CHIPPEWA - LUCE - MACKINAC
COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Contents

Executive Summary

Now celebrating its 60th year, Chippewa-Luce-Mackinac Community Action Agency (CLMCAA) continues its mission to change lives and reduce poverty across Michigan's Eastern Upper Peninsula. Through more than 40 active programs in Housing, Transportation, Senior Services, Early Childhood Programs, and Weatherization, CLMCAA serves as a vital link between people and the resources they need.

Every three years, the agency conducts a Community Needs Assessment (CNA) to better understand local challenges and opportunities. In 2025, CLMCAA received 732 responses—more than double the number in 2022—offering one of the agency's most comprehensive looks yet into regional needs, strengths, and barriers.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Housing** remains the region's most urgent concern, with affordability, home repairs, and utility support identified as top needs across all counties and age groups.

- **Childcare** continues to pose challenges, especially for single parents and low-income families. While there are signs of increased availability, affordability and reliability remain major concerns.

- **Transportation** access—particularly in Luce and Mackinac counties—continues to limit access to employment, healthcare, and food.

- **Older adults** report persistent barriers to social connection, in-home support, and service navigation, especially in rural areas.

- **Mental health** access emerged as a rising concern, with respondents noting confusion around provider availability and coverage.

Despite these barriers, residents consistently expressed deep resilience, pride in their communities, and a willingness to share honest feedback. Their input points to a strong desire for improved communication, clearer access to services, and accountability in follow-through.

MOVING FORWARD

Findings from this report will directly inform department-level strategy, community engagement efforts, and the upcoming Strategic Plan update. As CLMCAA reflects on six decades of service, this CNA serves not only as a mirror—but as a map forward.

CLMCAA's Strategic Planning Committee—composed of departmental and program leaders along with one community member—will use these findings to drive agency-wide improvements in equity, access, and responsiveness.

JOE NOLAN — ADMIN DEPARTMENT

HEATHER JACKSON — ADMIN DEPARTMENT

MARCEY THORNE — SENIOR SERVICES DEPARTMENT

BRIDGET AKRE — SENIOR SERVICES DEPARTMENT

JEN LABONTE — EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS DEPARTMENT

BOBBI PALMER — WEATHERIZATION DEPARTMENT

STEPHANIE ROOSE — NORTIA CONSULTING (COMMUNITY MEMBER)

Methodology

CLMCAA conducted the 2025 CNA to guide service delivery, strategic planning, and program development across Michigan's Eastern Upper Peninsula. The survey was open for responses from February 3 to March 31, 2025. A total of 732 completed responses were collected—representing a 114.6% increase over the 341 responses received in 2022. This assessment ensures the agency remains responsive to the evolving needs of residents in Chippewa, Luce, and Mackinac counties.

SURVEY DESIGN

The survey included 22 questions, combining multiple-choice and open-ended formats.

Core areas addressed:
- Housing
- Transportation
- Senior Services
- Early Childhood Programs
- Weatherization

Additional questions covered topics such as food security, employment, healthcare, community engagement, and demographics. Open-ended responses—such as Question 22—provided unfiltered community input, while quantitative responses supported trend analysis. The estimated completion time was approximately five minutes.

DISTRIBUTION

The survey was distributed both digitally and in print between February 3 and March 31, 2025.

Distribution channels included:
- A press release and public link (clmcaa.com/survey)
- Printed flyers and posters
- Client takeaway bags (e.g., food distribution and service locations)
- Social media and website promotion
- In-person support from staff for individuals needing assistance due to technology or accessibility barriers

INCENTIVES

To encourage participation, respondents could opt into a drawing to win one of three $50 gift cards. Participation was voluntary and anonymous unless contact information was provided for the drawing.

DATA HANDLING AND ANALYSIS

Survey data was collected via SurveyMonkey, exported to Excel, and analyzed using a combination of spreadsheet and Python-based tools. Open-ended responses were manually coded into thematic categories. All personally identifiable information was removed prior to analysis.

Responses were segmented by:
- County (Chippewa, Luce, Mackinac)
- Age group
- Race, gender identity, education level, employment status, and housing status
- Household income, household size
- Disability status and number of employed adults in the household

This segmentation enables CLMCAA to identify patterns across geographic and demographic groups, supporting targeted decision-making and department-specific planning.

Demographics

The 2025 Community Needs Assessment reached a broad and diverse cross-section of residents across Chippewa, Luce, and Mackinac Counties. With 732 responses—more than double the 341 collected in 2022—this assessment reflects the highest participation rate in CLMCAA history. Robust demographic segmentation allows CLMCAA to tailor services and strategic plans that reflect the unique needs of the tri-county region, ensuring that equity, access, and accountability remain at the forefront of programming and resource allocation.

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

Survey respondents were distributed as follows:
- **Chippewa County:** 56.75% (416 responses)
- **Luce County:** 20.46% (150 responses)
- **Mackinac County:** 22.65% (166 responses)

These proportions align closely with population estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, which place Chippewa as the largest of the three counties. However, Luce County appears slightly under-represented relative to its population and known service demand. Full comparative data, including population, income, age structure, and labor force indicators, is provided in the Appendix.

AGE DISTRIBUTION

Respondents ranged in age from 18 to over 75, with representation across every age bracket:
- 18–24
- 25–34
- 35–44
- 45–54
- 55–64
- 65–74
- 75+

This allows for age-specific analysis of needs including workforce readiness, family support, senior programming, and long-term care.

RACE & ETHNICITY

Respondents identified as:
- White / Caucasian
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Other or Multiple Races
- Prefer not to answer

Chippewa County's significant Indigenous population is reflected in the responses, with multiple tribal members contributing to the open-ended feedback.

GENDER IDENTITY

Participants reported the following gender identities:
- Female
- Male
- Non-binary / Other
- Prefer not to answer

EDUCATION LEVEL

Highest level of education completed:
- Less than high school
- High school diploma or GED
- Some college
- Associate's degree
- Bachelor's degree or higher

EMPLOYMENT & HOUSING

- **Employment Status:** Respondents identified as full-time, part-time, unemployed, retired, disabled, students, caregivers, or other.
- **Housing Status:** Respondents reported being homeowners, renters, unhoused, living temporarily with others, or in other housing arrangements.

HOUSEHOLD FACTORS

- **Household Income:** Ranged from under $10,000 to over $100,000 annually
- **Housing Size:** Ranged from single-person households to those with 6 or more members
- **Disability Status:** Households with one or more members reporting a diagnosed physical or mental disability
- **Number of Employed Adults:** Households reported between 0 and 4+ working adults
- **ALICE:** (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) is a term developed by the United Way to describe individuals and families who earn above the federal poverty level but still struggle to afford basic household necessities such as housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, and technology. (Further information available in Appendix)

Housing Insights

Housing remains the most consistently cited concern across all four Community Needs Assessments conducted by CLMCAA since 2016. In 2025, it once again tops the list of unmet needs across Chippewa, Luce, and Mackinac Counties. Despite ongoing investments and prioritization of housing and repair services, only marginal progress has been made in closing the gap between demand and delivery.

TOP HOUSING CONCERNS (2025)

- **Utility cost burdens** – 34.43%
- **Housing needs minor repairs** – 33.61%
- **Rent/mortgage payments** – 32.51%
- **Housing needs major repairs** – 26.78%
- **Finding affordable, safe housing** – 16.39%

Note: Respondents could select more than one option. Percentages represent the proportion of total respondents who identified each concern.

Respondents in Luce County and individuals aged 45 and older reported the highest levels of housing-related concern, particularly among homeowners on fixed incomes and single-parent households.

HISTORICAL COMPARISON

YEAR	KEY TRENDS
2016	Housing and transportation were the two most frequently cited needs across all counties.
2019	Only 38% of those seeking help with affordable housing reported receiving assistance. Utility bill support had the lowest success rate at just 16%.
2022	Housing continued to lead in frequency, with increased mentions of space limitations, unaffordability, and difficulty securing repairs.
2025	Nearly 80% of respondents selected one or more housing concerns. Open-ended feedback reinforces chronic insecurity—particularly among rural, aging, and lower-income populations.

Q22 COMMENTARY HIGHLIGHTS

"Help for families that make 'too much' and yet not enough to get help with repairs."

"We've been living in a camper for over a year after our home was deemed uninhabitable. No programs seem to help unless you're literally homeless."

"There needs to be more help with utilities. You can't keep people housed if they can't keep the lights on."

These comments reflect not only structural issues in the housing system—but the emotional toll on those navigating confusing, rigid, or under-resourced support networks.

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

- **Service Access** – Respondents reported difficulty navigating housing and weatherization programs due to delays, unclear criteria, or denials after submitting all required paperwork.
- **Eligibility Confusion** – Inconsistent messaging around income thresholds and program requirements was a frequent source of frustration.
- **Geographic Gaps** – Luce and Mackinac County residents continue to experience less access to programs and longer wait times compared to Chippewa County.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Modernize Intake Systems
Implement clearer eligibility screens, streamlined forms, and real-time status tracking to reduce confusion and abandonment of applications.

2 Expand Home Repair Funding
Prioritize minor repair and safety-related grants for aging residents and fixed-income homeowners before issues escalate into uninhabitable conditions.

3 Audit Housing & Utility Workflows
Conduct an internal process review to identify bottlenecks, clarify eligibility standards, and align intake practices across departments and counties.

Health Insights

Health concerns remain a central theme in the 2025 Community Needs Assessment. While issues around medical, dental, and mental health access have appeared in every CNA since 2016, this year's data shows an increase in urgency— especially around affordability, navigation support, and mental health services for caregivers and households with disabilities.

TOP HEALTH CONCERNS (2025)

- **Affordable access to medical care** – 30.87%
- **Affordable prescriptions** – 30.60%
- **Lack of affordable, comprehensive insurance** – 25.96%
- **Lack of payment assistance options** – 24.32%
- **Affordable access to mental health care** – 23.50%
- **Assistance navigating the healthcare system** – 23.22%
- **Affordable access to dental health care** – 22.68%

Note: Respondents could select more than one concern. Percentages represent the share of total respondents who selected each item.

Respondents aged 25–44, especially those identifying as caregivers or living in households with a diagnosed disability, were most likely to express concern. While Chippewa County recorded the highest total number of health-related responses, Luce and Mackinac Counties showed proportionally greater concern about availability and accessibility—especially regarding mental health and dental services.

HISTORICAL COMPARISON

YEAR	KEY TRENDS
2016	Access to care was a primary concern for seniors and Medicaid recipients.
2019	Mental health, dental, and prescription affordability emerged as high-need, low-access areas.
2022	Mental health access and insurance affordability declined; childcare emerged as a co-occurring stressor.
2025	Mental health concerns remain high, but medical affordability, insurance coverage gaps, and navigation challenges have now surpassed them in frequency.

Q22 COMMENTARY HIGHLIGHTS

"Affordable access to therapists and long-term care for anxiety and trauma."

"There's no clear path for people who need regular dental work and don't have top-tier insurance."

"I got a list of providers to call, but half were outdated or didn't take new patients."

These comments reflect both emotional strain and systemic breakdowns, especially among those attempting to access care while managing chronic conditions, caregiving responsibilities, or financial hardship.

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

- **Redirection fatigue** – Respondents often cited frustration with being sent to resources that were outdated, unavailable, or geographically out of reach.
- **Coverage confusion** – Many households reported falling through gaps in Medicaid eligibility or not knowing how to access payment assistance.
- **Provider shortages** – A lack of in-region **mental health** and **dental providers**, especially in Luce and Mackinac Counties, continues to limit options for rural and uninsured populations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Create a real-time provider directory or CRM for health referrals
Centralize up-to-date provider availability and ensure both staff and clients have access.

2 Strengthen local partnerships to fill mental and dental care gaps
Work with regional health departments, nonprofits, and tribal partners to co-host clinics or extend provider hours.

3 Require written follow-up for healthcare referrals and denials
Make clear, timely communication part of the process so clients aren't left in the dark about next steps.

Employment Insights

Employment concerns in 2025 continue to reflect structural workforce challenges in the Eastern Upper Peninsula. Although fewer respondents overall identified employment as a top concern, a closer look reveals patterns tied to age, caregiving responsibilities, income level, and transportation limitations.

TOP EMPLOYMENT CONCERNS (2025)

- **Jobs do not pay a living wage** – 23.22%
- **Lack of available jobs** – 22.13%
- **Conflicts with childcare** – 17.90%
- **Lack of career training or advancement opportunities** – 17.35%
- **Lack of transportation** – 14.07%

Note: Respondents could select more than one option. Percentages represent the share of total respondents who identified each concern.

Respondents aged 18–34 were most likely to report employment-related concerns, particularly around job quality, wages, and childcare conflicts. Single parents, individuals with disabilities, and those earning under $25,000/year reported the highest levels of concern. However, many respondents also indicated they were retired, on fixed incomes, or unable to work due to health conditions—explaining why this category ranked lower overall in volume but higher in intensity for specific subgroups.

HISTORICAL COMPARISON

YEAR	KEY TRENDS
2016	Workforce barriers included low wages, lack of transportation, and minimal local training options.
2019	Job quality—not just availability—emerged as the dominant concern.
2022	Caregiving responsibilities and child care costs were leading employment disruptors.
2025	Living wage, flexible hours, and career pathways remain top priorities—especially for young adults, caregivers, and rural workers.

Q22 COMMENTARY HIGHLIGHTS

"The jobs that exist don't pay enough to make ends meet—even full-time."

"Hard to work when child care costs more than your paycheck."

