

The poverty guidelines are a version of the federal poverty measure. They are published each year in the *Federal Register* by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The guidelines are a simplification of the poverty thresholds for use for administrative purposes — for instance, determining financial eligibility for certain federal programs, including Head Start/Early Head Start.

HHS Poverty Guidelines for 2026

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2026 POVERTY GUIDELINES FOR THE 48 CONTIGUOUS STATES AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

| Persons in family/household | Poverty guideline |
|---|-------------------|
| 1 | \$15,960 |
| 2 | \$21,640 |
| 3 | \$27,320 |
| 4 | \$33,000 |
| 5 | \$38,680 |
| 6 | \$44,360 |
| 7 | \$50,040 |
| 8 | \$55,720 |
| For families/households with more than 8 persons, add \$5,680 for each additional person. | |

The Federal Register, where they were published on January 15, 2026, and can be accessed [here](#).