ON THE ROAD

EXPLORING ECONOMIC SECURITY PATHWAYS IN COLORADO

Prepared for the Colorado Center on Law and Policy

COLORADO CENTER ON LAW AND POLICY

Colorado's legal aid community created CCLP in 1998, so that people would continue to have access to justice after Congress imposed advocacy restrictions on federally funded legal services. CCLP quickly emerged as a leader in increasing access to health care, family economic security, job training and other critical family needs and supports.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Colorado 2018 and the calculations for this report have been prepared by Lisa Manzer and Lisa Mikesell at the University of Washington, Center for Women's Welfare.

The conclusions and opinions contained in this document do not necessarily reflect the opinions of those listed above. Any mistakes are the author's responsibility.

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On the Road: Exploring Economic Security Pathways in Colorado

ON THE ROAD: EXPLORING ECONOMIC SECURITY PATHWAYS IN COLORADO

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PREPARED FOR

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INTRODUCTION

This report is Part II of *The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Colorado 2018* report series. Part I addressed the issue of economic security for Colorado households beginning with securing the costs of daily basic needs, and creating an emergency savings fund using the Self-Sufficiency Standard as the benchmark. In contrast, Part II discusses three asset-building Economic Security Pathways that build on and enhance economic security, depending on a given household's circumstances.

Below we briefly summarize the three elements of this approach to achieving economic security.

#1 SECURE INCOME TO MEET BASIC NEEDS

Many researchers and policy analysts have concluded that the official poverty measure (OPM), developed half a century ago, is not only methodologically out of date, but also no longer accurately measures poverty.[1] Even the Census Bureau characterizes the official poverty measure as a "statistical yardstick rather than a complete description of what people and families need to live."[2]

Designed with a real-world approach, the Self-Sufficiency Standard provides an accurate, nuanced, and up-to-date measure of the income needed to afford a basic needs budget.[3]

The first step to achieving economic security is earning enough to pay for the basic expenses of daily life. The Self-Sufficiency Standard defines how much income families of various sizes and composition need to make ends meet without public or private assistance in each county of Colorado. The Standard calculates a family-sustaining wage that accounts for basic necessities such as nutritious food, adequate housing, and child care.

#2 CREATE AN EMERGENCY SAVINGS FUND

As shown in the *The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Colorado 2018*, the Standard is a conservative measure. It is a "bare bones" budget with costs set at minimally adequate levels with no extras. For example, the food budget has no take-out or restaurant food, not even a pizza or a cup of coffee. Realistically, achieving incomes at the Self-Sufficiency level should not be assumed to mean the achievement of economic security, but is instead the first and necessary step. All families need additional resources in order to be able to weather any unexpected income loss.

In short, after having secured the cost of basic needs (as measured by the Standard)—the next step toward increased economic security is emergency savings. *The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Colorado 2018* includes a separate emergency savings calculation that estimates how much each household needs to save on a monthly basis to have a "rainy day" fund that would cover basic needs in case of an unforeseen job loss.

#3 CHOOSE AN ECONOMIC SECURITY PATHWAY

This report, assuming that basic needs and emergency savings have been secured, details the costs of taking the next steps towards economic security, which we call Economic Security Pathways, or ESPs.

Once a family has secured income at the Self-Sufficiency Standard level and instituted their

The Colorado Self-Sufficiency Standard report and dataset for over 700 family types can be viewed or downloaded at:

www.selfsufficiencystandard.org/colorado

THE ROAD TO ECONOMIC SECURITY

The Self-Sufficiency Standard approach to economic security consists of three elements: securing the costs of daily basic needs, creating an emergency savings fund, and choosing the appropriate asset-building Economic Security Pathway(s).

STEP 1: SECURE BASIC NEEDS

The Self-Sufficiency Standard calculates how much income families of various sizes and compositions need to make ends meet without public or private assistance in each county in Colorado. The Standard measures income adequacy and is based on the costs of basic needs for working families: housing, child care, food, health care, transportation, and miscellaneous items, plus taxes and tax credits. To download the full report and tables for 700+ family types, by county, visit www.selfsufficiencystandard.org/colorado.

+ + + + + + = **SELF-SUFFICIENCY STANDARD**

STEP 2: CREATE AN EMERGENCY SAVINGS FUND

Beyond meeting basic needs the next step towards economic security is saving for emergencies, particularly job loss, the most common reason for income loss. Emergency savings, together with unemployment insurance, enable families to weather economic crises, and are an essential element on the road to achieving economic security.

[Living expenses (Self-Sufficiency Standard) – Unemployment benefit] X 3.4 months Duration of average job loss = **EMERGENCY SAVINGS FUND**

STEP 3: CHOOSE AN ECONOMIC SECURITY PATHWAY

Once a family has secured income at the Self-Sufficiency Standard level and instituted their emergency savings fund, the road to long-term economic security will be different for each. While there are many options, depending on family circumstances, this report considers three key pathways that many families can take to move closer to long-term economic security (1) postsecondary education, (2) improved housing and/or homeownership, and (3) savings for retirement.

Postsecondary Education

Improved housing Homeownership

Savings for Retirement

LONG-TERM ECONOMIC SECURITY

emergency savings fund, the road to long-term economic security will be different for each. For some, this might be additional savings, to meet immediate costs (such as a car breakdown) or to ensure sufficient resources for the long-term costs of retirement. For others, paying off debts may be the first priority. For still others, income beyond that needed for the essentials may be devoted to moving to alternative housing, or enabling the family to leave an abusive partner or a problematic neighborhood.

It is not assumed that every family can or should take any or all of these pathways. Rather, by providing this information, this report enables individuals and households to make informed choices as to which ESPs make the most sense for their situation and family.

Considered here are three key pathways that adults can take to move closer to long-term economic security:

1. Postsecondary Education

2. Improved Housing or Homeownership

3. Savings for Retirement

For each of these pathways, varying alternatives are presented, so that readers of this report can explore a range of potential options and compare the costs of each one. The numbers provided are meant to give the reader estimates of what and how much the costs might be for each security pathway. Of course, the actual costs for an individual family or householder will be determined by their unique situation and choices.

For each Economic Security Pathway, costs are shown as specifically as possible and, when data allows, the ESP costs are shown by county. In addition, for each ESP example, scenarios are modeled. Using different options and timeframes, these various scenarios illustrate how the ESP data can be used flexibly, combining the Self-Sufficiency Standard, public work supports, and private assistance to move along a given pathway. Note that these scenarios are meant to be illustrative rather than definitive, and to suggest how the ESP data presented here can be used towards planning for a more economically secure future through asset building.

THIS REPORT ENABLES INDIVIDUALS AND HOUSEHOLDS TO MAKE INFORMED CHOICES AS TO WHICH ESPS MAKE THE MOST SENSE FOR THEIR SITUATION AND FAMILY.

ECONOMIC SECURITY PATHWAY #1: POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Education, which economists call "human capital" is a key asset and pathway to economic security. Moreover, it is one asset that cannot be taken away or foreclosed upon. True long-term self-sufficiency increasingly requires human capital investments that enhance skills as well as improve access to jobs with career potential. In today's economy, one cannot easily maintain and move beyond the basic Self-Sufficiency level without a technologically advanced and broad-based education. A high-school diploma no longer has the same value it once did in the job market, as businesses increasingly require higher skill levels from potential employees.[4] Advanced education provides the flexibility to move into new, innovative, or nontraditional jobs and careers.

Postsecondary education not only leads to wages above the self-sufficiency level, but these jobs also provide benefits, increased stability, and have promotion and salary increase potential. Moreover, the higher earnings that result can enable the achievement of other economic security goals, such as buying a house or saving for retirement.

There are a range of choices for postsecondary education: vocational training in specialized institutions, community college which provides two-year associate degrees or certificates in specialized fields, or a four-year college or university. Almost all postsecondary education or training requires resources for tuition, thus requiring monetary investment, as well as addressing decreased wages if attendance cannot be combined with full-time work. Below we briefly summarize the three elements of this approach to achieving economic security.

THE COST OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Among the many options for postsecondary education, three types of postsecondary education are presented here:

1. Post-high school certificates or diplomas
2. Associate's degrees (two-year)
3. Bachelor's degrees (four-year)

POST-HIGH SCHOOL CERTIFICATE. The median earnings of certificate holders is 20% more than workers with a high school degree as their highest educational attainment.[5] There are various options for post-high school certificates or diplomas in Colorado across many different fields. For example, the Fire Science certificate offered at the Community College of Aurora provides training to prepare workers to become Municipal Firefighters. The Web Developer certificate at Front Range Community College trains students to become workers in the rapidly expanding tech sector.

These programs vary in terms of the amount of academic credits required to earn the certificate or diploma, from just six credits (about one semester) to two years, with most certificate programs falling in between. As a result, the costs vary considerably by the type of certificate and how many credits are needed to complete it.

ADVANCED EDUCATION PROVIDES THE FLEXIBILITY TO MOVE INTO NEW, INNOVATIVE, OR NONTRADITIONAL JOBS AND CAREERS.

To illustrate costs, we show in **Table 1** a selection of certificate and diploma programs that are found at state-supported local community colleges. For each program, the total program-specific costs are estimated, including tuition, fees, books, and supplies.[6] Total costs average just over $9,000 with the least expensive certificate program shown being the Camera Operator program offered at a number of colleges for about $1,800 for a 6-credit program.[7] Most programs require more credits and time for completion, and are in the $4,000 to $7,000 range. For example, a 30-credit Paralegal certificate program is offered at the Community College of Denver which trains students to be paralegals and legal assistants. This certificate would cost approximately $5,500 in tuition and just under $1,500 in books and supplies.

TABLE 1. Estimated Cost of Selected Certificate and Diploma Programs*, Colorado 2017-2018

OCCUPATION TITLE	ANNUAL MEDIAN WAGES (2016)**	TOTAL CERTIFICATE CREDITS	ESTIMATED TOTAL (Tuition, Fees, Books, & Supplies)
Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians	$66,260	89	$18,172
Automotive Master Mechanics	$41,910	60	$3,048
Camera Operators, Television, Video, and Motion Picture	$59,410	6	$1,219
Chefs and Head Cooks	$48,170	57	$11,582
Civil Engineering Technician	$44,120	24	$4,705
Computer User Support Specialists	$56,300	17	$4,350
Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers	$71,530	62	$12,752
Film and Video Editor	$62,760	30	$6,170
First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	$65,240	21	$4,192
First-Line Supervisors of Landscaping, Lawn Service, and Groundskeeping Workers	$52,200	18	$3,702
Food Service Managers	$50,820	20	$4,113
Foresters	$61,220	16	$1,851
Heating and Air Conditioning Mechanics and Installers	$54,490	37	$7,518
Immigration and Customs Inspectors	$81,250	30	$6,773
Manufacturing Production Technicians	$68,030	20	$4,859
Massage Therapist	$45,770	35	$4,113
Mechanical Drafter	$53,850	24	$4,936
Medical Records and Health Information Technicians	$46,990	27	$5,553
Meeting, Convention, and Event Planners	$41,230	23	$4,730
Municipal Firefighter	$52,390	17	$3,361
Paralegals and Legal Assistants	$49,360	30	$7,058
Police Patrol Officers	$70,270	40	$7,711
Police, Fire, and Ambulance Dispatchers	$47,830	17	$3,333
Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	$54,490	31	$2,235
Sound Engineering Technicians	$52,160	28	$5,759
Web Developer	$56,530	18	$4,705
Welders, Cutters, and Welder Fitters	$41,670	29	$6,547

* Programs included in the sample were selected if the expected median wage is above $40,000 per year (the average Self-Sufficiency Standard for one adult and one school-age child in Colorado) and if the outlook for the job category has average or faster projected growth.
** Median wages and job growth projections come from the National Center for O*NET Development, O*NET OnLine, Retrieved March 23, 2018 from http://www.onetonline.org/.
Note: The cost of certificate programs is estimated for illustrative purposes only. Contact the college for specific details. Cost estimates are based on tuition, fees, books and supplies. The estimate is based on the posted tuition rate and fees per credit plus the average cost of books and supplies for community college students.

