

Johnston County

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Introduction

In 2019, the population of Johnston County was estimated at 196,870. This is a 22.53% increase from 160,675 in 2010. Most of this population growth is concentrated in the northwest region of the county. This area borders Wake County and is within the Raleigh metropolitan area. Johnston County has a higher median household income and lower rates of family and child poverty compared to the rest of the state and nation. Poverty rates are higher and median incomes are lower in the town of Smithfield, located in the center of the county. The population of Johnston County has a slightly lower rate of bachelor's degree attainment and a slightly higher high school dropout rate compared to the state and national averages. The majority of public schools in Johnston County received a 'C' or lower ranking from the NC Department of Public Instruction. Access to healthcare is a major barrier. Nearly 13% of residents are uninsured, and Johnston County has an extremely low ratio of healthcare providers to population size. While most households in Johnston County have access to a computer, access to broadband and high-speed internet remains a substantial barrier. Internet access is especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Overview of Barriers Johnston County, NC	Black Households	Hispanic/LatinX Households	White Households
2019 Median Household Income	\$48,988	\$39,730	\$62,041
2019 Poverty Rate	17.7%	30.6%	10.8%
% of Population with Bachelor's Degree	20%	10%	24%
% Population: Less Than High School	15%	42%	12%

Summary of Barriers

Income, Poverty & Education

	Johnston County	North Carolina	United States
Median Household Income (2019)	\$59,865	\$54,602	\$62,843
Family Poverty Rate (2019)	9.2%	10.6%	9.5%
Child Poverty Rate (2019)	19.3%	21.2%	18.5%

Education

Out of the 45 public schools in Johnston County, 36 received a 'C' or less on their NCDPI report card. 18 schools did not meet their 2019-2020 academic growth targets. 14 schools were classified as 'low-performing' in 2020.

Community Health

	Johnston County	North Carolina	United States
Rate of Primary Care Providers per 100,000	30.2	70.6	75.5
Rate of Mental Health Care Providers per 100,000	86.2	215.5	214.3

Johnston County is in the worst quartile of NC counties for preventable hospital stays. The measure of preventable hospitalizations in a community indicates the quality and accessibility of primary health care services available. If the quality of care in the outpatient setting is poor, then people may be more likely to overuse the hospital as a main source of care and be hospitalized unnecessarily.

