ALICE—an acronym for *Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed*—represents the growing number of working households in our communities that live above the poverty line but do not earn enough to afford basic necessities.

**ALICE: Working Hard and Struggling to Survive**

Not only do ALICE families struggle to achieve a good quality of life, **but their struggle also has a huge impact on our regional economy.**

Due to low wages, limited work hours, and a lack of savings, ALICE households live on the edge financially, struggling to meet basic needs and unable to save for the future, let alone weather a financial setback, such as an unexpected medical bill or car repair. These individuals work hard to provide for their families but often slip through the cracks because they aren’t eligible for poverty-level support. They don’t earn enough to truly get by, let alone thrive.

**HOW DOES UNITED WAY HELP?**

United Way works to help stabilize ALICE families, a need further amplified by the ongoing impacts of inflation and a volatile economy. We support our community partners throughout the Chicago region to ensure households are able to meet their immediate basic needs—a roof over their heads, access to food, a path to a new career, and other vital services.

**LEARN MORE** View the 2023 ALICE Report for Illinois at [UnitedForAlice.org](http://UnitedForAlice.org)
In Illinois, from 2019 to 2021, the total number of ALICE households increased by 8%.

$31.46 PER HOUR
Hourly wage a family of four in Illinois needs for “Household Survival”

**ALICE Essentials Index**
Measures change over time in cost of essentials that matter most to ALICE households, including housing, childcare, food, transportation, health care, and a smartphone plan.

**Consumer Price Index**
Measures 200 categories, masking the change in cost of basics.

**KEY TAKEAWAYS**
- **Increased cost** for basic needs items (ALICE Essentials) outpaced **overall inflation** (Consumer Price Index).
- **Wages for essential jobs**, e.g., retail sales, lag behind the ALICE index.
- Essential workers are not earning a living wage to support themselves or their families.

*Data pulled from the ALICE Essentials Index Illinois, June 2023 Report*