

Richmond County Community Health Assessment 2025



Message from the Health Director

The North Carolina Department of Public Health requires all local health departments receiving state funding to conduct a Community Health Assessment (CHA), which provides local agencies with an opportunity to identify factors that affect the health of county residents. The county's health officials can then determine the availability of resources and programs within the county to adequately address these factors and determine what else may be needed to best address emerging health trends.

This publication of the Richmond County Community Health Assessment 2025 is the result of a great deal of work from the Richmond County Health Department and many other community members and organizations. I would like to thank each of them for their assistance in completing this extensive work. As you review the Community Health Assessment, you are provided with a glance into our population and the unique health and social concerns of Richmond County. Please use the information that follows to assist you in best providing quality services to our community.



Heather L. Horne
Health Director



Mission

The mission of the Richmond County Health Department is to help prevent disease, promote health, and protect the environment for all citizens of Richmond County, and to continually assess and respond to the health needs of the community.

This mission is based on the following beliefs:

- The health of the community supersedes individual needs
- Environment affects health
- Quality is essential
- The health of an individual affects the quality of life of the community
- All individuals should have access to basic health care
- Early intervention is the most effective
- All individuals have a responsibility for their own health
- Health can be improved to an optimum level for every individual
- Employees are valuable
- It is important to maintain an effective staff training and education program to ensure that the constantly changing and increasing public health care needs of the community can be met
- The health needs of a community are dynamic and measurable
- Good health requires a holistic approach
- Health information is essential for making choices for healthy living

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Executive Summary

For Richmond County Health Department to obtain accreditation through the NC Local Health Department Accreditation Board, a Community Health Assessment (CHA) must be completed every three or four years. The CHA identifies and prioritizes the key health problems in Richmond County. The CHA report is disseminated to the community and sent to the Division of Public Health for review. With information gathered during the CHA process, priorities are identified and a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is created.

Vision Statement

We commit, through personal and organizational excellence, to be an agent of change dedicated to achieving a healthier Richmond County.

CHA Leadership

The Richmond County Health Department (RCHD) in partnership with FirstHealth of the Carolinas' Community Health Services Department gathered information, primary data, through the facilitation of focus groups, and secondary data was gathered from credible sources such as: NC Data Portal, NC Center for Health Statistics, and County Health Rankings. Our community, residents, community partners, and stakeholders provided insight into the needs of our community which led to the development of health priorities we will use to guide the improvement and overall health of our county.

CHA Team Members:

Name	Affiliated Organization
Heather Horne	Richmond County Health Department
Allison Smith	Richmond County Health Department
Jenny Boney	Richmond County Health Department
Nancy Porter	Richmond County Health Department
Kendra Faries	Richmond County Health Department
Tommy Jarrell	Richmond County Government Special Projects Coordinator
Martie Butler	Richmond County Government Economic Developer
Tammie Gainey	Sandhills Best Care
Mark Gullede	Richmond County Sheriff
George Gillenwater	Police Chief, City of Rockingham
Katrina Chance	Partnership for Children
Cheri Bennett	Cooperative Extension
Melvin Ingram	Richmond County Schools
Amy Hamilton-Forester	FirstHealth of the Carolinas
Samantha Allen	FirstHealth of the Carolinas
Anthony Ward	Trillium
Linda Ross	Faith Assembly Outreach Ministries
Jimmy McDonald	Photography
Theresa Smith	Drug Endangered Family Taskforce (DEFT)
Sheila Brosier	Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC)

Partnerships

We would like to acknowledge the community leaders, focus group participants, and local community organizations who participated or assisted in the development of the 2025 CHA process.

Partnerships Represented	Number of Partners	Partnerships Represented	Number of Partners
Public Health Agency	5	Community Organizations	4
Hospital	2	Educational Institutions	1
Healthcare Provider	1	Community Members	2
Behavioral Health Services	1	Other	2
First Responders	2		

Theoretical Framework

The Population Health Model was used to select data indicators and to create a guide for the 2025 Richmond County Community Health Assessment. With the Population Health Model, outcomes are split into four categories: health care, health behavior, physical environment, and social determinants of health. Length of life and quality of life are also important measures. The policies and programs offered by local public health agencies aim to impact these health factors and lead to improved health outcomes such as increased length or quality of life.

The Healthy North Carolina 2030 project uses similar objectives to impact the health of the state. In addition, Healthy North Carolina 2030 places an additional focus on health equity and determinants of health (NCIOM, n.d.). The local Community Health Assessment process includes involving members of the community to determine key health problems and to help identify solutions. Primary and secondary data were collected throughout this process, and local, county, state, and national sources were used.

Collaborative Processes

In May of 2024, the Richmond County Health Department (RCHD) began the Community Health Assessment (CHA) by gathering community partners to determine the goals and structure for our county assessment. Both primary and secondary data were gathered to develop the 2025 CHA. The RCHD CHA Team met in August of 2024 and decided to use focus groups to gather the primary data for the 2025 CHA. It was decided that RCHD would work in conjunction with FirstHealth of the Carolinas to gather data. The health department and hospital would receive feedback from stakeholders and community members by holding focus groups in Richmond County. From January to March 2025, five focus groups were held in various areas of the county and reached various age groups.



Source: Jimmy McDonald

Harrington Square, Rockingham

Key Findings

In focus groups compiled of Richmond County residents, the rise in the homeless population in our county was commonly stated as a concern. Also revealed in the focus groups was the issue of substance abuse and the theme that substance abuse leads to higher



Source: Jimmy McDonald Bostick Schoolhouse, Ellerbe

crime rates, contributes to homelessness, and negatively impacts the safety of our county. The Drug Endangered Family Taskforce (DEFT) works to address opioid and substance abuse in Richmond County. FirstHealth of the Carolinas, Samaritan Colony, Richmond Community College, and Sandhills Best Care are some of the community partners receiving funding to provide services to individuals recovering from substance abuse.

Secondary data offered a wider view of the health of our county. Important findings included population decline, consistent leading causes of death, low life expectancy, high poverty level of residents, and health issues that are not being managed due to the small number of health care providers in our county.

Health Priorities

The CHA team met to identify the top health priorities for Richmond County. The committee analyzed the primary and secondary data that was gathered during the CHA development process. It was determined that the health priorities that need attention are substance abuse, homelessness, and chronic disease.

Substance Abuse	Substance Abuse, including tobacco, illicit drugs, and alcohol, were identified as pressing concerns for community members. Our secondary data shows Richmond County has one of the highest Fentanyl related death rates in North Carolina. Early intervention in the youth population can prevent future negative health outcomes or severe addiction.
Homelessness	Homelessness was identified as a priority through community feedback. Richmond County Schools also reported an increase in the total number of students experiencing homelessness in recent years. Collaboration from multiple agencies is needed to help this population find safe housing options to provide stability and improve quality of life.
Chronic Disease	The top two leading causes of death in Richmond County have consistently been diseases of the heart and cancer. Strategies to manage chronic disease rates include nutrition education, tobacco prevention and cessation, exercise and fitness promotion, and alcohol reduction. With early preventative measures, our aim is to increase life expectancy and quality of life of county residents.

Next Steps

1)

Disseminate the CHA

Presentations on the CHA and health priorities will be given at local meetings. Copies will also be available at local libraries, at the Richmond County Health Department, and on the county's website:

<https://www.richmondnc.com/>

2)

Develop CHIP and Strategic Plan

A Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) will be developed with community partners, and the Richmond County Health Department will create a strategic plan to address urgent health issues.

3)

Implement Health Programs

The priorities and strategies identified will be put into action through programs, policies, and partnerships that address the community's health needs.

County Geography



Data Source: <https://uscountymaps.com/richmond-county-map-north-carolina/>

Richmond County is located on the central southern border of North Carolina and is bordered by Anson County, Montgomery County, Moore County, Scotland County and Marlboro County in South Carolina. The county has a total area of 479.70 square miles of which 473.69 square miles is land, making it the 38th largest county in North Carolina by land area. The Piedmont, Sandhills, and Coastal Plain physiographic regions meet in Richmond County. The western part of the county, which includes part of the Uwharrie Mountains, is in the Piedmont region while the central and eastern parts of the county are in the Sandhills and Coastal Plain.

Richmond County has 3 main municipalities. The city of Rockingham, the county seat of Richmond County, was historically known for textile mills, the city of Hamlet was known for its railroad industry, and the town of Ellerbe was known for farming.

County Demographics

Population

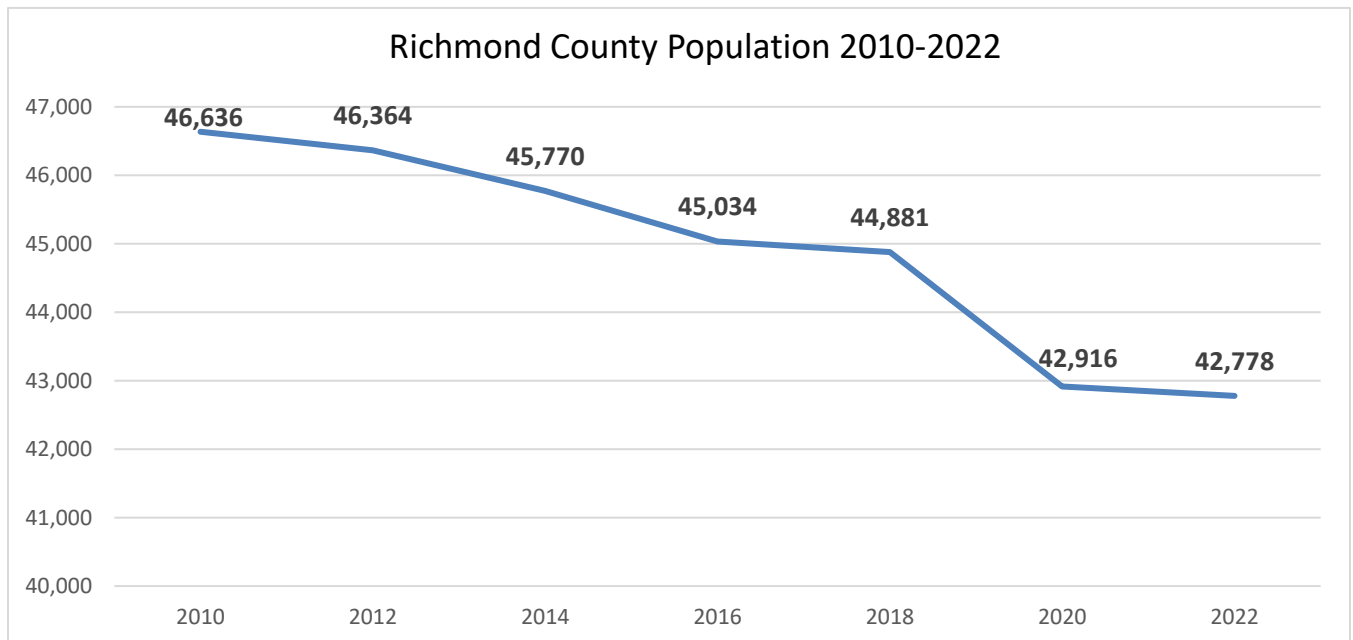
According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the population of Richmond County has dropped 8.3 percent from 2010 to 2022 while the state of North Carolina's population grew by 11.7 percent, and the United States total population grew by 7.7 percent.



Source: Jimmy McDonald

Visitor's Center, Rockingham

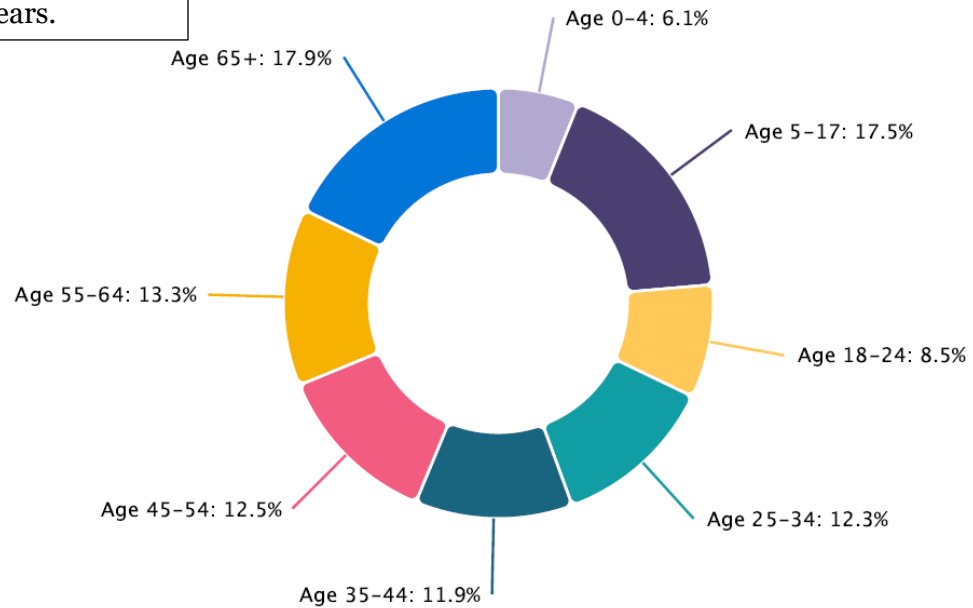
According to the United States Census Bureau, the 2024 population estimate for Richmond County was 41,990 people. This graph shows the steady decline in the population of Richmond County, North Carolina, from 2010 to 2022.



Age

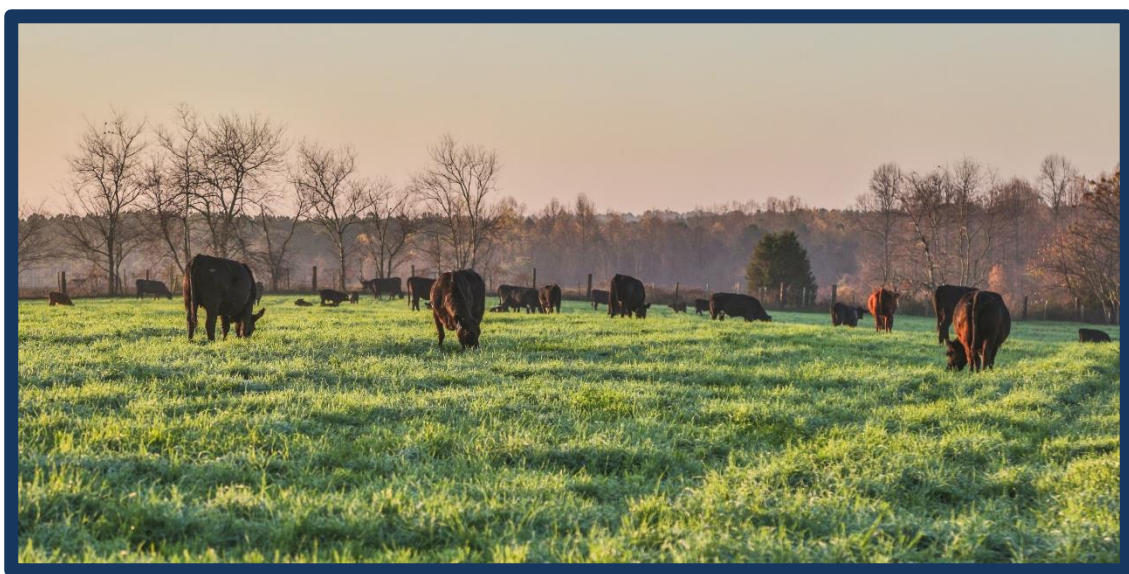
Richmond County Percentage of Population by Age Group

Note that the age group categories **do not** all contain the same number of years.



Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2019-23.
ncdataportal.org,

Based on the 2024 population estimates from the U.S. Census, the population of Richmond County is moderately balanced among the different age groups, with the highest percentage (17.9%) being the 65 years and older group.