Barriers by Race & Ethnicity

Overview

Figure 1: Median Income by Race

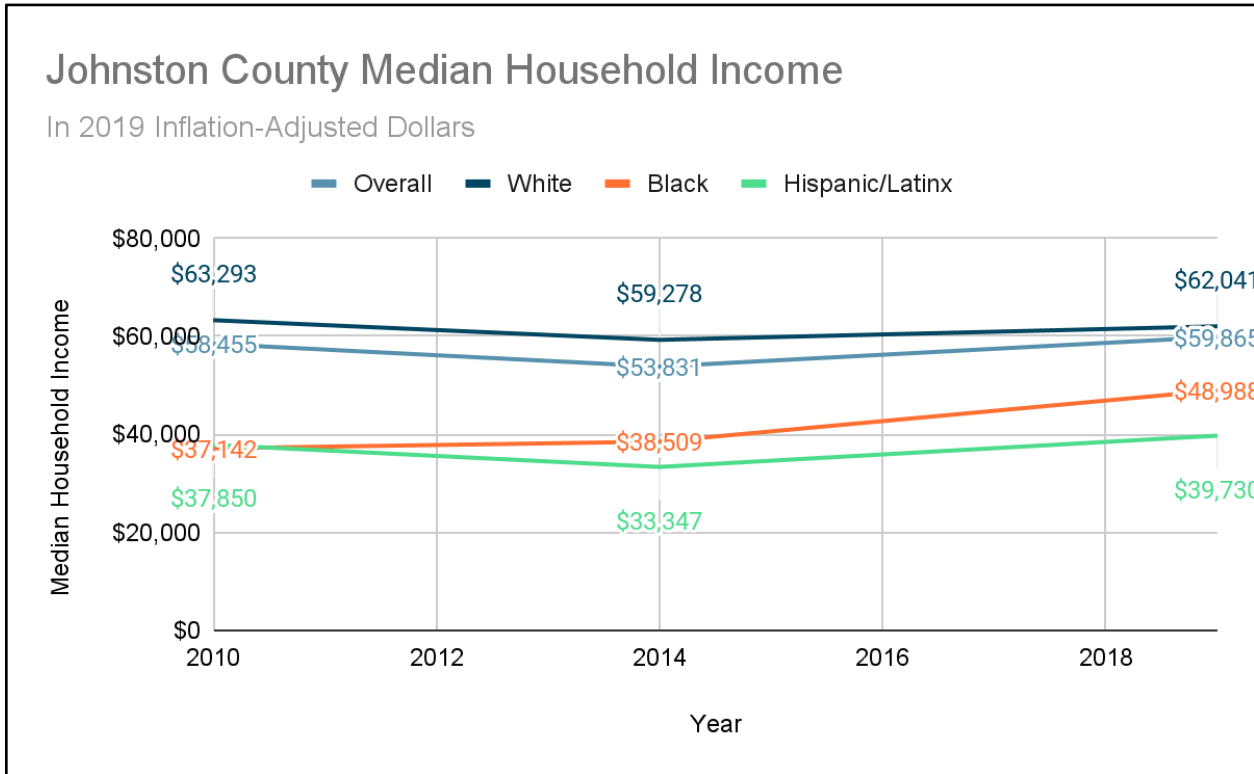


Figure 2: Poverty Rate by Race

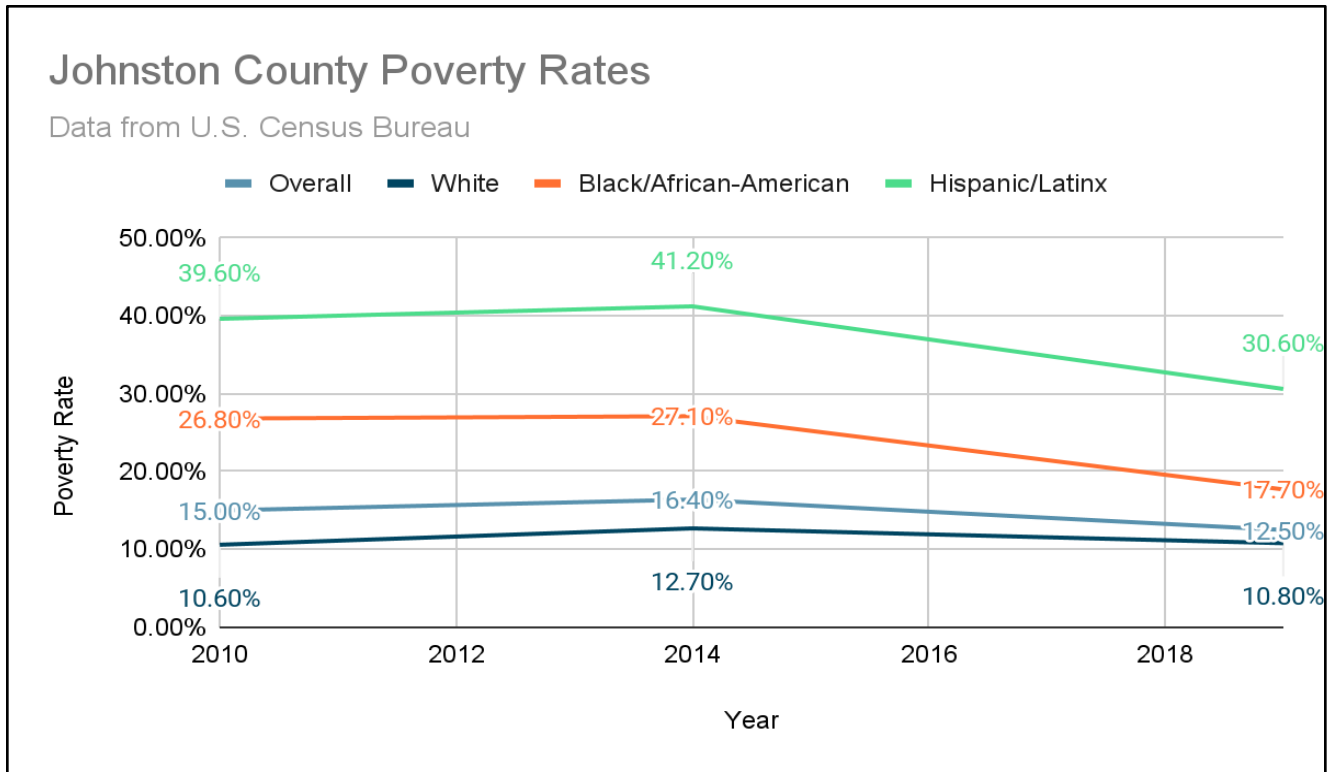
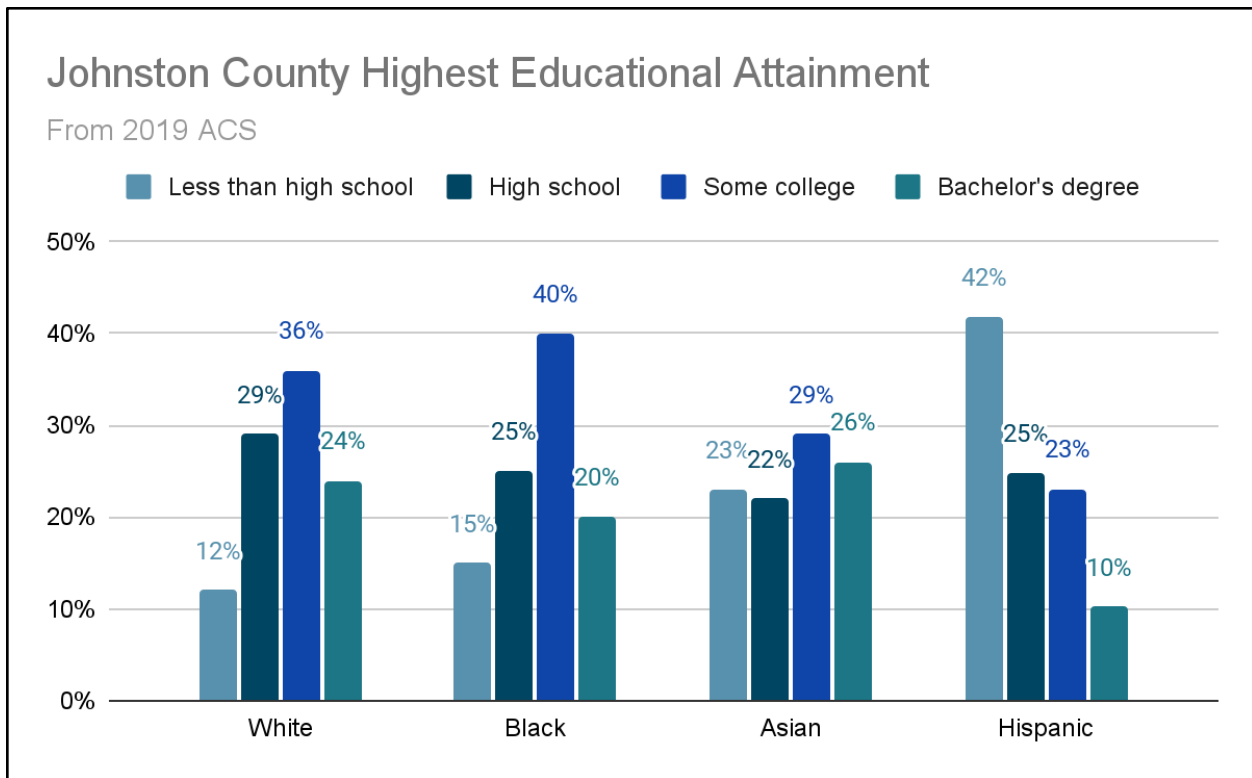


Figure 3: Educational Attainment by Race¹



Black & African American

- The median income for Black households was \$48,988 in 2019, while the overall median income for Johnston County was \$59,865.
 - Median income for Black households is consistently \$10-15,000 lower than the median income for white households (see *Figure 1*).
- 17.7% of Black households lived in poverty in 2019, compared to 12.5% of all Johnston County residents.
 - The poverty rate for Black households is consistently 5-10% higher than the poverty rate for white households (see *Figure 2*).
- Black households have lower rates of higher educational attainment.
 - 15% of Black residents over age 25 did not graduate high school.