TECHNICAL COLLEGE TWO-YEAR DEGREE. Table 2 shows the cost of attaining an associate's degree from a public two-year community or technical college in Colorado. Tuition rates vary by college, and even different branches of the same school often have different required student fees. On average, community college students spend $1,338 annually on books and supplies when attending full time, and $669 when attending part time. In total, the average cost of a two-year community college degree (not including living expenses), is $12,704 if attending full time (two years), and $13,908 if attending part time (four years). Note that these tuition rates assume a 60-credit associate's degree. However, credit requirements vary by program. and often require more than 60 credits. Additionally, course prerequisites not covered in a degree program or remedial course requirements can also increase the total number of credit hours and resulting cost.

If a student attends part time, they are available to work full time while attending school, but must consider that educational costs continue to rise each year. Although going part time reduces the ***annual*** cost of attending college to only $3,125 on average for the first year, the ***total*** cost of attending part time over four years is slightly higher than for two years due to the anticipated inflation in tuition and other educational costs over the longer time period.

TABLE 2. Estimated Cost of Associate's Degree, Public Community Colleges, Colorado 2017-2018

COLORADO COMMUNITY COLLEGES	ANNUAL EXPENSES			FULL-TIME TOTAL	PART-TIME TOTAL
	Tuition & Fees	Books & Supplies	2017-2018 Yearly Total		
Araphahoe Community College	$4,543	$1,338	$5,882	$12,064	$14,795
Colorado Northwestern Community College - Rangely	$4,787	$1,338	$6,125	$12,567	$13,296
Colorado Northwestern Community College - Craig	$4,622	$1,338	$5,960	$12,226	$12,933
Community College of Aurora	$4,593	$1,338	$5,931	$12,167	$13,765
Community College of Denver	$5,434	$1,338	$6,773	$13,902	$15,741
Front Range Community College - Boulder	$4,594	$1,338	$5,932	$12,168	$13,581
Front Range Community College - Larimer	$4,832	$1,338	$6,170	$12,659	$14,277
Front Range Community College - Westminster	$4,693	$1,338	$6,031	$12,373	$13,973
Front Range Community College - Brighton Center	$4,522	$1,338	$5,860	$12,020	$13,371
Lamar Community College	$4,704	$1,338	$6,042	$12,395	$13,802
Morgan Community College	$4,523	$1,338	$5,861	$12,022	$12,658
Northeastern Junior College	$4,940	$1,338	$6,278	$12,882	$13,702
Otero Junior College	$4,761	$1,338	$6,099	$12,513	$13,911
Pikes Peak Community College	$4,651	$1,338	$5,989	$12,286	$12,997
Pueblo Community College - Pueblo	$5,951	$1,338	$7,289	$14,966	$15,424
Pueblo Community College - Fremont	$5,064	$1,338	$6,402	$13,138	$13,903
Pueblo Community College - SCCC-West (Mancos)	$5,499	$1,338	$6,837	$14,034	$14,856
Pueblo Community College - SCCC-East (Durango)	$5,064	$1,338	$6,402	$13,138	$13,903
Red Rocks Community College	$4,757	$1,338	$6,096	$12,506	$13,836
Trinidad State Junior College - Trinidad	$4,832	$1,338	$6,171	$12,660	$13,855
Trinidad State Junior College - Valley	$4,557	$1,338	$5,895	$12,092	$13,481

Note: Annual for full time is defined here as 30 credit hours, for part time it is 15 hours. Future rates are inflated based on the 10-year average change in tuition and fees for 2-year public colleges in the West.

BACHELOR'S DEGREE. Table 3 shows the cost of attaining a bachelor's degree from a public four-year college or university in Colorado. The costs assume full-time attendance (30 credits per year) for four years. Included in the total cost are tuition, fees, books and supplies, as well as room and board. Costs are inflated for the three future years of attendance, using the average increases over the last decade. The estimated total cost of attaining a bachelor's degree from a public institution in Colorado is $96,815 on average. The least expensive is Adams State University, where the cost of a bachelor's degree is $75,711, while the most expensive is the Colorado School of Mines, where the cost of a bachelor's degree is $141,342.

MEETING THE COSTS OF EDUCATION

As shown above, postsecondary education can be expensive, particularly for a four-year degree. An approach utilized by many students is to use a combination of grants (most commonly, Pell grants), scholarships, and loans. Among full-time students in public community colleges, 56% of students have federal grants averaging $4,505 and 23% have student loans averaging $4,603. Among full-time students in public 4-year institutions, 38% of students have federal grants averaging $4,669 and 50% have student loans averaging $6,698.[8]

A second approach to financing education is to reduce costs. One way to reduce costs is to spread it out over time, so that one can continue full-time employment while in school. For four-year degrees, another way to reduce costs is to commute from home rather than pay room and board. Note that on average in Colorado the cost of room and board is about half of the cost of a four-year degree, so this strategy could significantly cut the cost of this degree. Finally, a third approach is to combine work and private and public assistance of various kinds.

In the following section, we present two paths for meeting the cost of higher education through combinations of work, public and private assistance.

TABLE 3. Estimated Annual and Total Cost of Bachelor's Degree, Full-Time, Public 4-Year Institutions, Colorado 2017-2021

NAME OF PUBLIC COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY	ANNUAL EXPENSES				TOTAL COST FOR A FULL-TIME STUDENT OVER FOUR YEARS
	Tuition & Fees	Books & Supplies	Room & Board	TOTAL	
Adams State University	$9,440	$1,424	$7,630	$18,494	$75,711
Colorado School of Mines	$18,386	$1,424	$12,900	$32,710	$141,342
Colorado State University	$11,519	$1,424	$11,964	$24,907	$107,083
Colorado State University-Pueblo	$10,090	$1,424	$8,370	$19,884	$85,609
Fort Lewis College	$8,609	$1,424	$8,932	$18,965	$81,444
Colorado Mesa University	$8,972	$1,424	$8,908	$19,304	$82,945
Metropolitan State University of Denver*	$7,352	$1,424	$10,022	$18,798	$80,495
University of Colorado at Boulder	$12,086	$1,424	$13,998	$27,508	$113,168
University of Colorado at Colorado Springs	$10,201	$1,424	$13,430	$25,055	$107,452
University of Colorado - Denver	$11,258	$1,424	$13,090	$25,772	$110,682
University of Northern Colorado	$9,537	$1,424	$9,700	$20,661	$88,781
Western State Colorado University	$9,802	$1,424	$9,018	$20,244	$87,072
4-YEAR AVERAGE	**$10,604**	**$1,424**	**$10,664**	**$22,692**	**$96,815**

Note: The 2017-18 rates for tuition and fees and room and board are inflated to future years based on the 10-year average change in costs for 4-year public colleges among Western states. Books and supplies are inflated using the average change in costs between 2011-2015 for 4-year public colleges. Total costs for Adams State and UC Boulder reflect the four year tuition guarantee in place for undergraduates at both institutions.
*MSU Denver does not provide student housing. Room rate based on cost of double unit at nearby Regency apartments

SCENARIO

MEETING THE COST OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The first scenario presented here is that of a woman we will call Elizabeth Jones. Ms. Jones is a 25-year-old single mother with a 4-year-old preschooler, living in Pueblo County. She has a high school degree and works as a retail salesperson earning $11.73 per hour ($2,033 per month), the median wage among retail salespersons in Colorado.[9] She also receives $234 per month in child support, the average amount received by families participating in the Child Support Program in Colorado.[10] Her total resources are thus $2,267 per month. However, according to the Self-Sufficiency Standard, a family of her type living in Pueblo County requires $17.60 per hour or $3,098 per month, just to meet her basic needs. Since her wages alone plus child support cannot meet the cost of basic needs for her family, Ms. Jones combines help from her mother and state assistance programs:

- Ms. Jones lives with her mother and pays reduced housing costs, only two-thirds of what she would pay if living on her own.
- She is eligible for child care assistance through the state and pays $249 per month for her preschooler's child care instead of the full market rate child care cost of $799.
- Although her income is too high to be eligible for SNAP (food stamps), she is eligible for food assistance through the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); this program adds the equivalent of $41 per month to her food budget.
- In addition, because her child is eligible for Colorado's CHIP program, her health insurance and out-of-pocket costs are $156 per month, instead of the $404 per month cost when covered by the employer-sponsored health insurance family coverage assumed in the Self-Sufficiency Standard.

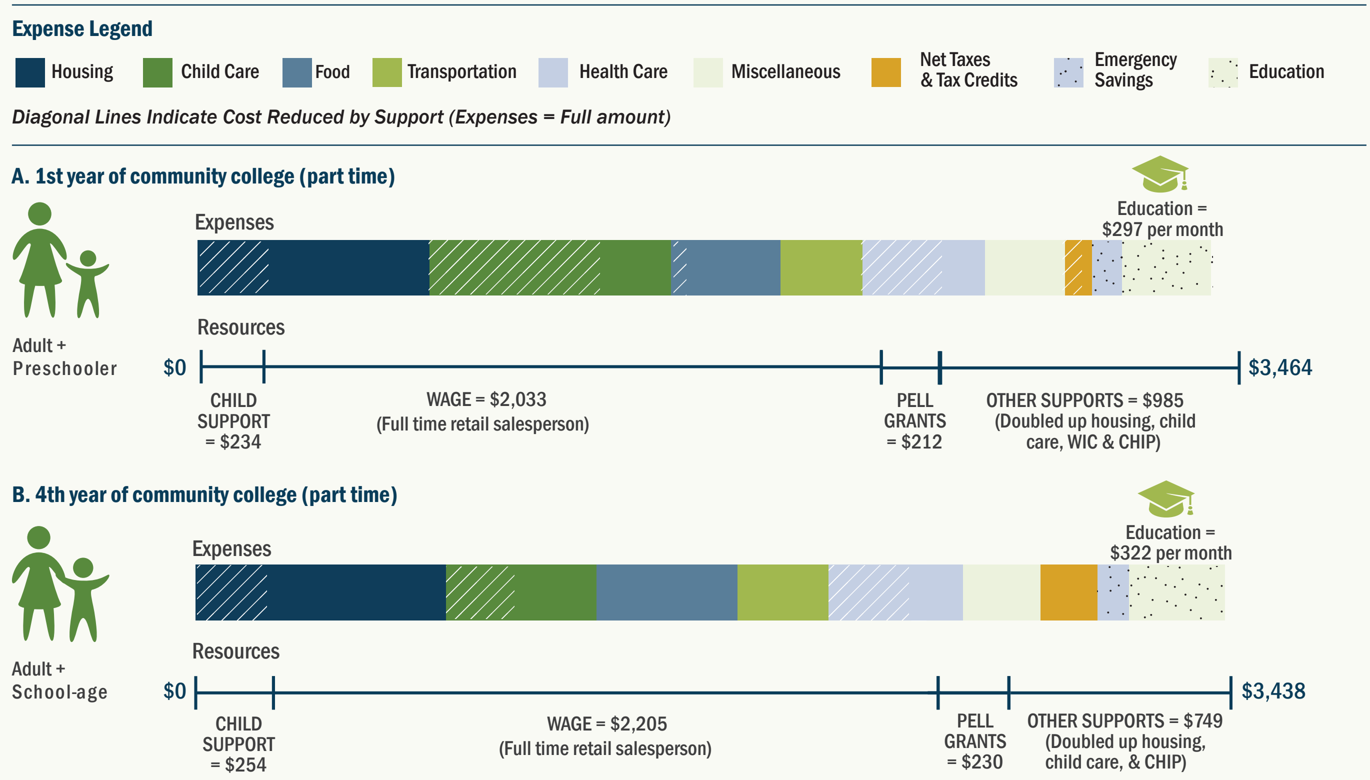
Overall, Ms. Jones' resources cover her family's basic needs with just enough extra to consider attending her local community college. She has decided to seek an Associate Degree in Applied Science from Pueblo Community College, in Dental Hygiene. Although getting this degree will cost about $15,000, she expects to be employed afterwards as a dental hygienist, which had median wages of $84,800 in Colorado in 2017. This wage will enable her to have earnings above her Self-Sufficiency Wage and allow her to support her family without public or private assistance.[11] Below we explore two options for how she can achieve the goal of attaining her Associate Degree.