*"Not everyone wants to work retail or seasonal jobs.
We need training for year-round skilled work."*

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

- **Childcare and transportation** remain deeply intertwined with employment viability—especially for low-income caregivers.
- **Workforce retention and readiness** are impacted by limited opportunities for upskilling, remote work, or mid-skill employment.
- **The employment landscape is skewed** by age and disability, meaning traditional workforce development approaches may not fit current needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Expand career training partnerships
Work with local colleges, trades programs, and employer coalitions to offer training aligned with regional jobs.

2 Integrate childcare and transportation planning
Design employment services with wraparound supports that address retention barriers directly.

3 Develop flexible and remote-friendly workforce programs
Offer tailored tracks for single caregivers, people with disabilities, and older adults seeking to re-enter or pivot careers.

Food & Nutrition Insights

Food insecurity continues to impact a wide range of households across Chippewa, Luce, and Mackinac counties. While the overall volume of food-related concerns has remained relatively consistent since 2016, the drivers behind those concerns have shifted—from availability and location to cost, nutrition, and transportation access. Aside from 27.87% of respondents who reported no concerns, the most frequently cited food-related challenges were:

TOP FOOD & NUTRITION CONCERNS (2025)

- **Expense of groceries** – 44.26%
- **Lack of stores with nutritious options** – 22.68%
- **Transportation to shopping** – 18.85%
- **Lack of knowledge about nutrition or meal preparation** – 8.74%
- **Other** – 4.10%

Note: Respondents could select multiple concerns. Percentages reflect share of total responses.

Respondents with household incomes under $35,000/year, households with children, and residents of Luce County were most likely to express concern. In particular, rural respondents cited the difficulty of accessing full-service grocery stores and a lack of delivery or reliable transportation.

HISTORICAL COMPARISON

YEAR	KEY TRENDS
2016	Food availability and transportation to grocery stores were primary concerns.
2019	Only 23% of households needing food assistance reported receiving it.
2022	High grocery costs and limited access to healthy food were top issues.
2025	Concerns now center on rising food prices, nutritional quality, and barriers to reaching food programs or stores.

Q22 COMMENTARY HIGHLIGHTS

> *"We have to choose between paying bills or buying fresh produce."*

> *"There are stores, but they don't carry much beyond boxed junk food."*

> *"I live alone and don't drive. I rely on one food delivery a month that doesn't meet my needs."*

These comments reflect a growing divide between food access and food dignity. Many are not just asking for food—they're asking for the right kind of food, in a reliable, culturally respectful, and nutritionally sufficient way.

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

- **Transportation limitations**—especially in Luce and Mackinac—are a major contributor to food access gaps.
- **Cost-conscious nutrition education** could help residents maximize limited budgets without sacrificing health.
- **Senior and disabled residents** face enrollment and delivery barriers in food programs, even when eligible.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Expand partnerships** with local food co-ops, food pantries, and delivery programs, particularly for homebound residents and seniors.

2. **Invest in culturally appropriate, practical nutrition education,** delivered via workshops, social media, or printed guides.

3. **Coordinate with transportation providers** to align food distribution and delivery with mobility services—especially in rural areas.

Transportation Insights

Transportation remains one of the most persistent and structurally limiting barriers in the region—especially in Luce and Mackinac counties, where distance, lack of public transit, and high vehicle-related expenses compound daily. While Chippewa County has made some progress in route expansion and coordination, access remains inconsistent and unreliable in more rural areas, limiting residents' ability to reach jobs, medical care, groceries, and community programming.

TOP TRANSPORTATION CONCERNS (2025)

Aside from 34.52% of respondents who reported no transportation concerns, the most frequently cited issues were:

- **Transportation to appointments** – 28.69%
- **Car repairs** – 25.27%
- **Affordable public transportation** – 23.22%
- **Reliable public transportation** – 22.13%
- **Car payments** – 19.95%

Note: Respondents could select more than one concern. Percentages reflect the share of total respondents who selected each option.

Respondents with low income, disabilities, or no access to a personal vehicle expressed the most concern. Seniors and working single parents frequently cited difficulty coordinating transportation for both practical and social needs—highlighting the gap between availability and usability of existing services.

HISTORICAL COMPARISON

YEAR	KEY TRENDS
2016	Transportation ranked #1 among all community concerns across counties.
2019	Rural residents reported limited service areas and inflexible transit schedules.
2022	Investment in Dial-a-Ride was noted, but accessibility and scheduling gaps persisted.
2025	Demand continues for flexible, affordable, and coordinated solutions—especially as missed medical appointments and lost jobs are increasingly tied to unreliable transportation.

Q22 COMMENTARY HIGHLIGHTS

> *"I lost a job because I couldn't get to work three days in a row when my car broke down."*

> *"Senior rides need to go beyond doctor appointments— we need to get groceries and interact with people, too."*

> *"The bus only comes once or twice a week out here. If you miss it, you're stuck."*

These comments reinforce that transportation challenges are not just logistical—they're life-interrupting.

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

- **Geographic inequities persist:** Residents in Luce and Mackinac continue to face the steepest barriers to reliable transport.
- **Dial-a-Ride and similar programs remain underutilized**, often due to lack of awareness or rigid scheduling.
- **Seniors and caregivers** need services that go beyond medical appointments, supporting their overall quality of life.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Expand outreach and visibility** of transportation programs with clear, multi-format materials outlining schedules, eligibility, and service areas.

2. **Coordinate with Health, Food, and Senior Services** to align transit availability with client needs for appointments, grocery access, and social connection.

3. **Advocate for flexible ride models and extended hours**, particularly in underserved zones and for high-need groups such as seniors, single parents, and disabled residents.

Community Insights

The 2025 Community Needs Assessment confirms that residents across Chippewa, Luce, and Mackinac counties deeply value community connection, family-centered programming, and neighborhood safety. While 8.46% of respondents selected "no concerns", the remaining data and open-ended responses reflect a strong desire for accessible, inclusive opportunities to gather, participate, and feel a sense of belonging.

TOP COMMUNITY CONCERNS (2025)

Aside from those with no concerns, the most frequently cited issues included:
- **More family-friendly activities** – 8.33%
- **More community events** – 7.38%
- **More outdoor public spaces** – 6.83%
- **More senior and elderly services** – 6.15%
- **More assistance programs for low-income residents** – 5.74%

Respondents from rural communities, low-income households, and those with children under 12 were most likely to request expanded community programming. Older adults and caregivers emphasized the need for age-appropriate, accessible events and social gathering spaces beyond service delivery.

HISTORICAL COMPARISON

YEAR	KEY TRENDS
2016	Limited outdoor space, transportation barriers, and youth activity gaps were noted.
2019	66% of respondents reported unmet needs for social connection—particularly among older adults.
2022	Demand increased for child-friendly, safe community spaces and general public safety.
2025	Community concerns now reflect a dual call for connection and accessibility—not just more events, but better promotion, easier transportation, and more inclusive design.

Q22 COMMENTARY HIGHLIGHTS

> *"We need more family activities—ones that don't cost a fortune or require a drive to the Soo."*

> *"It's not just about services—it's about feeling included in our own communities."*

> *"We don't need more events. We need better communication so we know what's already happening."*

These responses suggest that many programs may already exist, but remain invisible due to siloed promotion, outdated outreach, or a lack of cross-agency collaboration. The challenge is not just providing services—but ensuring residents can access, attend, and feel welcomed by them.

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

- **Communication gaps** were cited nearly as often as lack of services—particularly in **Luce and Mackinac Counties.**
- **Seniors, low-income households, and single parents** expressed a need for non-transactional, inclusive spaces—places to belong, not just receive aid.
- Several comments pointed to missed events due to limited notice, inconvenient timing, or transportation barriers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1 **Coordinate a centralized, cross-department community calendar** with clear distribution via print, email, social media, and posted flyers at service locations.

2 **Support community-led, place-based initiatives** that reflect local culture and capacity—especially in under-resourced zip codes.

3 **Invest in multipurpose gathering spaces** and **intergenerational programming** that reduce isolation, build community trust, and reflect lived experiences.

Conclusion & Recommendations

The 2025 Community Needs Assessment drew 732 responses, more than double the 2022 total—making it one of the most robust data sets in CLMCAA's history. The results confirm what past reports have shown: housing, transportation, food access, and mental health remain top priorities, particularly for seniors, low-income families, and rural residents.

While some progress is evident—such as modest improvements in childcare access—many barriers remain unchanged. Respondents described confusion navigating services, inconsistent outreach, and a perceived lack of representation in program decisions. These insights reveal not only the gaps in services, but the systems-level issues that create frustration and erode trust.

Yet this report is not just a mirror. It is a roadmap—one informed by real voices, lived experience, and practical suggestions for improvement.

STRATEGIC THEMES

- **Communication Gaps:** Many clients are unaware of services, unclear on eligibility, or confused by inconsistent follow-up.
- **Geographic Disparities:** Residents in Luce and Mackinac Counties report less access and longer wait times than those in Chippewa.
- **Navigation Barriers:** Respondents described unclear application processes and a lack of coordination between departments.
- **Organizational Readiness:** Staff feedback and community input indicate a need for culture shifts, performance metrics, and leadership support in key departments.

CROSS DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Improve Communication & Visibility
- Standardize and simplify eligibility info across platforms.
- Provide consistent written follow-up on applications.
- Consider a CRM or shared intake system for transparency and handoffs.

2 Strengthen Access in Rural Areas
- Expand outreach and service days in Luce and Mackinac.
- Partner with local groups to co-host or co-locate services.
- Monitor and report on equity metrics by county.

3 **Simplify Systems Navigation**
- Train staff in plain language, trauma-informed communication.
- Promote warm handoffs between programs to reduce drop-offs.
- Audit workflows to remove avoidable friction points.

4 **Make Community Feedback Actionable**
- Use this CNA to guide program design and staffing.
- Create feedback loops (e.g., surveys, advisory groups, listening sessions).
- Share "You Said / We Did" updates publicly to build transparency.

METRICS & ACCOUNTABILITY

To turn insight into impact, CLMCAA must track what matters and make that progress visible.

KEY ACTIONS

- Set measurable goals aligned with the strategic plan
- Examples: reduce housing repair wait times; improve transportation access by ZIP code; track intake-to-response timelines.
- Centralize and route community input to appropriate departments with follow-up protocols.
- Publish updates via social media, newsletters, and the agency website.
- Make progress tracking part of leadership and board agendas—not just compliance.

LOOKING AHEAD

This report reflects the voice of a community that continues to engage with honesty, hope, and urgency. The path forward is clear: listen with intention, act with purpose, and lead with accountability.

The 2025 Community Needs Assessment offers more than just insight—it offers direction. By translating these findings into action, CLMCAA has the opportunity to not only meet needs, but to build trust, improve equity, and create systems that work for everyone. With a community that continues to show up, speak out, and participate, the next chapter of Community Action's story can be its most impactful yet.

Appendix

A. Survey Instrument

- The 2025 Community Needs Assessment consisted of 22 questions, including:
- Multiple-choice questions related to housing, employment, transportation, health, food access, and community engagement
- Demographic questions covering county, age, race, gender, education, income, housing status, employment, household size, and disability status
- One open-ended question (Q22) inviting suggestions on how CLMCAA can better serve the community

A full copy of the survey is available upon request or can be accessed at https://cms.clmcaa.org/survey/. Here is a visual representation of each question:

Q1 IN WHICH COUNTY DO YOU RESIDE?

Answered: 732   Skipped: 0
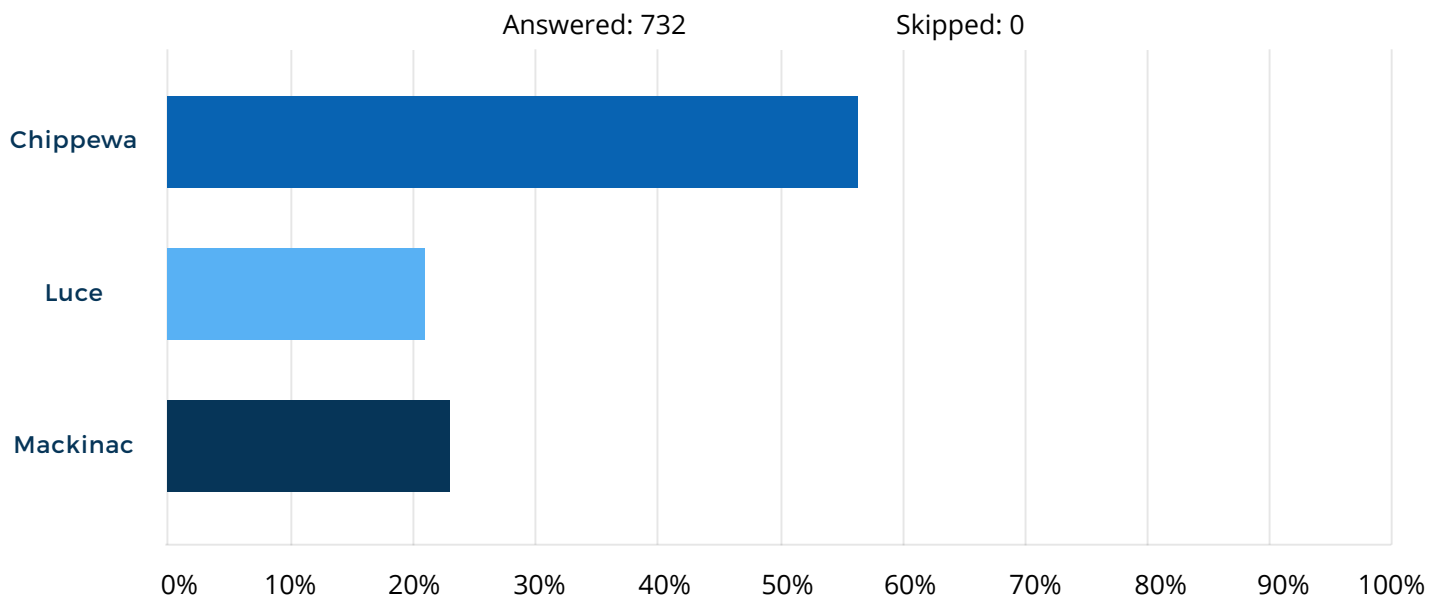
Q2 IN WHICH AGE RANGE BELOW, DO YOU FALL?