¹TownCharts. (2021). *Johnston County, North Carolina Education Data*. <https://www.towncharts.com/North-Carolina/Education/Johnston-County-NC-Education-data.html>

- 20% of Black residents over age 25 have a bachelor's degree, which is lower than the rate of bachelor's degree attainment for white and Asian residents.

Hispanic & Latinx

- The median income for Hispanic households was \$39,730 in 2019. The overall median income in Johnston County was \$59,865.
 - The median income for Hispanic households is consistently \$20-25,000 lower than the median income for white households (see *Figure 1*)
- Hispanic and Latinx households have the highest poverty rates in Johnston County.
 - In 2019, 30.60% of Hispanic households lived in poverty.
 - The poverty rate for Hispanic and Latinx households is consistently 20-30% higher than the poverty rate for white households (see *Figure 2*).
- Hispanic and Latinx households have the lowest rates of higher educational attainment in Johnston County.
 - 42% of Hispanic or Latinx residents above age 25 did not complete high school.
 - 10% of Hispanic or Latinx residents over age 25 have a bachelor's degree.

Social & Community Context

Demographics

Population

- There are 196,870 people living in Johnston County, which covers 792 sq. miles with a population density of 249 people per sq. mile.²
- The population is 48% urban and 52% rural.³
- There are 13,569 veterans living in Johnston County. 36% of veterans (4,885) are over the age of 65.⁴
 - 25.2% of veterans (3,413) served in the Vietnam War.
 - 19.2% (2,608) served in the Gulf War between 1990 and 2001.
- 9.7% of the population under age 65 has a disability.

Age⁵

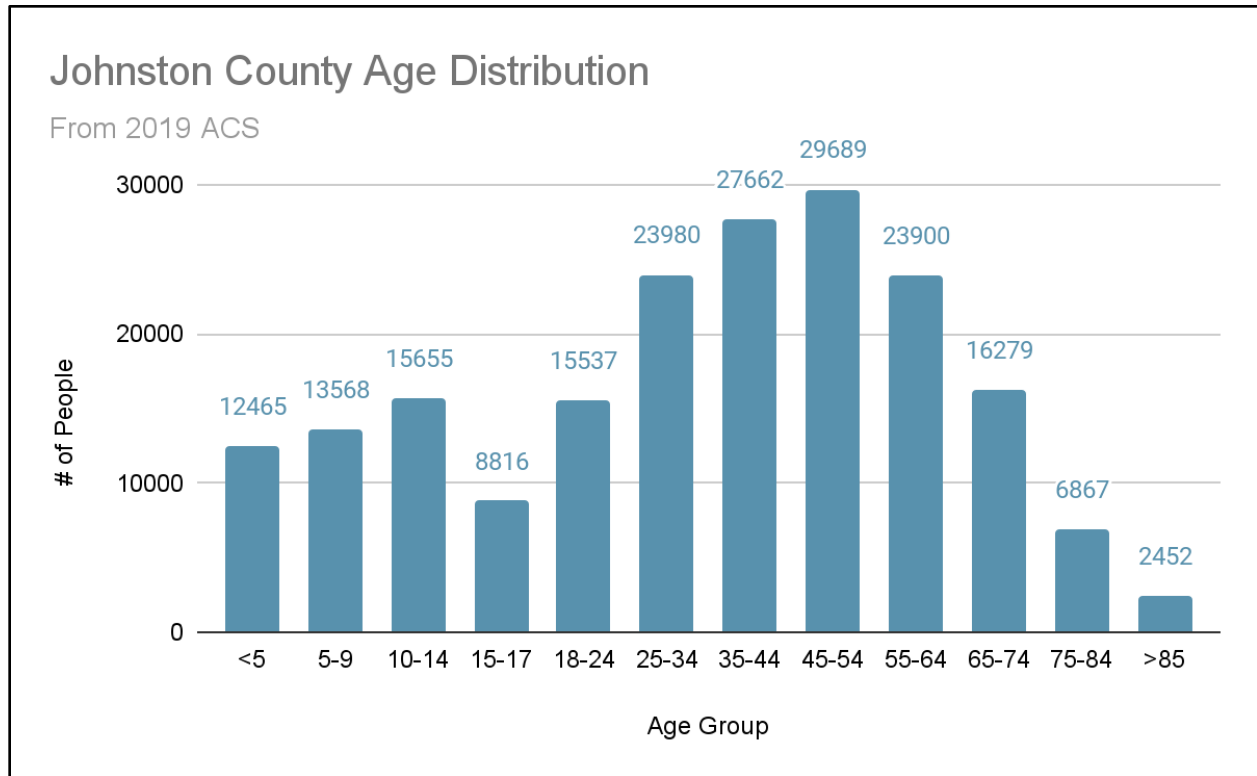
Figure 4: Johnston County Age Distribution

²SE:A00002. Population Density (Per Sq. Mile). (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved July 9, 2021, from https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12858928

³AccessNC. (2020). *County Profile Johnston County (NC)* [Fact sheet]. North Carolina Department of Commerce, Labor & Economic Analysis Division. <https://www.researchtriangle.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Johnston-County-Report.pdf>

⁴SE:A16002. Veteran Status for the Civilian Population. (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved July 9, 2021, from https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12858928

⁵SE:A01001. Age. (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved July 9, 2021, from https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12858928



Race & Ethnicity

- Johnston County is 77.2% white, 16.0% Black or African American, and 13.6% Hispanic or Latinx.^{6 7}

Immigration⁸

- As of 2018, 7.68% of Johnston County, NC residents (14.7k people) were born outside of the United States, which is lower than the national average of 13.7%.
 - In 2017, the percentage of foreign-born citizens in Johnston County, NC was 7.65%, meaning that the rate has been increasing.

⁶SE:A03001. Race. (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved July 9, 2021, from https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12858928

⁷SE:A04001. Hispanic or Latino by Race. (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved July 9, 2021, from https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12858928

⁸Data USA. (2021). *Johnston County, NC*. Datawheel. <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/johnston-county-nc>

Single-Parent Households⁹

- 27.4% of children live in a single-parent household.
- 12.4% of households are single-parent households.
- 9.6% of households are headed by a single mother.