NOTE ON "DOUBLING UP" VERSUS HOUSING ASSISTANCE. We use "doubling up" rather than public housing assistance in our modeling because it is a more likely scenario. (By doubling up we refer to two or more households—whether family, friends, or roommates—living together to reduce the cost of housing.) Although families with income below 80% of area median income are technically eligible for federal housing assistance, most assistance for new program participants is limited to families with extremely low income (defined by HUD as income below 30% of area median income). According to the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, only one in four households that are eligible for housing assistance receives any housing assistance; moreover, most agencies have years-long waiting lists for housing assistance.[12] In short, public housing assistance is not a likely option for most low-income households. For this reason, several of the scenarios in this brief rely on households "doubling up" as a way to reduce housing costs, rather than public housing assistance.

OPTION 1. This option is "pay as you go," which means that Ms. Jones attends school part time over a period of four years, while continuing to work full time (see **Figure A**). The monthly cost of attending school part time is affordable on her tight budget both because the per month education costs are less (on average over four years it is only $297 per month for tuition, fees, books, and supplies) and because she is receiving supports that reduce her living costs. The first bar shows her expenses according to the Self-Sufficiency Standard plus the cost of education. The resource line illustrates how private and public assistance helps her close the gap between her wage income and her family's needs. Her income and expenses are assumed to increase slightly each year with inflation. Overall, public and private supports cover $985 of her monthly expenses. As her young child ages from a preschooler to a school-age child over the four years, her costs change somewhat as well (her food costs increase).

Note that she has a monthly surplus of about $100 per month when her child is in preschool, which decreases to about $20 once her child is school-aged and has higher food costs. She will also be receiving refundable tax credits totaling about $4,500 annually. Those funds may provide her with some additional reserves to add to her emergency savings fund, or be used to secure other ESPs, such as alternative housing, a needed vehicle, etc. These funds may also be used to meet some of her basic needs if she was unable to obtain all of the work supports and private assistance modeled here.

FIGURE A. Public and Private Supports Close the Gap Between Wages and Expenses to Allow a Single Mother to Complete a Two-Year Community College Degree Through Full-Time Work and Part-Time Attendance
Expenses and resources shown per month for Pueblo County, CO in 2018

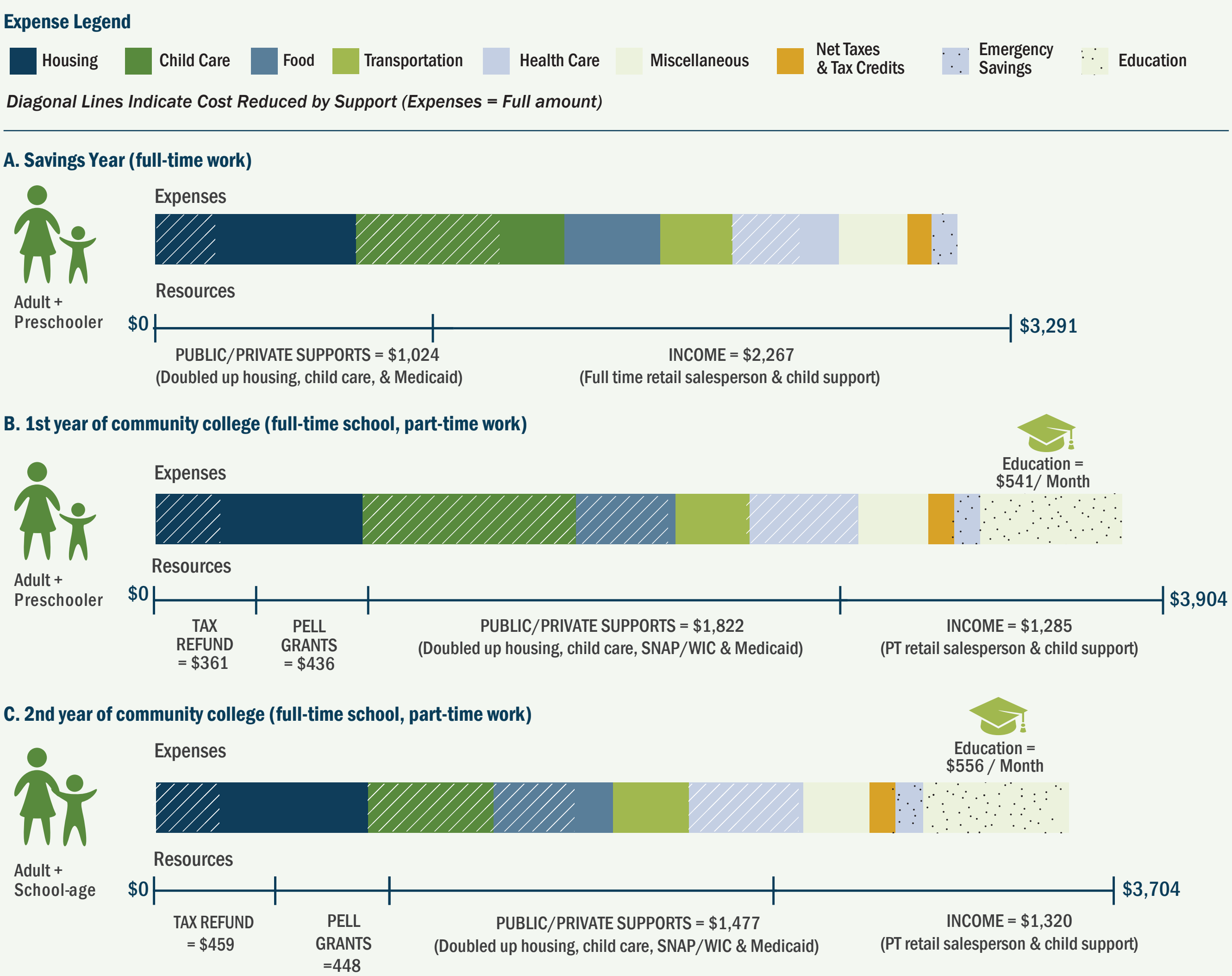


RESOURCE ASSUMPTIONS: Income is based on employment as a retail salesperson ($11.73 per hour) and an average child support award ($234 per month). Public and private supports include living with her mother, child care assistance and WIC for preschooler, and the Children's Health Insurance Program. Grants assumes half the average Pell grant award at Pueblo Community College.
EXPENSE ASSUMPTIONS: Living expenses are based on costs included in the 2018 Self-Sufficiency Standard. The monthly Standard for Pueblo County is $3,098 for one adult and one preschooler and $2,568 for one adult and one school-age child. Education expenses are based on attendance at Pueblo College and includes the monthly cost of tuition, fees, books, and supplies. While education expenses are not typically paid on a monthly basis, they are shown as such to illustrate how they can fit into a monthly budget.
INFLATION ASSUMPTIONS: Expenses change with each year to reflect the child aging plus resources and expenses are updated with inflation. For illustration purposes, it is expected that expenses, wages, and income eligibility levels will increase at the same rate with each year modeled.

OPTION 2. A second approach is that of "saving first, then school" (see **Figure B**). In this scenario, Ms. Jones continues to work full time as a retail salesperson for one year before beginning school in order to build her savings. When she is working full time and saving for school during this year, she receives around $4,200 total in an annual tax credits refund. These are saved and shown as monthly income in **Figure B**. Over the next two years, she attends school full time while working part time. With her lower earnings, her annual tax credits refund increases to about $5,200.

Each academic year, her resources to cover her expenses consist of a combination of her (saved) tax credit refunds, federal grants, and continuing private and public assistance (living with her mother, child care assistance, food assistance, and the Children's Health Insurance Program). If Ms. Jones receives the average Pell Grant of a full-time community college student at Pueblo Community College, about $5,100 annually, her educational costs will be close to fully covered (shown as monthly grants of $436/month).

FIGURE B. Public and Private Supports Close the Gap Between Wages and Expenses to Allow a Single Mother to Complete a Two-Year Community College Degree Through Full-Time Work and Part-Time Attendance
Expenses and resources shown per month for Pueblo County, CO in 2018



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INFLATION ASSUMPTIONS: Expenses change with each year to reflect the child aging plus resources and expenses are updated with inflation. For illustration purposes, it is expected that expenses, wages, and income eligibility levels will increase at the same rate with each year modeled.

ECONOMIC SECURITY PATHWAY #2: HOUSING

Whether it involves moving to more stable rental housing, or becoming a homeowner, achieving improved housing stability is an important step towards economic security. Families may need to move for a variety of reasons:

- seeking better schools or job opportunities
- relocating to a specific community
- moving out of “doubled up” housing, shelter or transitional housing
- leaving an unsafe situation (such as domestic violence)
- escaping a rental market with rapidly rising rents

The Standard presumes that all households are renters, but it only includes the ongoing cost of rent and utilities. It does not include the costs of getting ***into*** more secure housing. Two options for achieving more secure housing are discussed here: non-shared rental housing and homeownership.

RENTAL HOUSING

This option presumes that the household is now living in housing that is, for example, “doubled up,” with no security deposits or other savings. Thus securing rental housing requires savings to cover the costs of moving into a new rental, including the cost of the first month’s rent, a security (damage) deposit, moving expenses.

TABLE 4. Estimated Cost to Relocate to Non-Shared Rental Housing, CO 2018

SIZE	MINIMUM	AVERAGE COST, STATEWIDE	MAXIMUM
1 Bedroom	$1,447	$1,950	$3,144
2 Bedroom	$1,911	$2,483	$3,991
3 Bedroom	$2,642	$3,604	$5,834
4 Bedroom	$3,572	$4,768	$7,398

Note: Alternative housing costs include the cost of first month rent, security deposit, and moving costs

These costs are calculated as follows:

- The monthly rental cost is based on the housing cost calculated in the Self-Sufficiency Standard for Colorado, which uses the most recent Fiscal Year Fair Market Rents (FMRs). FMRs are calculated annually by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for each state’s metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas. FMRs include utilities (except telephone and cable) and are intended to reflect the cost of housing in the current market that meets minimum standards of decency.[13] FMRs are typically set at the 40th percentile meaning 40% of the housing in a given area is less expensive than the FMR.
- The security deposit is equal to one month of rent.
- Moving costs are quoted costs for a full service (movers and a truck) move by bedroom size and by county for licensed and insured moving companies.[14]

Costs vary by both the size of the housing unit, and the housing costs in a region. Table 4 shows that on average across Colorado, a family requiring two bedrooms needs about $2,500 in savings to move into non-shared rental housing. A family requiring a three-bedroom housing unit needs to save about $3,600 on average. Across the state, this ranges from more than $2,600 to nearly $6,000 to move to non-shared rental housing, depending on the county (see appendix for county tables). In Douglas County, where three bedroom units are the most expensive, a family requiring three bedrooms needs $5,834 to secure non-shared housing. In contrast, a household with no children, requiring only a one-bedroom unit, needs to save a minimum of about $2,000 in most Colorado counties but around $3,000 in the more costly counties in order to obtain more secure housing. See a complete list of costs by county in the appendix (Table A-3).

The scenario below illustrates how one example household is able to afford transitioning from shared housing to a solo rental.

