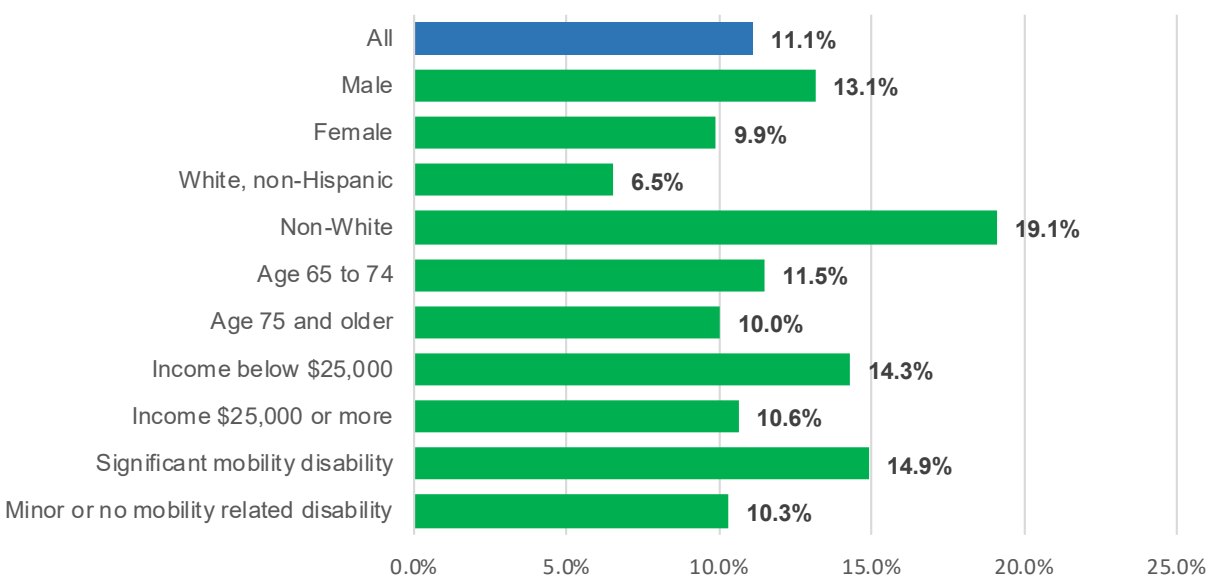


Source: CFPB compilation of data from the Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey Table 1b for all weeks, available at [census.gov/programs-surveys/household-pulse-survey/data.html](https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/household-pulse-survey/data.html). Note: The totals reflect the number of older adults, not rental units. Multiple older adults may live in the same rental unit.

## Low-income renters of color are more likely to be behind on their payments than their counterparts

Minimal variations in the percentage of older renters behind on their payments are seen by sex and age. The survey data show that the largest variations are along the lines of race/ethnicity and income. The share of older adults behind on their payments is higher among non-White than Whites and older renters with incomes below \$25,000 than those with incomes above \$25,000. It is also higher among older renters who report significant difficulty walking and climbing stairs or not being able to do it at all.

*Percent of older renters behind on their payments by selected characteristics, July 2021*

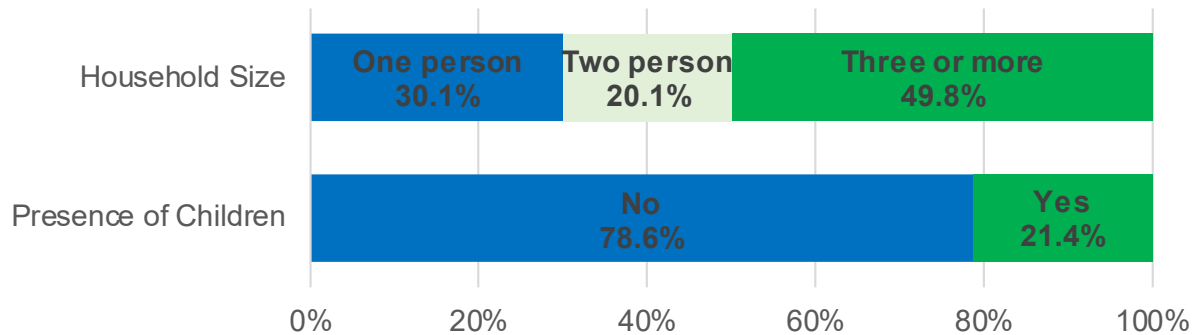


Source: CFPB estimates using data from the Census Bureau Household Public Use Files. See *About the Census Household Pulse Survey* section for more details on the data and methodology. Note: This analysis excludes older adults age 65 and older who live in a property that does not require rental payments.