Child Care

- As of May 2021, 9,163 children under age 6 live in a household where the sole parent or both parents work. This number represents 60% of all children under age 6.¹⁰
 - 6% of children participated in the state subsidized child care program in April 2021 to help offset the high cost of child care.
- 1,300 children from 0-3 years of age and 2,132 children from 3-5 years of age are currently enrolled in a licensed early care and education center in Johnston County.¹¹
 - Of these children under three years of age, 56% are in 4- and 5-star centers.
 - Of these children three to five years of age, 69% are in 4 or 5-star centers.
- In February 2021, 1,160 infants and toddlers in Johnston County were enrolled in child care centers. This number compares to 1,530 enrolled in child care centers prior to the pandemic.¹²

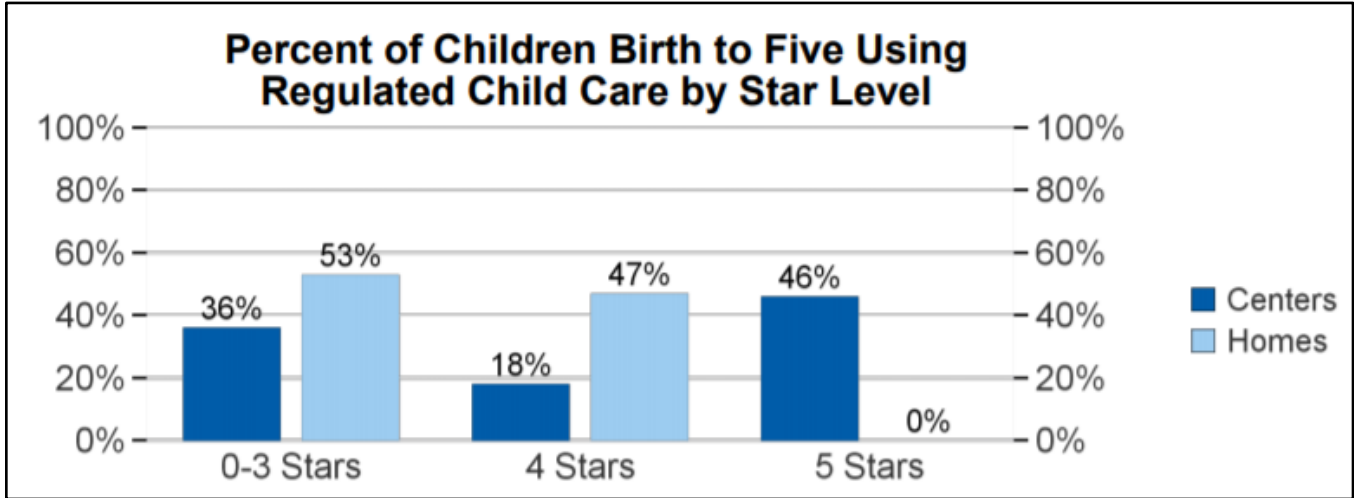
⁹SE:A10008. Households by Household Type. (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved July 9, 2021, from https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12858928

¹⁰Child Care Services Association. (2021). *Young Children and their Families in Johnston County* [Fact sheet]. https://www.childcareservices.org/research/nc-ece-data-repo/search/?repoSearch=§ion_id%5B%5D=4&rep_month=5&rep_year=2021&rep_month_end=&rep_year_end=&county_id%5B%5D=51

¹¹Child Care Services Association. (2021). *Early Care & Education Use in Johnston County* [Fact sheet]. https://www.childcareservices.org/research/nc-ece-data-repo/search/?repoSearch=§ion_id%5B%5D=3&rep_month=5&rep_year=2021&rep_month_end=&rep_year_end=&county_id%5B%5D=51

¹²Child Care Services Association. (2021). *Infant and Toddler Care in Johnston County* [Fact sheet]. https://www.childcareservices.org/research/nc-ece-data-repo/search/?repoSearch=§ion_id%5B%5D=7&rep_month=5&rep_year=2021&rep_month_end=&rep_year_end=&county_id%5B%5D=51

Figure 5: Johnston County Child Care



© 2021 Child Care Services Association. Figures derived using the most recent available data from Child Care Services Association, NC Division of Child Development and Early Education, NC Child Resource and Referral Council, NC Head Start State Collaboration Office.

Education¹³

Figure 6: Highest Educational Attainment as % of Population Over 25

	Johnston County	North Carolina	United States
Bachelor’s Degree	16.5%	20.0%	19.8%
High School (Includes Equivalency)	27.8%	25.7%	27%
Less than High School	13.1%	12.2%	12.0%

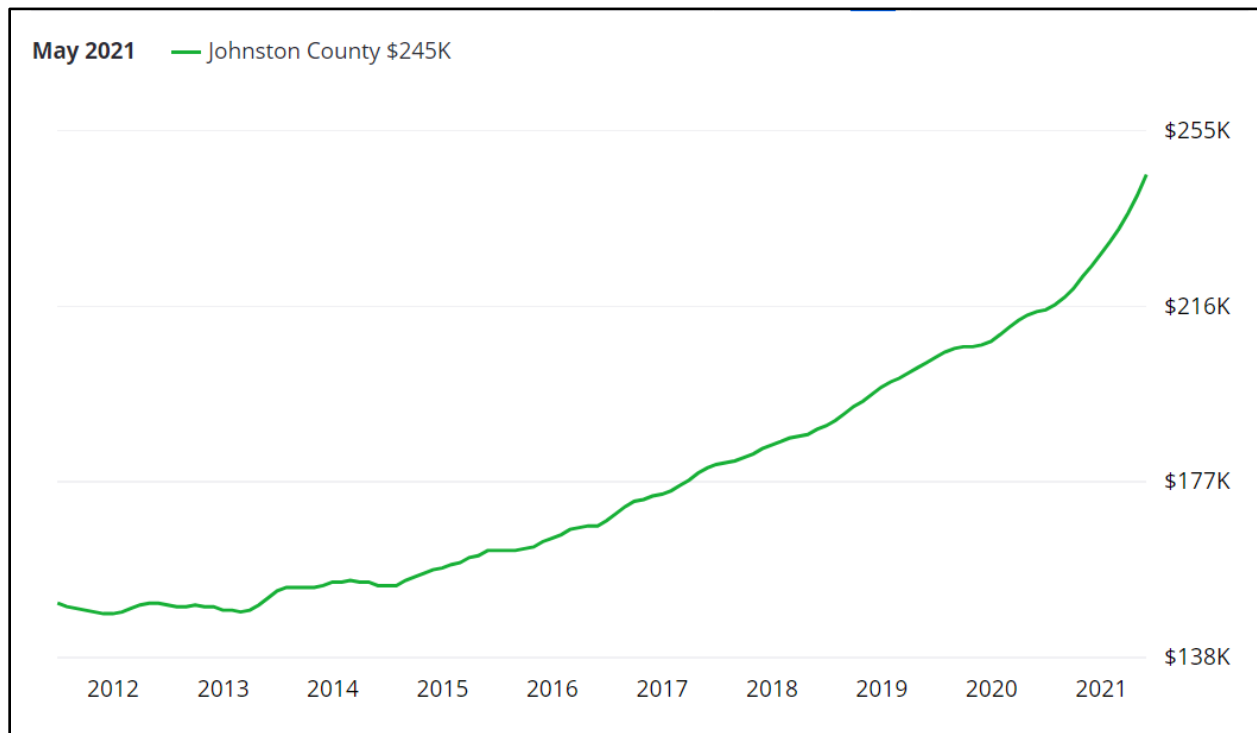
¹³SE:A12001. Educational Attainment for Population 25 Years and Over. (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved July 9, 2021, from https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12858928