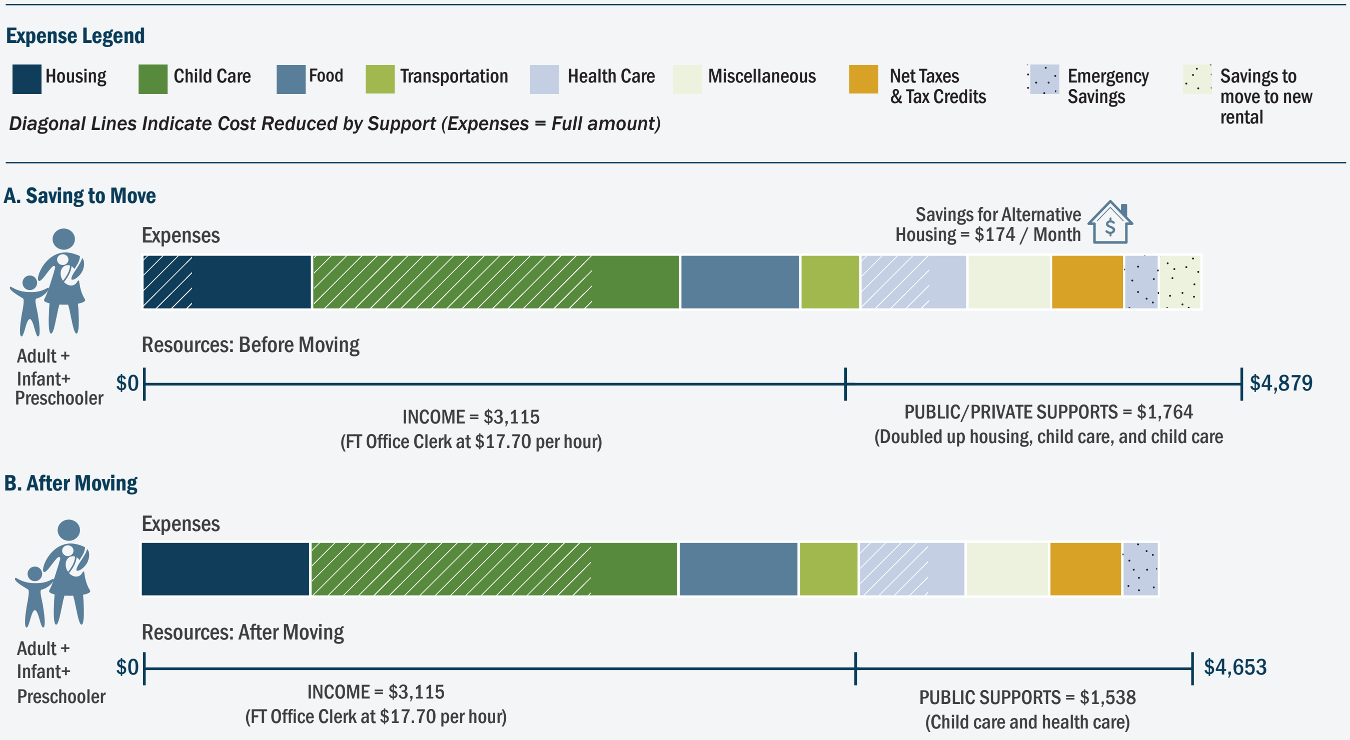
SCENARIO

MEETING THE COST OF RENTAL HOUSING

The Miller family includes a mother with two young children (one infant and one preschooler) living in Alamosa County. Ms. Miller works as an office clerk and earns about $37,000 annually ($3,115 per month), the median earnings of office clerks in Colorado (see **Figure C**). If her children were older, this income would be adequate, but with the higher child care costs of younger children her wages only cover about three-quarters of her needed Self-Sufficiency Standard income ($4,428 per month). However, she is able to meet her family's needs with the additional help of her parents, with whom she lives and who share the cost of housing. Additionally, at her income level she is eligible for child care and health care assistance for her children. By getting support with housing, health care, and child care, Ms. Miller earns enough to meet her basic needs, build her emergency savings fund, and has a surplus of $348 per month. She has decided that she needs to secure her own rental housing.

To live independently and move into her own apartment, she will need to save $756 for a security deposit, another $756 for first month's rent, and $517 for moving costs, for a total of $2,029 to secure a two-bedroom apartment in Alamosa County. If she saves half of her monthly surplus ($348 per month), in twelve months she will save enough to move into her own apartment. With the continued aid of child care and health care assistance, her monthly earnings are enough to cover the full cost of a two-bedroom rental but she will have a smaller surplus per month. This scenario requires the continued help of child care assistance and CHIP health care for the children, otherwise she cannot afford the increased housing costs on her current salary.

FIGURE C. Estimated Cost to Relocate to Non-Shared Rental Housing with Public and Private Supports
Expenses and resources shown per month: Alamosa County, CO 2018



RESOURCE ASSUMPTIONS: Income is based on assumption that Ms. Miller earns the median wage of a full time Office Clerk (which is $3,115 per month in Colorado). Public and private supports include living with her parents, child care assistance, and CHP+.
EXPENSE ASSUMPTION: Living expenses are based on costs in the Self-Sufficiency Standard. The 2018 Standard for one adult, one infant, and one preschooler living in Alamosa County is $4,428 per month ($25.16 per hour). The Standard shows refundable and nonrefundable tax credits as if they are received monthly. However, in order to be as realistic as possible, tax credits that are available as a refund on annual taxes are excluded from the monthly budget in this figure.

HOMEOWNERSHIP

Owning a home has been considered part of the "American Dream," and an investment that can provide long-term security. Homeownership may also provide more economic certainty, particularly if families are able to secure long-term fixed rate mortgages, thus avoiding rent increases.

Homeownership is an important long-term security pathway for many families, but the upfront costs can be quite high. Indeed, the single most expensive "big ticket" item for most families is the purchase of a home. At the same time, depending on the local housing market, it may also cost less to own than rent, especially when the homeowner's mortgage interest tax deduction is taken into account.

The costs of becoming a first-time homeowner are calculated for "starter" homes, those at the 25th percentile. Costs for purchasing a starter home include: down payment, closing costs, and moving costs. The ability to afford the ongoing costs of homeownership—including the mortgage payment, insurance, taxes, utilities, repairs and upkeep—will vary depending on household income.

The most important determinant of the cost of becoming a homeowner is the price of the house, as both down payment and closing costs vary by the price of the home. There is considerable variation in home values for starter homes between Colorado counties, from a low of $41,054 in Baca County to a high value of $352,694 in Summit County (see Appendix Table A-4). Likewise, the size of the starter homes will vary by county depending upon the distribution of the housing stock.

TABLE 5. **Estimated Savings Required to Purchase a Starter Home, CO 2018**

	STARTER HOME VALUE (25TH PERCENTILE)	TOTAL SAVINGS NEEDED (INCLUDES DOWN PAYMENT, CLOSING COSTS, & MOVING COSTS)	
		10% DOWN	20% DOWN
Baca County	$41,054	$5,357	$9,422
Statewide Average	**$166,125**	**$18,959**	**$35,410**
Summit County	$352,694	$39,250	$74,176

As noted above, the amount of down payment is calculated as a percentage of the sales price. Unless the homebuyer qualifies for a VHA or FHA loan or other special program, normally at least 10% is required, and more typically, 20%. With the average price of a starter home in Colorado of $166,125, the average down payment would be $16,612 (10%) or $33,225 (20%). However, down payment amounts vary substantially, reflecting house price variation across counties. Likewise, closing costs also vary across counties, again tied to variation in housing prices.[15]

Unlike down payment and closing costs, moving costs are not determined by the home value. The moving cost for a three-bedroom home is estimated to be approximately $892.

Altogether, the costs of purchasing a starter home, including down payment, closing costs, and moving costs, can vary substantially by county, as shown in Appendix Table A-4. For example, purchasing a home in Baca County, where houses are the least expensive in the state, with the lower down payment of 10%, would cost a family about $5,357. Purchasing a starter home in Summit County, the region with the highest cost housing, would be about $40,000 with a 10% down payment and nearly $75,000 with a 20% down payment.

Note that lower down payments typically result in higher interest rates and/or other increased costs, such as private mortgage insurance (PMI), which increases the monthly mortgage payment.[16] For example, with a 20% downpayment, a 30 year loan with a 4% interest rate will result in a mortgage payment of about $850 per month for the average price starter home in Colorado ($166,125). However, the mortgage payment will increase to just over $1,000 per month if a 10% downpayment is made.[17] Note that these mortgage payment totals include taxes and home insurance plus PMI with the 10% down payment, but not repairs or utilities.

SCENARIO
MEETING THE COST OF BECOMING A HOMEOWNER

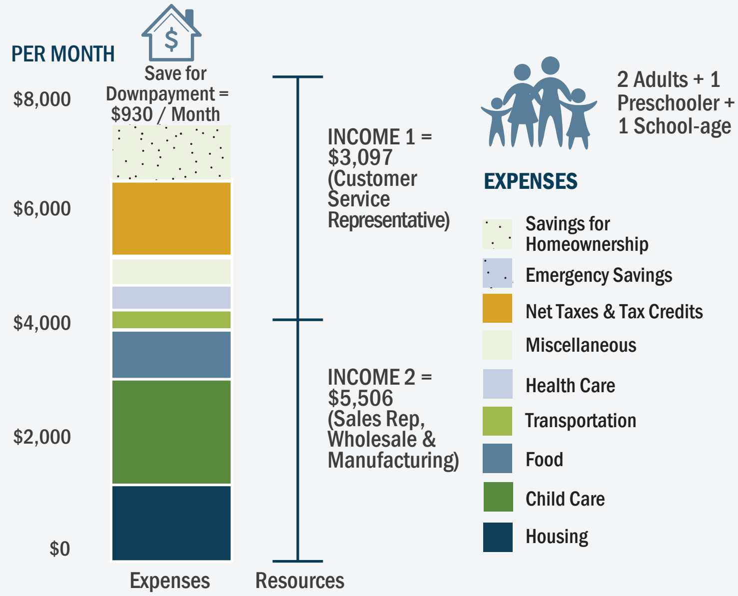
These scenarios, shown in Figure D, model Mr. and Mrs. Baker who live in Denver with their preschooler and school-age child. Mr. and Mrs. Baker work as a customer service representative and a wholesale & manufacturing sales representative, and earn the median wages for their occupations in Colorado. In total they bring home about $8,603 per month which is 129% of their Self-Sufficiency Standard. The Bakers are considering homeownership as their next step in reaching economic security.

The Bakers hope to find a starter home for around $215,273 (the 25th percentile of home values in Denver). To become homeowners, the Bakers would need to save for a 20% down payment, closing costs, and moving costs, for a total of $45,622 before inflation.

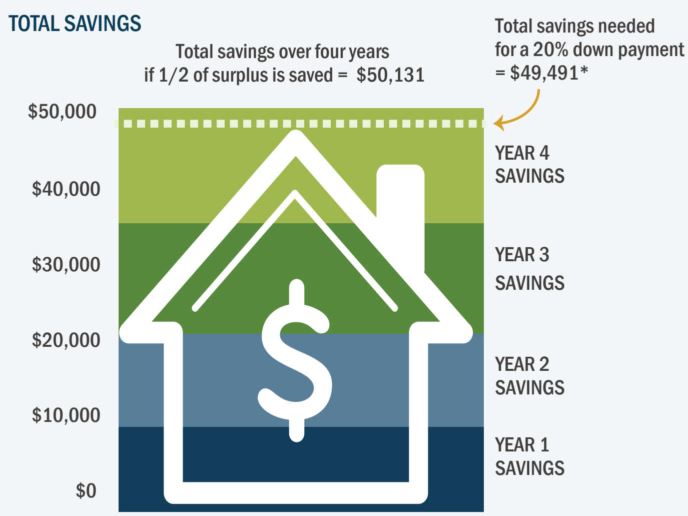
If they save half of their surplus earnings each month, which is $11,000 in year one, by midway in the fourth year they will have saved enough to cover a 20% down payment, closing costs, and moving costs of a starter home in Denver. However, note that this scenario, unlike the rental housing scenario described in Figure C, does not calculate whether the family is able to afford the ongoing costs of homeownership, including the mortgage payment, insurance, taxes, utilities, repairs and upkeep, which may total more or less than their current housing costs.

FIGURE D. Estimated Monthly Cost to Become Homeowners
Expenses and resources shown per month: Denver, CO 2018

YEAR 1 EXPENSES AND RESOURCES



THREE YEAR SAVINGS GOAL



EXPENSE ASSUMPTIONS: Living expenses are based on costs in the Self-Sufficiency Standard. The 2018 Standard for two adults, one preschooler, and one school-age child living in Denver is $6,019 per month ($17.10 per hour, per adult).
INFLATION ASSUMPTIONS: Expenses change with each year to reflect children aging plus resources and expenses increasing with inflation. For illustration purposes, it is expected that expenses, wages, and down payment goal will increase at the same rate with each year modeled.
* Down payment goal for a starter home in Denver is $45,622 before inflation.

ECONOMIC SECURITY PATHWAY #3: RETIREMENT

Although the benefits of saving for retirement can seem far off, particularly for younger families, retirement savings are an important priority for long-term economic security.[18] Data suggests that even now Social Security does not provide adequate income for most individuals during retirement, and it is likely to be even less adequate in the future. Social Security is the largest single source of income for both men and women over 65 today, more than earnings, pensions, and assets combined. Yet more than a third of elders find themselves in "near poverty," that is, with income less than 200% of the official poverty level.[19]

In addition, although Medicare was originally intended to meet elders' medical needs once they were no longer covered by employer-provided health benefits, Medicare no longer does so. Today even with Medicare, elders are often spending as much if not more than before Medicare, and medical costs are now claiming an increasingly higher proportion of their income.[20] Indeed, recent research using the Supplemental Poverty Measure, which takes into account the impact of "necessary expenditures," (which includes health care) finds that health expenditures push many elderly below the poverty level, substantially increasing the proportion of the elderly deemed "poor" by this alternative version of the official poverty measure.[21] Given the limitations of Social Security, and rising health care costs not covered by Medicare, saving for retirement is crucial for achieving economic security beyond the working years.