Answered: 732   Skipped: 0
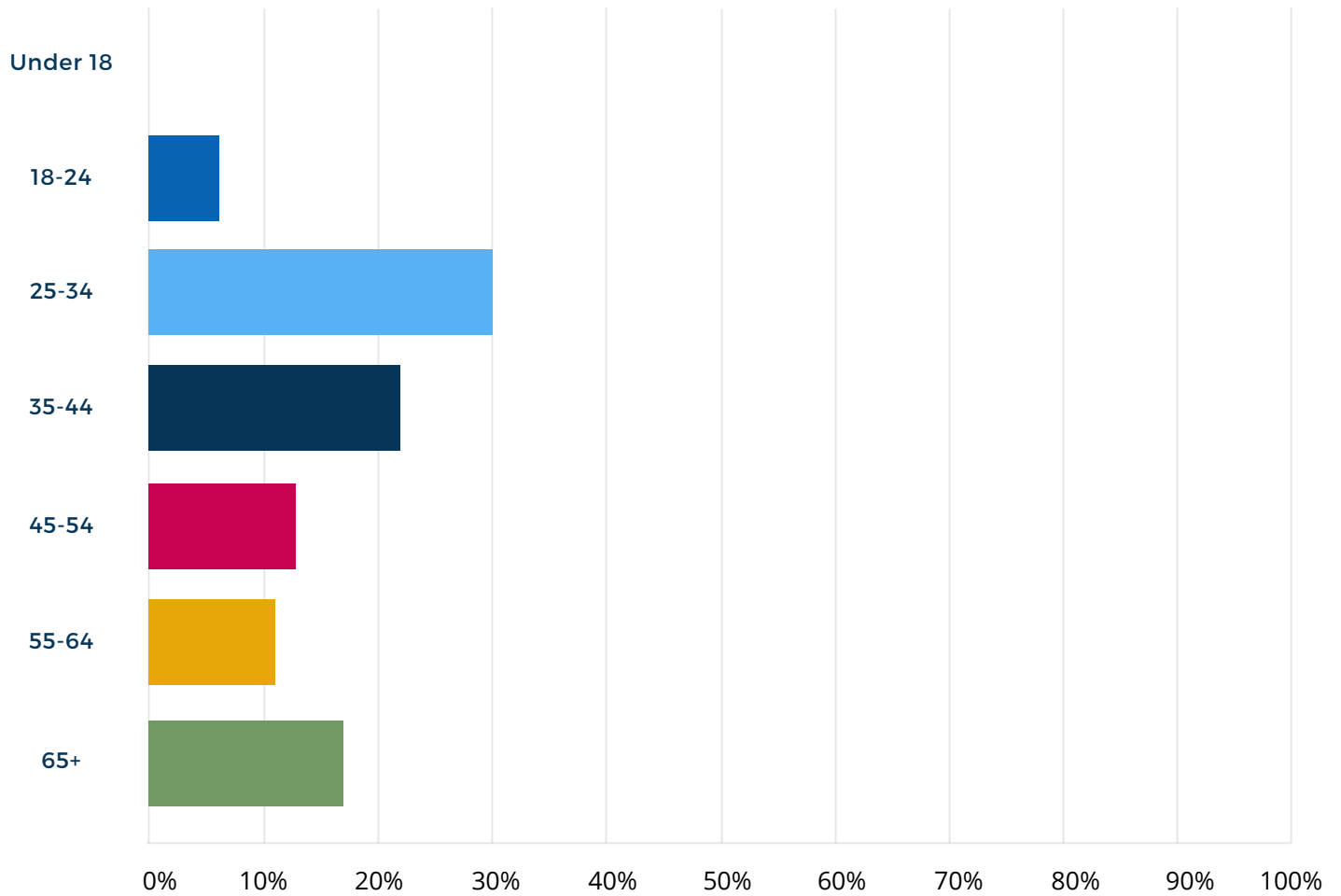
Q3 OF WHAT RACE DO YOU IDENTIFY?

Answered: 732   Skipped: 0
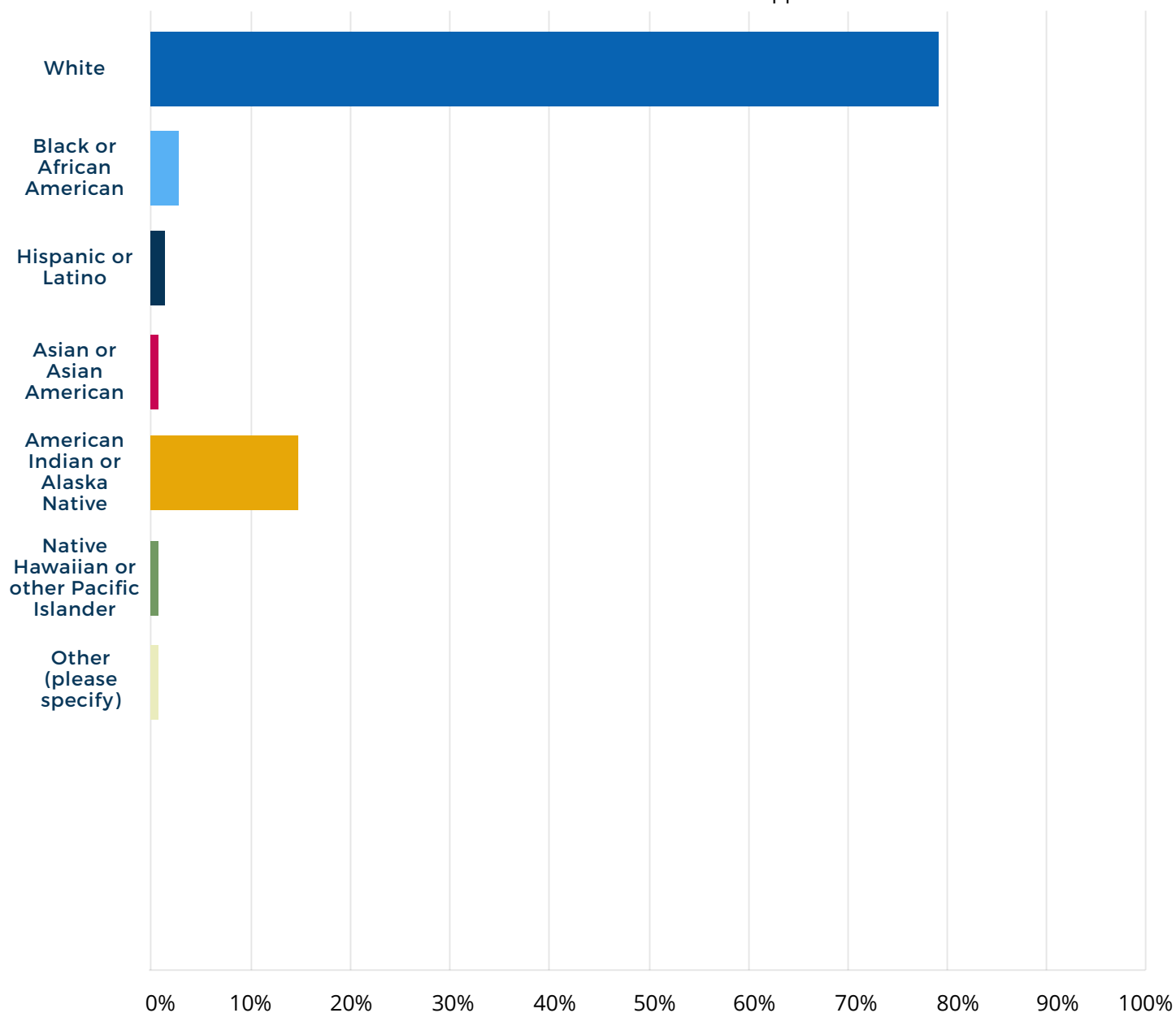
Q4 OF WHAT GENDER DO YOU IDENTIFY?

Answered: 732   Skipped: 0
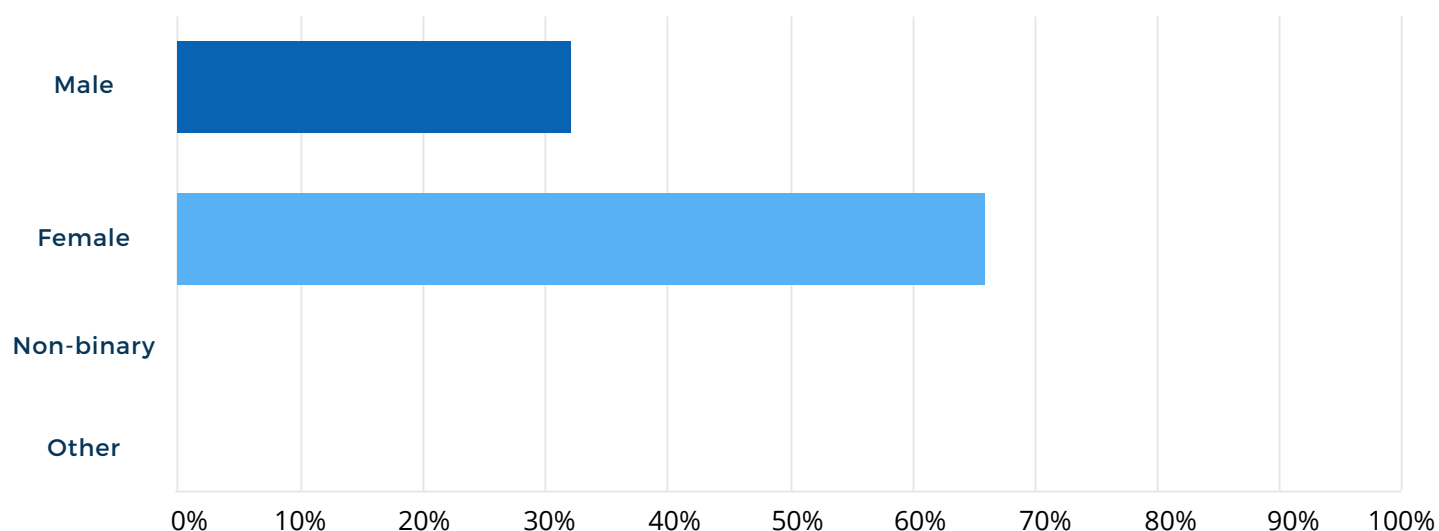
Q5 WHAT IS THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUATION YOU HAVE COMPLETED?

Answered: 732   Skipped: 0
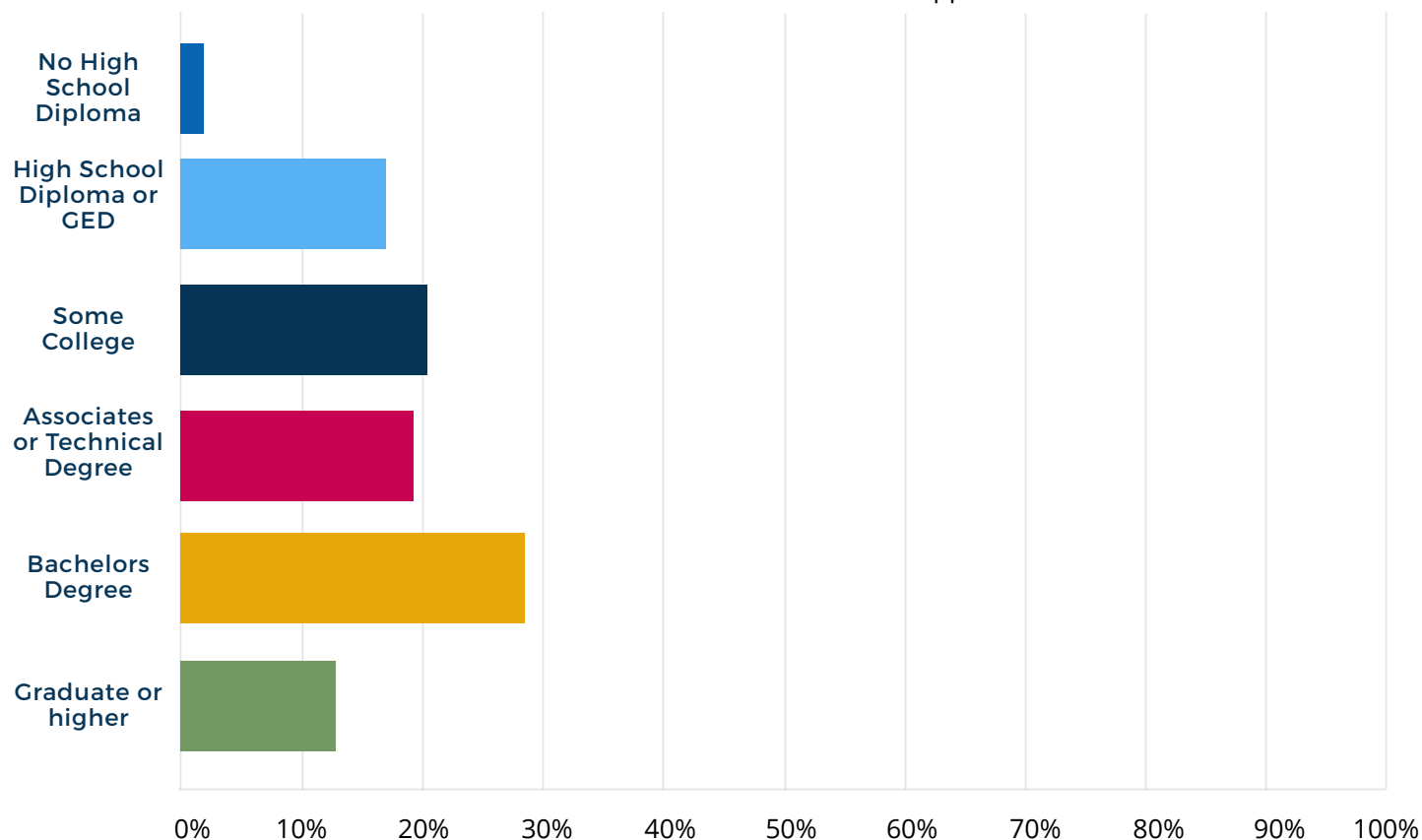
Q6 WHAT IS YOUR EMPLOYMENT STATUS?