Neighborhood & Built Environment

Housing

- Median gross rent was \$857 in 2019. This is only a slight increase of 1.51% from the median gross rent in 2014.
- 27% of residents spend 30-49% of their income on rent. 17.2% of residents spend more than 50% of their income on rent.¹⁴
- 19.6% of homeowners spend 30-49% of their income on homeownership expenses. 6.8% of homeowners spend more than 50% of their income on homeownership expenses.¹⁵

Figure 7: Median Home Value Johnston County



- The typical home value of homes in Johnston County is \$245,705. Johnston County home values have gone up 14.3% over the past year.¹⁶

¹⁴SE:B18002. Residents Paying More Than 30% or at least 50% of Income on Rent. (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved July 14, 2021, from https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12861317

¹⁵SE:B10040. Residents Paying More Than 30% or at least 50% of Income on Selected Home Ownership Expenses. (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved July 14, 2021, from https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12861317

¹⁶Zillow. (2021, June 30). *Johnston County Home Values*. <https://www.zillow.com/johnston-county-nc/home-values/>

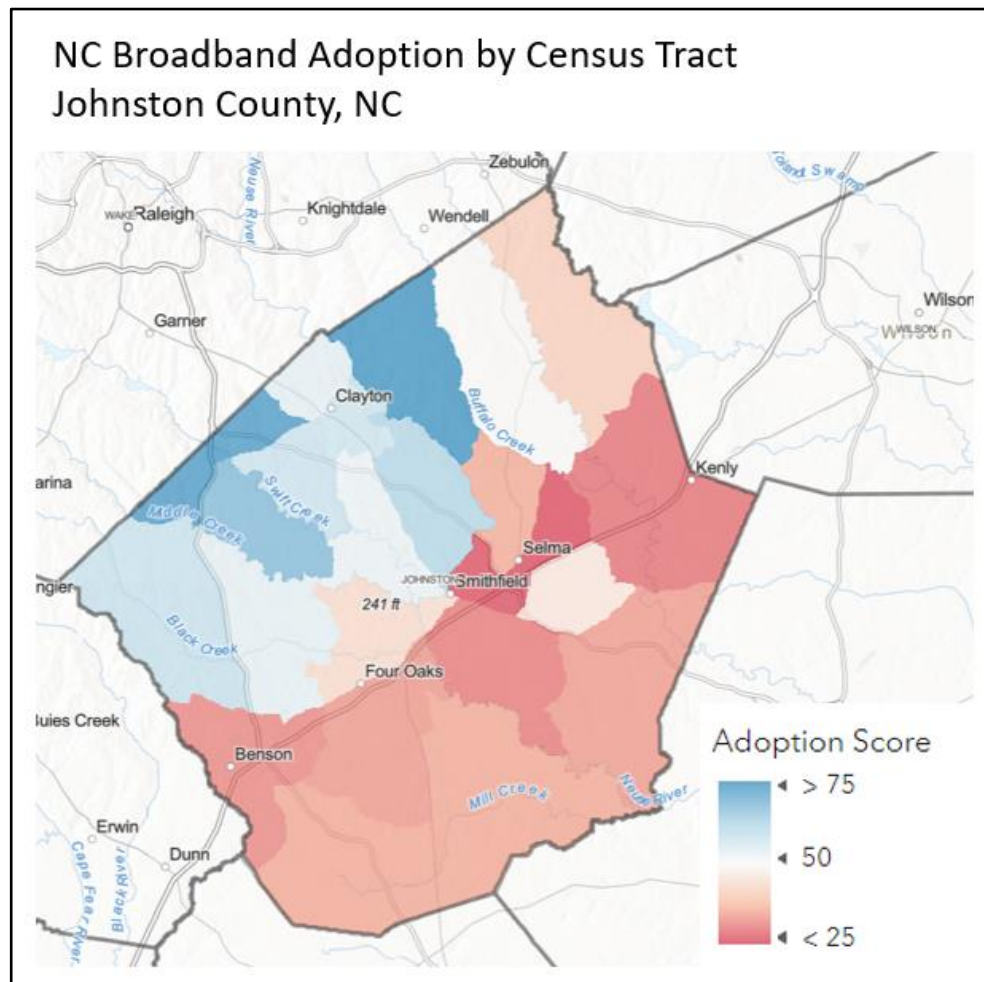
Transportation

1.16% of households (1,010) do not own a car. 15.4% own one car, and 42.2% own two.

Internet Access¹⁷

- 91% of households have a computer.
- 77.8% of households have a broadband internet subscription.

Figure 8: Johnston County Broadband Adoption¹⁸



¹⁷U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts. (2019). American Community Survey. U.S. Census Bureau.

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/johnstoncountynorthcarolina/AGE295219> (Accessed on July 12, 2021).