Source: Jimmy McDonald

Cattle Farming, Ellerbe

Population Percentages of Age Groups Compared to Adjoining Counties and the State of North Carolina

Report Area	Age 0-4	Report Area	Age 5-17
Scotland County	6.37%	Richmond County	17.54%
Richmond County	6.07%	North Carolina	16.29%
Moore County	5.84%	Scotland County	16.14%
North Carolina	5.65%	Moore County	15.92%
Anson County	5.23%	Montgomery County	15.78%
Montgomery County	5.07%	Anson County	15.03%
Report Area	Age 18-24	Report Area	Age 25-34
Scotland County	9.59%	North Carolina	13.37%
North Carolina	9.45%	Scotland County	13.36%
Richmond County	8.50%	Montgomery County	12.83%
Anson County	8.38%	Anson County	12.81%
Montgomery County	7.15%	Richmond County	12.31%
Moore County	6.28%	Moore County	11.60%

Population Percentages of Age Groups Compared to Adjoining Counties and the State of North Carolina

Report Area	Age 35-44		
North Carolina	12.71%	Report Area	Age 45-54
Anson County	12.52%	North Carolina	12.76%
Moore County	12.51%	Richmond County	12.53%
Scotland County	11.96%	Anson County	12.25%
Richmond County	11.85%	Montgomery County	12.06%
Montgomery County	10.79%	Scotland County	11.98%
		Moore County	10.95%
Report Area	Age 55-64		
Montgomery County	14.51%	Report Area	Age 65 +
Anson County	13.86%	Moore County	24.05%
Richmond County	13.34%	Montgomery County	21.82%
North Carolina	12.88%	Anson County	19.92%
Moore County	12.86%	Richmond County	17.86%
Scotland County	12.75%	Scotland County	17.86%
		North Carolina	16.88%

Since 2010, our county has seen a steady decline in population. When comparing Richmond County with its four bordering North Carolina counties and the state, Richmond County had the highest percentage of population in the age group 5-17 years old. This represents the age group enrolled in school for grades kindergarten through eleventh/twelfth grade. This helps explain our school system, Richmond County Schools, being the largest employer in the county. In comparison, Richmond County never held any of the lowest percentages in any age group, however, it did hold the second to the lowest in the age groups 25-34 and 35-44. This reflects the fact that many residents leave the county during early adulthood in search of employment.



Source: Jimmy McDonald

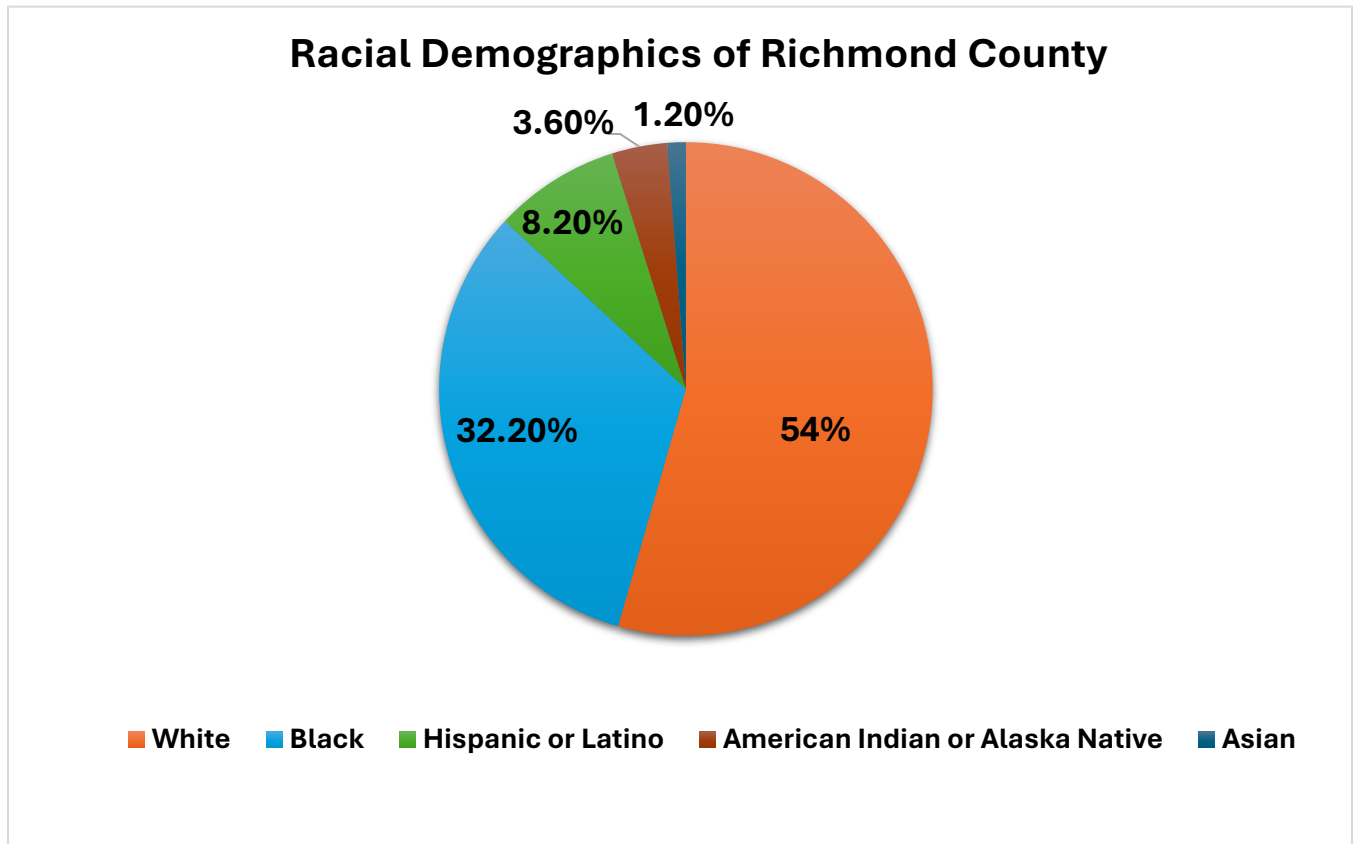
Seaboard Locomotive, Hamlet

Race

According to the United States Census Bureau, the 2024 population estimate for Richmond County was 41,990 people. This can also be broken down into race and Hispanic origin. Over half, 54%, of the population identified as white, 32.2% identified as black and 8.2% identified as Hispanic or Latino. The full breakdown is listed below.

Note: These are the projected estimates for 2024 based on the U.S. Census from 2020. The percentages listed do not equal to 100 and should be treated as estimates.

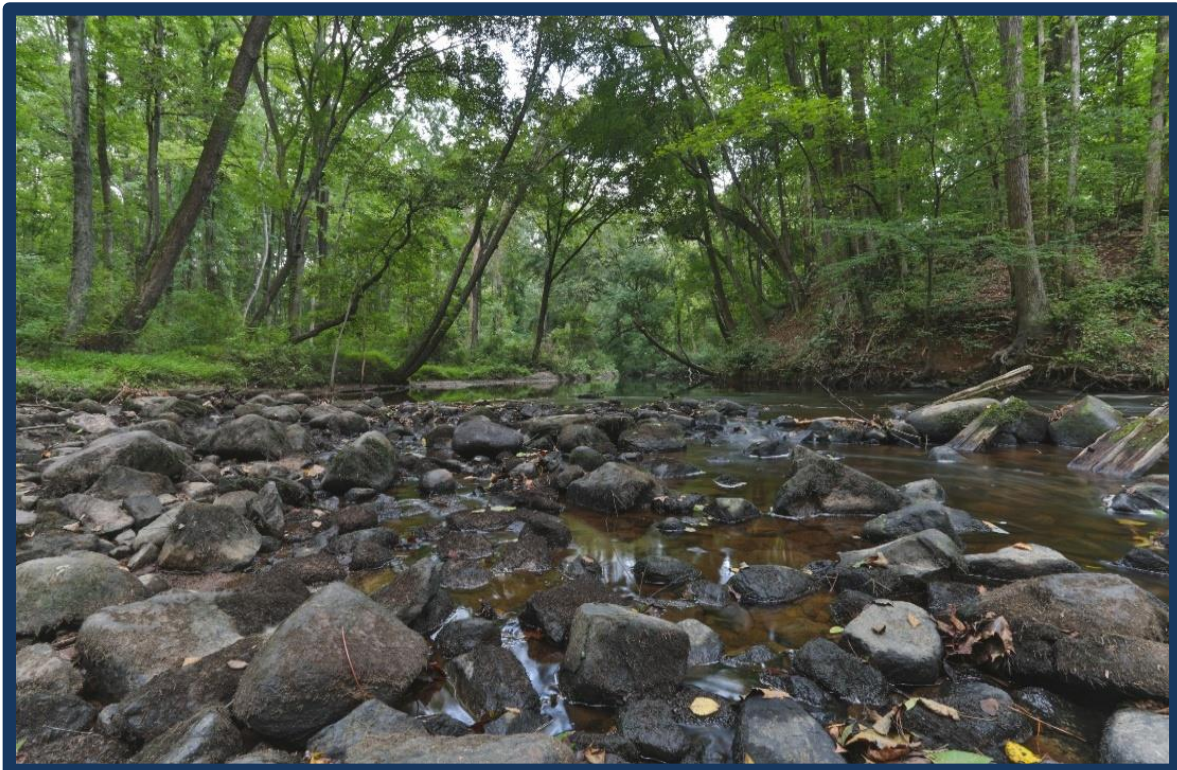
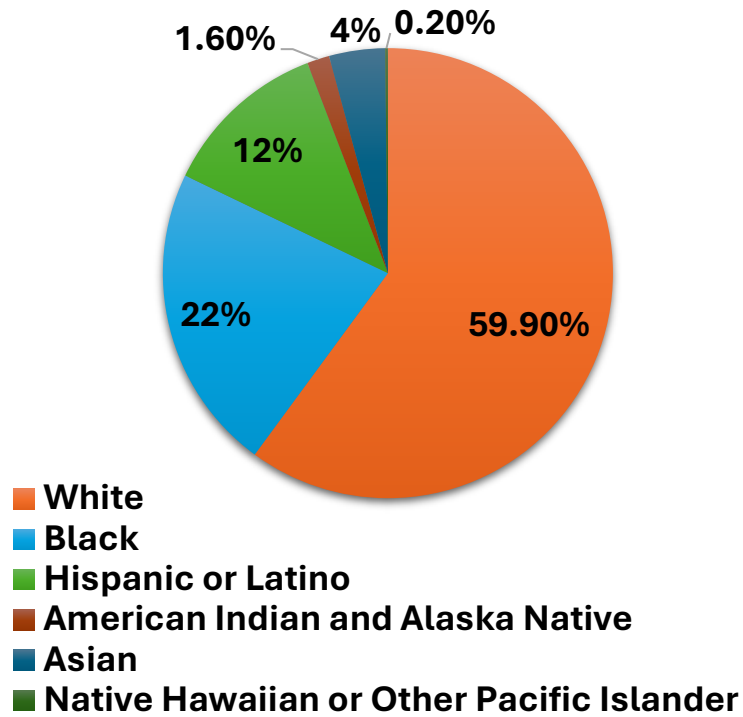
Data Source: United States Census Bureau



<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/richmondcountynorthcarolina/RHI125224#RHI125224>

Richmond County has a higher minority population than North Carolina of Black and American Indian or Alaska Native individuals. In addition, 2.8% of North Carolina citizens were reported as two or more races. In Richmond County, this number was higher at 3.0%.

Racial Demographics of North Carolina

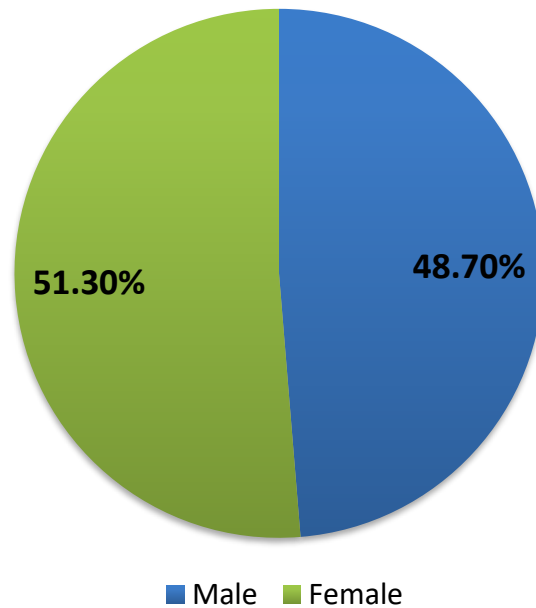


Source: Jimmy McDonald

Hitchcock Creek, Rockingham

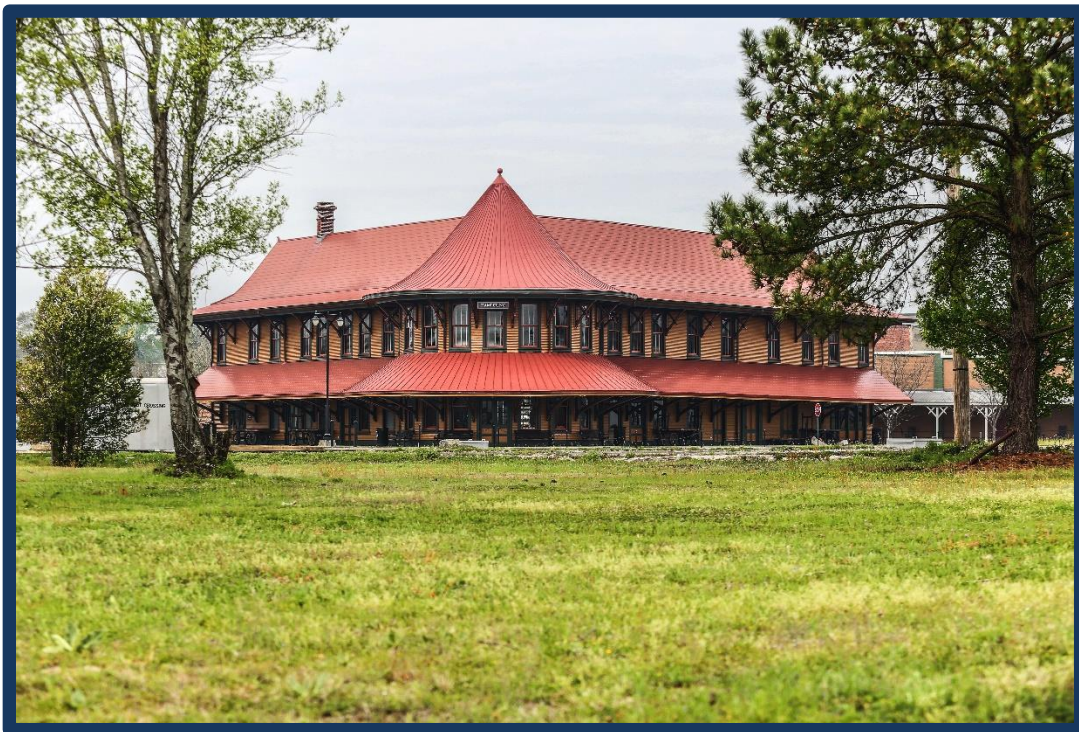
Gender

Demographics of Richmond County by Gender



Data Source: United States Census Bureau <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/NC/PST045225>

Richmond County has a higher population of females to males; however, the split is almost even at 51.3% and 48.7%.



Source: Jimmy McDonald

Hamlet Train Station, Built 1900

Primary Data

The primary data was collected directly from Richmond County residents. This data is original and unprocessed. It was gathered from direct conversations to obtain insights and opinions from county residents.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a focus group consists of a small group of people with shared interests meeting together with a facilitator who asks their thoughts and opinions on a topic. Focus group participants are encouraged to share their perspectives from their point of view. The benefit of using focus groups is that the group dynamic can provide insightful qualitative feedback on a topic. It can be especially useful for discussing community issues that may be hard to capture in a quantitative study. However, there are some disadvantages of using focus groups.

Due to the small number of people, focus groups are susceptible to bias through the facilitator or persons in the group (CDC, 2018). If someone comes into a focus group with a particularly strong opinion on a subject, they have the potential to steer the group towards their opinion. This demonstrates the importance of a strong facilitator to keep the group on track and to make sure all participants can be heard. Focus groups also do not provide information on individual beliefs or groups not represented (CDC, 2018). The information learned in a focus group can only be associated with the perspectives of that specific group and not outside people. Focus group results and secondary data will be compared to identify key findings and health priorities.