To determine how much savings are required in retirement, two calculations are made:

- the amount needed to meet basic needs, using the Retirement-Adjusted Self-Sufficiency Standard for one- and two-adult elderly households; and,
- the expected Social Security benefits to be received.

The gap between the amount of expected expenses in retirement and the amount of expected income from social security is the total amount that must be saved.

One more factor affects how much needs to be saved for retirement, and that is when savings are begun, as the sooner a person is able to begin saving for retirement, the better. Beginning retirement savings at a younger age means that there are more years in which to save, plus the more time there is for those savings to grow. Thus the amount that must be saved monthly varies substantially depending upon the age at which retirement savings begins. For this reason, calculations for the Retirement Economic Security Pathway are presented for three different ages at which savings begins: 25, 40, and 55 years, for one- and two-adult households.

HOW IS THE RETIREMENT SAVINGS FUND CALCULATED?

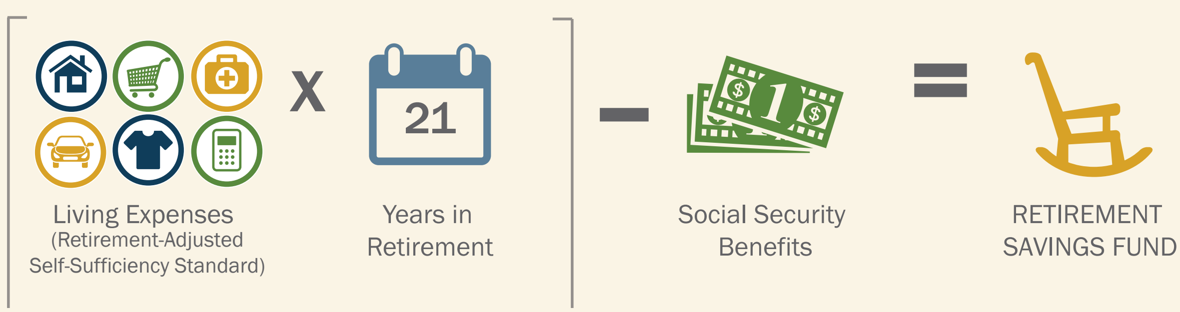


TABLE 6. **The Retirement-Adjusted (RA) Self-Sufficiency Standard, Social Security Benefit, and Needed Retirement Savings, Prowers County and Boulder County, CO in 2018**
By Age at Which Saving Begins for 1 and 2 Adults

	PROWERS COUNTY (LOW COST)		BOULDER COUNTY (HIGH COST)	
	1 ADULT	2 ADULTS	1 ADULT	2 ADULTS
Monthly Expenses: Retirement-Adjusted (RA) Self-Sufficiency Standard (Current Dollars)	$1,744	$2,623	$2,493	$3,446
Monthly Social Security Benefit (Current Dollars)	$1,032	$2,064	$1,336	$2,672
RETIREMENT SAVINGS CALCULATION STARTING TO SAVE AT AGE 25				
Total Expenses Over Retirement	$930,000	$1,360,000	$1,320,000	$1,790,000
Total Social Security Benefit Over Retirement	$430,000	$840,000	$560,000	$1,080,000
Total Net Savings Required at Retirement (Expenses less Social Security benefits)	$500,000	$520,000	$770,000	$700,000
Amount Needed to Save Monthly	$236	$248	$364	$333
RETIREMENT SAVINGS CALCULATION STARTING TO SAVE AT AGE 40				
Total Expenses Over Retirement	$590,000	$860,000	$840,000	$1,130,000
Total Social Security Benefit Over Retirement	$300,000	$580,000	$380,000	$750,000
Total Net Savings Required at Retirement (Expenses less Social Security benefits)	$290,000	$280,000	$450,000	$380,000
Amount Needed to Save Monthly	$378	$368	$593	$497
RETIREMENT SAVINGS CALCULATION STARTING TO SAVE AT AGE 55				
Total Expenses Over Retirement	$370,000	$540,000	$530,000	$710,000
Total Social Security Benefit Over Retirement	$200,000	$390,000	$260,000	$510,000
Total Net Savings Required at Retirement (Expenses less Social Security benefits)	$170,000	$140,000	$260,000	$200,000
Amount Needed to Save Monthly	$815	$708	$1,302	$968

Totals are rounded to the nearest thousand.

STEP 1. CALCULATE EXPENSES IN RETIREMENT

The total expenses needed in retirement are calculated based on *The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Colorado 2018* for one and two adults, by county. The Standard is modified for the cost of living in retirement to create a Retirement Adjusted (RA) Standard by making several adjustments:

- All income is assumed to be unearned (so payroll taxes are eliminated), and with the larger deduction for those over 65, generally very little federal and no state income tax is owed.
- Health care costs are adjusted to account for higher health care expenses in retirement (net of Medicare).[22]
- Transportation costs assume only one car per household and are based on the average daily miles driven by adults 66-88 years old.
- Housing costs assume the expenses of renting as in the Standard.

The resulting Retirement-Adjusted (RA) Self-Sufficiency Standard averages just about $60 less per month than the normal Standard for single adults but it varies depending on county. For example, the 2018 Standard per month for one adult in Boulder is $2,553 but after adjusting for retirement it decreases to $2,493. In Prowers County, the 2018 Standard per month is $1,604 and increases to $1,744 when adjusted for retirement (see Table 6).

The initial RA Standard is updated for inflation based on the retirement year of the three sample ages savings begin. It is assumed that the 25, 40, and 55 year olds will all begin retirement at the age of 67 (when full Social Security benefits begin). The cost of living based on the RA Self-Sufficiency Standard is assumed to have a 3% annual inflation rate during retirement.[23] The length of the retirement period is based on life expectancy at retirement age, which varies by gender and current age, and ranges from about 20 to 22 years.[24]

The RA Standard is inflated annually and aggregated to obtain the total expenses expected over the course of the retirement years, shown as "Total Expenses over Retirement" in Table 6 For example, in Prowers County, due to inflation the total needed to cover expenses during retirement for one adult who was 25 in 2018 and plans to retire at age 67 is $930,000, but is $590,000 if the adult is 40 now, and $370,000 if the adult is 55 now. In more expensive places, the numbers are even higher. For example, in Boulder the amount needed for expenses over retirement is over $1.3 million for one adult who is age 25 now, $840,000 if they are 40, and $530,000 if they are 55. Two-adult households need between 135%-153% more than single adults to cover their total expenses in retirement; that is, while some expenses double, such as food, others such as housing are the same for one and two adult households. For example, for two adults age 25 now, the total amount of expenses expected over retirement is $1.36 million in Prowers County and nearly $1.8 million in Boulder (see Table 6).

STEP 2. CALCULATE SOCIAL SECURITY INCOME

Social Security benefits provide the largest source of income for both men and women 65 and older.[28] The total Social Security benefit amount in retirement is calculated for the same amount of time as costs (about 22 years). The Social Security benefit is estimated using a Social Security Administration calculator with earnings based on the Self-Sufficiency Standard for one adult in each Colorado county, assumes 42 years of employment, and includes Social Security Administration estimates of Cost of Living adjustments (COLA). For example, the monthly Social Security benefit is estimated to be $1,032 in Prowers County and $1,336 in Boulder (in current dollars). By the time they reach retirement:

- The total Social Security benefit over retirement for a 25-year-old worker is estimated at $430,000 in Prowers County and $560,000 in Boulder.
- The total Social Security benefit over retirement for a 40-year-old worker is estimated at $300,000 in Prowers County and $380,000 in Boulder.
- The total Social Security benefit over retirement for a 55-year-old worker is estimated at $200,000 in Prowers County and $260,000 in Boulder.

For a two-adult retired household, assuming both adults were workers, the income from Social Security benefits is double these amounts.[29]

EMPLOYER-SPONSORED RETIREMENT PLANS

Funds from retirement plans or pensions are not included in these calculations for several reasons. While 66% of private industry workers have access to a retirement plan through their employer, only 49% of workers participate in a retirement plan.[25] In addition, for current retirees, the proportion of income received from retirement plans is quite small, averaging just 14%.[26] While this is not negligible, it is also true that this average reflects a very uneven distribution of private pension benefits. On average, the highest quintile receives 20% of their income from pensions, while the lowest quintile receives only 2% of their income from pensions.[27] Finally, unlike Social Security where the benefit is known and anticipated, in terms of calculations, the amount that can be anticipated from retirement plan participation is highly variable over time and across individual workers. Benefit amounts vary considerably between employers as well as by factors such as years of service, income levels, employer contribution, plan type, and so forth. Given this variability, and the relatively small amounts for most workers, it is not possible to reasonably estimate an average amount of income to be expected in retirement from pension plans.

STEP 3. CALCULATE SAVINGS NEEDED FOR RETIREMENT

The total amount needed to save for retirement is the difference between total estimated expenses (based on the RA Self-Sufficiency Standard) and the total expected benefits from Social Security. This amount is adjusted, based on the assumption of a conservative rate of return on savings before and after retirement of 6% annually,[30] and the number of years between current age (25, 40, or 55 years, when savings begin) and retirement to get the amount of Net Savings at Retirement required. To save this total, the monthly amount of savings required to close the gap between expenses (the RA Standard) and income (Social Security) is calculated for each age, for one and two adult households, and for each county in Colorado.

In Prowers County, a 25-year-old adult needs a net savings of $500,000 at retirement and must start saving $236 per month to reach that goal.

In Boulder, the 25-year-old adult will need a net savings of $770,000 at retirement and must start saving $364 per month to reach that goal.

Among two-adult households, however, the net savings needed at retirement are generally less as it assumes that they will receive two Social Security benefits as income. Additionally, the expenses for two people to maintain a home are not double that of a single person, but only about one and a half times on average the costs than for one adult. For example, housing costs are the same for one adult and two adult households. Therefore, a two-adult household of 25-year-olds in Prowers County needs to start saving $248 per month to reach their retirement goal of $520,000 and in Boulder the two adults need to save $333 per month to reach the goal of $700,000.

Each of these amounts increase as the age at which saving for retirement begins rises. The longer one waits to begin, the more one has to save, to play catch up, as well as the lost time for savings to accumulate with interest. Thus in Prowers County, if savings do not start until age 40, then the one adult household would need to save $378 monthly, and the two adult household $368 per month; if savings do not start until age 55, then these numbers increase to $815 and $708, respectively. This increase occurs because even though the total savings required for retirement at 67 is less for the 55 year old due to less future inflation, there is also less time for savings to earn interest and grow. That is, starting savings early allows for more time to accumulate and more time for savings to grow.

Table 7 provides the average estimate across Colorado of the amount one would need to save on a monthly basis to meet total expenses in retirement years, net of Social Security benefits, by age at which savings begin, and for one- and two-adult households. See **Table A-5** in the appendix for data by county. This data presumes that once started, the savings would continue at the same amount until retirement. However, some savings in the early years is better than no savings at all. With this in mind, as an example, the following calculations were made that anticipated less saving at the beginning, and more towards the end of the employment period.

1. The average retirement savings needed for one adult in Colorado is $275 per month if savings start at age 25. If the adult saves only half this amount at age 25, about $138 per month, they would have saved about $40,000 with compounded interest by age 40. If the adult then began saving the full amount needed for retirement, they will need to save $392 a month, compared to $275 per month if they had saved the full amount of $275 from age 25. But starting with something is better than

TABLE 7. **Estimated Monthly Retirement Savings, CO in 2018**
By Age at Which Savings Begin, for 1 & 2 Adults

	1 ADULT			2 ADULTS		
AGE	Minimum (Cheyenne County)	Colorado Average	Maximum (Douglas County)	Minimum (Cheyenne County)	Colorado Average	Maximum (Douglas County)
25 years old	$224	$275	$395	$242	$276	$341
40 years old	$359	$445	$644	$359	$411	$507
55 years old	$772	$965	$1,417	$693	$795	$979

nothing: if they had not saved anything from age. 25 on, and only started saving at age 40, the adult would have to start saving $445 per month at that point to meet their retirement savings goal.