¹⁸Federal Communications Commission. (2019). *NC Broadband Availability Index* [Map].

https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/1ca29805a2454ffab6b9579702b99e59/page/page_0

Crime¹⁹

- The crime rate is 29.64 per 1,000 residents in a standard year, which is slightly lower than the national average.
- Johnston County is in the 35th percentile for safety, meaning 65% of counties are safer and 35% of counties are more dangerous.
- Crime is lower in the northern part of the county, and higher in the east. The property crime rate is 21.02 per 1,000 residents, while the violent crime rate is 2.603 per 1,000 residents.

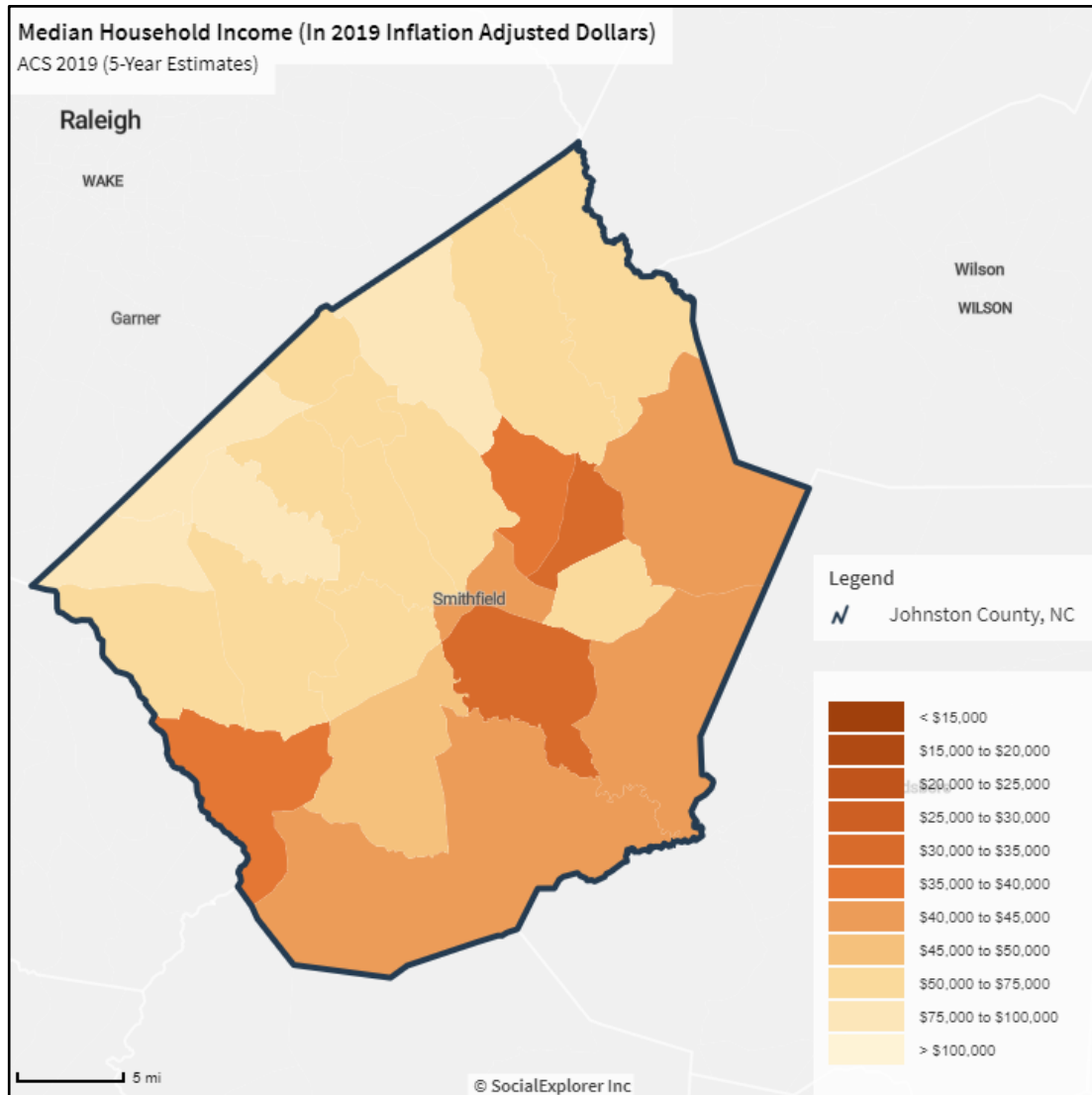
Economic Stability

Income

- The median household income in 2019 was \$59,865.

Figure 9: Median Household Income

¹⁹CrimeGrade. (2021). *Crime per Capita in Johnston County*. <https://crimegrade.org/safest-places-in-johnston-county-nc/>



Poverty

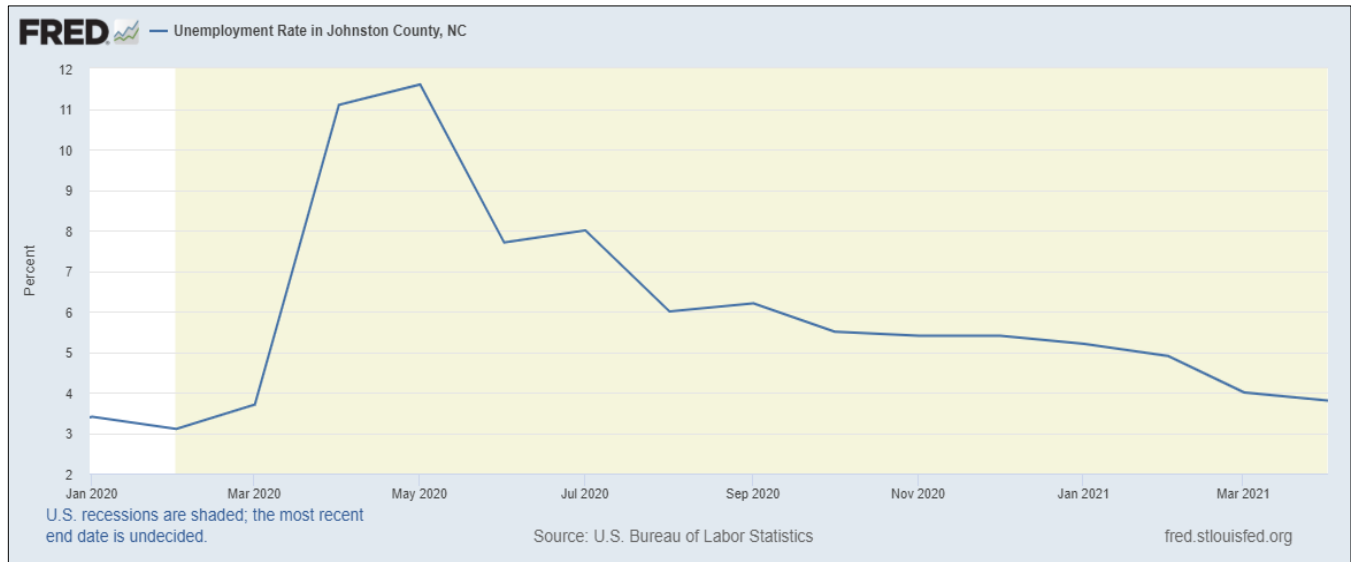
- 9.2% of families live in poverty.
- 5% of single-mother households live in poverty.
- 19.3% of children live in poverty.