Focus Groups and Locations

Dobbins Heights Community Center	Adult Group
Hamlet Soup Kitchen	Adult Group
Richmond Community College	Adult Group
Richmond Senior High School	Youth Group
FirstHealth-Richmond Campus First Responders	Adult Group

Representatives in the five groups included community members, educational leaders, businesses, students, healthcare personnel, social services employees, public health staff, and first responders. Focus group settings allow participants to provide individual ideas on current health and community needs.

Of the five focus groups surveyed, one group, Richmond Senior High School, represents the county's youth population. This focus group was with the Richmond Senior High Senate members and all fourteen participants reported being in the twelfth grade. Data collection from the four additional focus groups were compiled as adult focus group responses.



Source: Jimmy McDonald

Richmond Community College Conder Building, Hamlet

Focus Group Questions

The following questions were created by First Health Community Health Services for the 2025 Community Health Assessment.

Focus Group Guide Questions:

- 1) What does your vision of a healthy community look like?
- 2) What would you say are the top 3 concerns facing your community?
- 3) What are some things/resources that your community needs to become healthier?
- 4) What are some ways the health system and/or public health department can help improve the health of the community?
- 5) What do you enjoy most about your community?
- 6) Is there anything else that you would like us to know about your community?

Additional questions were asked for youth community feedback.

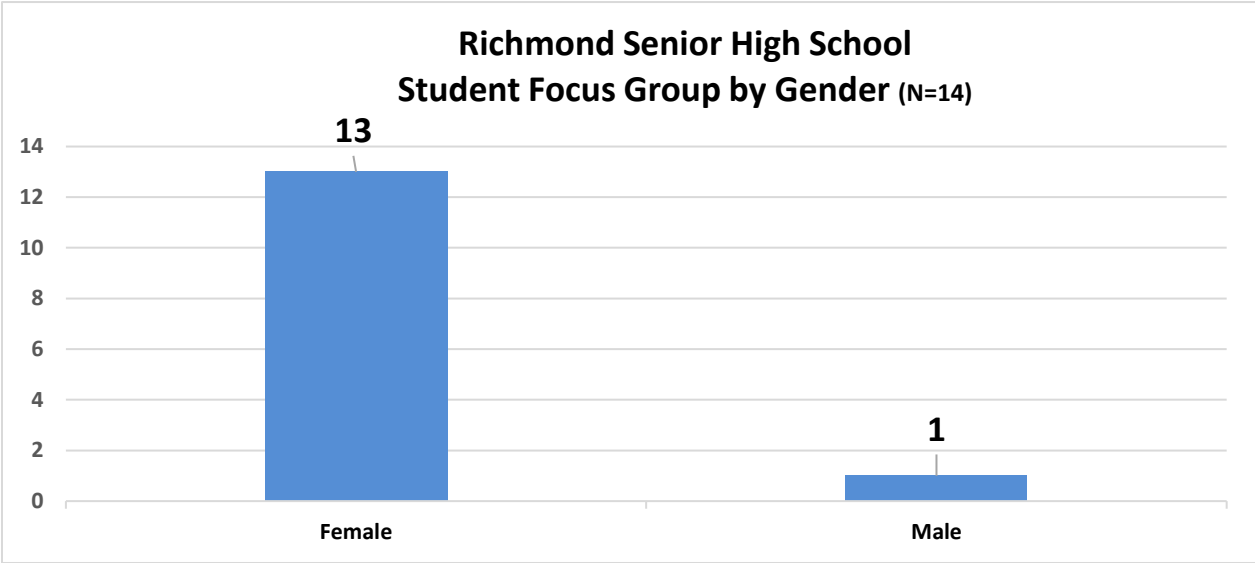
These included:

- How do you keep up with what is happening in your community?
- What are your plans after graduation?
- Do you plan to stay in the county? Why/why not?
- If you could change anything about your community, what would it be? Is there anything you feel is needed?

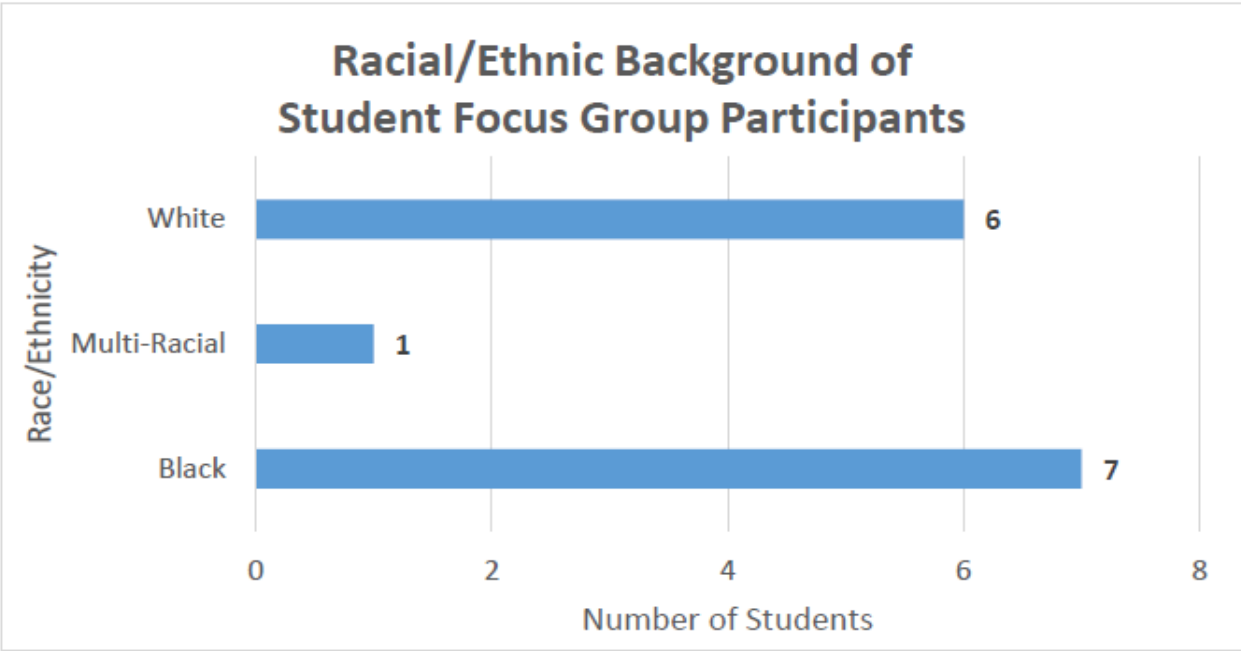
Demographic information was also collected for all participant groups through a confidential survey.

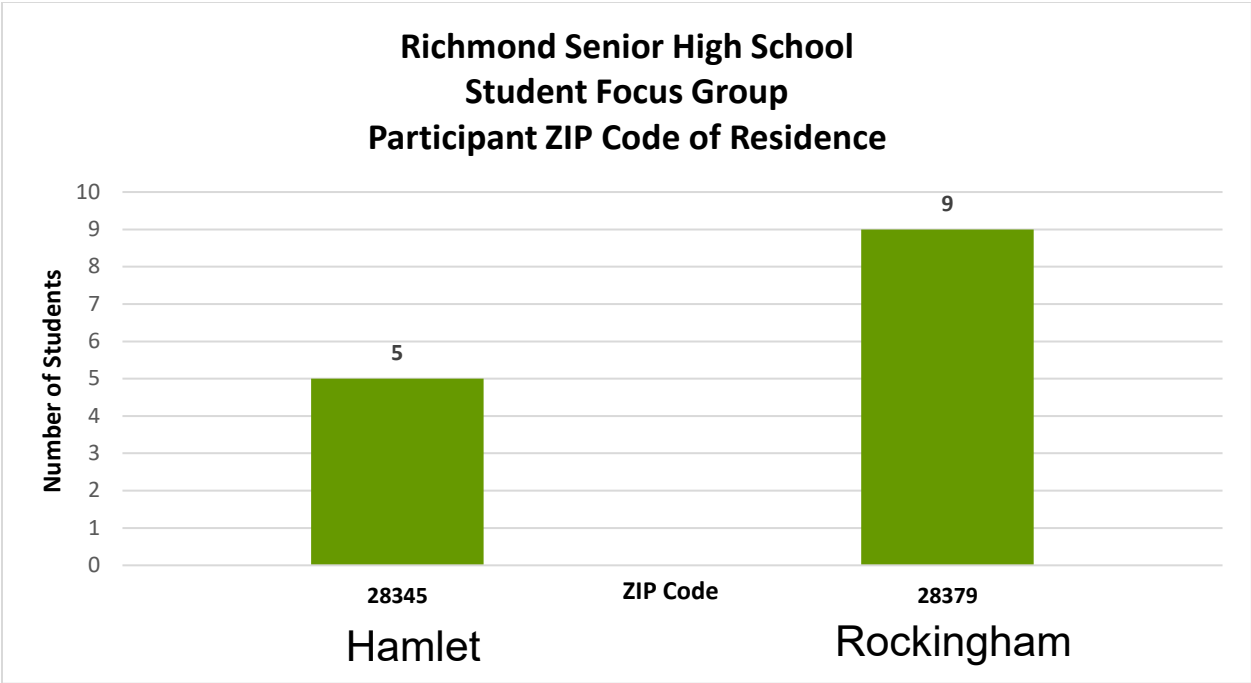
Youth Focus Group Findings

Demographics of Focus Group Participants Richmond Senior High School Student Focus Group



The Richmond Senior High School Senate Focus Group was predominantly female, but almost equally diverse when it came to racial/ethnic background.





A ZIP (Zone Improvement Plan) Code of 28345 typically represents residing in Hamlet while 28379 represents residing in Rockingham. These are the two largest municipalities in Richmond County.



Source: Jimmy McDonald

Harrington Square, Rockingham

Youth Focus Group Responses

When asked to identify the top three concerns facing their community, the following responses were frequently mentioned.

- Financial stability for families
 - Need for higher paying jobs in the county
 - More jobs that are willing to hire teens
 - More resources for families who are struggling financially
- Homelessness
 - More food donations for food banks
- Safety-no safe places for youth to gather with peers, no safe places to be active
 - Lack of recreational opportunities for youth over age 13
 - Need for community events that appeal to young people
 - Strengthening community by holding events that make young people feel included

Participants revealed that if they could change anything about their community they would:

- Create a sense of community with a revitalization of downtown Hamlet to increase support for local businesses
- Have the communities of the county come together to discourage trash being dumped on the side of roadways and in bodies of water through a cleanup project

Youth revealed their plans for residency after high school graduation:

- Over half the youth plan to leave the county to attend college or move to a bigger city

- Those that plan on staying in Richmond County cited reasons being
 - Remaining close to family
 - Save money before moving elsewhere
- Unsure

Plans for their future included:

- Attending a 4-year college or university
- Attending a community college/trade school
- Working
- Moving to a larger city

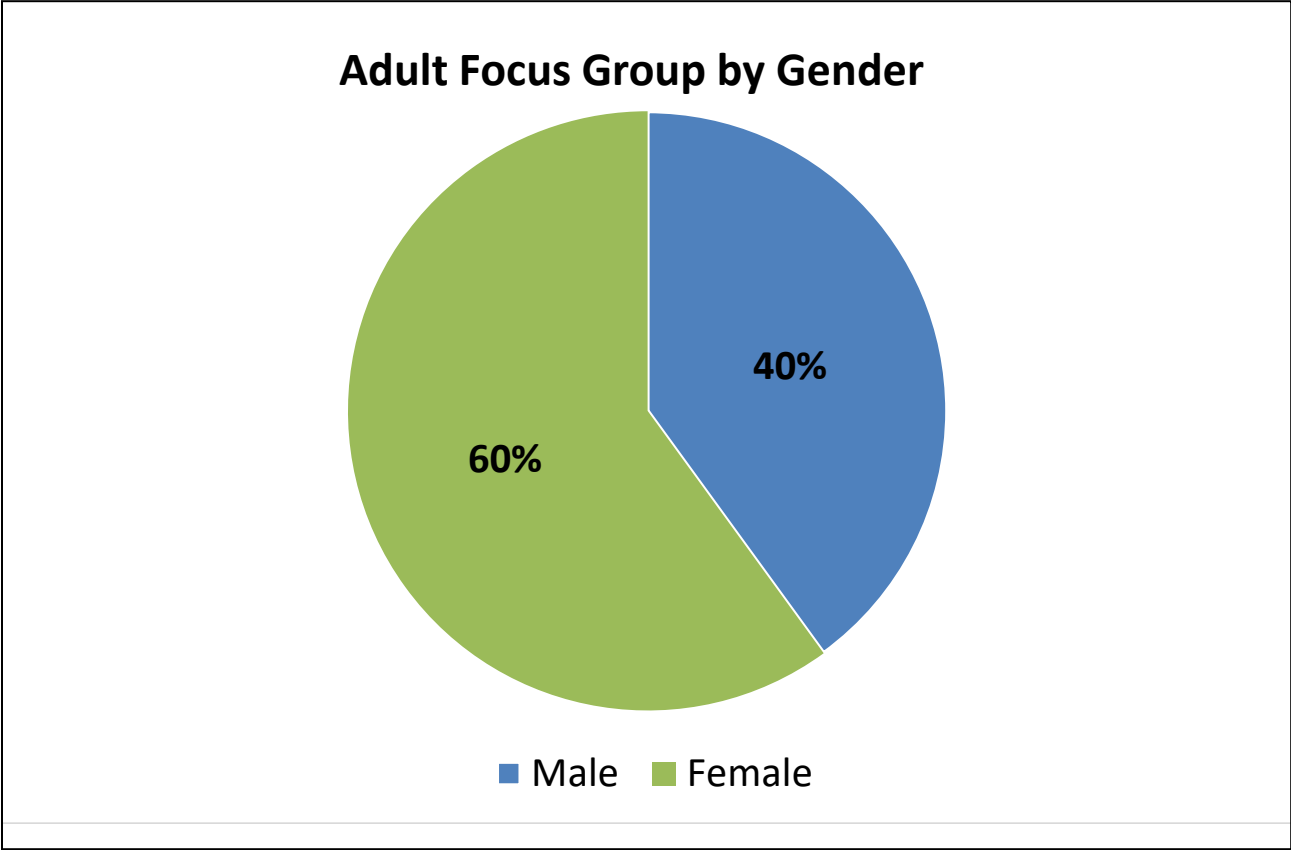
Other comments made during our youth focus group:

- Most students get news about community events from social media, not billboards or flyers
- Nothing for older kids to do for recreation/fun
 - Youth are judged if they go to parks
 - No sports offered by Parks and Recreation for older teens
 - Don't always feel safe walking around downtown
- Richmond County does not have medical specialty services or services are limited
 - Hospital does not deliver babies
 - Need behavioral health
 - Need eye doctors and other specialty doctors
- Youth must leave the county after high school for educational and economic opportunities
- Richmond Community College offers a lot of “male-focused” programs

Adult Focus Group Findings

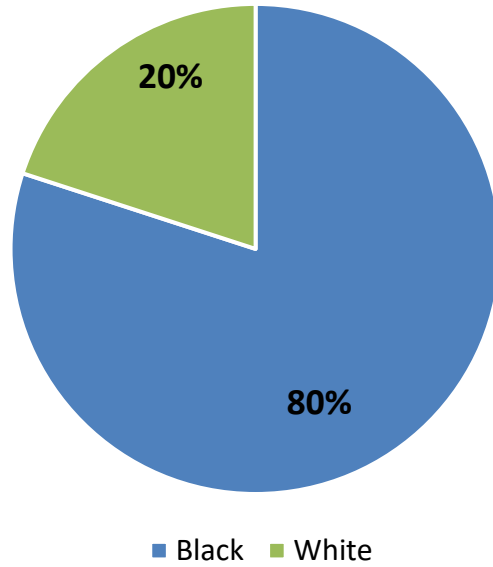
The four adult focus groups were held in different areas of the county which were easily accessible to residents.

