



Housing Affordability in Boise

What is Affordable Housing? National experts including HUD and the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) define housing as affordable when a family pays no more than 30% of their income on rent. Households spending more than 30% of their income on rent experience housing cost-burden and likely struggle to afford other necessities such as food, transportation, and healthcare. These households are at higher risk of becoming homeless.

How many people rent in Boise? Thirty percent (30%) of Boise residents, or approximately 77,219 people, are renters according to NLIHC *Out of Reach 2021* data.¹

What does rental housing cost in Boise? According to the rental website Zumper, median rents and the percentage they have increased in the last year are: 1-bedroom \$1,495 (22% increase); 2-bedroom \$1,698 (20% increase); 3-bedroom \$2,053 (17% increase).² Many hard-working Boiseans are rapidly being priced out of housing.

How much income does it take to rent an apartment or home? NLIHC lists the following hourly wages that are needed to afford rentals in Boise: 1-bedroom \$15.40; 2-bedroom \$19.27; 3-bedroom \$27.31.³

How much do renters earn in Boise? Boise's estimated mean renter wage is only **\$14.92**. Here are some examples of median wages for occupations in Idaho: waiters and waitresses \$9.52; cashiers \$11.74; retail salespersons \$13.25; nursing assistants \$14.28; construction laborers \$16.96.⁴ ***The amount of rent that is affordable at the estimated mean renter wage of \$14.92 is only \$776. A person receiving SSI disability payments of \$847 can afford only \$254.***⁵ A recent study says that 43% of Boise renters are cost-burdened, paying over 30% of their income for rent.⁶

How can very low-, low- and moderate-income households afford housing? Affordable housing units, built utilizing grant funds, tax credits and other specialized sources of financing, offer rents below market rates to qualifying households. Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8) similarly subsidize a portion of rent to make housing affordable for families with incomes at 50% or less of Area Median Income. Rental assistance programs provide temporary assistance to people at imminent risk of homelessness to keep them housed. Many communities are exploring new approaches to expanding their affordable housing stock, including incorporating tiny homes and Accessory Dwelling Units in existing neighborhoods.

Due to overwhelming need, existing affordable rentals in Boise are full and the city's Housing Choice Voucher waiting list is closed. The city's Housing Needs Analysis report shows that 2,145 affordable rental units need to be built **each year** between now and 2030 to meet current and projected needs.⁷ To accomplish this within its geographic area, the city is working on zoning changes to increase density and improve use of underutilized land.

How can we help? Support the City of Boise's proposed zoning changes that will make it easier to develop needed affordable housing. Urge your federal, state, and local elected officials to dedicate funds for affordable housing development. Encourage property managers you know to accept tenants with Housing Choice Vouchers. Consider renting a room in your home to a low-income student, senior or other tenant who can't afford an apartment.

Your voice counts! Keep our community strong by supporting the needs of all community members. Visit www.homelesscoalitionboise.com to learn more and become an advocate for affordable housing!

¹ [Idaho | National Low Income Housing Coalition \(nlihc.org\)](http://Idaho | National Low Income Housing Coalition (nlihc.org))

² Average Rent in Boise City, ID and Cost Information - Zumper

³ [Idaho | National Low Income Housing Coalition \(nlihc.org\)](http://Idaho | National Low Income Housing Coalition (nlihc.org))

⁴ [Idaho | National Low Income Housing Coalition \(nlihc.org\)](http://Idaho | National Low Income Housing Coalition (nlihc.org))

⁵ [Idaho | National Low Income Housing Coalition \(nlihc.org\)](http://Idaho | National Low Income Housing Coalition (nlihc.org))

⁶ [boisehousinganalysis-2021-report.pdf \(cityofboise.org\)](http://boisehousinganalysis-2021-report.pdf (cityofboise.org)), page 15

⁷ [boisehousinganalysis-2021-report.pdf \(cityofboise.org\)](http://boisehousinganalysis-2021-report.pdf (cityofboise.org)), page 7