Answered: 732   Skipped: 0
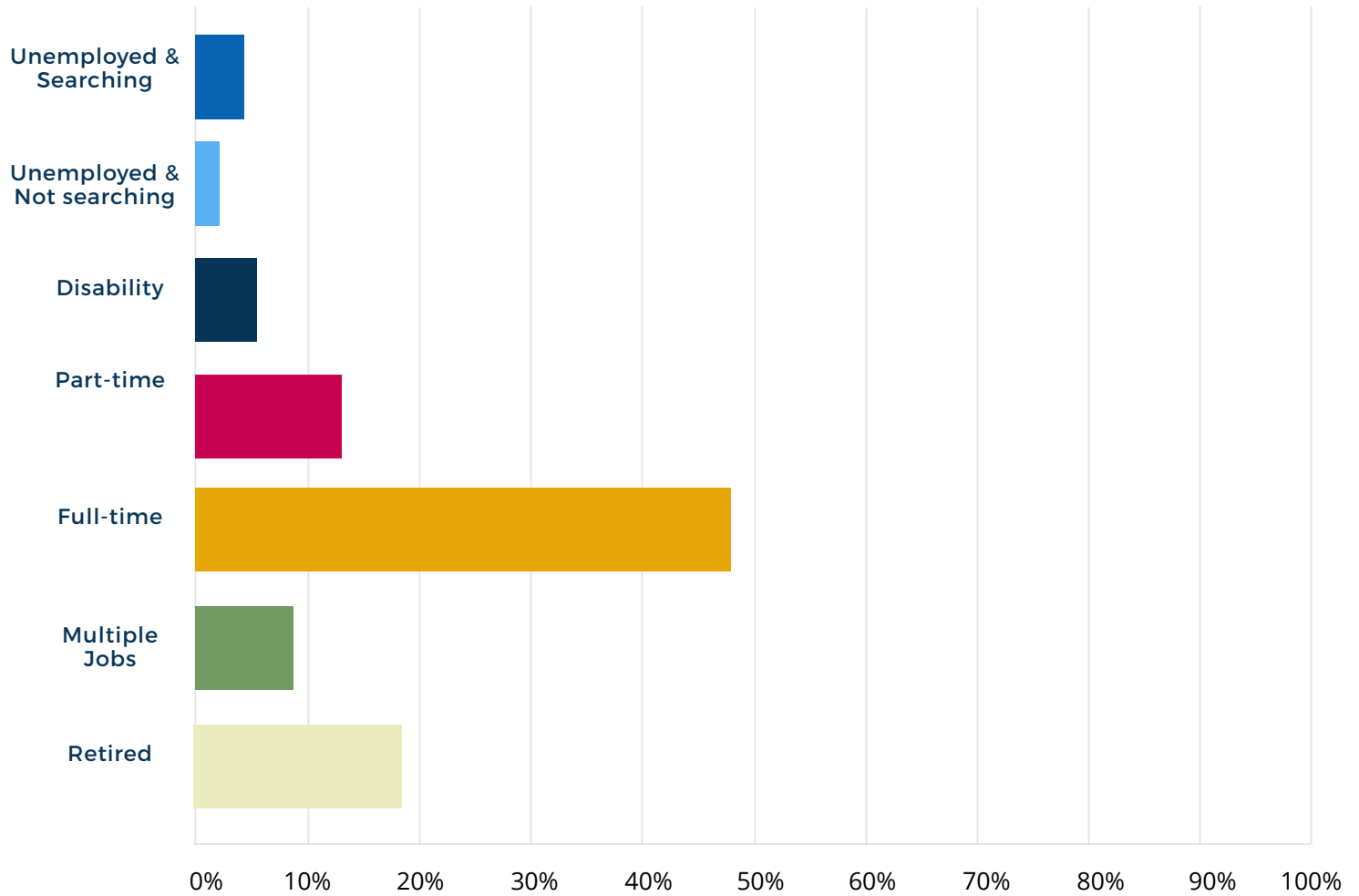
Q7 IN WHAT TYPE OF RESIDENCE DO YOU RESIDE?

Answered: 732   Skipped: 0
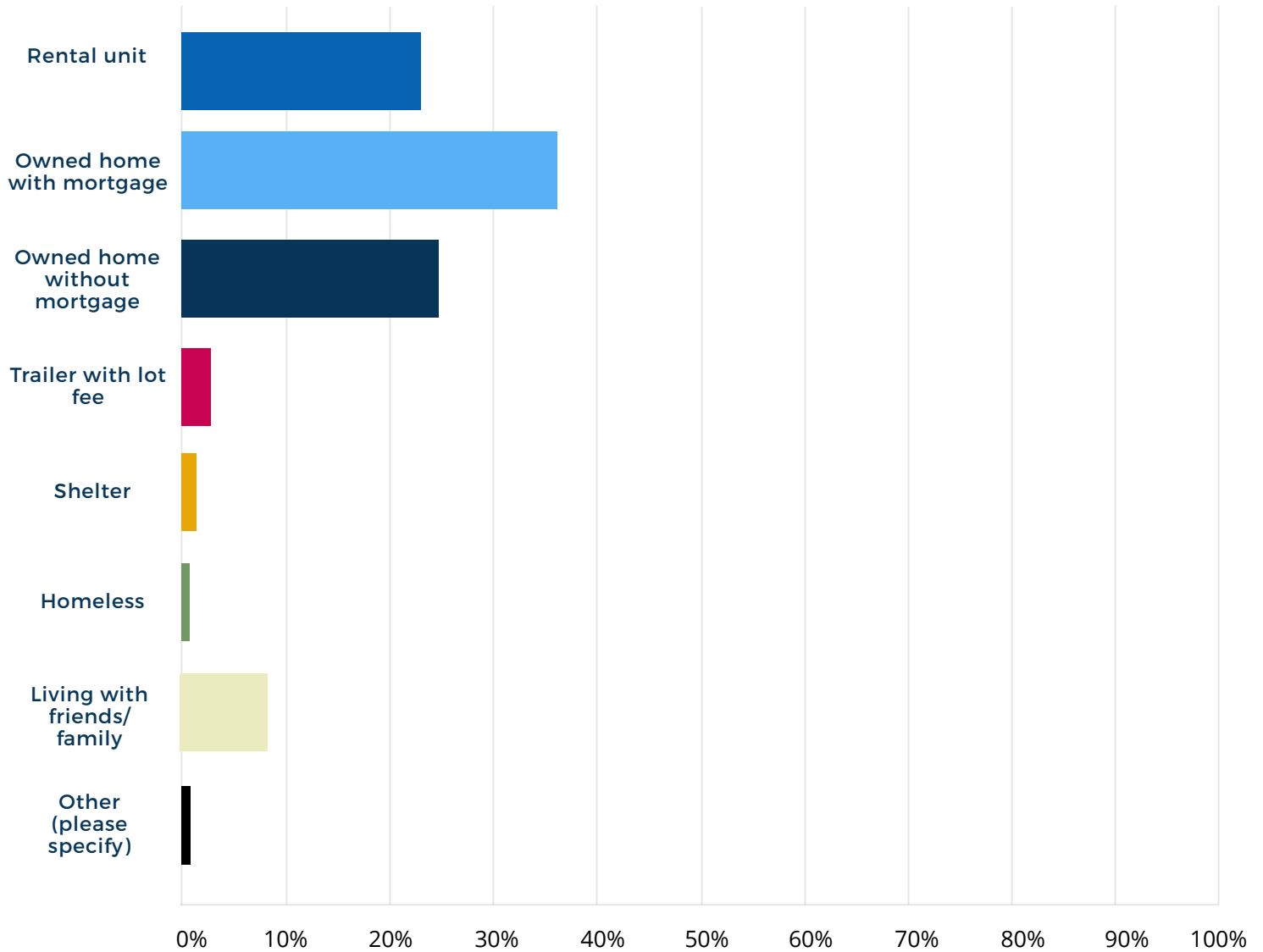
Q8 WHAT IS YOUR MARITAL STATUS?

Answered: 732   Skipped: 0
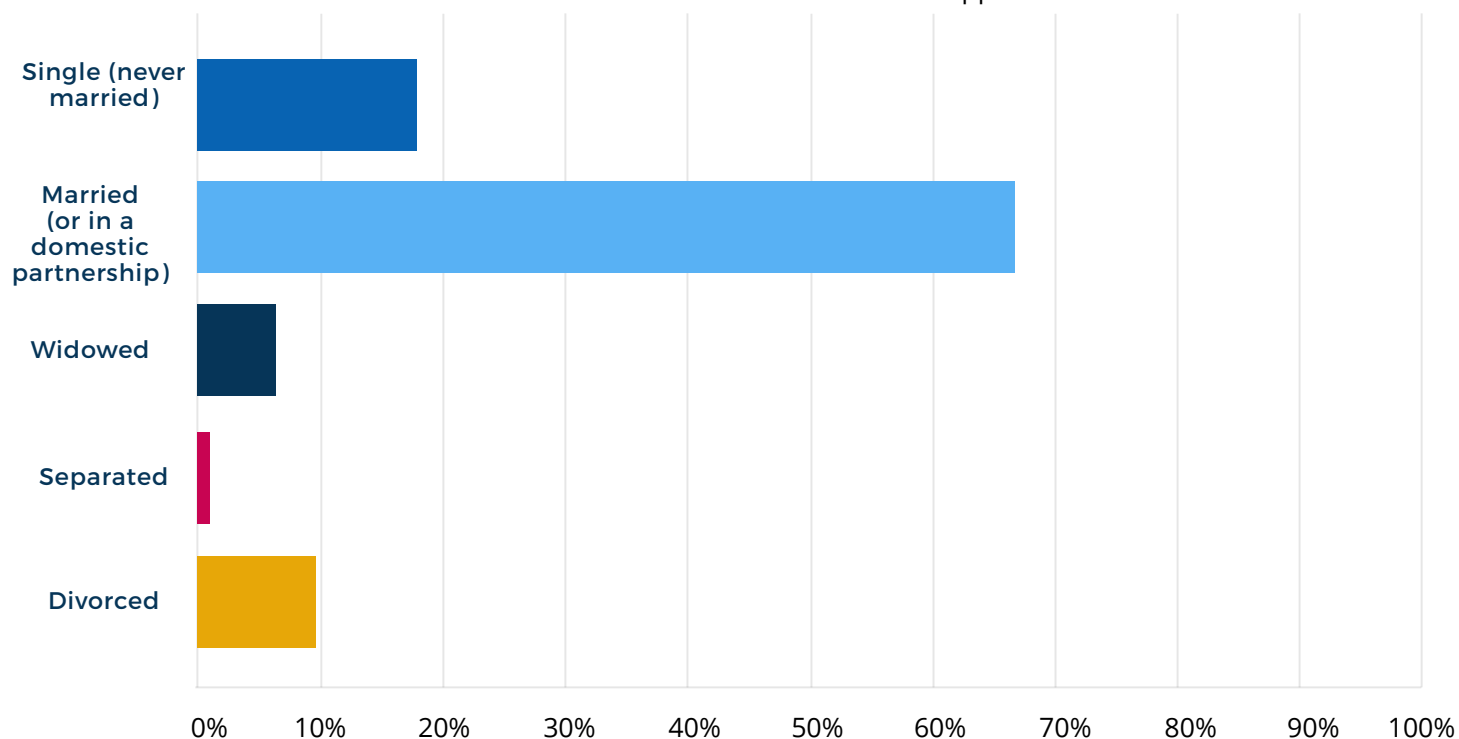
Q9 WHAT IS YOUR MILITARY STATUS?