Figure 10: Families in Poverty

- Women ages 35 to 44 are the largest demographic living in poverty in Nash County, followed by women ages 25 to 34 and then males ages 6 to 11. Women ages 35 to 44 make up 8.48% of the population living in poverty (Data USA, 2021).

Employment

Figure 12: Unemployment in Johnston County²⁰



- The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the unemployment rate for Johnston County in April 2021 was 3.8%.
- Unemployment in Johnston County is trending downwards since the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. In May 2020, unemployment peaked in Johnston County at 11.6% (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021).
- Before the COVID-19 pandemic, unemployment in Johnston County averaged between 3 and 4% (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021).

Food Security

HungerNet by Feeding America

²⁰U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Unemployment Rate in Johnston County, NC [NCJOHN0URN], retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis; <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/NCJOHN0URN>, June 15, 2021.

<https://feedingamerica.sharepoint.com/>

Identifying Racism in the Drivers of Food Insecurity by Feeding America Research

<https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/feeding.america.research/viz/IdentifyingRacismIntheDriversofFoodInsecurity/Introductionv2>

Education

Public Schools

Enrollment²¹

- During the 2019-2020 school year, there were 36,772 students enrolled across 45 schools in the Johnston County Schools district.
- 52.2% of students are white, 25.7% are Hispanic, and 15.8% are Black.
- Per-pupil funding in 2019 amounted to \$9,029, which is lower than the state average of \$9,938.

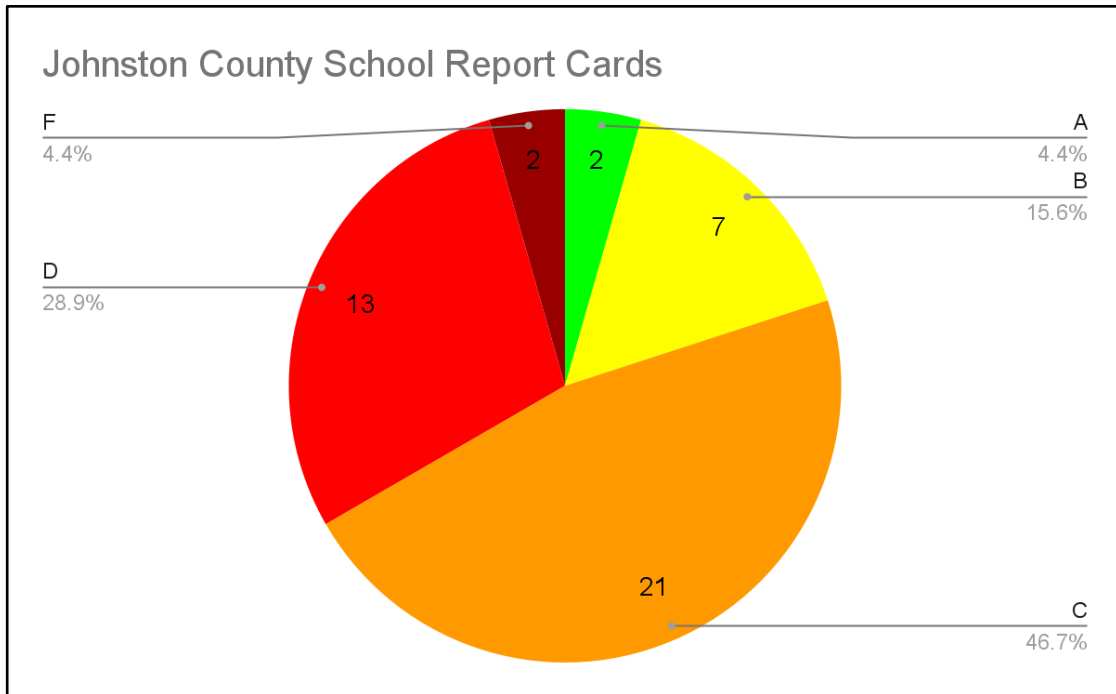
School Performance²²

Each academic year, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) releases school report cards, which assign each public school a letter grade based on school performance and academic growth metrics.

Figure 13: Johnston County School Report Card Score Distribution

²¹Johnston County Public Schools. (2021). *About the District*. <https://www.johnston.k12.nc.us/Page/12258>

²²North Carolina School Report Cards. (2020). *Johnston County Public Schools*. North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. <https://ncreports.ondemand.sas.com/src/district?district=510LEA&year=2019&lng=en>