Demographics of our Adult Focus Group Participants

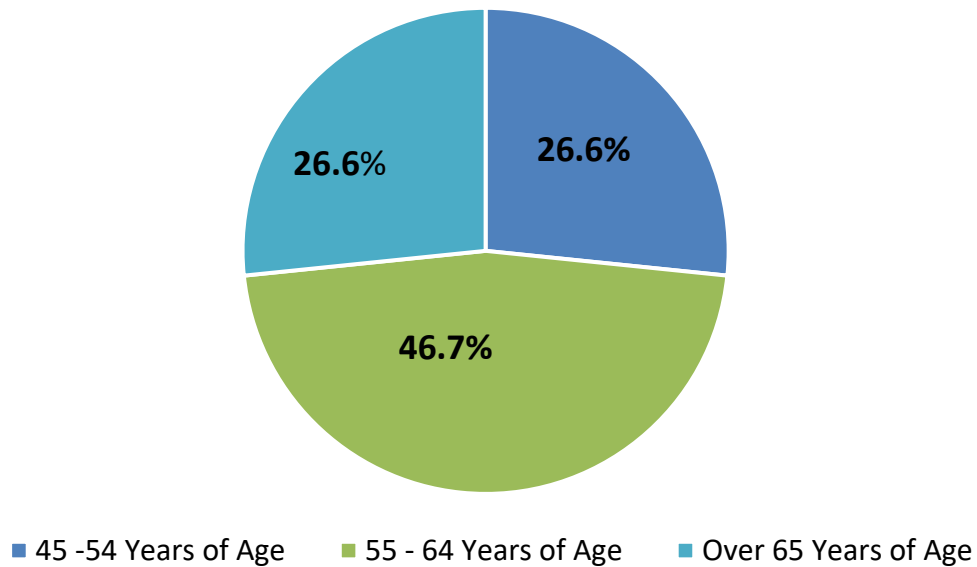


The gender makeup of the adult focus groups was better balanced than the youth, with a 60% female to 40% male ratio.

Adult Focus Group by Race

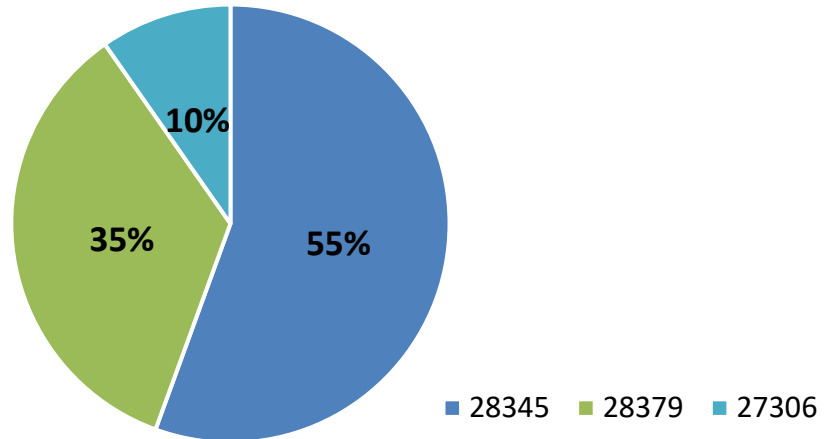


Adult Focus Groups Representation by Age



In the adult focus groups, the participants' race was predominantly black, and the age range was predominantly 55-64 years.

Adult Focus Group ZIP Codes



Typically, a ZIP Code of 28345 represents participants residing in Hamlet, 28379 in Rockingham, and 27306 in the northern section of the county near Ellerbe and the Montgomery/Richmond County line.

Adult Focus Group Responses

When asked to identify the top three concerns facing their community, the following responses were mentioned most frequently:

- Homelessness
 - Surrounding areas bring their homeless to our county and drop them here
- Drug use / Drug related crime
 - Lack of behavioral health resources
 - Substance Use Disorders (SUD) are abundant
 - Need to put the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program back in schools
- Lack of Education Services
 - Need more partnerships between communities and schools
 - Lack of After School programs/Daycares

When asked to share their vision for a healthy community, participants shared these thoughts and themes:

- Members of the community come together to help each other
 - Unity in the county
 - Pride in being a resident of Richmond County
 - Community Watch Groups with law enforcement advisory personnel
 - Community engagement, neighbors include elderly in daily responsibilities
 - Social recognition for helping in the community
- Safe Community
 - Neat and clean neighborhoods
 - Community alert system
 - Clean up drug activity
 - Less violence
 - Educating community on police work/happenings
- Communication to the public regarding available resources and how to access them
 - Affordable housing
 - Funding for community projects
 - Gaining skills needed to request and manage funds for community projects
 - More resources for the homeless population
- Need more organized sports for all ages
 - Provide exercise and fun
 - Build confidence
 - Not about winning or losing
 - Feeling good about yourself, benefits mental health
- Perceived health needs for the county
 - Community health workers that are members of the community

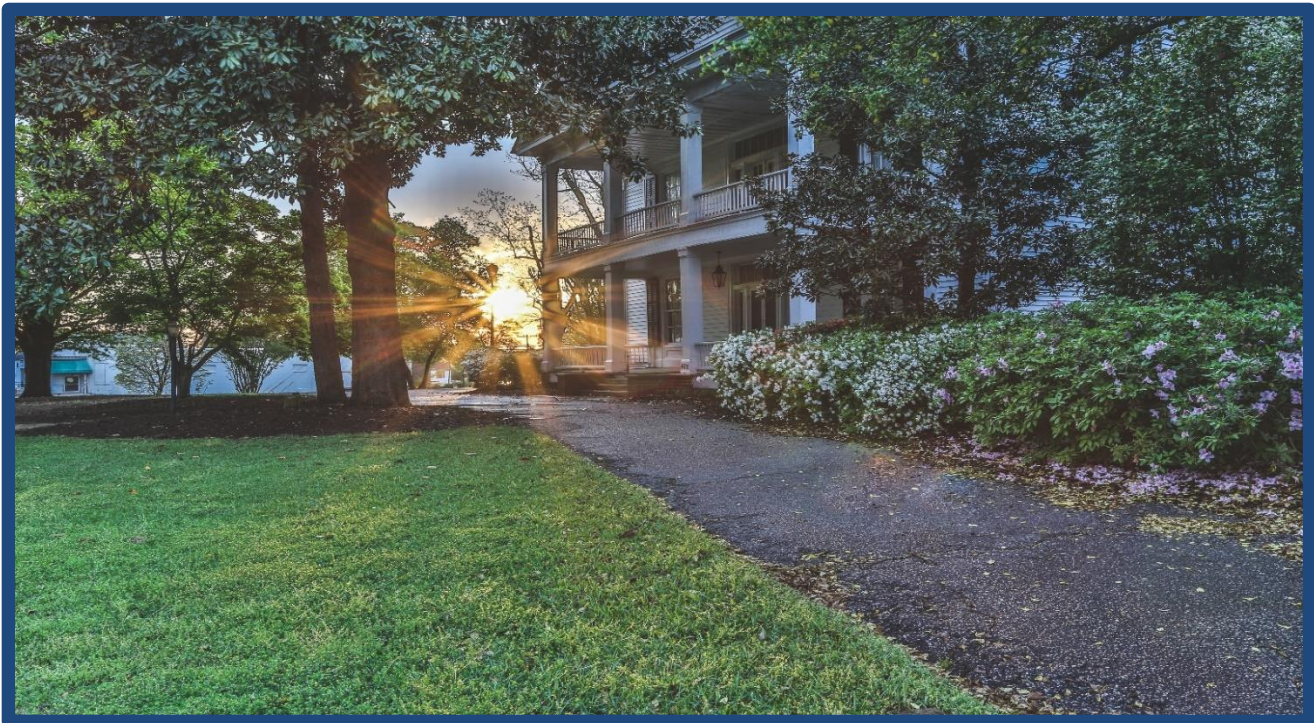
- Community Paramedic Program
- Support for caregivers
- Chronic disease management programs in the community

Results of All Focus Groups

Top Three Community Issues Identified by all Community Focus Groups During Primary Data Gathering

- Homelessness
- Drug Use / Drug Related Crime / Safety
- Educational Opportunities / Leading to Financial Stability for families

The results of all focus groups were presented to the CHA team to determine the priorities for Richmond County, with collaboration from other community groups and agencies including the Richmond County Health Department. These priorities will be addressed in the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).



Source: Jimmy McDonald

Leak-Wall House, Built 1853, Rockingham

Secondary Data

Secondary data differs from primary data in that it is collected and processed by others. For the 2025 Richmond County Community Health Assessment, secondary data was gathered from credible websites such as:

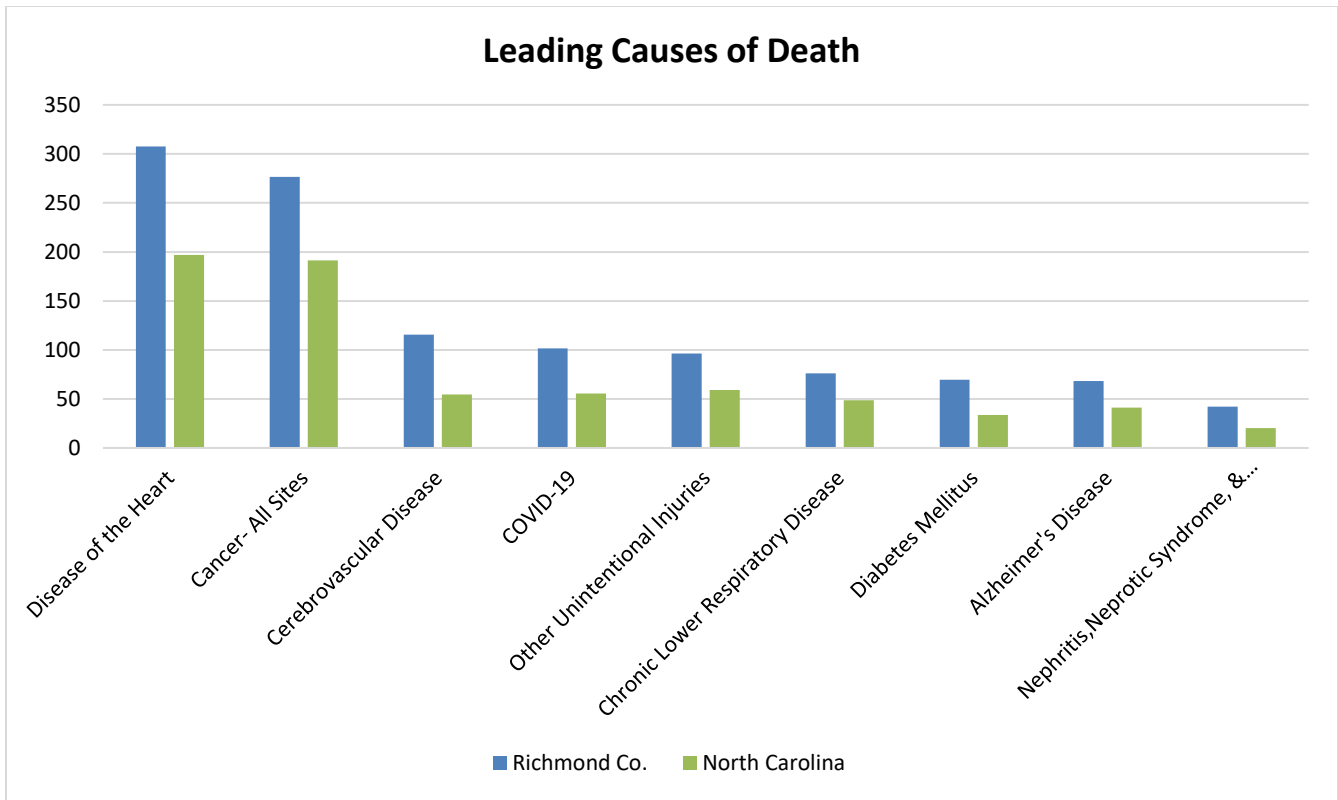
- NC Data Portal
 - Accesses various datasets related to North Carolina
- NC Center for Health Statistics
 - Part of NC Department of Health and Human Services responsible for data collection
- County Health Rankings
 - Assesses the health of nearly every county in the United States

Health Outcomes

Leading Causes of Death

According to the North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics 2025 County Health Data Book, Richmond County's top leading causes of death for the reporting year 2025 all have a higher death rate than the state for the same causes of death. COVID-19 appeared in the top ten in reporting year 2023 which was for the range of years 2017- 2021 and currently the county's fourth leading cause of death for reporting year 2025 which covers 2019-2023.

Since reporting year 2006, Richmond County's top two causes of death for all ages have stayed the same with diseases of the heart being number one and cancer, all sites, being number two.



Data Source: North Carolina County Health Data Book – 2025, NC Department of Health and Human Services Division of Public Health State Center for Health Statistics <https://schs.dph.ncdhhs.gov/data/databook/>

Richmond County 20 Year History of the Top 10 Leading Causes of Death

Cause of Death – All Ages	Number of times in the past 20 years that the cause has appeared in the top 10 causes of death in Richmond County.
Diseases of the Heart	20
Cancer - All Sites	20
Other Unintentional Injuries	20
Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases	20
Diabetes Mellitus	20
Nephritis, Nephrotic Syndrome, and Nephrosis	20

Cerebrovascular Disease	20
Alzheimer’s Disease	13
Motor Vehicle Injuries	13
Pneumonia and Influenza	9
Hypertension	9
Chronic Liver Disease and Cirrhosis	7
Septicemia	4
COVID-19	3
Suicide	3

Adult Health

Cancer Incidence

Trends in All Types of Cancer Incidence Rates (2014–2022), by Year: North Carolina Counties and Statewide

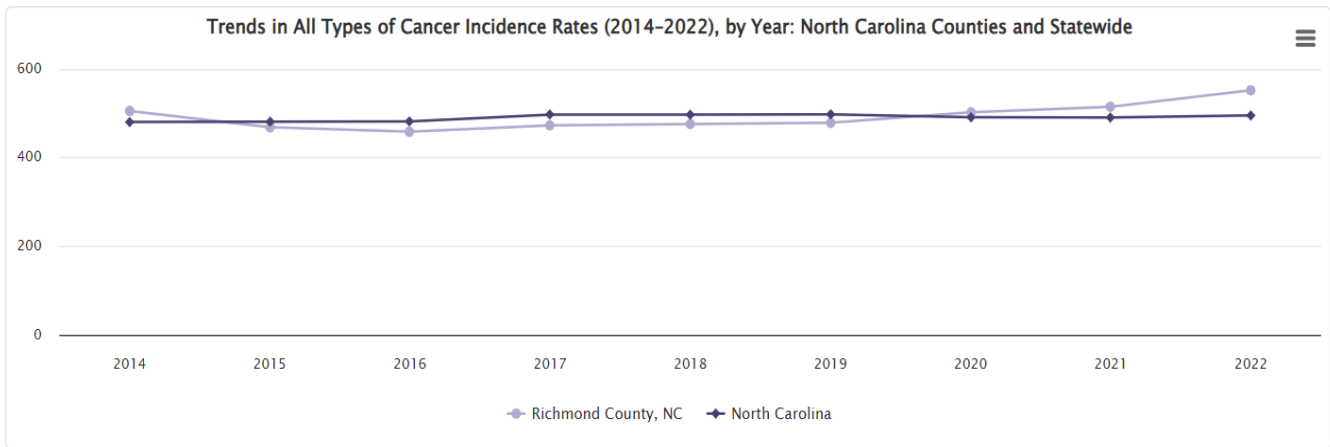
The table and chart below display trends in all cancer incidence rates per 100,000 population across North Carolina counties and statewide from 2014 to 2022.

Report Area	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Richmond County, NC	505.4	468.6	458.5	473	475.9	478.7	502.4	515	552.3
North Carolina	480.4	481.4	481.9	497.4	496.9	497.9	491	490.6	495.3

Data Source: NCDHHS, Division of Public Health, North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics. 2022. → [Show more details](#)

Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

Cancer, all sites, has been in the top 10 causes of death for the past 20 years in Richmond County. When comparing all types of cancer incidence rates per 100,000 population (2014-2022), Richmond County and the state have had similar rates with averages that range from 458/100,000 in 2016 to 552/100,000 in 2022.