Answered: 732   Skipped: 0
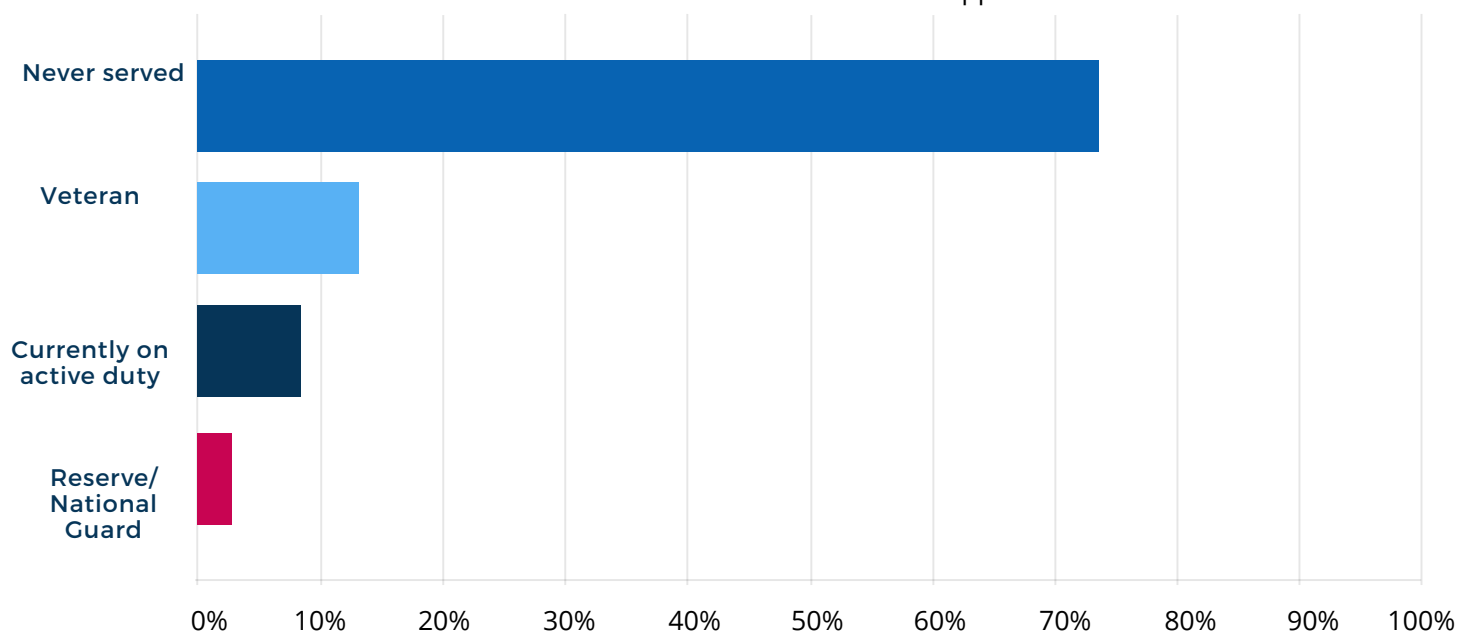
Q10 HOW MANY PEOPLE LIVE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD AT LEAST 50% OF THE TIME?

Answered: 732   Skipped: 0
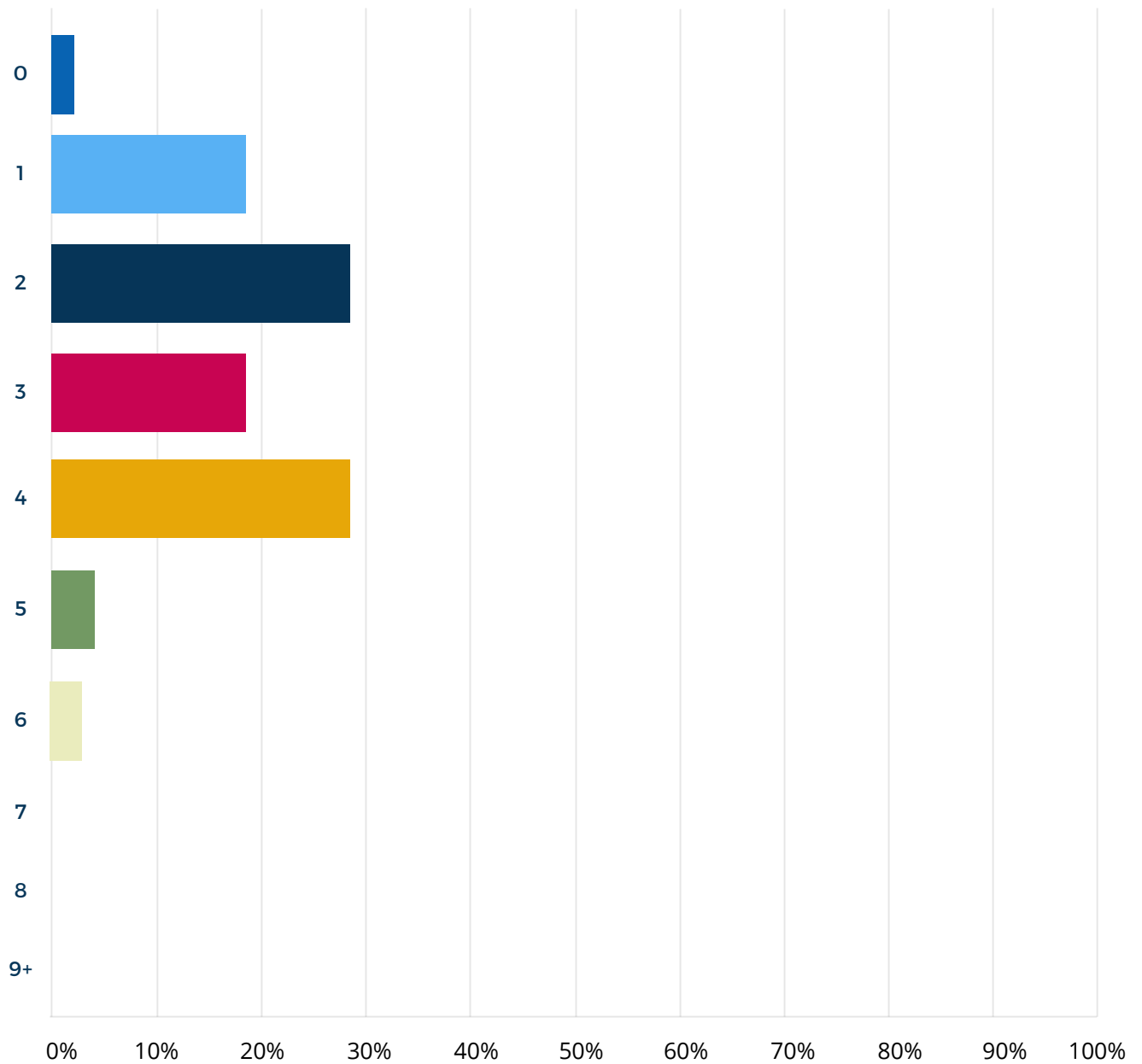
Q11 IN WHICH INCOME RANGE BELOW, DOES YOUR COMBINED HOUSEHOLD FALL?

Answered: 732   Skipped: 0
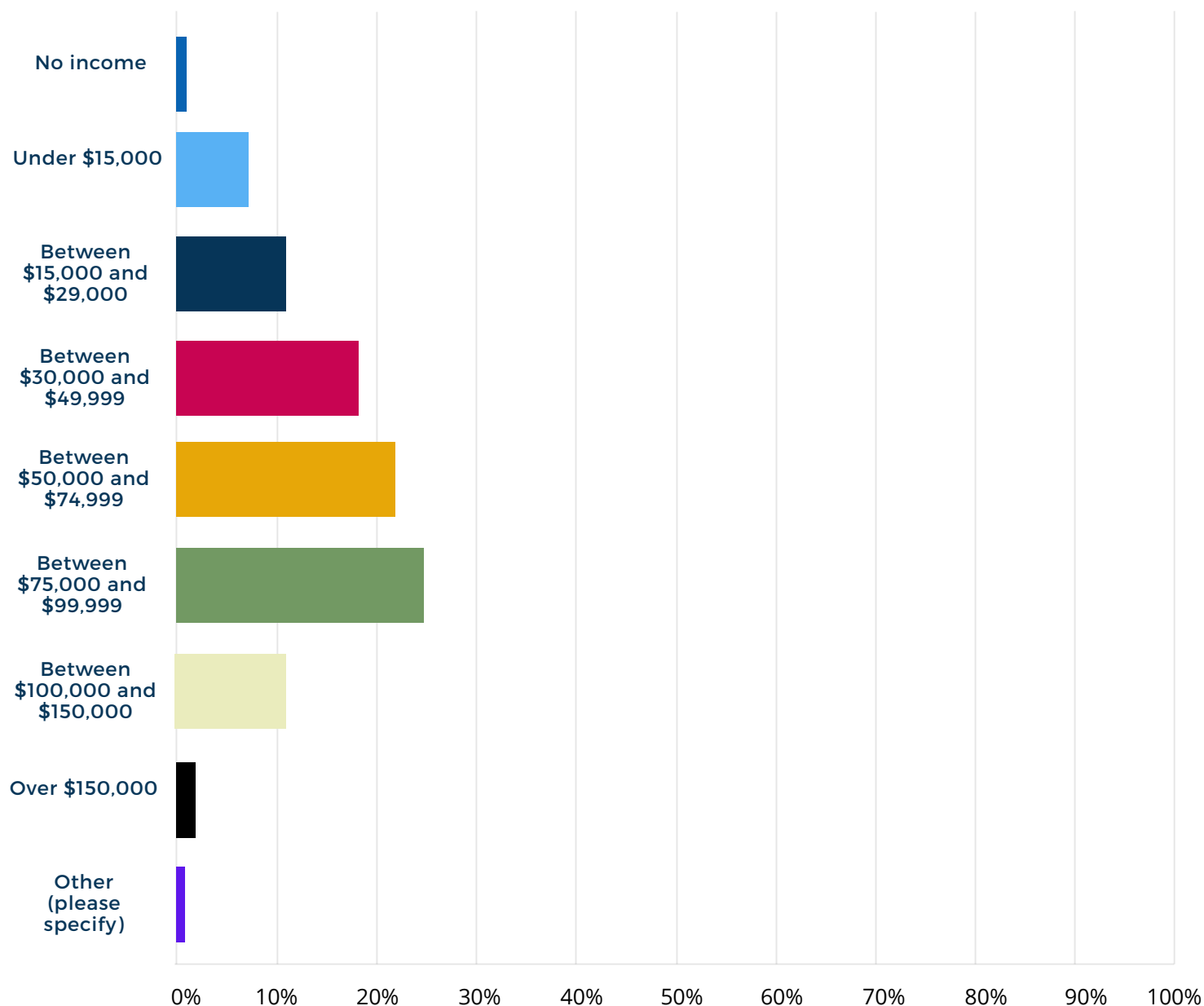
Q12 HOW MANY MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD (WHO ARE OVER 18 YEARS OLD) WORK AT LEAST 35 HOURS A WEEK?

Answered: 732   Skipped: 0
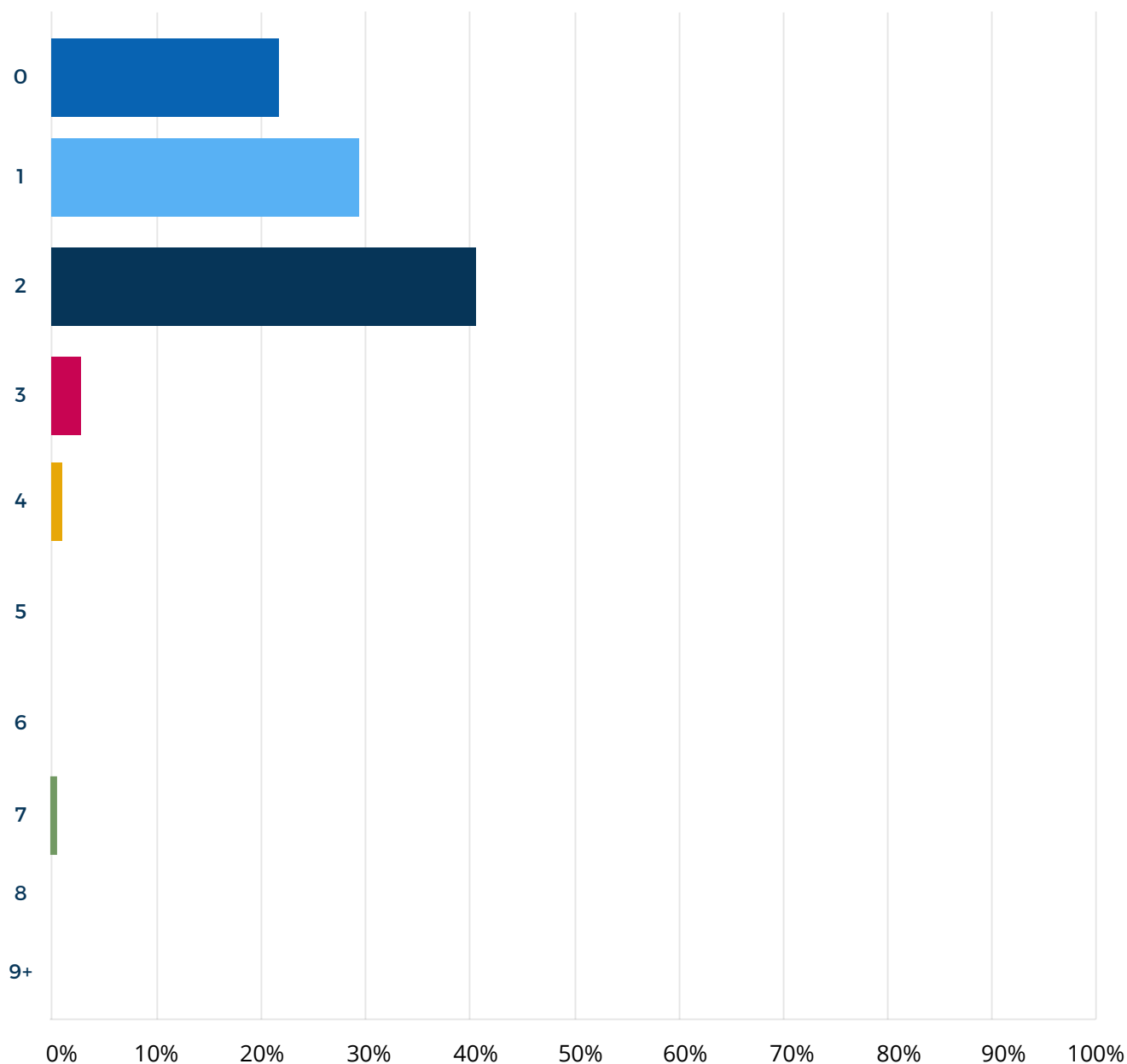
Q13 HOW MANY MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAVE A DIAGNOSED MENTAL OR PHYSICAL DISABILITY?