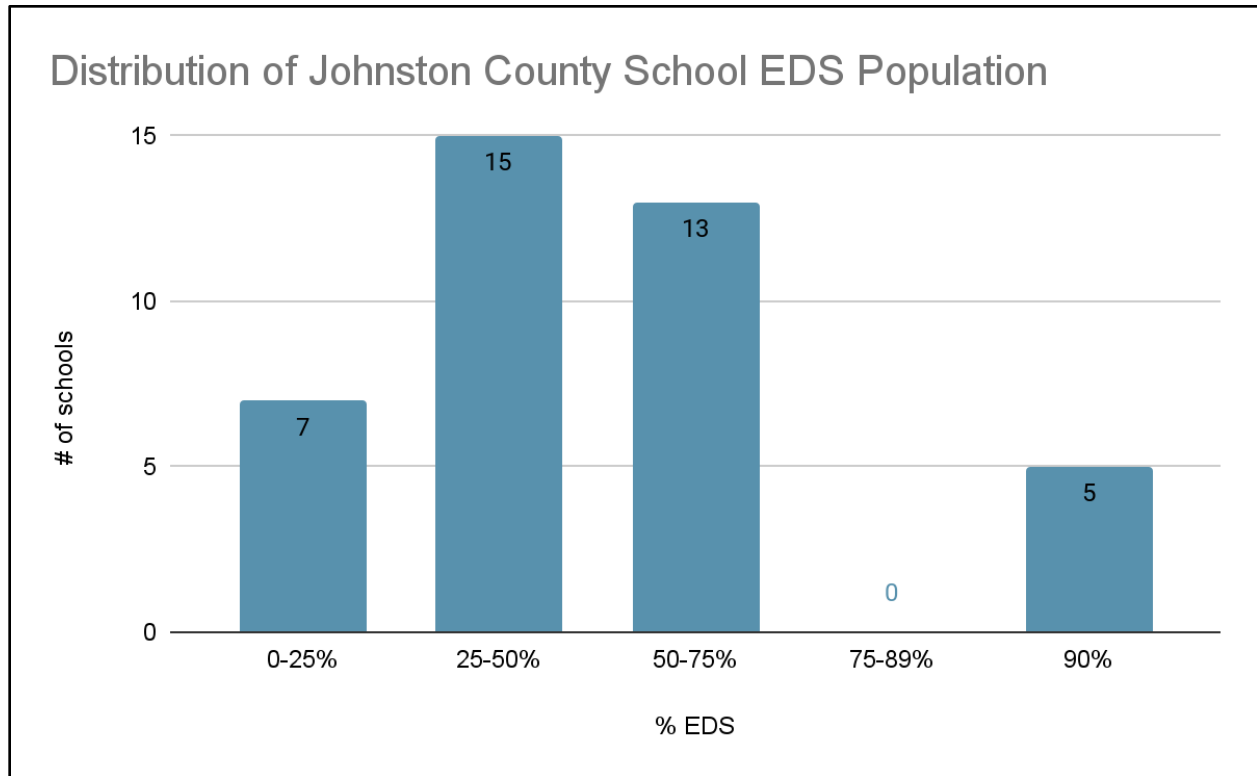


- During the 2018-2019 school year, 2 schools in Johnston County received an 'A' ranking, 7 schools received a 'B', 21 received a 'C', 13 received a 'D', and 2 received an 'F'.
- 17 schools met and 10 schools exceeded their 2019-2020 academic growth targets. 18 schools did not meet their growth targets.
- 14 schools were classified as 'low-performing' following the 2019-2020 school year.

Economically Disadvantaged Students

- 14,129 of Johnston County Public Schools students relied on free lunch services, and 1,701 relied on reduced lunch services during the 2019-2020 school year.
- 41.94% of students were identified as economically disadvantaged based on enrollment in free and reduced lunch programs during the 2019-2020 school year.

Figure 14: Johnston County School EDS



- There are 7 schools in Johnston County where less than 25% of the student population is economically disadvantaged.
 - There are 15 schools where 25-50% of the student population is economically disadvantaged.
 - There are 13 schools where 50-75% of students are economically disadvantaged.
 - There are 5 schools where more than 90% of students are economically disadvantaged.

- All the schools that identified 90% or more of their students as economically disadvantaged are clustered in the neighboring towns of Smithfield and Selma in the central region of Johnston County.

Community Health

Key Points²³

- Johnston County has a diabetes prevalence rate of 12.4% (DataUSA, 2021).
- The adult obesity rate is 34.8% (DataUSA, 2021).
- Johnston County has a rate of 30.2 primary care providers per every 100,000 people, compared to the state average of 70.6 and the national average of 75.5.
 - Johnston County has a rate of 86.2 mental health care providers per every 100,000 people, compared to the state average of 215.5 and the national average of 214.3.

Healthcare Access

- 87.8% of the population has health coverage.
 - 48% are on employee plans.
 - 16.5% are on Medicaid.
 - 10% are on Medicare.
 - 11.1% are on non-groups plans.
 - 2.17% are on military or VA plans.
- There are 147 licensed physicians in Johnston County, or 7.4 physicians per 10,000 people (AccessNC, 2020).
- Primary care physicians in Johnston County see an average of 3,685 patients per year.

Impact of COVID-19^{24 25 26}

- As of August 2021:

²³Johnston County Public Health. (2019). *2019 Community Health Needs Assessment*.

<https://www.johnstonhealth.org/app/files/public/364ab3ee-3c4d-4344-a768-3112f4383595/final-2019-chna-johnston-health.pdf>

²⁴USA Facts. (2021). *Johnston County, North Carolina coronavirus cases and deaths*. <https://usafacts.org/visualizations/coronavirus-covid-19-spread-map/state/north-carolina/county/johnston-county>

²⁵North Carolina Department of Health & Human Safety. (2021). *Cases Demographics*. <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/dashboard/cases-demographics>

²⁶North Carolina Department of Health & Human Safety. (2021). *Vaccinations*. <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/dashboard/vaccinations>

- There have been 23,095 confirmed cases of COVID-19 since the onset of the pandemic.
 - There have been 240 deaths attributed to COVID-19.
 - 42.38% of the population is fully vaccinated.²⁷
- Johnston County's white population makes up 65% of confirmed cases, 62% of COVID-19 deaths, and 68% of vaccinations while comprising 80% of the total population.
 - African Americans make up 16% of confirmed cases, 13% of COVID-19 deaths, and 16% of vaccinations while comprising 18% of the total population.
 - The Hispanic and Latinx population makes up 26% of confirmed cases, 9% of COVID-19 deaths, and 12% of vaccinations while comprising 14% of the total population.

Resources

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²⁷Citizen Times. (2021). *North Carolina COVID-19 Vaccine Tracker*. <https://data.citizen-times.com/covid-19-vaccine-tracker/north-carolina/37/>

https://www.childcareservices.org/research/nc-ece-data-repo/search/?repoSearch=§ion_id%5B%5D=7&rep_month=5&rep_year=2021&rep_month_end=&rep_year_end=&county_id%5B%5D=51

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<https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/NCJOHN0URN>, June 15, 2021.

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