## Many older renters who are behind on their payments live in multigenerational households and report a job loss by at least one household member

Nearly half of older renters who are behind on their payments live in households with three or more people and one-fifth live with minor children. In addition, 43.4 percent of older renters who are behind on their payments report a recent or expected job loss by a household member. These findings indicate, among other things, that many older renters' struggling to pay their rent may be tied to the financial situation of other family members, not just that of the older adult. It is also concerning because the inability to pay rent may result in the displacement of multiple generations with unique housing needs.

*Living situation of older renters who are behind on their payments, July 2021*

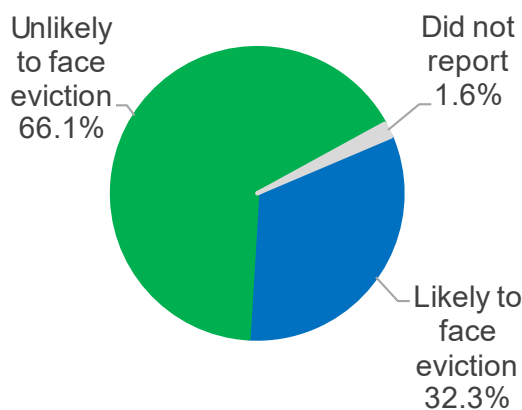


Source: CFPB estimates using data from the Census Bureau Household Public Use Files. See *About the Census Household Pulse Survey* section for more details on the data and methodology. Percentages are based on the 583,400 older adults who are behind on their rent payments. The household size number includes older adults and other individuals of any age living in the household. Children refers to minor children (under 18-years-old), of any relationship, living with an older adult.

## Over one fourth of older renters who are behind on their payments fear eviction

In July 2021, 32.3 percent (approximately 188,700) of the 583,400 older renters who were behind on their rent reported that they will likely be evicted. This percentage is an improvement from a high of 53 percent in December 2020. Even with this improvement, eviction concerns are particularly high among older renters with a mobility-related disability. About 64 percent of older renters who were behind on their rent and have a disability report that they will likely be evicted from their homes. For this population, eviction poses a unique challenge to find a new accessible home that meets their needs.

*Percent of older renters who were behind on their payments reporting that they will likely be evicted in the next two months, July 2021*



Source: CFPB estimates using data from the Census Bureau Household Public Use Files. See *About the Census Household Pulse Survey* section for more details on the data and methodology.

## Older renters behind on their payments also face food insecurity, difficulty meeting expenses, and frequently feel anxious

About 15 percent of older renters who are behind on their payments also struggle with food insecurity, 33 percent have difficulty covering expenses, and 46 percent experience heightened anxiety. These findings reflect a larger problem with these older renters' financial situation and the presence of other unmet needs and struggles.


*Selected experiences of older renters who are behind on their payments, July 2021*



Source: CFPB estimates using data from the Census Bureau Household Public Use Files. See *About the Census Household Pulse Survey* section for more details on the data and methodology.

### Information for renters

If you're having trouble making rent payments as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, you're not alone. Federal, state, and local governments are offering help with housing expenses and avoiding eviction. You can find more information about help for renters at:

 Online  
[consumerfinance.gov/renters](https://consumerfinance.gov/renters)

## About the Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey

**Data:** To develop this fact sheet, CFPB staff analyzed public use data from the Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey. The Household Pulse Survey is an online survey that provides information on the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on households in the United States. Nearly 66,300 respondents answered the June 23 to July 5, 2021 survey (Week 33), including over approximately 19,400 adults age 65 and older and 1,900 older renters.

**Analysis:** All analysis was restricted to respondents who reported their TENURE to be "Rented" (TENURE=3) and excludes renters that occupy without a rent payment and those who did not respond to the survey question. Respondents in the category "Rented" were asked whether they were caught up on their rent payments (RENTCUR). The analysis was also restricted to respondents 65 and older (TBIRTH\_YEAR ≤ 1956). The following is a list of the additional variables used in the analysis: (Confidence in making next month payment: MORTCONF) (Sex: EGENDER); (Race/Ethnicity: RRACE/RHISPANIC); (Income: INCOME); (Mobility: MOBILITY); (Number of minor children: THHLD\_NUMKID); (Household size: THHLD\_NUMPER); (Likelihood of eviction: EVICT); (Recent or expected job loss by a household member: EXPCTLOSS/WRKLOSSRV); (Food insecurity: CURFOODSUF); (Difficulty meeting expenses: EXPNS\_DIF); (Anxiety: ANXIOUS). The percentages and numbers are based on weighted responses using person weights (PWEIGHT).

**Additional information:** Survey data, methodology and other technical documentation for the Household Pulse Survey Week 33 Public Use File is available at: [census.gov/programs-surveys/household-pulse-survey/datasets.html](https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/household-pulse-survey/datasets.html)