Answered: 732   Skipped: 0
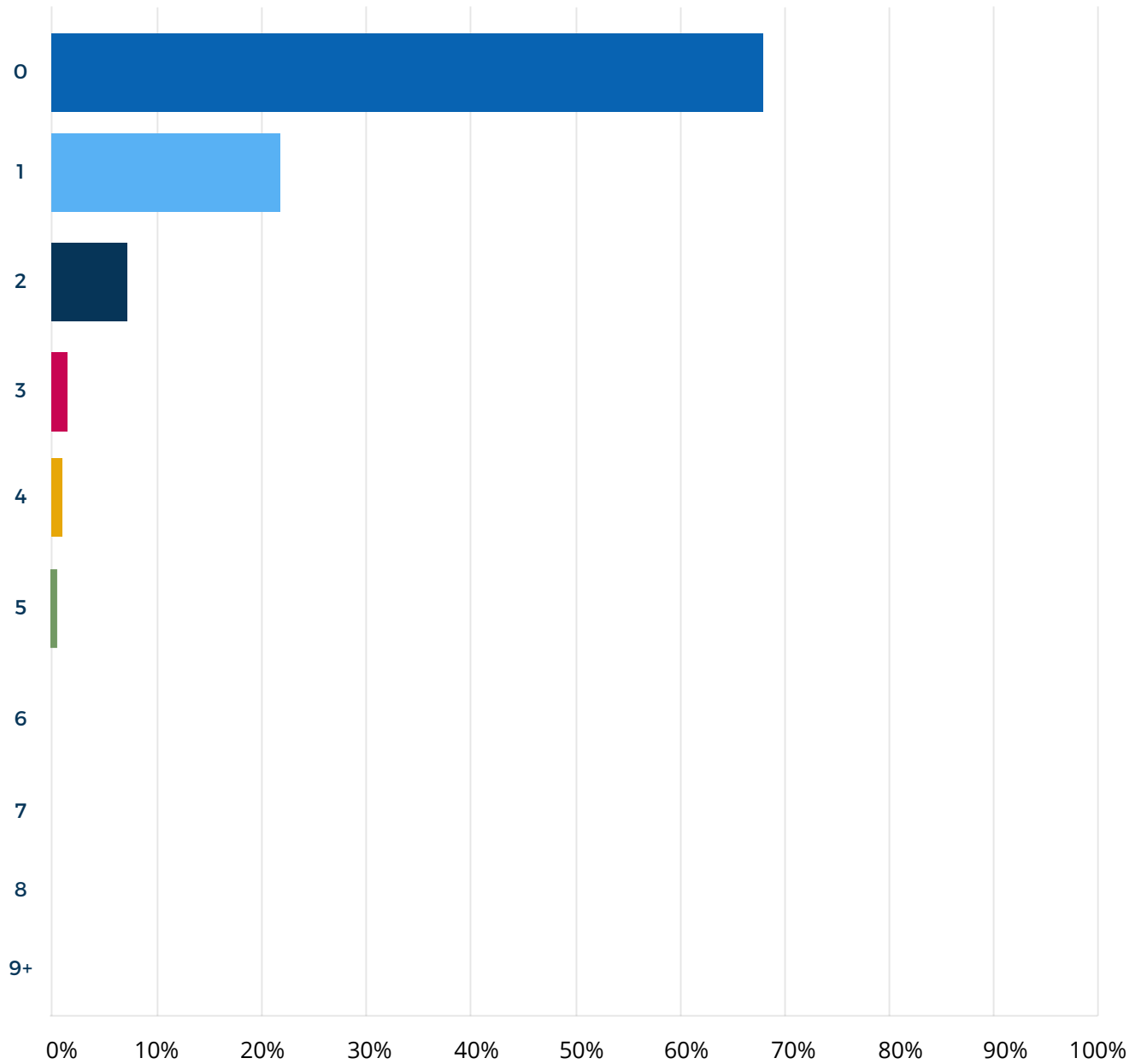
Q14 WHAT ARE YOUR HOUSING CONCERNS?

Answered: 732   Skipped: 0
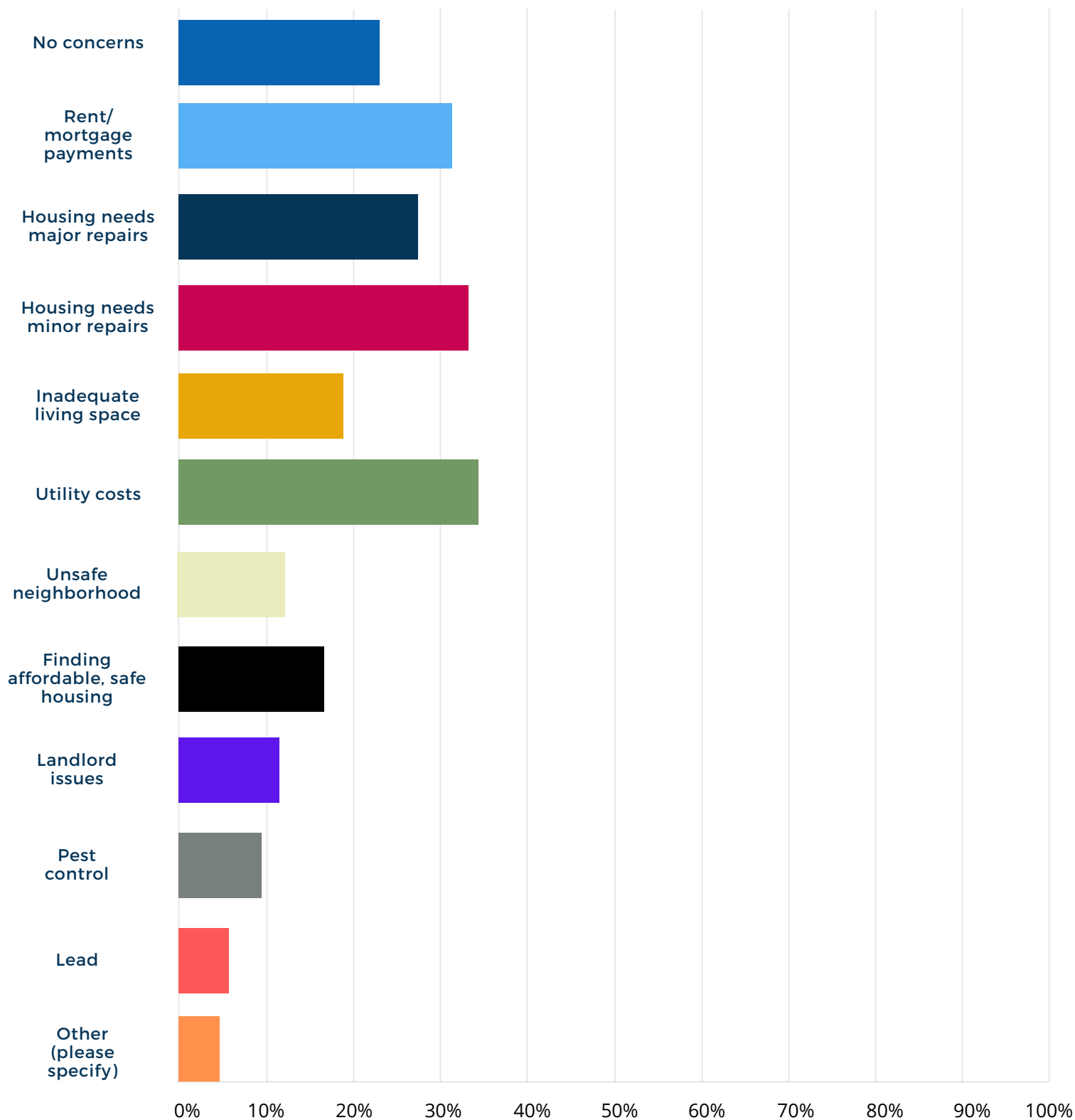
Q15 WHAT ARE YOUR HEALTH CONCERNS? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

Answered: 732   Skipped: 0
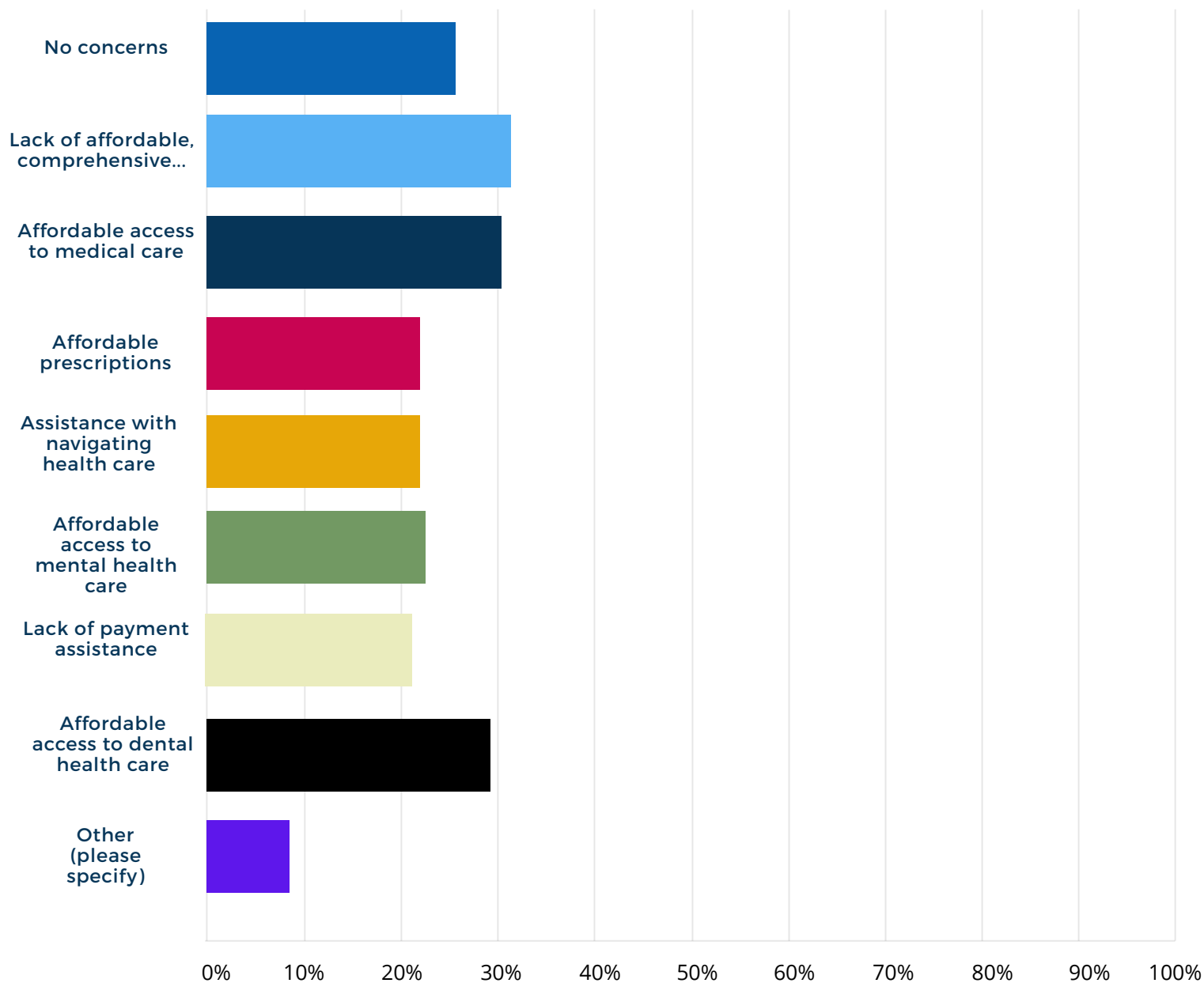
Q16 WHAT ARE YOUR EMPLOYMENT CONCERNS?

