Snapshot of Older Adults in Kern County

California is the state with the most older adults living in poverty. By 2030, older adults will make up one-quarter of California’s population, intensifying the need to invest in the critical programs that support them.

Overview

- Older adults age 60+ account for 20% of California’s population.
- In Kern County, 141,000 older adults are 60+.
- Statewide demographics among older adults: Black, 6.5%; Asian, 11.4%; Hispanic, 24.1%; White, 55.1%.

Medi-Cal & Medicare

Older adults 65+ who have incomes at or below 138% of the federal poverty level qualify for both Medi-Cal & Medicare for their health care coverage.

- There are 1,658,539 older adults statewide who are dually eligible.
- In Kern County, there are 39,055 older adults dually eligible.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

SSI is a federal income supplement program available to low-income older adults and people with disabilities.

- 567,486 older adults statewide receive SSI payments.
- In Kern County, there are 10,832 older adults 65+ receiving SSI payments.

Poverty Levels Using the Elder Index

A new, more accurate standard of measurement gauges income security among California’s older adults and takes into account local cost of living.

- 1,547,000 older adults 65+ statewide don’t have enough income to meet their basic needs.
- 35% of older adults 65+ in Kern County don’t have enough income to meet their basic needs.
- A single older adult who rents in Kern County needs at least $20,796 per year to meet their basic needs.

In Home Supportive Services (IHSS)

IHSS provides in-home assistance to eligible older adults and people with disabilities as an alternative to institutional care and enables recipients to remain safely in their own homes.

- In Kern County, 5,220 older adults 65+ receive IHSS services.
- 388,736 older adults statewide receive IHSS services.

Older Adults Experiencing Homelessness

- 45% of homeless individuals in California are age 50+.
- 57,715 older adults statewide interacted with the homeless response system.
- In Kern County, 1,219 adults age 55+ interacted with the homeless response system.

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i Data Dashboard for Aging, California Population Profile, Adults Age 60 and Older
ii CHHS Open Data Portal, Month of Eligibility, Dual Status, by County, Medi-Cal Certified Eligibility
iii Social Security Office of Retirement and Disability Policy, SSI Recipients by State and County, 2021
iv UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, California Elder Economic Security ™ Index (CEI)
v California Department of Social Services, Monthly IHSS Program Data, December 2022
vi Homeless Data Integration System, Demographic Characteristics of People Experiencing Homelessness