



City & County of San Francisco

Office of the City Administrator

Housing

San Francisco faces a large housing shortage and market pressures that make rent unaffordable for a significant number of residents. While some short-term housing price decreases have been seen during the pandemic, COVID-19 has increased instability for vulnerable households and caused a construction slowdown that is likely to exacerbate the existing housing shortage.

Housing overview

- 65% of housing is renter occupied, compared to 45%, for entire Bay Area.¹
- The median rent for a two-bedroom unit was \$4,300 in 2018. **A renter would need to earn \$83 an hour to afford this median rent.**²

Table 1: San Francisco compared to California

	San Francisco	California
Median rent	\$1,959	\$1,614
Median home value	\$1,217,500	\$568,500
Percent paying \$3,000 or more in rent	23.9%	8.3%
Percent paying 35% or more of income in rent	24.3%	43.6%

Source: ACS 2019 1-year estimates (Table DP04)³

Insufficient housing production and an economic shift towards wealthier residents have created upward pressure on prices.

- Between 2011 and 2017, San Francisco added 6.28 jobs for every unit of housing.
- In the past 20 years, there was a shortfall of 699,000 housing units that would have needed to be built in the Bay Area but were not. Of these, 486,500, or 70% of the missing units, were needed for households with below median income.
- Only about 9% of San Francisco housing stock is restricted for affordable housing,⁴
- About 282,000 low-income families in the Bay Area live in housing that is currently affordable but is at risk of price increases because it is not subsidized or price-restricted.⁵

High housing costs disproportionately affect San Francisco residents of color. **On average, residents of color are significantly more rent-burdened than White San Franciscans.** Black and Latinx San Franciscans are almost twice as likely as White residents to have faced evictions in the last five years.

Table 2: Housing burden by race

Race	Average percent of income dedicated to rent (2015)	Percent who own their home (2015)	Percent who have been threatened with eviction in the last five years (2018)
Asian-Pacific Islander	38%	54%	9%
Black	45%	31%	21%
Latinx	40%	32%	24%
White	33%	39%	12%

Source: IPUMS-USA, University of Minnesota, 2015 via Urban Displacement Project⁶ and San Francisco Planning Department⁷; San Francisco Housing Survey, 2018

Impact of COVID-19

- The San Francisco Apartment Association reported in July that almost 12% of tenants had broken their leases since the beginning of the pandemic.⁸
- The median price of a single-family home dropped 4.1% in May from the prior year and the median rental price for a one bedroom dropped 9.2%.⁹

On the other hand, the enormous job losses have placed many San Franciscans in danger of being unable to pay their rent at all. Current local and state orders protect San Francisco residents from being evicted due to non-payment caused by COVID-19 through January 31, 2021, but the long-term economic impacts are likely to extend beyond that date.¹⁰

In addition, the economic slowdown could have drastic implications for new housing construction.

- All housing construction currently underway in San Francisco was already approved pre-COVID, and there appears to be a lag in new applications.¹¹
- After the 2008 market crash, there was a marked decline in new housing developments. Between 2008 and 2012, there were 50,000 homes built per year in California, compared to the 200,000 per year average before that.¹²

City Services

Total number of services offered: 104

Total number of departments offering services: 12

Subcategory	Number of Services	Number of Departments	Number of Services Disrupted
Homeowner Taxes & Assessment	27	6	1
Housing Assistance	37	4	22
Landlord & Rent Services	32	4	1
Legal & Administration	8	3	3
Total	104	12	27

	Number	Percent
Services digitally accessible	7	7%
Services paused due to COVID	27	26%
Services targeted to vulnerable populations	43	41%

Subcategory	Paper	PDF	Digitally Available
Homeowner Taxes & Assessment		25	2
Housing Assistance	1	29	5
Landlord & Rent Services	1	30	
Legal & Administration	2	6	
Total	4	90	7

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- ¹ San Francisco Housing Needs and Trends Report. San Francisco Planning Department, July 2018. https://default.sfplanning.org/publications_reports/Housing-Needs-and-Trends-Report-2018.pdf.
- ² "Rising Housing Costs and Re-Segregation in San Francisco." Urban Displacement Project, February 2019. https://www.urbandisplacement.org/sites/default/files/images/sf_final.pdf.
- ³ ACS 2019 1-year estimates (Table DP04). https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=ACSDP1Y2019.DP04%20California&q=0400000US06_0500000US06075&tid=ACSDP1Y2019.DP04&moe=false&hidePreview=true.
- ⁴ "Rising Housing Costs and Re-Segregation in San Francisco." Urban Displacement Project, February 2019. https://www.urbandisplacement.org/sites/default/files/images/sf_final.pdf.
- ⁵ "What It Will Really Take to Create an Affordable Bay Area." Sarah Karlinksy. SPUR, March 2020. https://www.spur.org/sites/default/files/publications_pdfs/what_it_will_really_take_to_create_an_affordable_bay_area.pdf.
- ⁶ "Rising Housing Costs and Re-Segregation in San Francisco." Urban Displacement Project, February 2019. https://www.urbandisplacement.org/sites/default/files/images/sf_final.pdf.
- ⁷ San Francisco Housing Needs and Trends Report. San Francisco Planning Department, July 2018. https://default.sfplanning.org/publications_reports/Housing-Needs-and-Trends-Report-2018.pdf.
- ⁸ "Coronavirus stalls housing construction in SF, and lull may last a while." J.K. Dineen. San Francisco Chronicle, July 27, 2020. <https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/Coronavirus-stalls-housing-construction-in-SF-15435608.php>.
- ⁹ "The COVID-19 Effect on San Francisco's Housing and Rental Market." Zach Drucker. Sf.citi, July 9, 2020. <https://sfciti.org/news/the-covid-19-effect-on-san-franciscos-housing-and-rental-market/>.
- ¹⁰ "The Temporary Eviction Moratorium." San Francisco Rent Board. <https://sfrb.org/temporary-eviction-moratorium>.
- ¹¹ "The COVID-19 Effect on San Francisco's Housing and Rental Market." Zach Drucker. Sf.citi, July 9, 2020. <https://sfciti.org/news/the-covid-19-effect-on-san-franciscos-housing-and-rental-market/>.
- ¹² "The COVID-19 Effect on San Francisco's Housing and Rental Market." Zach Drucker. Sf.citi, July 9, 2020. <https://sfciti.org/news/the-covid-19-effect-on-san-franciscos-housing-and-rental-market/>.