2. If the adult only increased savings at age 40 to $275 per month, doubling what they had been saving since age 25, they will fall short of the savings goal, so that at age 55, they would have to begin saving $1,122 per month to reach the savings goal by retirement age.

These numbers reinforce that the more one saves at early ages, the easier it is to achieve one's retirement goal. Note that these calculations do not take into account any additional income, such as pension payments from an employer-sponsored plan, or higher Social Security payments reflecting wages higher than the Standard. At the same time, these savings assume expenses at the Self-Sufficiency Standard level, adjusted for retirement, but nevertheless a "bare bones" budget.

Three conclusions can be drawn from the calculations shown in Table 6 and Table 7, and the scenario in Figure E.

- **NUMBER OF ADULTS:** While it is not quite true that "two can live as cheaply as one," when it comes to retirement savings, two-adult households do have two advantages. First, living costs are not double, but rather range from 135% to 153% of the costs of just one adult, depending on the county. Second, pre-retirement, there are assumed to be two incomes from which savings are drawn for retirement. Thus the cost of retirement savings per individual is less per adult than a single adult needs to save for retirement. For example, a 40-year-old single adult in El Paso County needs to save $457 per month for retirement, while a 40-year-old couple in El Paso County needs to save $419 per month or $210 per person. Third, there will be two Social Security payments to offset expenses, on the presumption that both adults will be workers. In short, a couple has two incomes pre-retirement, and two Social Security benefit incomes in retirement, but expenses are only roughly one and a half times that of a single adult.

- **GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION:** Because the cost of living varies considerably, the amount needed to save for retirement varies considerably by place. However, unlike during working age, some retirees have some flexibility regarding location, so that while they may have earned more, and therefore earned higher benefits from living in a relatively expensive place, in retirement they can move to less expensive places to live. For example, the cost of housing in Douglas County is more than twice as much per month than the cost of housing in Mesa County. Thus at retirement, retirees can reduce their cost of living by choosing less expensive places to live.

- **AGE:** The data presented here demonstrate the tremendous advantages of starting to save for retirement at younger ages. In brief, starting younger pays off later, considerably. For example, a 25-year-old single adult in El Paso County needs to save $282 per month for retirement. If this single adult waits until she is 40 years old she would have to save $457 per month and if she waited until she was 55 years old, to start saving she would need to save $995 per month. If a couple in El Paso County starts saving at age 25, they would need a combined savings of $280 per month, but if they waited until they were 40 the amount would increase to $419, and at 55 years, it would be $815 per month.

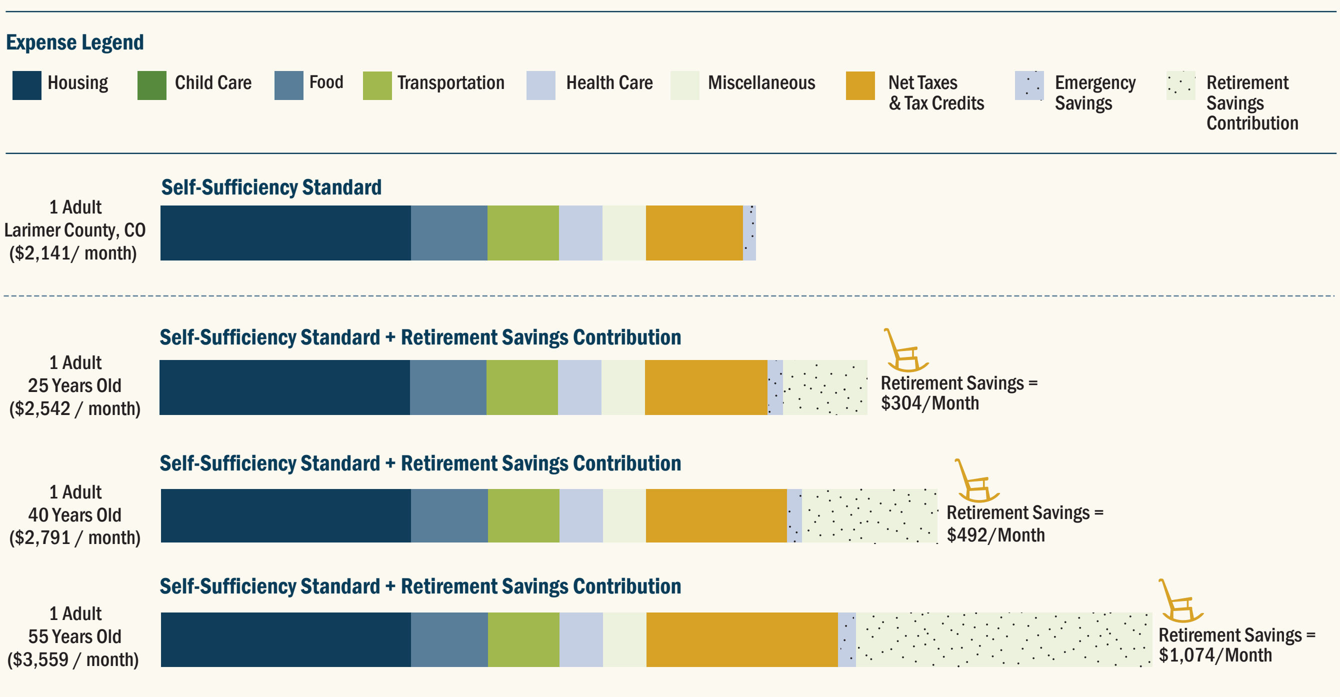
As noted above, the two-adult calculations assume both adults receive a Social Security benefit based on earnings at the one-adult Self-Sufficiency Standard level. However, if one adult does not work outside the home or has had partial workforce participation the adult is still eligible for a Social Security benefit equal to half of their spouse's benefit. The spouse with the lesser earnings is entitled to take whichever benefit is larger, their own as a worker, or as a spouse.

ONCE A FAMILY OR INDIVIDUAL IS ABLE TO MEET THEIR BASIC NEEDS, THE SOONER THEY ARE ABLE TO BEGIN SAVING FOR RETIREMENT, THE BETTER.

SCENARIO
MEETING THE COST OF RETIREMENT

The following model illustrates how much additional income is needed to meet net retirement needs for a single adult in Larimer County, based on the different retirement contribution amounts by age at which retirement savings begin. The Self-Sufficiency Standard for a single adult, Susan Smith, living in Larimer County is $2,141 per month (see the first bar of Figure E). If Ms. Smith has decided to start saving at 25 years old, and saves the suggested minimum of $304 per month, the amount she needs to earn to maintain her basic needs AND save for retirement increases to $2,542 per month. However, if Ms. Smith is 40 years old and just starting to save for retirement now she would need to earn $2,791 per month to both meet her basic needs AND save for retirement. Note that, as the amount she needs to earn increases with the higher retirement contribution, her taxes also increase. Finally, if Ms. Smith has not saved anything for retirement, and is 55 years old, she needs to earn $3,559 per month to meet her basic needs AND save enough for retirement, over three times as much as if she started saving at age 25 ($1,074 vs. $304).

FIGURE E. Minimum necessary to meet basic needs AND save for retirement, by the starting age of saving for retirement
Expenses shown per month for Larimer County, CO 2018



EXPENSE ASSUMPTIONS: Current living expenses are based on costs in the Self-Sufficiency Standard. The 2018 Standard for one adult living in Larimer County is $2,094 month ($11.90 per hour) plus $47 for emergency savings. Hourly wage assumes full-time, year-round employment.

CONCLUSION

This report used *The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Colorado 2018* calculations to explore the costs of several Economic Security Pathways Coloradans may take to increase their economic security. Understanding more about the extra costs associated with saving for higher education or training, a new housing situation and/or retirement will help families chart realistic paths to achieve and maintain economic security over the long term.

As we look to the future, the trends impacting families striving to achieve economic security are mixed. On the one hand, the importance of building assets, particularly education and training, have been increasingly recognized as key to achieving economic security. This recognition is apparent in several areas:

- Relaxed restrictions on assets and savings for low-income program participants.[31] These include allowing benefit recipients to save towards education or housing security; in some cases these savings are matched by private funds, such as IDA (Individual Development Account) programs.
- At the federal level, expanded health care coverage through the Affordable Care Act has increased economic security by decreasing the number of people experiencing or at risk of incurring uncovered health care costs.[32] For example, in Colorado the uninsured rate dropped from 15.9% in 2010 to 7.5% in 2016.[33] Such coverage helps prevent bankruptcy and impoverishment due to uncovered medical expenses, as 53% of households without coverage reported difficulty paying medical bills in the past year versus 20% of households with insurance coverage.[34]
- States have begun to mandate minimum amounts of paid sick leave and/or family leave.[35]
- Additionally, reforms included in the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act extended unemployment insurance to more workers in many states, partly by broadening eligibility for part-time workers and increasing the number of weeks of unemployment benefits for workers who need training to improve their job skills.[36]

At the same time, there are a couple of troubling counter trends that are reducing economic security for many American households. First, the median wage in Colorado has not kept pace with rising costs of living. A second troubling trend is a shifting of risk from employers and government to workers over the past several decades. For example, an increasing number of employers have cut or eliminated health insurance coverage, and reduced or eliminated pensions. Others have structured jobs as temporary or contract work, where they lack paid vacation or sick/family leave, limiting their contributions to employees' Social Security, eligibility for unemployment insurance, and other benefits.[37] Other workers, such as those in the "gig" economy, have limited access to benefits such as Social Security, unemployment insurance, workmen's compensation and disability coverage, much less paid sick leave.

Furthermore, although home ownership opportunities for low-income households expanded prior to the Great Recession,[38] this trend was partially fueled by

UNDERSTANDING MORE ABOUT THE EXTRA COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH SAVING FOR AN ECONOMIC SECURITY PATHWAY WILL HELP FAMILIES ACHIEVE AND MAINTAIN ECONOMIC SECURITY OVER THE LONG TERM.

predatory lending and subprime mortgages, resulting in increased rates of default and foreclosures during the downturn.[39] As a result, homeownership rates have fallen from 67% in 2009 to 63% in 2015, and especially so for people of color, whose home ownership rates have fallen even more, from 46% to 43% for African Americans, and from 49% to 45% for Hispanics.[40] Tightening of underwriting standards was a prudent and necessary move, but this has increased the barriers faced by low-income households seeking the economic security of home ownership.[41]

In other areas as well, the Great Recession has led to cutbacks, particularly at the state and local level, in programs that support low-income working families, such as child care assistance, TANF benefits, after school programs, higher education, and others. Although some of these have been restored with the recovery, many have not, or have only been partially reinstated and/or re-funded at previous levels.

As this brief summary suggests, achieving economic security is not only challenging, but is an effort that faces rapidly changing circumstances, reflecting economic cycles, changing business practices, increasing costs (such as health care for both workers and retirees), and changing public policies and priorities. Nevertheless, as demonstrated in this report, achieving economic security is possible and doable, although different for each individual and family. It is hoped that this report, by providing information and insight, will aid families in their efforts to access the information and resources that make getting on the road to economic security possible.

Looking to the future, from food stamps to Social Security and beyond, there are public policy proposals being put forward that would restrict access to or decrease benefits in a wide range of federal programs. Such proposals suggest that achieving economic security and even maintaining current programs will continue to be a challenge. This is not a challenge that individuals should have to face alone, but one where all stakeholders—employers, the government, and the community as well as individuals— must play a role in achieving economic security for all.

ENDNOTES

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2. Dalaker, Poverty in the United States: 2000. (U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Reports, Series P60-214). U.S. Government Printing Office (Washington, D.C., 2001).

3. The Self-Sufficiency Standard was developed in the mid-1990s by Diana Pearce as an alternative "performance standard" in the workforce development system, to measure more accurately and specifically what would be required to meet the Job Training Partnership Act Program goal of "self-sufficiency" for each individual participant. The development of the Standard also benefited from other attempts to create alternatives, such as Living Wage campaigns, the National Academy of Sciences studies, and Trudi Renwick's work. For more detail on the Standard, see http://www.selfsufficiencystandard.org/.