Data Source: NCDHHS, Division of Public Health, North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics. 2022.
 Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

North Carolina’s cancer incidence rate has remained consistent, as you can see above, while Richmond County is starting to trend slightly upward.

Chronic Conditions- Diabetes Incidence Adult

Adults with Diagnosed Diabetes by Year, 2004 through 2023

The table below displays the percentage of adults age 20+ with diabetes over time for years 2004 through 2023.

Note: Trend estimates shown here use recalculated county-level data based on the CDC’s updated PLOW+ methodology, which replaced previously published estimates.

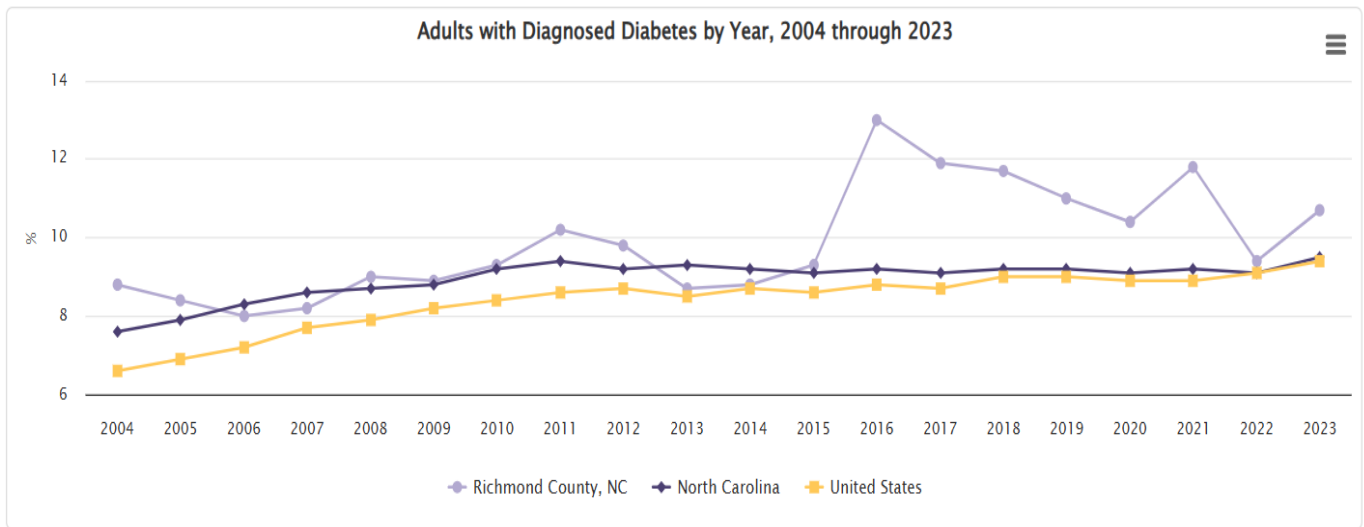
Report Area	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Richmond County, NC	8.8%	8.4%	8.0%	8.2%	9.0%	8.9%	9.3%	10.2%	9.8%	8.7%	8.8%	9.3%	13.0%	11.9%	11.7%	11.0%	10.4%	11.8%	9.4%	10.7%
North Carolina	7.6%	7.9%	8.3%	8.6%	8.7%	8.8%	9.2%	9.4%	9.2%	9.3%	9.2%	9.1%	9.2%	9.1%	9.2%	9.2%	9.1%	9.2%	9.1%	9.5%
United States	6.6%	6.9%	7.2%	7.7%	7.9%	8.2%	8.4%	8.6%	8.7%	8.5%	8.7%	8.6%	8.8%	8.7%	9.0%	9.0%	8.9%	8.9%	9.1%	9.4%

Data Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, CDC - Diabetes Atlas. 2023. → Show more details

Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

Diabetes Mellitus has been a top ten leading cause of death in Richmond County for the past 20 years. Beginning in 2004, Richmond County’s incident rate for diabetes was similar to the North Carolina rate. After 2015, however, the rate in Richmond County greatly increased. The county rate is currently higher than the state and national average.

The table below displays the percentage of adults age 20+ with diabetes over time for years 2004 through 2023.



Data Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, CDC - Diabetes Atlas. 2023
Data Source: NC Data Portal

Since 2015, Richmond County has had spikes and drops in the percentage of adults age 20 plus with diabetes while always staying above the state and national rate. The state, national, and county incidence of diabetes have all increased over the past 20 years.

Chronic Conditions-Heart Disease Adult

Percentage of Adults with Coronary Heart Disease, 2018-2023 (Crude)

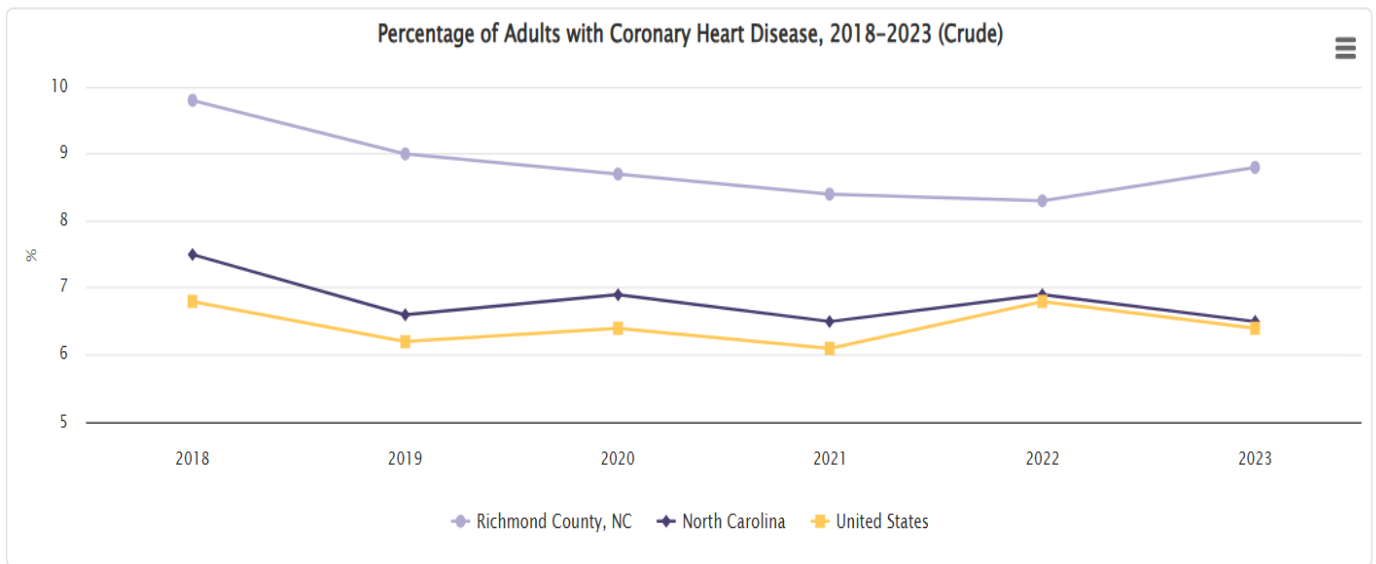
The table and chart below display annual trends in the percentage of adults age 18+ who have ever been diagnosed with coronary heart disease.

Report Area	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Richmond County, NC	9.8%	9.0%	8.7%	8.4%	8.3%	8.8%
North Carolina	7.5%	6.6%	6.9%	6.5%	6.9%	6.5%
United States	6.8%	6.2%	6.4%	6.1%	6.8%	6.4%

Data Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. Accessed via the PLACES Data Portal. 2023. → Show more details

Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

Diseases of the heart have been in the top ten leading causes of death in Richmond County for the last 20 years. Since 2018, the percentage of adults with heart disease has been decreasing until 2023 when it took a slight up swing. Richmond County has had a higher percentage of adults with heart disease than North Carolina and the United States since 2018.



Data Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. Accessed via the PLACES Data Portal. 2023.
Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond

Adult Health Comparison						
	Richmond County	Scotland County	Montgomery County	Anson County	Moore County	North Carolina
Injury Deaths Per 100,000	145	140	140	129	108	97
Adult Obesity	40%	41%	38%	43%	32%	34%
Life Expectancy	68.3	70.3	71.7	70.3	76.9	76.0

Data Source: 2025 County Health Rankings <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/health-data/compare-counties?compareCounties=37153%2C37165%2C37000%2C37125&year=2025>

Richmond County has the highest rate of injury deaths per 100,000 than surrounding counties, however, all surrounding counties have a rate higher than the North Carolina average.

Adult obesity is a strong indicator of the health of an adult population. Adults experiencing obesity are more likely to have chronic diseases, including high blood pressure and diabetes (CDC, 2024). Exactly 40% of the adult population of Richmond County is classified as obese. This is higher than the percentages for Montgomery and Moore County, but lower than the percentages for Scotland and Anson County.

Life expectancy in Richmond County is lower than in all surrounding counties. The average North Carolinian is expected to live over 8 years longer than the average Richmond County resident.

Maternal and Child Health

First Prenatal Provider Visit

Report Area	First Trimester	Second Trimester	Third Trimester	None	Unknown
Richmond County, NC	68.1%	22.5%	5.8%	3.4%	Suppressed
North Carolina	71.9%	18.3%	4.9%	4.4%	0.5%

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.

Data Source: NCDHHS, Division of Public Health, Maternal and Infant Health Data Dashboard, Title V Office Analysis of 2023 Birth Certificate data. 2024. → [Show more details](#)

Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

Only 68% of pregnant women in Richmond County in 2023 sought prenatal care during their first trimester. This is lower than the state average of almost 72%. Currently there are only 2 OBGYN practices and the maternity care clinic at the RCHD available for prenatal care in Richmond County. Our local hospital, FirstHealth Moore Regional

Hospital - Richmond, does not have a labor and delivery ward. With there being limited practices in Richmond County and a hospital that does not provide delivery services, the lack of care options could be a contributing factor to women delaying prenatal care. Early prenatal care helps ensure better outcomes for mother and baby.

Birth Outcomes- Teen Birth Rate

The teen birth rate is calculated as the number of births to females 15 to 19 years old, divided by the total female age group population, multiplied by 1,000. Teenage childbearing poses an increased health risk for mother and child, and increased social, educational, and economic disparities.

2023 Teen Birth Rate

Report Area	Female Population Age 15-19	Births to Females Age 15-19	Teen Births, Rate per 1,000 Population
Richmond County, NC	1,348	43	31.9
North Carolina	353,896	5,237	14.8

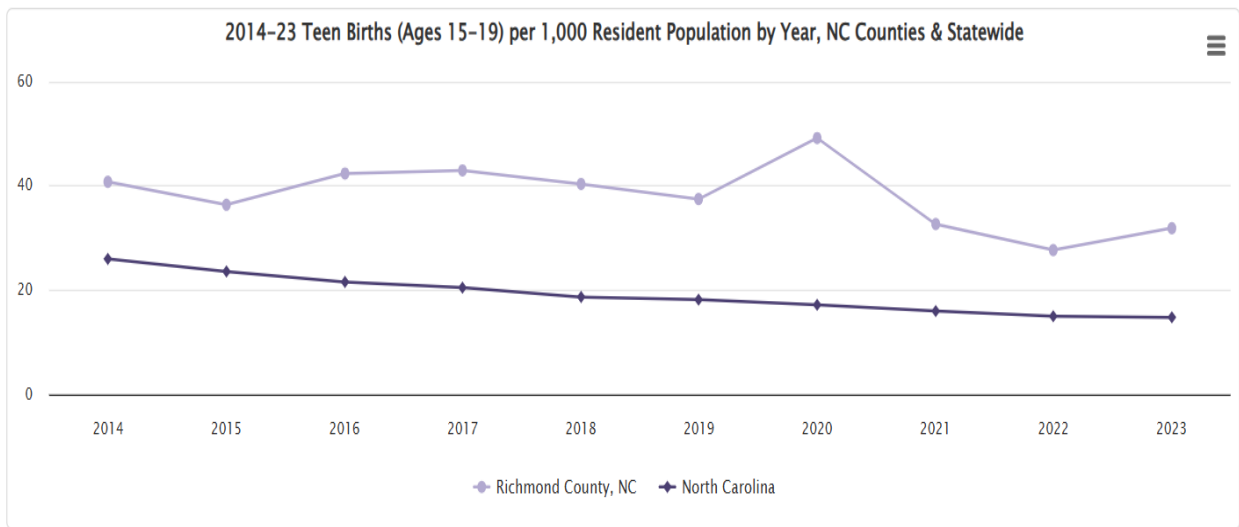
Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.
Data Source: NCDHHS, Division of Public Health, North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics. Analysis of 2023 Birth Certificate data & Census Bureau
 Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

As of 2023, Richmond County’s teen birth rate is more than double the North Carolina rate. Teen mothers and their babies often live in poverty and become dependent on government assistance programs, which is difficult to overcome.

The table and chart below display trends in the teen birth rate per 1,000 among North Carolina females aged 15 to 19.

Report Area	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Richmond County, NC	40.8	36.4	42.4	43.0	40.4	37.5	49.2	32.7	27.7	31.9
North Carolina	26.0	23.6	21.6	20.5	18.7	18.2	17.2	16.0	15.0	14.8

Data Source: NCDHHS, Division of Public Health, North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics. Analysis of 2014-2023 Birth Certificate data & Census Bureau Population estimates. → Show more details
 Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County



Data Source: NCDHHS, Division of Public Health, North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics. Analysis of 2014-2023 Birth Certificate data & Census Bureau Population estimates.
Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

Although we have made progress on decreasing the teen birth rate over the last ten years, our county rate is still more than double the state’s average. Richmond County’s teen birth rate from 2014 to 2023 does not maintain a downward trend like the state rate. The spike of teen births in 2020 could be attributed to remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Health Behaviors

Adult Tobacco Use

Report Area	Male	Female	Overall
North Carolina	23.5%	15.1%	19%

Data Source: *North Carolina Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS)*. Access is available via the NC State Center for Health Statistics *Survey Results* web tool. 2024

The percentage of adults in North Carolina that use e-cigarettes, cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco, pipes, and/or hookah was 19% in 2024. The goal for Healthy North Carolina 2030 is to reduce tobacco use to 15% among adults by 2030.

Any Tobacco Product Use by Race and Hispanic Origin, 2024

Report Area	White Non-Hispanic	Black Non-Hispanic	Hispanic or Latino
North Carolina	19.5%	17.6%	16.5%

Racial disparities exist among different groups using tobacco products.

Youth Tobacco Use

Report Area	Middle School Overall	High School Overall	Combined Overall
North Carolina	6.4%	8.7%	7.2%

Data Source: North Carolina Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS). Access is available via the NC State Center for Health Statistics [Survey Results](#) web tool. 2024

It has been reported that 7.2% of youth in North Carolina that attend middle and high schools use tobacco products including e-cigarettes, cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco, pipes, and/or hookah. Data is sourced from the most recent NC Youth Tobacco Survey and the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). Healthy North Carolina 2030 has already met their goal of reducing youth tobacco use from 19.8% in 2017 to 9.0% by 2030. We need to continue our efforts to reduce that number even more due to the harmful long-term effects of tobacco use.

Alcohol and Drug Use

Alcohol Outlets: Total Alcohol Outlet Density by Population

Alcohol outlets include both on-premises (bars and restaurants), and off-premises (grocery, convenience, and liquor stores). Higher outlet density leads to increased alcohol-related injury, violence, and chronic disease.

2023 Alcohol Outlet County to State Comparison

Total Count column refers to the number of alcohol outlets in 2023.

Report Area	Total Count	Total Population	Rate per 100,000 Population
Richmond County, NC	89	42,324	210.28
North Carolina	20,287	10,835,491	187.23

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.