Answered: 732   Skipped: 0
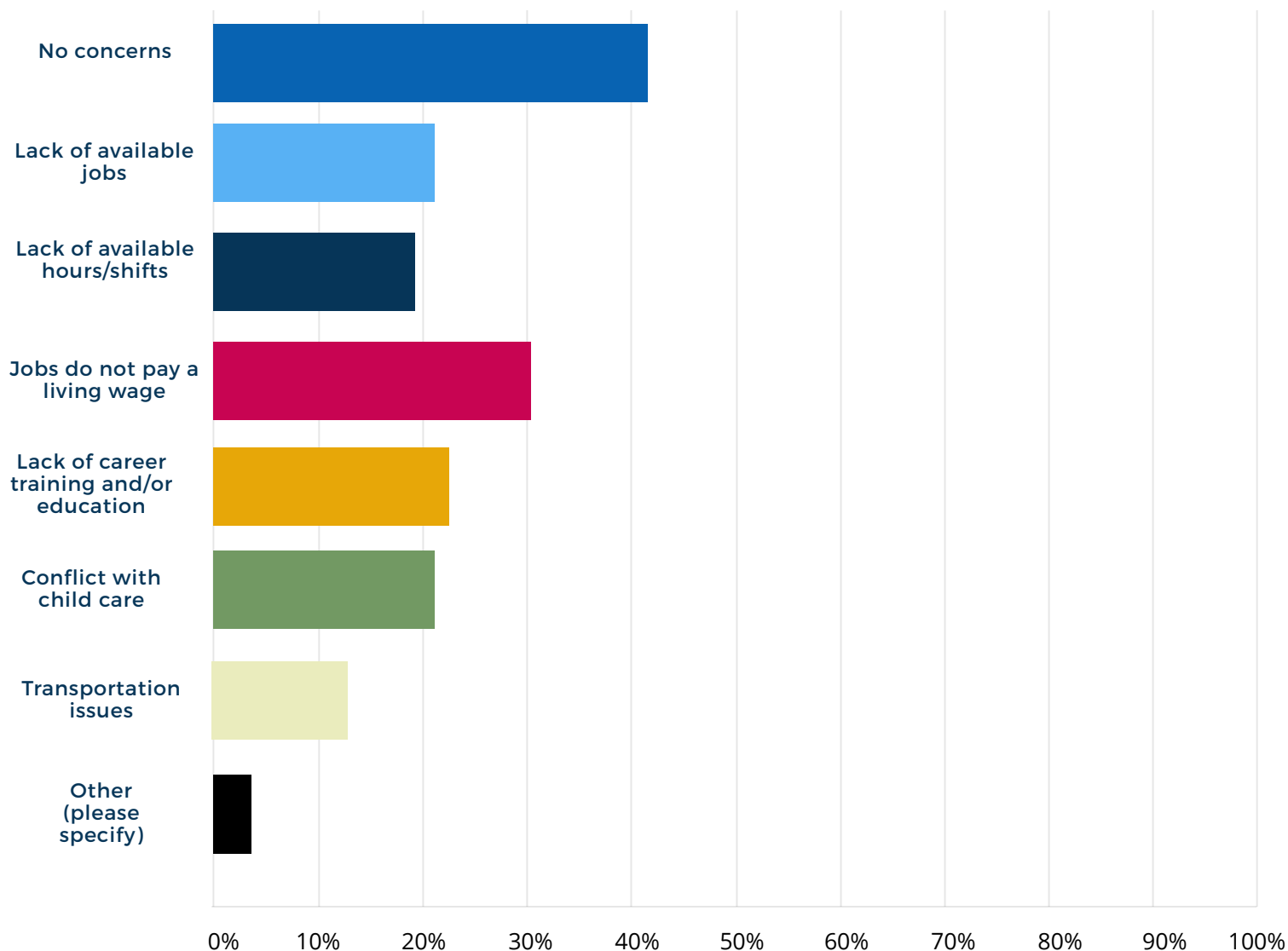
Q17 WHAT ARE YOUR FOOD & NUTRITION CONCERNS? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

Answered: 732   Skipped: 0
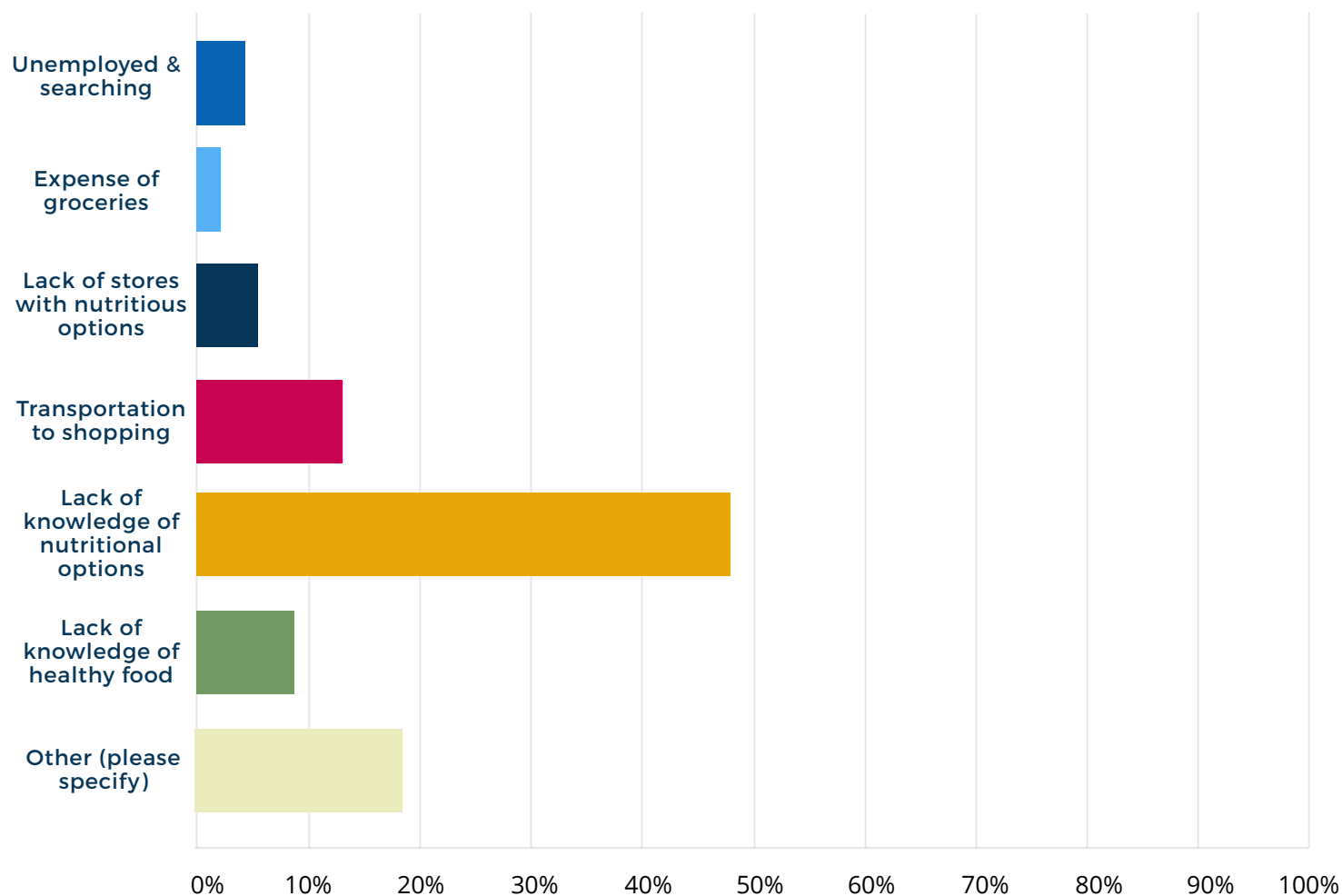
Q18 WHAT ARE YOUR TRANSPORTATION CONCERNS? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

Answered: 732   Skipped: 0
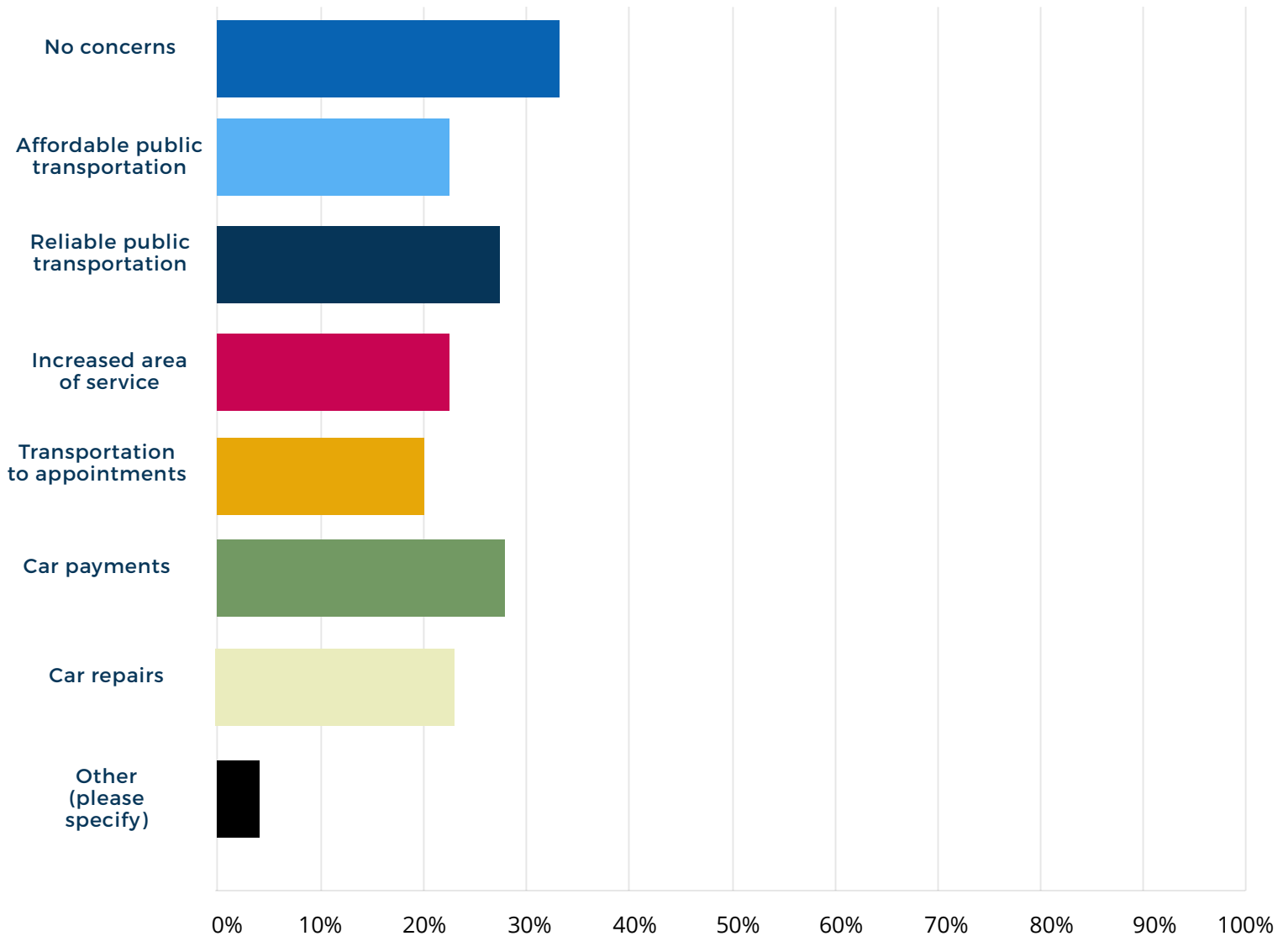
Q19 WHAT ARE YOUR COMMUNITY CONCERNS? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

Answered: 732   Skipped: 0
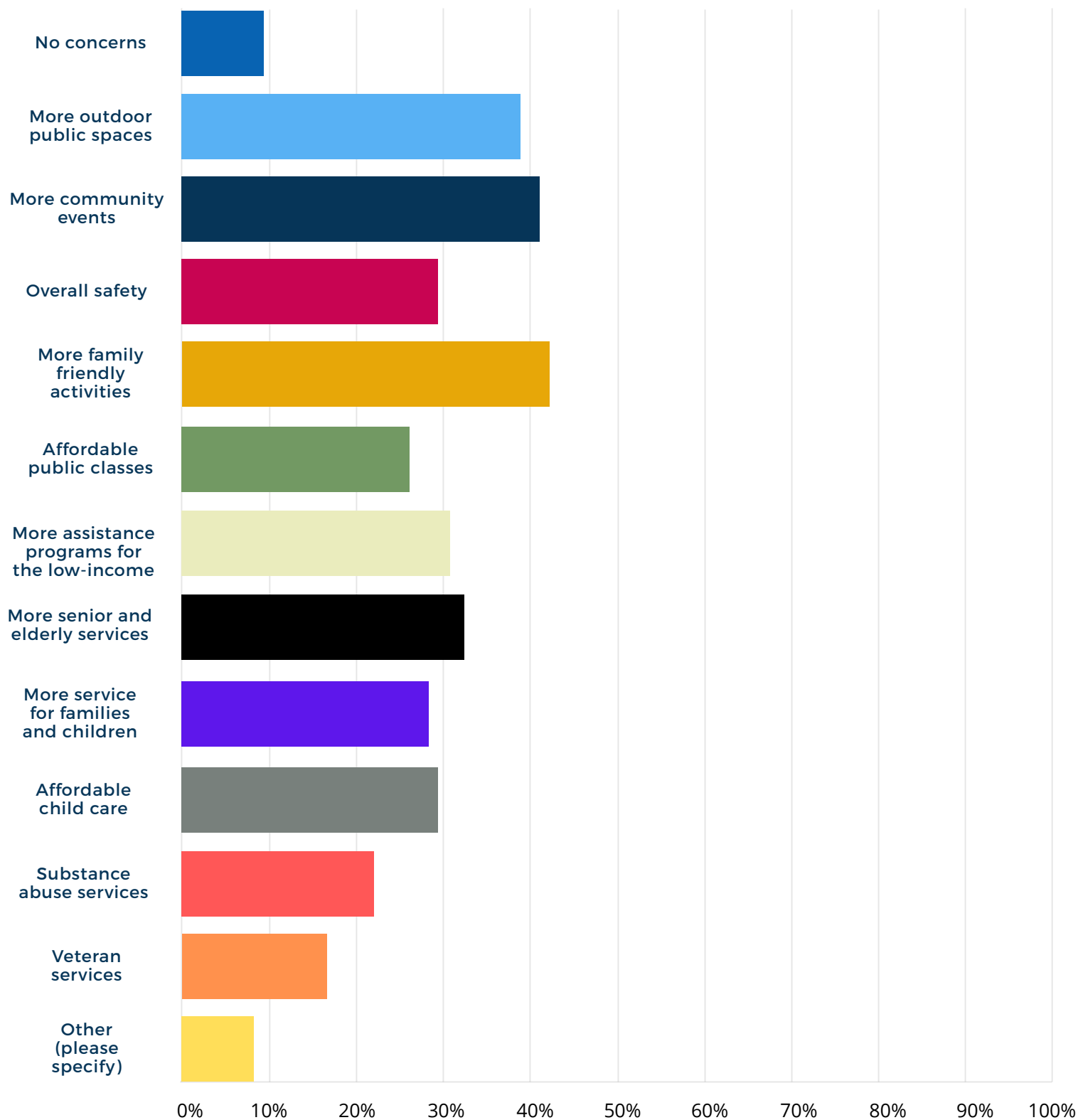
Q20 WHAT WOULD YOU CONSIDER THE TOP 5 NEEDS IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD? (1 BEING THE HIGHEST NEED AND 5 BEING THE LOWEST)