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6. Cost estimates are for illustrative purposes only, and prospective students should contact the school for cost details. If total program cost was provided by the school, that estimate is shown. Otherwise, the estimate is based on the posted rate and fees per credit, plus the average cost of books and supplies for community college students.

7. Most community college courses are three credits per semester. The amount of time it will take to complete a certificate program will depend on the timing of course offerings at the community college. Contact an academic advisor for more detail, if you are interested in pursuing a community college certificate.

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9. U.S. Department of Labor, "May 2016 State Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates," Databases and Tables, Occupational Employment Statistics, http://www.bls.gov/oes/data.htm (accessed December 11, 2017).

10. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children & Families, Office of Child Support Enforcement, "FY 2016 Annual statistical report to Congress," Table S-4, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/programs/css/fy_2016_annual_report.pdf (accessed June 19, 2018). Data has been inflated using the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, "West Region All Items, 1982-84=100 - CUURA101SA0," Consumer Price Index, http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/surveymost?cu (accessed June 19, 2018).

11. Visit http://www.onetonline.org/ to explore career options and find local salary information and training programs.

12. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (2008), "What is Public Housing?," http://www.cbpp.org/files/policybasics-housing.pdf.

13. Not all rental units include the cost of utilities. However, deposits may be required for new utility customers. Including the full FMR covers the cost of securing utilities when not included in the rent itself. For information on avoiding utility deposits see https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0220-utility-services.

14. Note that the Standard assumes adults and children do not share bedrooms, and so by definition a household with children requires at least a two-bedroom housing unit.

15. Note the costs of initial homeownership do not include any monthly mortgage payments. Closing costs are assumed to be 0.973% of the loan amount (the average in Colorado for a $200,000 loan).

16. Typically on a conventional loan, if the down payment is less than 20 percent of the value of the home, lenders will require the buyer to carry mortgage insurance, typically an additional $30-70 per month for every $100,000 borrowed. For more information see http://www.zillow.com/mortgage-rates/buying-a-home/mortgage-insurance-and-pmi/.

17. Calculations based on results from http://www.zillow.com/mortgage-calculator/.

18. See http://www.dol.gov/ebsa/pdf/savingsfitness.pdf or http://www.dol.gov/ebsa/pdf/NewEntrants.pdf.

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22. Health care costs in the RA Standard assume Original Medicare with Part D (Prescription Drug Coverage) plus Medigap (supplemental insurance) and out-of-pocket costs. Original Medicare consists of Part A (hospital insurance) and Part B (medical insurance) and has a universal premium per participant. Medigap is based on the cost of AARPs Plan F premium. Part D assumes the cost of the Humana Walmart Rx Plan. Out-of-pocket costs are calculated from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Medical Expenditure Panel Survey.

23. The annual inflation rate of 3% is a typical assumption made by retirement calculators (for example, see Vanguard and T.RowePrice)..

24. Estimates for one adult assume life expectancy for females and ranges from 18.4 years for the 55 year old to 22.1 years for the 25 year old after turning 67 years old. For two adults, life expectancy is the average of female and male ranging from 19.5 years for the 55 year old to 21.1 for the 25 year old.

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28. Social Security Administration, “Fast Fact and Figures About Social Security, 2013,” SSA Publication No. 13-11785,

29. Consistent with the Self-Sufficiency Standard assumption that all adults work, two-adult households are considered to be two retired workers with both adults receiving a Social Security benefit. Some women, even though they worked, may find that the 50% spousal benefit is more than the benefit to which they are entitled in their own right. However, with increased workforce participation and a decline in the wage gap, in the future it is expected that most women as well as men will receive their own benefit, rather than a spousal benefit. The SSA estimates that by 2025, about 8% of women will receive benefits only on their spouses earnings and only 6% will do so by 2040 (see Social Security Administration, Office of Retirement Planning, “Current Law Projections,” http://www.socialsecurity.gov/retirementpolicy/projections/women-dual-2025-alt.html#chart1

30. Retirement savings plan calculators tend to use higher estimated rates of return, in the 8% to 9% range. However, to be more conservative considering rate of return volatility, our calculations use 6%.

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APPENDIX TABLES

TABLE A-1. Methodology Assumptions and Data Sources for Economic Security Pathways, CO 2018

ASSUMPTIONS	DATA SOURCES
POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION	
Full time is defined as 30 credit hours annually; part time is 15 credits annually. **The 2017-2018 rates are inflated to future years based on the average change in tuition and fees for public colleges in the West over the previous 10 years.**	Tuition & Fees: Colorado Community College System, "Cost." http://www.coloradocommunitycolleges.com/go/cost/ (accessed February 14, 2018). Colorado Commission on Higher Education, "Tuition and Fees Report Fiscal Year 2017-18." https://highered.colorado.gov/Publications/Reports/Budget/FY2018/2018_tuitionfeesreport.pdf (Accessed February 15, 2018). Books & Supplies: College Board, Annual Survey of Colleges, "Average Student Expenses by College Board Region, 2017-18 (Enrollment-Weighted)," Accessed August 23, 2018 from personal communication with College Board. Tuition & Fees Inflation: College Board, "Average Tuition and Fees and Room and Board by College Board Region, 1990-91 to 2017-18 (Enrollment-Weighted)," https://trends.collegeboard.org/college-pricing (accessed February 21, 2018). Books & Supplies Inflation: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Spring 2010 through Spring 2014, Student Financial Aid component; and Fall 2009 through Fall 2014, Institutional Characteristics component, "Table 330.40. Average total cost of attendance for first-time, full-time undergraduate students in degree-granting postsecondary institutions: 2009–10 through 2013-14," http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/tables/xls/tabn330.40.xls (accessed February 14, 2018).
ALTERNATIVE HOUSING	
Alternative housing costs include the cost of first month's rent, security deposit, and moving costs. Security deposit is equal to one month's rent. **Moving costs compiled from a variety of websites. Assumption is $399 for a 1 bedroom move, $517 for a 2 bedroom, $892 for a 3 bedroom, and $1,673 for a 4 bedroom.**	Rent and Security Deposit: Housing costs from The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Colorado 2018, based on Fair Market Rents. Moving Costs: Home Advisor, "Hire Movers," https://www.homeadvisor.com/cost/storage-and-organization/hire-a-moving-service. Unpakt Blog, "Moving Costs," http://www.unpakt.com/blog/how-much-it-cost-to-move-in-denver/. CostHelper, "Local Mover Cost?" http://home.costhelper.com/local-mover.html. Moving Company Reviews, "How to estimate the cost of a pro move," https://blog.movingcompanyreviews.com/2014/07/11/estimate-cost-pro-move/. My Moving Reviews, "How much does if cost to hire movers?" https://www.mymovingreviews.com/move/how-much-does-it-cost-to-hire-movers. Updater, "How much does it cost to move? Calculating your moving price," http://www.updater.com/moving-tips/how-much-does-it-cost-to-move. Moving Tips, "Cost to hire movers? See our sample moving costs!" https://moving.tips/costs-saving-tips/sample-moving-costs. All accessed June 18, 2018.
HOUSING PURCHASE	
Closing costs are assumed to be .973% of the loan amount (the average in Colorado for $200,000 loan in June 2017). Closing costs include lender fees, third-party fees for services, and title insurance. Moving costs are based on a 3-bedroom home.	Home Values: U.S. Census Bureau, "B25076: Lower Value Quartile (Dollars)," 2012-2016 5-Year American Community Survey, http://factfinder.census.gov/ (accessed August 20, 2018). Closing Costs: Bankrate.com, "Colorado Closing Costs," Mortgage, Closing Costs, United States, Colorado Closing Costs, https://www.bankrate.com/finance/mortgages/closing-costs/colorado.aspx (accessed February 21, 2018). Moving Costs: See above.
RETIREMENT	
All numbers shown for two adults are the total for both adults in the family. Life expectancy is assumed to be 22.1 at 67 for the 25 year old, 21.4 at 67 for the 40 year old, and 20.6 at 67 for the 55 year old. **Cost of living is calculated using the 2018 Colorado Self-Sufficiency Standard adjusted for retirement. Retirement adjustments include: original Medicare for health costs, one car for two adults and an adjusted mileage rate, food costs weighted by age (over 65) and average life expectancy of males and females. Expenses are assumed to inflate at a rate of 3%.** **Savings assume a 6% return on investment.**	Life expectancy: U.S. Social Security Administration, Office of the Chief Actuary, "Retirement & Survivors Benefits: Life Expectancy Calculator," http://www.socialsecurity.gov/OACT/population/longevity.html (accessed August 18, 2018). Retirement Age: Social Security Administration, "Full Retirement Age," http://www.ssa.gov/retire2/retirechart.htm (accessed August 18, 2018). Social Security Benefit: U.S. Social Security Administration, "Calculators: Online Calculator," http://www.ssa.gov/retire2/AnypiaApplet.html (accessedAugust 18, 2016). Cost of Living: The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Colorado 2018, Adjusted for Retirement; Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, "Medicare 2016 costs at a glance," https://www.medicare.gov/your-medicare-costs/costs-at-a-glance/costs-at-glance.html; Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, "Medicare Plan Finder," https://www.medicare.gov/find-a-plan/questions/home.aspx (accessed August 16, 2016); AARP, "Medicare Supplement Insurance Plans" https://www.aarpmedicareplans.com/health-plans/medicare-supplement-plans.html (accessed June 14, 2018); U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Center for Financing, Access, and Cost Trends, Medical Expenditure Panel Survey-Household Component Analytical Tool, "Total Amount Paid by Self/Family, all Types of Service, 2012" MEPSnetHC, http://www.meps.ahrq.gov/mepsweb/data_stats/MEPSnetHC.jsp (accessed June 14, 2018); U.S. Department of Transportation, 2009 National Household Transportation Survey, "Average Annual Vehicle Miles of Travel Per Driver," Online Analysis Tools, http://www.nhts.ornl.gov (accessed August 20, 2018). Social Security Benefit Inflation: U.S. Social Security Administration, Office of the Chief Actuary, "COLAs & AWI increases under the intermediate assumptions of the 2014 Trustees Report," http://www.socialsecurity.gov/OACT/TR/TRassum.html (accessed March 12, 2015).

TABLE A-2. List of Public 2-Year Institutions, CO 2018

Araphahoe Community College	Northeastern Junior College
Colorado Northwestern Community College - Rangely Campus	Otero Junior College
Colorado Northwestern Community College - Craig Campus	Pikes Peak Community College
Community College of Aurora	Pueblo Community College - Pueblo Campus
Community College of Denver	Pueblo Community College - Fremont Campus
Front Range Community College - Boulder County Campus	Pueblo Community College -SCCC-West (Mancos)
Front Range Community College - Larimer Campus	Pueblo Community College -SCCC-East (Durango)
Front Range Community College - Westminster Campus	Red Rocks Community College
Front Range Community College - Brighton Center	Trinidad State Junior College-Trinidad Campus
Lamar Community College	Trinidad State Junior College - Valley Campus
Morgan Community College	

TABLE A-3. Estimated Cost to Relocate to Alternative Rental Housing, CO 2018
By County and Bedroom Size