Data Source: The North Carolina Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission. 2023. → Show more details

Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

Richmond County has a higher rate of alcohol outlets per 100,000 population when compared to the state. In other words, Richmond County has more establishments selling alcohol per population than the state's average. Higher alcohol outlet density can lead to higher alcohol consumption. In the past 20 years, chronic liver disease/cirrhosis, which can be caused by excessive alcohol consumption, has been in the top 10 leading causes of death for Richmond County 7 times.

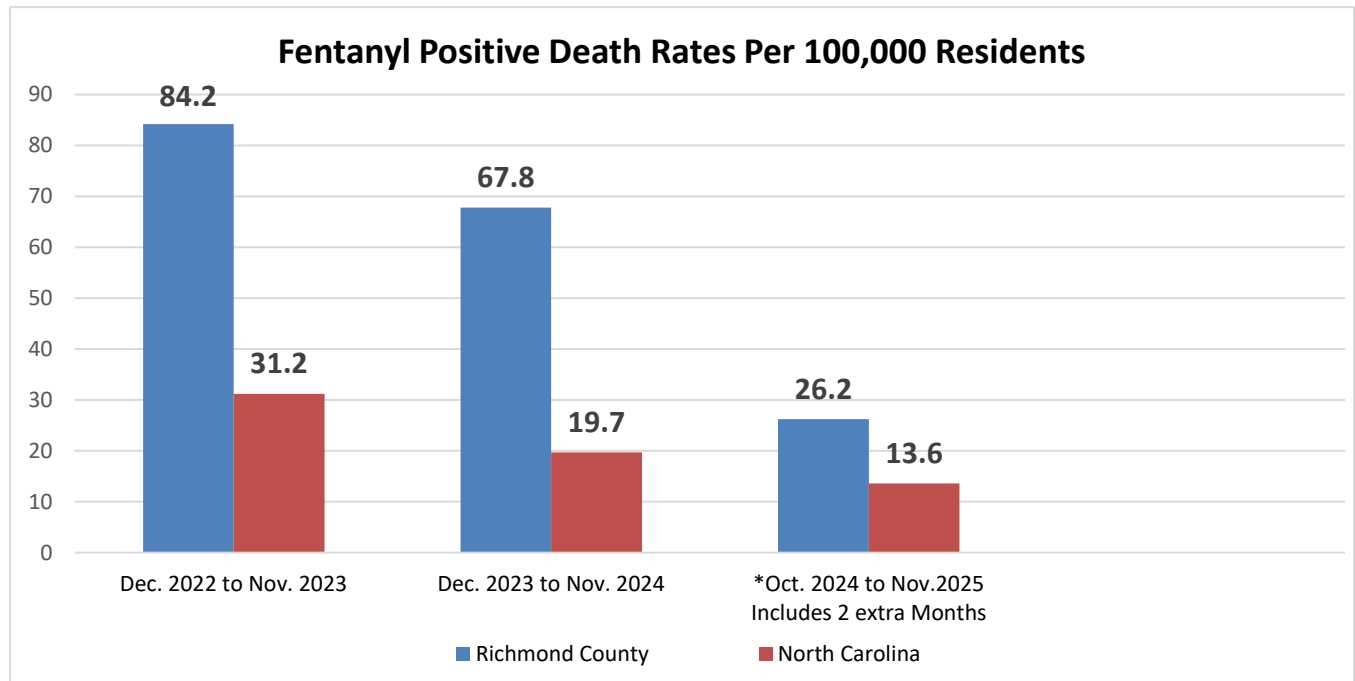
Fentanyl

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) classifies fentanyl as a synthetic opioid, up to 50 times stronger than heroin and 100 times stronger than morphine. Fentanyl comes in 2 types, pharmaceutical or illicitly (illegally) manufactured. Pharmaceutical fentanyl is prescribed by doctors for patients with severe pain in advanced stages of cancer or after surgery and is distributed by a pharmacy. Illicit fentanyl is both produced and distributed illegally. Due to the high potency (two milligrams, the amount of a few grains of salt, can cause death), invisible presence (no smell or taste), and low cost of fentanyl it is often added to other illegally produced drugs without the user's knowledge. Richmond County violence and injury rates have

increased with the continual use of alcohol and increased availability of drugs. The county has many repeat and habitual drug-related offenders in our court system.

Data Source: cdc.org

Fentanyl Positive Death Rates Per 100,000 Residents



Data Source: ocme.dhhs.nc.gov

Richmond County has occupied the first or second place for all the counties in North Carolina with the highest fentanyl positive death rates per 100,000 residents since the December 2022 to November 2023 report from the North Carolina Office of the Chief Medical Examiner. With the most recent report, October 2024 to November 2025, Richmond County dropped to third highest fentanyl related positive death rates in North Carolina. With the latest fentanyl positive death rate of 26.2, Richmond County is still a lot higher than the state rate of 13.6. However, the county and state have made significant progress in this area over the last few years. When the first report was published, the county had a much higher fentanyl positive death rate of 84.2 per 100,000 residents compared to the state rate of 31.2 per 100,000 residents.

Addressing the Opioid Crisis in Richmond County

In 2017, the Richmond County Drug Endangered Family Task Force (DEFT) was established to address the illegal distribution of opioids. This opioid crisis has impacted the county by contributing to an increase in neighborhood violence, joblessness, increased child abuse reports, children living in poverty, homelessness, and increased number of families filing for assistance through the Richmond County Department of Social Services (RCDSS). DEFT was formed with RCDSS taking the lead with community stakeholders, county government, Richmond County Health Department, Richmond County Schools, the local hospital (FirstHealth of the Carolinas), faith-based organizations, Sandhills Opioid Response Consortium, FirstHealth Emergency Medical Services, and Richmond County Emergency Services all participating.

Funding was secured from Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA), Community Impact North Carolina (CINC), and the Sandhills Opioid Response Consortium. DEFT continues to address our county's opioid crisis with numerous community partners coming together to best utilize funding from the North Carolina Opioid Settlement Fund.

Richmond County Commissioners act as the governing board for the Opioid Settlement Funds that are being distributed in Richmond County among several different agencies. The commissioners allowed for the development of request for proposals (RFPs). Local agencies can apply for potential funding of programs to support prevention of substance use, treatment, and rehabilitation. In 2025, DEFT accepted RFPs from Samaritan Colony to treat Richmond County residents with opioid dependency, FirstHealth to provide counseling and Narcan distribution, Richmond Community College to provide counseling and

education for individuals that are recovering from opioid dependency, and Sandhills Best Care to provide medical and counseling care.

Clinical Care

Access to Primary Care Providers

Primary health providers include practicing physicians specializing in general practice medicine, family medicine, internal medicine, and pediatrics. Access to providers and having insurance are major factors in the overall health of the population.

County and State Comparisons of Population to Providers

Due to population and geographic differences among communities across the state, it can be beneficial to compare data with surrounding counties. The North Carolina Office of Rural Health defines Richmond County and the surrounding counties of Scotland, Montgomery, Anson, and Moore as rural (2023), according to their definition and criteria.

Ratio of Population to Care Providers Comparison						
	Richmond County	Scotland County	Montgomery County	Anson County	Moore County	North Carolina
Primary Care Physicians	6,110:1 (1 provider for 6,110 people)	1,710:1	3,700:1	2,470:1	930:1	1,410:1
Mental Health Providers	370:1 (1 provider for 370 people)	410:1	680:1	1,180:1	350:1	290:1
Dentists	3,530:1 (1 provider for 3,530 people)	2,860:1	3,730:1	4,380:1	1,640:1	1,610:1

Data Source: 2025 County Health Rankings <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/health-data/compare-counties?compareCounties=37153%2C37165%2C37123%2C37125&year=2025>

Richmond County has a greater ratio of population to care providers than the state for Primary Care Physicians, Mental Health Providers, and Dentists. This means that residents in Richmond County severely lack options for health care compared to other North Carolina state residents. North Carolina as a whole has 4 times as many Primary Care Physicians per person as Richmond County, and 2 times as many Dentists per person compared to Richmond County.

Surrounding counties also have a greater ratio of population to care providers than North Carolina as a whole, except for Moore County. Moore County has a smaller ratio of total population to Primary Care Physicians than the state. Many Richmond County residents must leave the county to seek both primary care physicians and specialty care.

Insurance

The Uninsured Population (Age 0-64) in Richmond County is 11.02%

Report Area	Total Population Age 0-64	Pop. Age 0-64 w/o Insurance	Pop. Age 0-64 w/o Insurance, Percent
Richmond County, NC	32,847	3,621	11.02%
North Carolina	8,636,817	958,197	11.09%
United States	269,185,221	25,457,101	9.46%

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.

Data Source: US Census Bureau, Small Area Health Insurance Estimates. 2023. → Show more details

Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

The Medicaid Population in Richmond County is 51.66%

Report Area	Total Population	2025 Medicaid Enrollment	Medicaid Enrollment, Percent
Richmond County, NC	41,990	21,694	51.66%
North Carolina	11,046,024	2,978,559	26.96%

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.

Data Source: North Carolina Medicaid Enrollment Reports. 2025. → Show more details

Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

Richmond County's Medicaid population (51.66%) is significantly higher, almost double, than that of our state's average of almost 27%. More than half of the population of Richmond County is on Medicaid. The Community Care Clinic, housed in the Richmond County Health Department, provides primary care services to Richmond County residents, including the Medicaid and uninsured population, through the Primary Care Access Program (PCAP) with funds from the Office of Rural Health. The Pharmacy Assistance Program offered by the Richmond County Health Department goes hand in hand with PCAP to provide medications for qualifying individuals at a free or discounted rate. The Pharmacy Assistance Program also receives funding from the Office of Rural Health.

Social Determinants of Health



Data Source: <https://odphp.health.gov/healthypeople/priority-areas/social-determinants-health/literature-summaries/high-school-graduation>

Income

The median family income is the middle-income value of the households in Richmond County, meaning half of the households earn more and half earn less. Family income includes all the incomes of family members aged 15 and older.

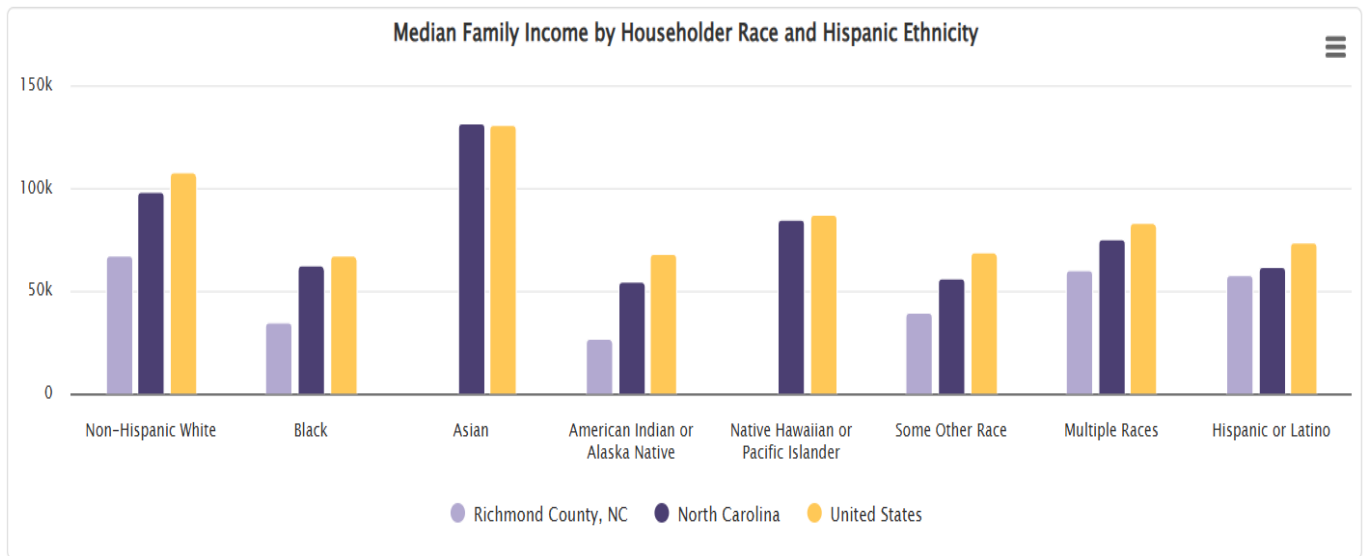
Report Area	Total Family Households	Average Family Income	Median Family Income
Richmond County, NC	10,717	\$67,940.84	\$58,491
North Carolina	2,699,070	\$116,074.22	\$86,947
United States	82,220,165	\$130,215.11	\$96,922

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2019-23. → Show more details

Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

Richmond County’s current median family income is significantly lower than the state and national numbers. The median family income in Richmond County is 32.7% lower than the state and 39.7% lower than the national median family income. The average Richmond County household generates \$58,491 annually.



Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2019-23

Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

Median household incomes in Richmond County by race and ethnicity are all significantly lower in each category than state and national averages.

Poverty

Report Area	Total Population	Population in Poverty	Population in Poverty, Percent
Richmond County, NC	41,632	10,478	25.17%
North Carolina	10,297,193	1,355,827	13.17%
United States	324,567,147	40,390,045	12.44%

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2019-23. → Show more details

Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

In Richmond County, 10,478 people, or approximately ¼ of the population (25.17%) is below the 100% Federal Poverty Level (FPL). This results in barriers that contribute to a poorer health status than those with higher incomes. People below the 100% FPL have difficulty affording healthy food, medicine, regular physician office visits, or specialty care.

Report Area	Total Population	Population with Income Below 200% FPL	Population with Income Below 200% FPL, Percent
Richmond County, NC	41,632	20,191	48.50%
North Carolina	10,297,193	3,195,199	31.03%
United States	324,567,147	92,357,008	28.46%

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2019-23. → Show more details

Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

In Richmond County, 48.50%, or nearly half, of the population is below the 200% FPL which results in 20,191 people having barriers that usually contribute to poor health status.

Report Area	Total Population Under Age 18	Population Under Age 18 Below 200% FPL	Population Under Age 18 Below 200% FPL, Percent
Richmond County, NC	9,975	6,573	65.89%
North Carolina	2,284,911	923,633	40.42%
United States	72,472,636	26,544,399	36.63%

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2019-23. → Show more details

Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

Richmond County’s poverty level for children under age 18 is almost 66%. That percentage is 1.5 times more than our state average and almost double the national average. Poverty creates barriers to accessing healthy food, health services, and other necessities that can contribute to overall poor health for adults and children.

According to the Economic Research Service, the poverty rate is typically higher in rural, or non-metro, areas. Rural areas in the Southern United States, specifically, tend to face the highest rates of poverty. High concentrations of poverty affect quality of life, including high crime rates, increased school dropout rates, and housing insecurity. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion states that conditions of poverty negatively impact health across the lifespan. Residents living in poverty face higher risks of mental illness, obesity, substance use, chronic stress, and lower life expectancy. The negative impacts of poverty are not limited to adults. Children living in poverty are more likely to experience developmental delays, nutritional deficits, and chronic stress and illness. Children who grow up in poverty are likely to also experience poverty as adults.

Food Insecurity

Report Area	Total Population	Food Insecure Population, Total	Food Insecurity Rate
Richmond County, NC	43,350	8,670	20%
North Carolina	10,582,034	1,577,850	14.91%
United States	331,287,882	46,753,190	14.11%

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.

Data Source: Feeding America. 2023. → Show more details

Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

According to Feeding America 2023, Richmond County has a **20%** food insecurity rate. One out of five people living in our county do not have access to a sufficient amount of food on a daily basis. This is a higher rate than the North Carolina state average and the United States national average. Richmond County currently has no active local farmers’ markets, leaving residents with limited options for local fresh fruits and vegetables.

Report Area	Total Students	Students Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch	Students Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch, Percent
Richmond County, NC	6,639	6,588	99.2%
North Carolina	1,545,585	1,055,371	68.3%
United States	46,694,706	24,748,121	54.7%

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.

Data Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NCES - Common Core of Data. 2023-24. → Show more details

Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

Due to the poverty level and other demographics that have led to Richmond County being in a Tier I status, all public school students in the county receive free breakfast and lunch.

Employment

The Richmond County unemployment rate is almost double the state rate. Note that the survey data was collected from 2019-2023 which includes the COVID-19 pandemic.

