Elders Who Can’t Make Ends Meet in Kings and Tulare Counties*  
As Measured by the California Elder Economic Security Standard™ Index

The California Elder Economic Security Standard™ Index (Elder Index) measures how much income is needed for a retired adult age 65 and older to adequately meet his or her basic needs including housing, food, out-of-pocket medical expenses, transportation, and other necessary spending. For an elderly renter living alone in Kings and Tulare counties, the Elder Index is approximately $21,000/year.

Not Just “Poor” Elders who are Struggling

- 45% of all elders age 65+ do not have enough income to meet their most basic needs, as measured by the Elder Index. That’s 21,000 elders struggling to make ends meet in these counties.

- In contrast, according to the Federal Poverty Line (FPL), only 11% (5,000) of elders in these counties are considered “poor,” with annual individual incomes below $10,210.

- But a large number of other elders (16,000 or 34%) fall into the “eligibility gap,” with incomes above the FPL but below the Elder Index. These elders don’t have enough money to cover their most basic needs, but have too much to qualify for many public programs.

Elders Living Alone Are More Vulnerable

- With high housing costs in these counties, both women and men living alone are economically vulnerable. Half of elder women and 46% of elder men living alone with incomes below the Elder Index, struggle to make ends meet.

- Elders living with a partner are doing somewhat better, but almost 3 in 10 of them are still economically insecure.

(more)
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Race Makes a Difference

- Nearly 9 out of 10 Latino elders in Kings and Tulare counties have incomes below the Elder Index.
- Although non-Latino White elders are doing better, 4 out of 10 are still economically insecure.
- The number of African American and Asian elders who live alone on incomes below the Elder Index is less than 1,000, and therefore too small to calculate reliable estimates.

Renters Living Alone Are the Most Economically Vulnerable

- 8 out of every 10 elder renters living alone in these counties are trying to survive on incomes below the Elder Index.
- Elders who own their homes outright are doing somewhat better, but still struggling. 35% cannot make ends meet.
- The number of elder homeowners with mortgages who live alone with incomes below the Elder Index is less than 1,000, and therefore too small to calculate reliable estimates.

*Due to small numbers and unreliable estimates in some individual counties, a 2-step method was used to cluster these counties to produce reliable estimates. For more detail on that methodology, please see http://www.healthpolicy.ucla.edu/elder_index09feb.html.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau’s 2006 ACS data, compiled by the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research.  
To view the numerical data behind these graphs and access a statewide comparison, click here.

For more information, see Half A Million Older Californians Living Alone Unable to Make Ends Meet by the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research and the Insight Center for Community Economic Development at http://www.healthpolicy.ucla.edu/elder_index09feb.html.