COUNTY	BEDROOM SIZE				COUNTY	BEDROOM SIZE			
	1	2	3	4		1	2	3	4
Adams	$2,541	$3,214	$4,755	$6,148	Kit Carson	$1,481	$1,911	$2,666	$4,130
Alamosa	$1,645	$2,029	$3,014	$3,992	Lake	$1,915	$2,349	$3,336	$4,482
Arapahoe	$2,664	$3,368	$4,971	$6,396	La Plata	$2,121	$2,603	$3,926	$5,040
Archuleta	$1,815	$2,343	$3,376	$4,506	Larimer	$2,209	$2,729	$4,110	$5,570
Baca	$1,613	$1,911	$2,920	$4,130	Las Animas	$1,669	$2,207	$3,216	$4,160
Bent	$1,515	$1,997	$2,816	$3,690	Lincoln	$1,525	$2,015	$2,866	$3,970
Boulder	$2,789	$3,439	$5,004	$6,374	Logan	$1,639	$2,057	$3,132	$4,362
Broomfield	$2,704	$3,419	$5,050	$6,488	Mesa	$1,669	$2,205	$3,348	$4,648
Chaffee	$1,695	$2,241	$3,232	$4,022	Mineral	$1,773	$2,289	$3,346	$4,390
Cheyenne	$1,449	$1,913	$2,642	$3,604	Moffat	$1,767	$2,135	$3,234	$4,466
Clear Creek	$2,439	$3,083	$4,608	$5,969	Montezuma	$1,619	$1,969	$3,004	$4,232
Conejos	$1,607	$1,911	$2,774	$3,572	Montrose	$1,723	$2,277	$3,330	$4,120
Costilla	$1,551	$2,003	$2,756	$3,952	Morgan	$1,547	$2,043	$2,938	$3,838
Crowley	$1,657	$1,961	$2,702	$3,690	Otero	$1,581	$2,089	$2,862	$3,816
Custer	$1,503	$1,941	$2,964	$4,182	Ouray	$2,167	$2,803	$3,984	$5,178
Delta	$1,769	$2,339	$3,340	$4,272	Park	$2,787	$3,529	$5,207	$6,659
Denver	$2,540	$3,209	$4,748	$6,138	Phillips	$1,483	$1,959	$2,700	$3,884
Dolores	$1,613	$1,911	$2,920	$3,810	Pitkin	$3,011	$3,991	$5,606	$6,406
Douglas	$3,144	$3,970	$5,834	$7,398	Prowers	$1,573	$1,911	$2,774	$3,818
Eagle	$2,723	$3,429	$4,542	$6,092	Pueblo	$1,557	$2,057	$3,072	$4,162
Elbert	$2,586	$3,266	$4,839	$6,246	Rio Blanco	$1,649	$2,129	$3,106	$3,896
El Paso	$1,985	$2,557	$3,860	$5,268	Rio Grande	$1,613	$1,911	$2,916	$3,886
Fremont	$1,613	$2,069	$3,088	$4,174	Routt	$2,381	$2,989	$4,488	$5,462
Garfield	$2,109	$2,741	$4,040	$5,542	Saguache	$1,447	$1,911	$2,920	$3,810
Gilpin	$2,617	$3,308	$4,882	$6,290	San Juan	$2,319	$2,993	$3,996	$5,468
Grand	$1,951	$2,581	$3,692	$4,890	San Miguel	$2,589	$3,429	$4,634	$5,986
Gunnison	$1,867	$2,319	$3,388	$4,838	Sedgwick	$1,447	$1,911	$2,654	$3,688
Hinsdale	$1,825	$2,155	$3,162	$4,184	Summit	$2,533	$3,355	$4,450	$5,540
Huerfano	$1,545	$2,001	$2,906	$3,696	Teller	$2,005	$2,605	$3,898	$5,352
Jackson	$1,729	$2,233	$3,044	$4,304	Washington	$1,613	$1,911	$2,698	$3,810
Jefferson	$2,596	$3,283	$4,855	$6,257	Weld	$1,887	$2,391	$3,618	$4,974
Kiowa	$1,667	$2,151	$2,940	$3,899	Yuma	$1,447	$1,911	$2,920	$3,919

TABLE A-4. Estimated Savings Required to Purchase a Starter Home, CO 2018
By Percentage of Down Payment and County

COUNTY	STARTER HOME VALUE (25th Percentile)	Total Savings Needed (Includes Down Payment, Closing Costs, & Moving Costs)		COUNTY	STARTER HOME VALUE (25th Percentile)	Total Savings Needed (Includes Down Payment, Closing Costs, & Moving Costs)	
		10%	20%			10%	20%
Adams	$179,969	$20,465	$38,287	Kit Carson	$85,787	$10,222	$18,717
Alamosa	$108,442	$12,686	$23,424	Lake	$123,621	$14,337	$26,578
Arapahoe	$214,353	$24,204	$45,431	La Plata	$258,627	$29,019	$54,631
Archuleta	$188,134	$21,353	$39,983	Larimer	$236,433	$26,606	$50,019
Baca	$41,054	$5,357	$9,422	Las Animas	$100,507	$11,823	$21,776
Bent	$53,013	$6,658	$11,907	Lincoln	$70,608	$8,571	$15,563
Boulder	$296,461	$33,134	$62,492	Logan	$95,447	$11,273	$20,724
Broomfield	$270,357	$30,295	$57,068	Mesa	$163,410	$18,664	$34,846
Chaffee	$227,233	$25,605	$48,107	Mineral	$204,579	$23,141	$43,400
Cheyenne	$54,853	$6,858	$12,290	Moffat	$114,651	$13,361	$24,715
Clear Creek	$227,118	$25,593	$48,083	Montezuma	$131,211	$15,162	$28,156
Conejos	$81,877	$9,797	$17,905	Montrose	$148,920	$17,088	$31,835
Costilla	$85,327	$10,172	$18,622	Morgan	$100,047	$11,773	$21,680
Crowley	$54,048	$6,770	$12,122	Otero	$70,953	$8,609	$15,635
Custer	$183,534	$20,853	$39,027	Ouray	$331,995	$36,999	$69,875
Delta	$142,481	$16,388	$30,497	Park	$213,548	$24,117	$45,264
Denver	$215,273	$24,304	$45,622	Phillips	$94,297	$11,147	$20,485
Dolores	$86,707	$10,322	$18,908	Pitkin	$268,977	$30,145	$56,781
Douglas	$326,590	$36,411	$68,752	Prowers	$55,428	$6,920	$12,409
Eagle	$309,570	$34,560	$65,216	Pueblo	$106,717	$12,498	$23,066
Elbert	$282,316	$31,596	$59,553	Rio Blanco	$146,275	$16,800	$31,286
El Paso	$187,329	$21,265	$39,816	Rio Grande	$89,927	$10,672	$19,577
Fremont	$118,906	$13,824	$25,599	Routt	$271,737	$30,445	$57,355
Garfield	$222,748	$25,117	$47,175	Saguache	$93,377	$11,047	$20,294
Gilpin	$228,728	$25,768	$48,418	San Juan	$173,300	$19,740	$36,901
Grand	$226,083	$25,480	$47,868	San Miguel	$317,160	$35,385	$66,793
Gunnison	$234,133	$26,356	$49,541	Sedgwick	$62,328	$7,671	$13,843
Hinsdale	$221,598	$24,992	$46,937	Summit	$352,694	$39,250	$74,176
Huerfano	$91,537	$10,847	$19,912	Teller	$201,704	$22,829	$42,803
Jackson	$105,107	$12,323	$22,731	Washington	$89,007	$10,572	$19,386
Jefferson	$255,522	$28,682	$53,985	Weld	$177,899	$20,240	$37,857
Kiowa	$60,028	$7,420	$13,365	Yuma	$100,392	$11,810	$21,752

TABLE A-5. Estimated Monthly Retirement Savings, CO 2018
By Age at Which Savings Begin, and County, for One and Two Adults

COUNTY	25 YEARS OLD		40 YEARS OLD		55 YEARS OLD	
	1 Adult	2 Adults	1 Adult	2 Adults	1 Adult	2 Adults
COLORADO AVERAGE	**$275**	**$276**	**$445**	**$411**	**$965**	**$795**
Adams	$333	$304	$542	$453	$1,186	$874
Alamosa	$247	$260	$398	$388	$859	$752
Arapahoe	$348	$316	$567	$470	$1,242	$910
Archuleta	$260	$263	$419	$389	$906	$747
Baca	$237	$245	$381	$363	$821	$697
Bent	$231	$246	$371	$366	$798	$707
Boulder	$364	$333	$593	$497	$1,302	$968
Broomfield	$357	$330	$581	$493	$1,275	$961
Chaffee	$253	$264	$407	$394	$880	$764
Cheyenne	$224	$242	$359	$359	$772	$693
Clear Creek	$326	$305	$529	$454	$1,155	$880
Conejos	$244	$260	$393	$387	$849	$752
Costilla	$239	$257	$384	$383	$828	$744
Crowley	$248	$259	$398	$386	$861	$748
Custer	$230	$245	$369	$365	$793	$704
Delta	$255	$259	$410	$383	$885	$733
Denver	$317	$323	$514	$487	$1,123	$961
Dolores	$246	$262	$395	$389	$851	$751
Douglas	$395	$341	$644	$507	$1,417	$979
Eagle	$314	$294	$510	$435	$1,111	$836
Elbert	$340	$312	$552	$466	$1,209	$903
El Paso	$282	$280	$457	$419	$995	$815
Fremont	$244	$258	$392	$384	$847	$747
Garfield	$291	$283	$471	$419	$1,022	$805
Gilpin	$343	$315	$558	$470	$1,223	$911
Grand	$276	$274	$445	$407	$964	$782
Gunnison	$267	$269	$430	$399	$931	$768
Hinsdale	$278	$295	$451	$447	$983	$889
Huerfano	$235	$250	$377	$371	$812	$717
Jackson	$259	$271	$417	$404	$901	$782
Jefferson	$343	$315	$557	$470	$1,220	$913
Kiowa	$245	$253	$394	$375	$850	$723
Lake	$277	$280	$446	$417	$966	$805

TABLE A-5. Estimated Monthly Retirement Savings, CO 2018
By Age at Which Savings Begin, and County, for One and Two Adults

COUNTY	25 YEARS OLD		40 YEARS OLD		55 YEARS OLD	
	1 Adult	2 Adults	1 Adult	2 Adults	1 Adult	2 Adults
La Plata	$299	$295	$483	$439	$1,050	$849
Larimer	$304	$294	$492	$438	$1,074	$852
Las Animas	$247	$255	$398	$380	$859	$733
Lincoln	$239	$259	$385	$386	$830	$751
Logan	$244	$254	$392	$377	$847	$728
Mesa	$247	$257	$397	$383	$857	$739
Mineral	$265	$277	$427	$414	$926	$806
Moffat	$258	$264	$415	$391	$897	$751
Montezuma	$241	$250	$387	$371	$832	$710
Montrose	$254	$263	$409	$390	$882	$751
Morgan	$234	$247	$376	$367	$809	$708
Otero	$236	$249	$380	$369	$819	$712
Ouray	$296	$285	$479	$421	$1,040	$809
Park	$357	$318	$580	$473	$1,272	$911
Phillips	$230	$248	$368	$369	$793	$714
Pitkin	$356	$335	$578	$499	$1,262	$967
Prowers	$236	$248	$378	$368	$815	$708
Pueblo	$239	$252	$384	$376	$830	$729
Rio Blanco	$247	$258	$396	$383	$853	$737
Rio Grande	$246	$261	$395	$390	$853	$757
Routt	$326	$312	$529	$465	$1,152	$899
Saguache	$230	$253	$369	$378	$794	$735
San Juan	$313	$297	$508	$441	$1,105	$847
San Miguel	$302	$288	$488	$425	$1,061	$813
Sedgwick	$226	$246	$362	$366	$779	$707
Summit	$346	$331	$563	$496	$1,231	$969
Teller	$286	$287	$464	$431	$1,010	$841
Washington	$244	$258	$392	$384	$847	$745
Weld	$274	$277	$443	$413	$962	$803
Yuma	$224	$243	$360	$360	$773	$696

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Diana M. Pearce, PhD is on faculty at the School of Social Work, University of Washington in Seattle, Washington, and is Director of the Center for Women's Welfare. Recognized for coining the phrase "the feminization of poverty," Dr. Pearce founded and directed the Women and Poverty Project at Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW). She has written and spoken widely on women's poverty and economic inequality, including testimony before Congress and the President's Working Group on Welfare Reform. While at WOW, Dr. Pearce conceived and developed the methodology for the Self-Sufficiency Standard and first published results in 1996 for Iowa and California. Her areas of expertise include low-wage and part-time employment, unemployment insurance, homelessness, and welfare reform as they impact women. Dr. Pearce has helped found and lead several coalitions, including the Women, Work and Welfare Coalition and the Women and Job Training Coalition. She received her PhD degree in Sociology and Social Work from the University of Michigan.

THE CENTER FOR WOMEN'S WELFARE

The Center for Women's Welfare at the University of Washington School of Social Work is devoted to furthering the goal of economic justice for women and their families. The main work of the Center focuses on the development of the Self-Sufficiency Standard and related measures, calculations, and analysis. Under the direction of Dr. Diana Pearce, the Center partners with a range of government, non-profit, women's, children's, and community-based groups to:

- research and evaluate public policy related to income adequacy;
- create tools, including online calculators, to assess and establish income adequacy and benefit eligibility;
- develop programs and policies that strengthen public investment in low-income women and families.

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