Report Area	Labor Force	Number Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
Richmond County, NC	19,607	1,863	9.56%
North Carolina	5,351,978	253,256	4.83%
United States	169,855,626	8,759,317	5.20%

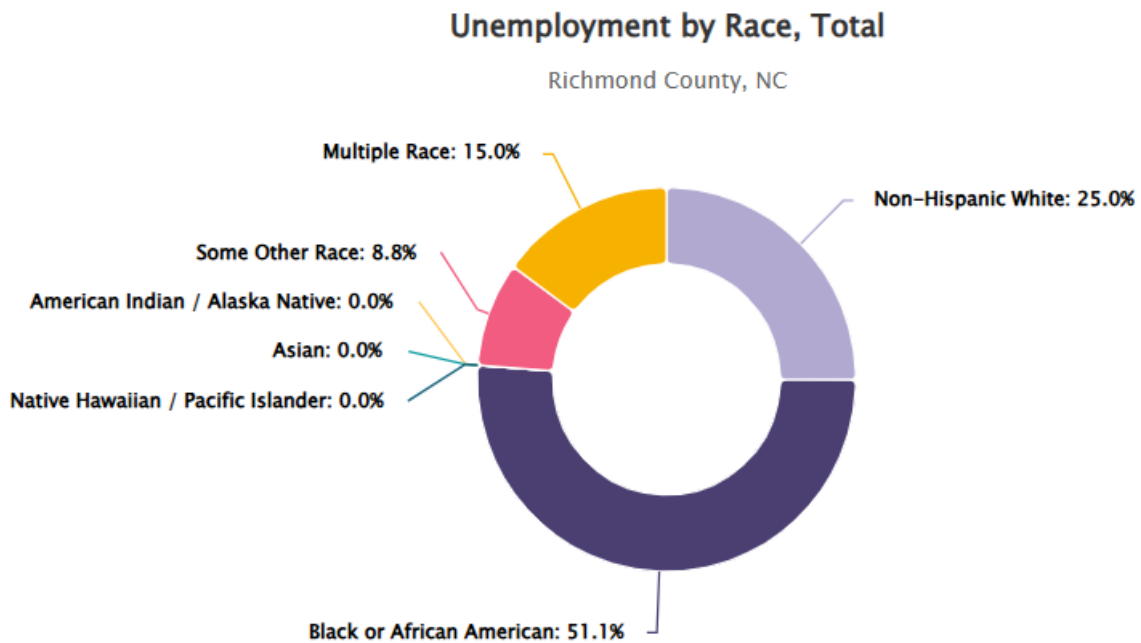
Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019-23. → [Show more details](#)

Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

Richmond County’s most recent unemployment rate sits at 9.56%, whereas North Carolina state’s is significantly below that at 4.83%.

Unemployment



Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

The Black or African American population is most impacted by unemployment in Richmond County. Over 50% of our unemployed population is designated as Black or African American and is slightly more than 2 times higher than the Non-Hispanic White population and is more than 3 times higher than the Multiple Race unemployment percentage.

Employment Analysis of Richmond County

Top Twenty-Five Companies with the Highest Number of Employees

Richmond County

Area Name	Year	period	Company Name	Industry	Class	Employment Range	Rank
Richmond County	2025	02	Richmond County Schools	Educational Services	Public Sector	1000+	1
Richmond County	2025	02	Perdue Farms Incorporated	Manufacturing	Private Sector	1000+	2
Richmond County	2025	02	Firsthealth Of The Carolinas Inc	Health Care and Social Assistance	Private Sector	500-999	3
Richmond County	2025	02	County Of Richmond	Public Administration	Public Sector	250-499	4
Richmond County	2025	02	Richmond Community College	Educational Services	Public Sector	250-499	5
Richmond County	2025	02	Plastek Industries Inc (Pa)-North C	Manufacturing	Private Sector	250-499	6
Richmond County	2025	02	Wal-Mart Associates Inc	Retail Trade	Private Sector	250-499	7

Data Source: NC Department of Commerce Labor and Economic Analysis Year 2025 Period Quarter2

Top Employer Summary:

- ❖ **Richmond County Schools and Perdue Farms are the largest two employers with more than 1000+ employees each**
- ❖ **FirstHealth of the Carolinas falls in the category of 500-999 employees**
- ❖ **4 other companies have 250-499 employees each**

Area Name	Year	period	Company Name	Industry	Class	Employment Range	Rank
Richmond County	2025	02	Superior Employer Services Llc	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	Private Sector	100-249	8
Richmond County	2025	02	Food Lion Llc	Retail Trade	Private Sector	100-249	9
Richmond County	2025	02	Nc Department Of Adult Corrections	Public Administration	Public Sector	100-249	10
Richmond County	2025	02	Burlington Industries V Llc	Manufacturing	Private Sector	100-249	11
Richmond County	2025	02	Hood Packaging Corporation	Manufacturing	Private Sector	100-249	12
Richmond County	2025	02	American Woodmark Corporation	Manufacturing	Private Sector	100-249	13
Richmond County	2025	02	Fleetwood Homes Inc	Manufacturing	Private Sector	100-249	14
Richmond County	2025	02	City Of Rockingham	Public Administration	Public Sector	100-249	15
Richmond County	2025	02	Novipax Buyer Llc	Manufacturing	Private Sector	100-249	16
Richmond County	2025	02	Qsi Llc	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	Private Sector	100-249	17
Richmond County	2025	02	Lowes Home Centers Inc	Retail Trade	Private Sector	100-249	18
Richmond County	2025	02	Principle Long Term Care Inc	Health Care and Social Assistance	Private Sector	100-249	19
Richmond County	2025	02	Cascades Holding Us Inc	Manufacturing	Private Sector	100-249	20
Richmond County	2025	02	City Of Hamlet	Public Administration	Public Sector	100-249	21
Richmond County	2025	02	Mount Vernon Mills Inc	Manufacturing	Private Sector	100-249	22
Richmond County	2025	02	Griffin Automotive Group Llc	Retail Trade	Private Sector	100-249	23

Data Source: NC Department of Commerce Labor and Economic Analysis Year 2025 Period Quarter2

❖ 16 Companies have between 100-249 employees

Area Name	Year	period	Company Name	Industry	Class	Employment Range	Rank
Richmond County	2025	02	Trinity Manufacturing Inc	Manufacturing	Private Sector	50-99	24
Richmond County	2025	02	Pruitthealth - Rockingham Llc	Health Care and Social Assistance	Private Sector	50-99	25

Data Source: NC Department of Commerce Labor and Economic Analysis Year 2025 Period Quarter2

❖ 2 Companies have 50-99 employees

❖ All other companies have less than 50 employees

Richmond County is a rural community with very few large corporate employers. Job opportunities can be sparse at both entry level and for advanced positions. Often smaller businesses and privately owned businesses cannot provide employees with health benefit packages. This contributes to an increased rate of uninsured persons.

Economic Growth

On June 4th, 2025, Richmond County was given significant hope for economic growth over the next 10 years. Josh Stein, the Governor of North Carolina, along with other state and local leaders, announced that Amazon Web Services plans to invest \$10 billion in its next artificial intelligence innovation campus in Hamlet. The Governor stated that, “This is one of the largest capital investments ever made in the history of North Carolina.” Data Source: Richmond Observer.com

The Amazon Web Services campus is expected to positively impact the local economy. Richmond County Board of Commissioners Chairman, Rick Watkins, stated that the investment “will serve as a catalyst to transform the local economy, provide high paying jobs for citizens, and improve the quality of life for all residents.” Amazon’s anticipated investment is larger than the current tax base of Richmond County, which was \$3.2 billion in 2023 (Daniels, 2025).

With the development of Amazon Web Services in Richmond County, there is the potential for population growth. The influx of job opportunities could provide young adults with more reason to stay in or return to Richmond County after completing their education.

Education

High school diplomas are used as a standard for job opportunities and to gain higher education. Not obtaining a high school diploma is linked to several factors that can negatively impact health, such as limited low wage jobs and poverty. Students that do not graduate from high school often have parents that are not actively involved in their education. From the beginning of a child’s education, it is important that parents read to their child, listen to their child read, develop a routine for homework, share mealtimes, and establish a

regular bath and bedtime. Research has proven that a student’s third grade reading proficiency can affect academic performance and their likelihood of graduating from high school. One study found that 23% of students with below-basic reading skill levels failed to finish high school on time or at all. Teen pregnancy and teen parenthood are also risk factors for students not obtaining a high school diploma. One analysis of 22-year-old females revealed that 89% of women who had not given birth as teenagers earned a high school diploma, while only 51% of those who were teen mothers earned a high school diploma.

Data source: [High School Graduation - Healthy People 2030 | odphp.health.gov](https://odphp.health.gov)

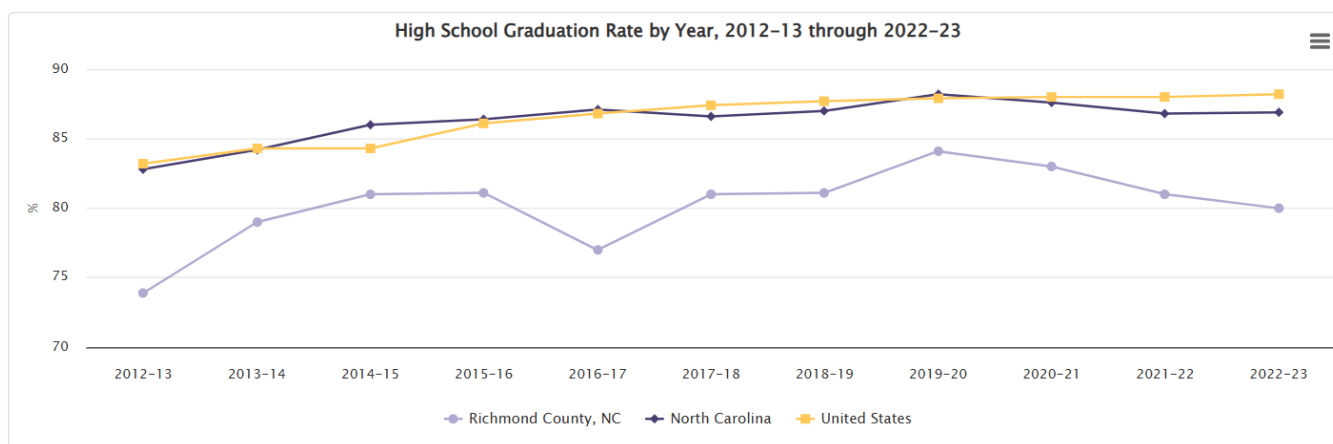
Report Area	Total Population Age 25+	Population Age 25+ with No High School Diploma	Population Age 25+ with No High School Diploma, Percent
Richmond County, NC	29,068	4,599	15.82%
North Carolina	7,261,810	744,581	10.25%
United States	228,434,661	24,230,217	10.61%

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2019-23. → Show more details

Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

Richmond County’s population group age 25+ with no high school diploma is higher than the North Carolina and the national average.



Data Source: US Department of Education, ED Data Express. Additional data analysis by CARES. 2022-23. → Show more details

Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

The high school graduation rate for Richmond County Public Schools from 2013 to 2023 varied over the 11-year span but stayed consistently lower than both the state and national averages. The highest percentage of high school graduates was 84.1% in 2020 and the lowest percentage was 73.9% in 2013. Richmond County’s graduation rates are consistently lower than the North Carolina and United States graduation rates.

Proficiency

4th Grade Student Reading Proficiency for 2021-2022

Report Area	Students with Valid Test Scores	Students Scoring 'Proficient' or Better, Percent	Students Scoring 'Not Proficient' or Worse, Percent
Richmond County, NC	470	43.0%	57.0%
North Carolina	102,003	50.6%	49.4%
United States	3,352,180	46.7%	53.4%

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.

Data Source: US Department of Education, ED Data Express. Additional data analysis by CARES. 2021-22. → Show more details

Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

Of the Richmond County students taking the 4th grade Reading/Language Arts portion of the state-specific end of year test for the 2021-2022 school year, 57% scored *Not Proficient* or *Worse*. In comparison to students’ scores in North Carolina and the United States, Richmond County had a smaller percentage of students scoring *Proficient* or *Better*.

4th Grade Student Math Proficiency for 2021-2022

Report Area	Students with Valid Test Scores	Students Scoring 'Proficient' or Better, Percent	Students Scoring 'Not Proficient' or Worse, Percent
Richmond County, NC	470	46.0%	54.0%
North Carolina	101,957	49.8%	50.2%
United States	3,216,333	43.2%	56.8%

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.

Data Source: US Department of Education, ED Data Express. Additional data analysis by CARES. 2021-22.

Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

Of the Richmond County students taking the 4th grade Math portion of the state-specific end of year test for 2021-2022, 54% scored *Not Proficient* or *Worse*. When comparing Richmond County students tested to all 4th grade students tested in North Carolina, the state had a higher percentage of students (50%) scoring *Proficient* or *Better*. However, Richmond County's (46%) percentage of students that scored *Proficient* or *Better* was higher than the 43% of all students tested in the United States.

Grade Level Proficiency

Report Area	Number of Students Tested	College and Career Readiness	Grade Level Proficiency
Richmond County, NC	866	19.61%	36.28%
North Carolina	112,268	29%	48.6%

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.

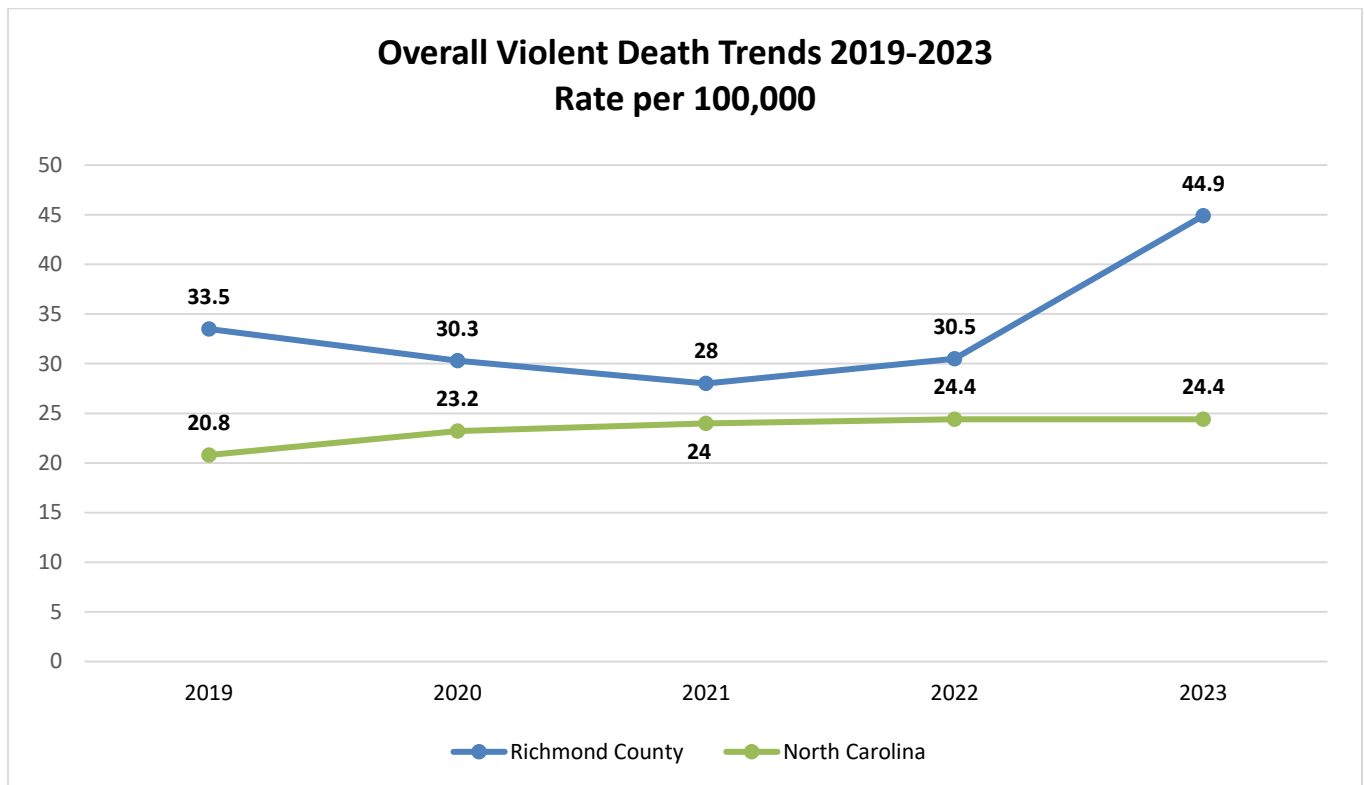
Data Source: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. 2023 → [Show more details](#)

Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

The percentage of Richmond County students in the 2021-2022 school year that tested Grade Level Proficient was 36.28%, which is 12.32% lower compared to the state percentage of 48.6%. The percentage of Richmond County students that met College and Career Readiness standards was 19.61%, compared to the North Carolina state average of 29%, which is a difference of 9.39% lower.