Answered: 732   Skipped: 0

KEY   1   2   3   4   5
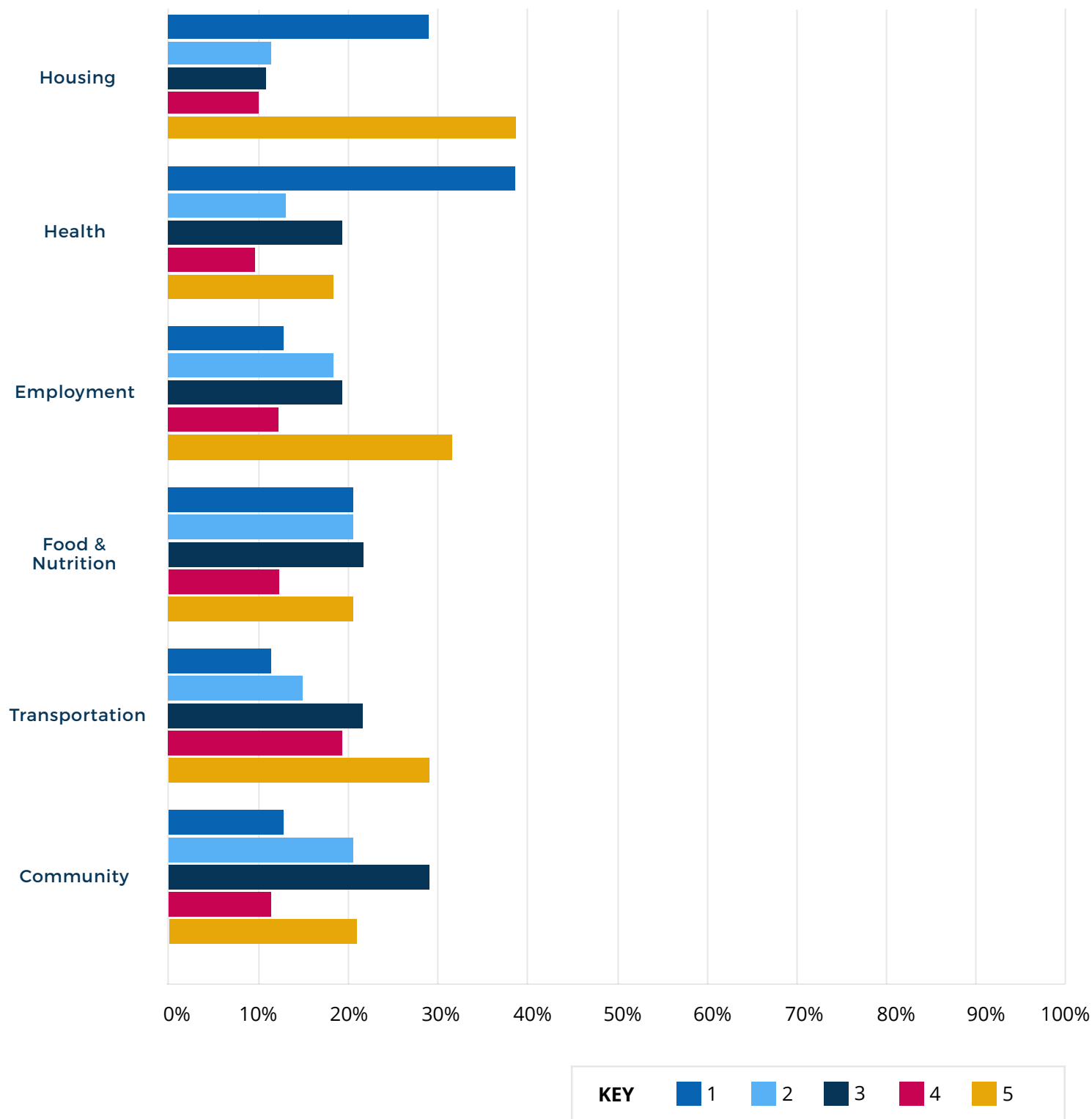
Q21 WHAT WOULD YOU CONSIDER THE TOP 5 NEEDS IN YOUR COMMUNITY? (1 BEING THE HIGHEST NEED AND 5 BEING THE LOWEST)

Answered: 732   Skipped: 0

KEY   1   2   3   4   5
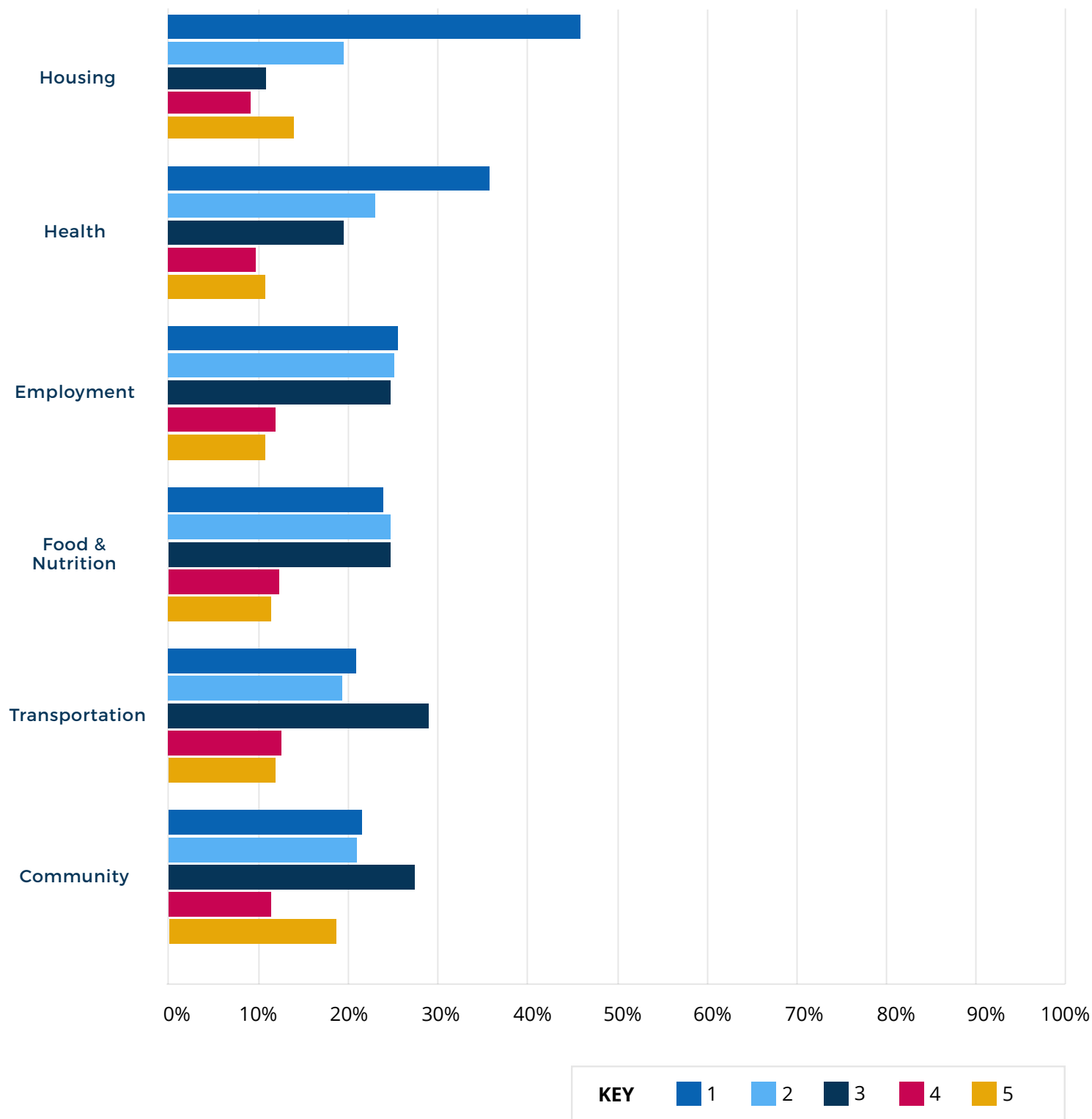
Q22 DO YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS AS TO HOW CLMCAA CAN BETTER AID OUR COMMUNITY?

Answered: 251   Skipped: 481

After filtering out blank, duplicate, and non-substantive responses (e.g., 'no,' 'n/a,' or 'not really'), 163 valid responses remained, providing rich qualitative insight into community priorities.

These responses were thematically coded into core categories such as housing, transportation, health, childcare, and communication, aligning closely with the top quantitative concerns identified in the survey.

CATEGORY	COUNT
Other/Uncategorized	65
Housing	39
Transportation	27
Health	9
Employment	8
Communication/Outreach	7
Food	6
Senior Services	5
General Praise or Neutral	2

To view each reply in detail, please reference the Q22 Deduped Responses Excel file located in the appendix. This document includes all categorized responses and offers additional context behind the community's feedback.

Q22 DEDUPED RESPONSES

B. Data Sources

Primary Source:
- CLMCAA Community Needs Assessment Survey (February–March 2025), n=732

Secondary Sources for Contextual Data:
- U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2020–2023)
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), Employment & Income Reports for Chippewa, Luce, and Mackinac Counties (2024)
- CLMCAA Strategic Plans (2016–2019, 2022–2025)
- Prior CLMCAA CNAs from 2016, 2019, and 2022

C. Participation Metrics

The 2019 Community Needs Assessment reported 945 survey responses—an apparent increase compared to other years. However, it is the only CNA cycle that included focus group input (particularly Head Start families and incoming program participants), without disaggregating these sources from general survey data.

Because responses were collected primarily through agency channels and among known clients, this year's data may reflect higher awareness and satisfaction rates that do not align with public sentiment. Furthermore, focus group feedback was not coded separately, introducing qualitative bias into what was presented as quantitative data.

For this reason, 2019 results are included for historical context only in this report.

YEAR	RESPONSES	% CHANGE FROM PRIOR	NOTES
2016	296	—	Randomized print and in-person distribution through community sites and service locations.
2019	945	+219%	*Includes focus groups and responses from current/past clients; not methodologically comparable.*
2022	341	-63.9%	Digital and printed formats with broader community outreach; stronger sampling integrity.
2025	732	+114.6%	Most robust and balanced sample to date, with segmented analysis by demographics and geography.

D. Data Segmentation Variables

The data was segmented to allow for deeper crosstab analysis by:

- **Geography**: Chippewa, Luce, Mackinac Counties
- **Age Groups**: 18–24, 25–34, 35–44, 45–54, 55–64, 65–74, 75+
- **Race & Ethnicity**: As self-reported
- **Gender Identity**
- **Household Income & Size**
  - ○ ALICE: Although they are employed—often working multiple jobs or essential roles such as caregivers, retail workers, or delivery drivers—ALICE households live paycheck to paycheck and lack sufficient savings to weather emergencies or unexpected expenses. This places them in a precarious financial position where a single crisis, such as a car repair, illness, or reduced work hours, can push them into poverty.
  - ○ ALICE households often do not qualify for public assistance, yet their income is not enough to achieve financial stability. This "in-between" status creates barriers to upward mobility and makes them especially vulnerable to economic downturns, inflation, or policy changes that do not account for their real cost of living.
  - ○ Addressing ALICE challenges requires recognizing and responding to the true cost of living in communities—often much higher than federal poverty thresholds—and implementing policies and programs that support economic mobility and resilience for working families.
- **Employment Status**
- **Housing Status**
- **Presence of Disability**
- **Number of Employed Adults in Household**

E. Notes on Analysis

- Open-ended responses (Q22) were manually coded into eight major thematic categories and cross-referenced by demographic subgroup.
- Top concerns were calculated by frequency of response, excluding "No concerns" unless otherwise noted.
- Percentages were rounded to two decimal places. Respondents could select more than one option for most questions.

CLM-Community Action Agency

Phone :
(906) 632-3363

Address :
524 Ashmun Street
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

Website :
clmcaa.org

Contact List

JOE NOLAN, CPA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

📞 906-632-3363 Ext. 132

✉️ jnolan@clmcaa.com

HEATHER JACKSON
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

📞 906-632-3363 Ext. 135

✉️ hjackson@clmcaa.com

KAREN GREGG, MAcc
FINANCE DIRECTOR

📞 906-632-3363 Ext. 134

✉️ kgregg@clmcaa.com

Department Heads

VICKI THOMAS, M.Ed.
EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

📞 906-632-3363 Ext. 117

✉️ vthomas@clmcaa.com

TONI PHILLIPS
SENIOR CARE SERVICES & TEFAP

📞 906-632-3363 Ext. 112

✉️ tphillips@clmcaa.com

JIM WEBB, MBA
HOUSING

📞 906-632-3363 Ext. 121

✉️ jwebb@clmcaa.com

TROY EARLS
TRANSPORTATION

📞 906-632-6882

✉️ tearls@clmcaa.com

MIKE DECKER
MAINTENANCE

📞 906-632-6481

✉️ mdecker@clmcaa.com

BOBBI PALMER
WEATHERIZATION

📞 906-632-3363 Ext. 118

✉️ bpalmer@clmcaa.com

Community Centers

RONALD J. CALERY CENTER
CHIPPEWA

📞 906-632-3363

NEWBERRY CENTER
LUCE
AMANDA ROBERTS

📞 906-293-5621

FENLON COMMUNITY CENTER
MACKINAC
PATTY MARIOTTI

📞 906-643-8595