

Economy Tracker™

Northeastern Pennsylvania’s Social Service Rate

In January 2009, 11.1 % of the population in Lackawanna County was eligible for food stamps. By December 2009, the number jumped to 13.0%. Luzerne County also saw an increase during this time period – increasing from 12.4% to 14.5% in December 2009. Both counties showed a higher percentage than the state average for each time period – 10.5% in January 2009 and 12.3% in December 2009 for the state wide totals. There were also increases in the number of households and persons that were counted in the non-public assistance category (a household which contains at least one member who does not receive Assistance or SSI Benefits). There were also increases in those counted for the Public Assistance households or persons category.

Food Stamp Eligible Households by Persons and County							
Jan-09							
	Public Assistance		Non-Public Assistance		Total		
County	Households	Persons	Households	Persons	Households	Persons	% of Pop.
<b>STATE TOTAL</b>	<b>97,993</b>	<b>210,206</b>	<b>515,459</b>	<b>1,089,537</b>	<b>613,452</b>	<b>1,299,743</b>	<b>10.50%</b>
Lackawanna	1,575	3,161	9,761	20,068	11,336	23,229	11.10%
Luzerne	1,710	3,308	16,544	35,374	18,254	38,682	12.40%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare

Food Stamp Eligible Households by Persons and County							
Dec-09							
	Public Assistance		Non-Public Assistance		Total		
County	Households	Persons	Households	Persons	Households	Persons	% of Pop.
<b>STATE TOTAL</b>	<b>101,626</b>	<b>217,730</b>	<b>616,673</b>	<b>1,311,314</b>	<b>718,299</b>	<b>1,529,044</b>	<b>12.30%</b>
Lackawanna	1,571	3,226	11,597	24,071	13,168	27,297	13.00%
Luzerne	1.662	3.227	19.598	42.056	21,260	45.283	14.50%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare

The Number of persons receiving cash assistance increased statewide between January 2009 and December 2009 and Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties both saw a slight increase in their numbers.

Number of Persons Receiving Cash Assistance by County					
Jan-09			Dec-09		
County	Percent of Population	Total	County	Percent of Population	Total
<b>STATE TOTAL</b>	<b>2.10%</b>	<b>259,982</b>	<b>STATE TOTAL</b>	<b>2.30%</b>	<b>282,439</b>
Lackawanna	1.80%	3,745	Lackawanna	1.90%	4,070
Luzerne	1.40%	4,464	Luzerne	1.50%	4,728

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare

The number of persons eligible for medical assistance increased statewide by almost 1% from January 2009 to December 2009. Both Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties saw a higher percentage than the state total. Lackawanna County’s number grew from 17.3% to 18.0% while Luzerne only saw a .5% increase – from 18.3% to 18.8%. The number of people also receiving a monetary payment such as Supplementary Security Income (SSI), Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), and General Assistance (GA) increased overall.

Number of Persons Eligible for Medical Assistance by County: January 2009							
County	Percent of Population	Total Eligible Population	ALSO RECEIVE MONEY PAYMENT			Cat. Needy	Med. Needy
			SSI	TANF	GA		
<b>STATE TOTAL</b>	<b>16.3%</b>	<b>2,022,583</b>	<b>350,166</b>	<b>199,407</b>	<b>60,237</b>	<b>1,291,348</b>	<b>121,147</b>
Lackawanna	17.3%	36,138	6,572	2,730	992	23,365	2,456
Luzerne	18.3%	57,123	9,582	3,283	1,166	38,818	4,259

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare

Number of Persons Eligible for Medical Assistance by County: December 2009							
County	Percent of Population	Total Eligible Population	ALSO RECEIVE MONEY PAYMENT			Cat. Needy	Med. Needy
			SSI	TANF	GA		
<b>STATE TOTAL</b>	<b>17.1%</b>	<b>2,123,174</b>	<b>355,978</b>	<b>217,820</b>	<b>64,307</b>	<b>1,354,794</b>	<b>129,963</b>
Lackawanna	18.0%	37,680	6,698	3,019	1,030	24,346	2,566
Luzerne	18.8%	58,787	9,856	3,496	1,220	39,755	4,448

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare

In February 2010, the unemployment fluctuated for the regions examined. Lackawanna saw the rate decrease by .1% from January to February. Luzerne County experience a different trend for the months; increasing by .2% from January to February 2010. During the two first months of 2010 Lackawanna County experienced a lower unemployment rate than the state and Luzerne County experienced a higher unemployment than the state. Lackawanna had a rate of 9.7% and Luzerne had a rate of 11.1%, the state total was at 9.8%. Compared to the U.S. rate the results were the same, Lackawanna was under and Luzerne had a higher rate of unemployment. This may mean that Lackawanna has fewer opportunities than other counties or states and Luzerne County is seeing the beginning stages of recovery before other counties and states.

<b>Monthly (January) Not Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment Data for 2010</b>				
<b>Area Name</b>	<b>Civilian Labor Force</b>	<b>Employment</b>	<b>Unemployment</b>	<b>Unemployment Rate (%)</b>
Lackawanna County	108,600	98,000	10,600	9.8%
Luzerne County	163,200	145,400	17,900	10.9%
Pennsylvania	6,415,000	5,806,000	609,000	9.5%
United States	152,957,000	136,809,000	16,147,000	10.6%
Source: Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry				

<b>Monthly (February) Not Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment Data for 2010</b>				
<b>Area Name</b>	<b>Civilian Labor Force</b>	<b>Employment</b>	<b>Unemployment</b>	<b>Unemployment Rate (%)</b>
Lackawanna County	107,900	97,400	10,500	9.7%
Luzerne County	162,600	144,500	18,100	11.1%
Pennsylvania	6,409,000	5,782,000	627,000	9.8%
United States	153,194,000	137,203,000	15,991,000	10.4%
Source: Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry				