

2008 WASHINGTON STATE POPULATION SURVEY

Research Brief No. 50
November 2008

First Look at the Uninsured Population in Washington State

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According to findings from the Washington State Population Survey¹ (SPS), the percentage of Washington residents without health insurance in 2008 remained roughly the same, moving from 10.6 percent in 2006 to 11 percent in 2008. About one in nine Washingtonians is uninsured. The reader should note that the 2006 estimates have been revised.²

Table 1 contains the number and percentage uninsured by family income as a percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).³ In 2008, 29.2 percent of those Washington residents with income below the FPL were uninsured, compared to 23.9 percent in 2006. This increase in the percentage of those uninsured with incomes below the FPL is statistically significant.

Family Income as a Percent of the Federal Poverty Level	2006 SPS			2008 SPS		
	In Thousands		Percent Uninsured	In Thousands		Percent Uninsured
	Population	Number Uninsured		Population	Number Uninsured	
0 – 99%	1,118	267	23.9%	1,168	341	29.2%
100 – 199%	1,024	181	17.7%	1,042	175	16.8%
200 – 299%	862	93	10.8%	951	88	9.3%
Over 300%	3,372	133	4.0%	3,427	122	3.6%
State Total	6,376	675	10.6%	6,588	726	11.0%

The rate of the uninsured among those at incomes above the Federal Poverty level remained relatively constant between 2006 and 2008. There were no significant differences in the rate of uninsurance.

Employer and union sponsored insurance remained relatively constant between 2006 and 2008 (i.e. the decline was not statistically significant) (see Table 2). In addition, the percentage of people purchasing their own insurance remained constant between 2006 and 2008. Medicaid/Basic Health program coverage also remained relatively steady at 15.6 percent. The estimate for those covered under Medicare increased almost a percentage point between 2006 and 2008, however, the increase is not statistically significant.

¹ Data cited are from the 2006 (v03) and 2008 (v02) Washington State Population Surveys. More information about the surveys is available at: www.ofm.wa.gov/sps/default.asp.

² The estimates for 2006 are different from those presented in Issue Brief 39 (<http://www.ofm.wa.gov/researchbriefs/brief039.pdf>). Since Issue Brief 39 was released the survey weights were adjusted for nonresponse bias. Those adjustments have resulted in different estimates. For more information on the changes please refer to: <http://www.ofm.wa.gov/sps/2008/technical/default.asp>

³ In 2007, 100 percent of the Federal Poverty Level was \$21,027 for a married couple with two children (U.S. Census Bureau, "Poverty Thresholds for 2007 by Size of Family and Number of Related Children Under 18 Years." (<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/threshld/thresh07.html>)).

Table 2

Type of Insurance**	2006 SPS		2008 SPS		Change in Percent (2008-2006)*
	Number (in Thousands)	Percent of Total Population	Number (in Thousands)	Percent of Total Population	
Private Insurance					
Employer Insurance	3,853	60.4%	3,949	59.9%	-0.5%
Purchased	703	11.0%	731	11.1%	0.1%
Public Insurance					
Medicaid/Basic Health	1,010	15.8%	1,026	15.6%	-0.3%
Medicare	834	13.1%	897	13.6%	0.5%
Insured By Any Source	5,700	89.4%	5,862	89.0%	-0.4%
Uninsured	675	10.6%	726	11.0%	0.4%
State Population	6,376		6,588		

* The changes in the percent between 2006 and 2008 are not statistically significant at the five percent level

** In addition to the insurance sources listed, a person can be insured by military insurance, somebody outside the household, or by another type of plan (unspecified). A person can also have multiple forms of insurance, so total insured is not the sum of each insurance type.

Rates of insurance coverage vary by age (See Table 3). Between 2006 and 2008, the rate of uninsured decreased slightly for children (the change is not significantly different) and estimated number of children uninsured declined by 5,000. The rate of uninsured among adults increased by almost a percentage point from 14.6 percent to 15.5 percent (the increase is not significantly different). Over seven out of eight uninsured persons in Washington are working age adults between 19 and 64 years of age.

Table 3

Age	2006 SPS			2008 SPS		
	In Thousands		Percent Uninsured	In Thousands		Percent Uninsured
	Population	Number Uninsured		Population	Number Uninsured	
0 – 18	1,640	83	5.0%	1,674	78	4.6%
19 – 64	4,009	587	14.6%	4,142	640	15.5%
65 and Older	727	6	0.8%	771	8	1.0%
State Total	6,376	675	10.6%	6,588	726	11.0%

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