Community Safety

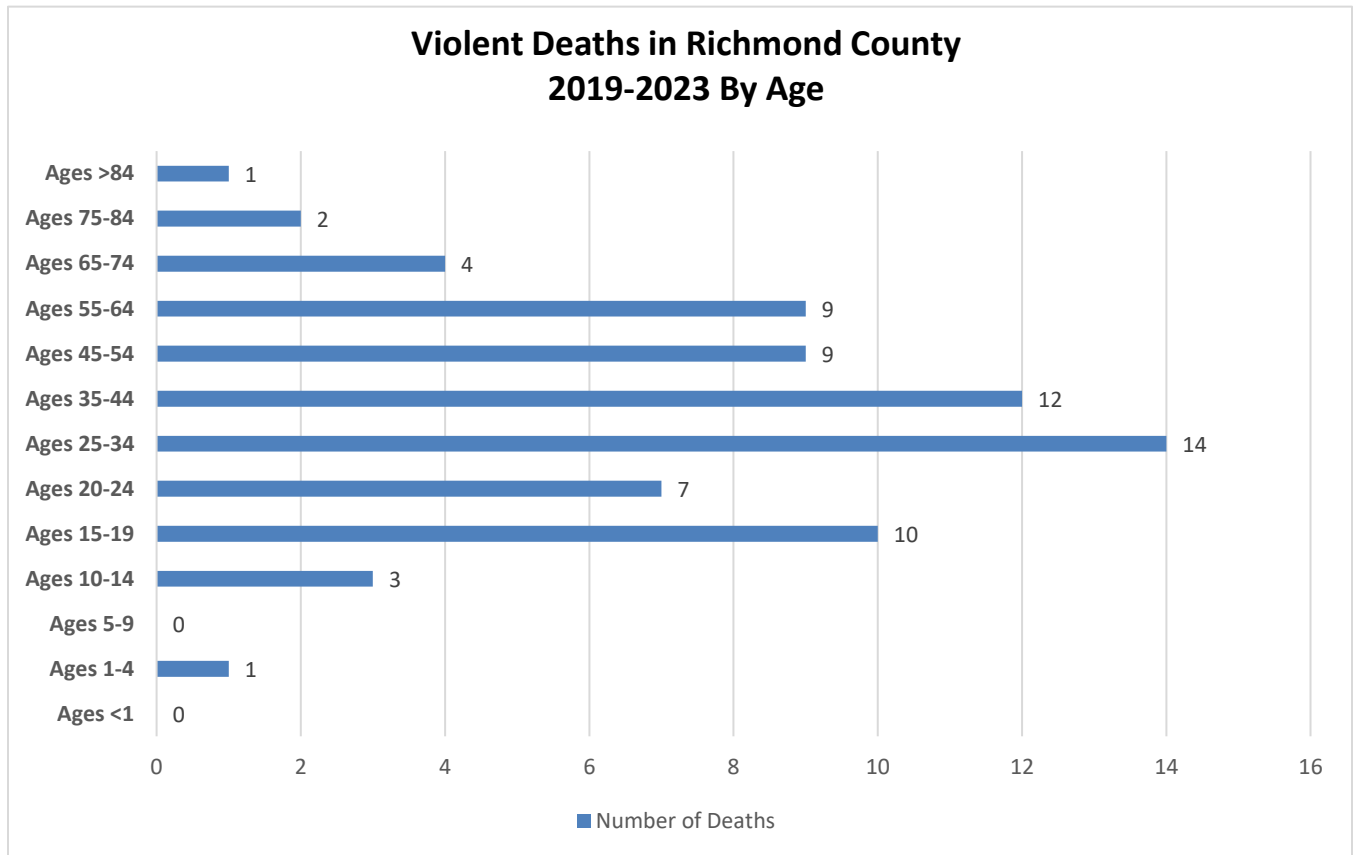
Violent Deaths



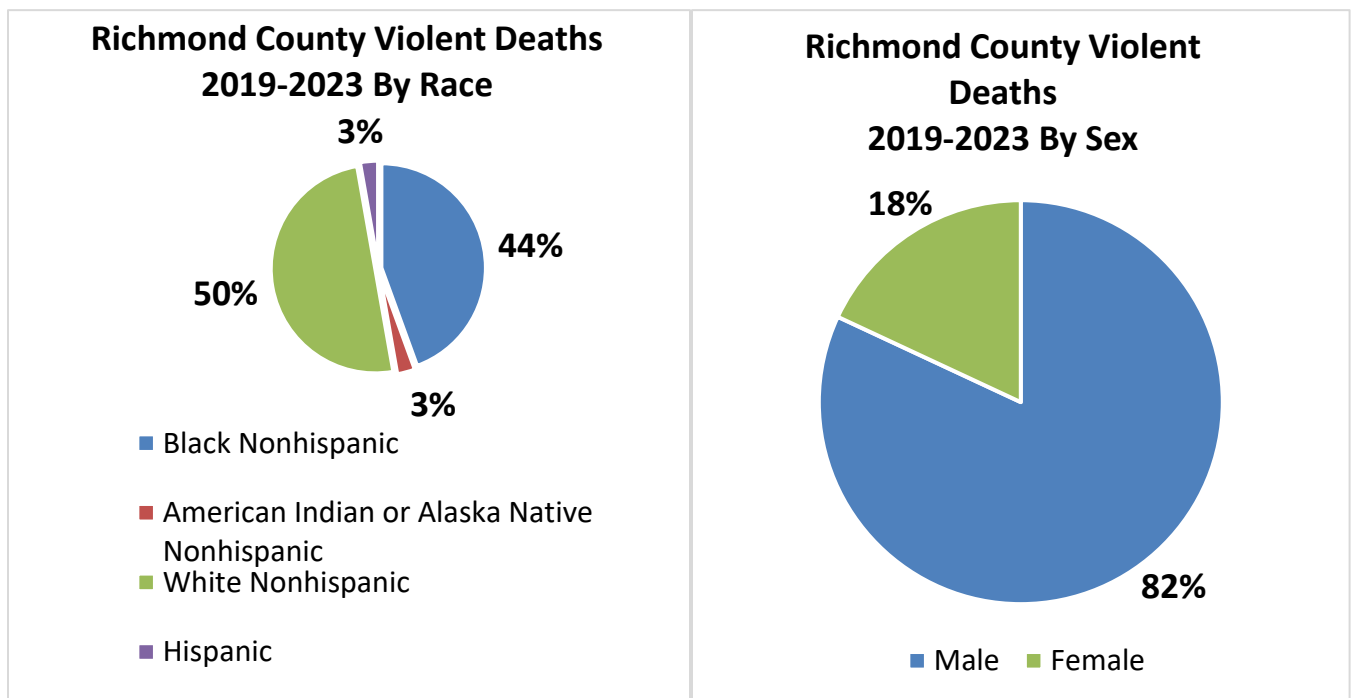
Data source: NCDHHS Division of Public Health Violent Death Reporting System

In the last five years, Richmond County has consistently faced higher rates of violent deaths than North Carolina as a whole. From 2019-2023 there were a total of 72 violent deaths recorded in Richmond County. This number peaked in 2023 with 19 violent deaths recorded that year. This is the highest number recorded for Richmond County in recent years and shows a drastic increase from years past. Violence in communities has a negative impact on health and wellbeing for residents. According to the CDC, community violence can increase risk for chronic diseases, limit business growth, prevent individuals from engaging in healthy behaviors, and cause strain on the educational, justice, and medical systems (2025). Rural areas disproportionately have higher rates of homicide and suicide mortality rates (Peek-Asa, 2004).

The violent deaths from Richmond County can be further classified by age, race, and sex.



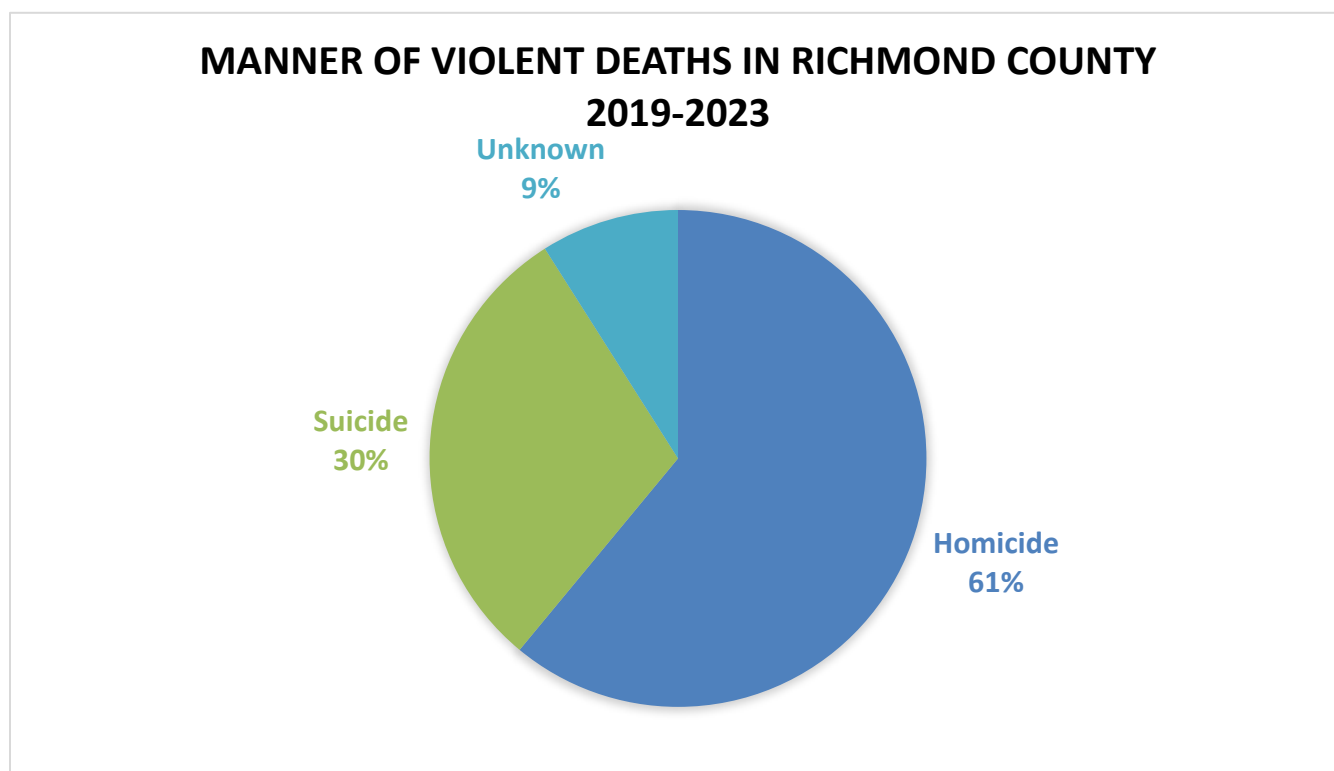
Data source: NCDHHS Division of Public Health Violent Death Reporting System



Data source: NCDHHS Division of Public Health Violent Death Reporting System

Violent deaths in Richmond County occur at a variety of ages. The youngest victim recorded from 2019 through 2023 was between the ages of one and four years old. The oldest victim was above the age of 84. There is a concerning number of violent deaths in the older adolescent (ages 10-14) and the older teenage (ages 15-19) populations of Richmond County with 3 deaths taking place between the ages of ten and fourteen and 10 deaths taking place between the ages of fifteen and nineteen. The number of violent deaths recorded in Richmond County primarily involved males (82%). Only 18% of recorded deaths consisted of females. Of the violent deaths over the past 5 years, 94% were from the White Non-Hispanic or Black Non-Hispanic population.

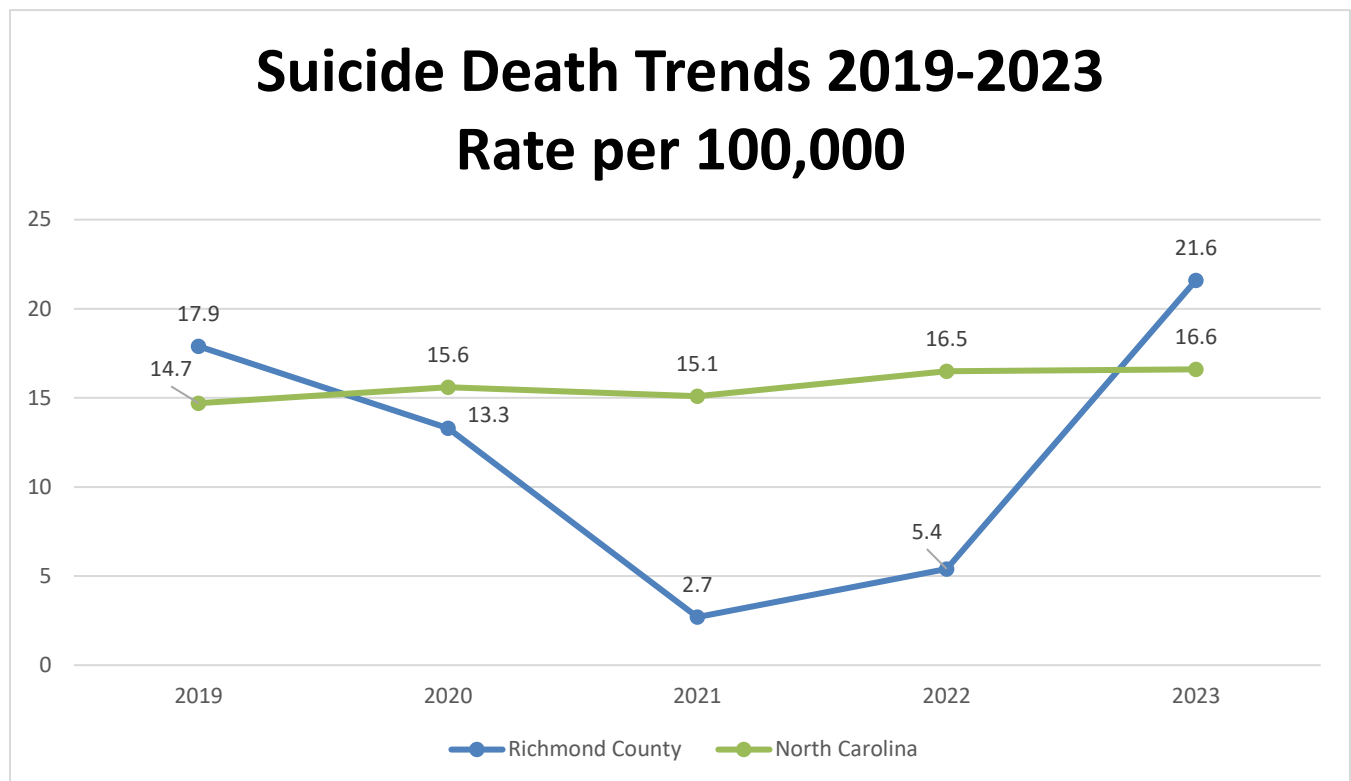
Homicide Vs. Suicide



Data source: NCDHHS Division of Public Health Violent Death Reporting System

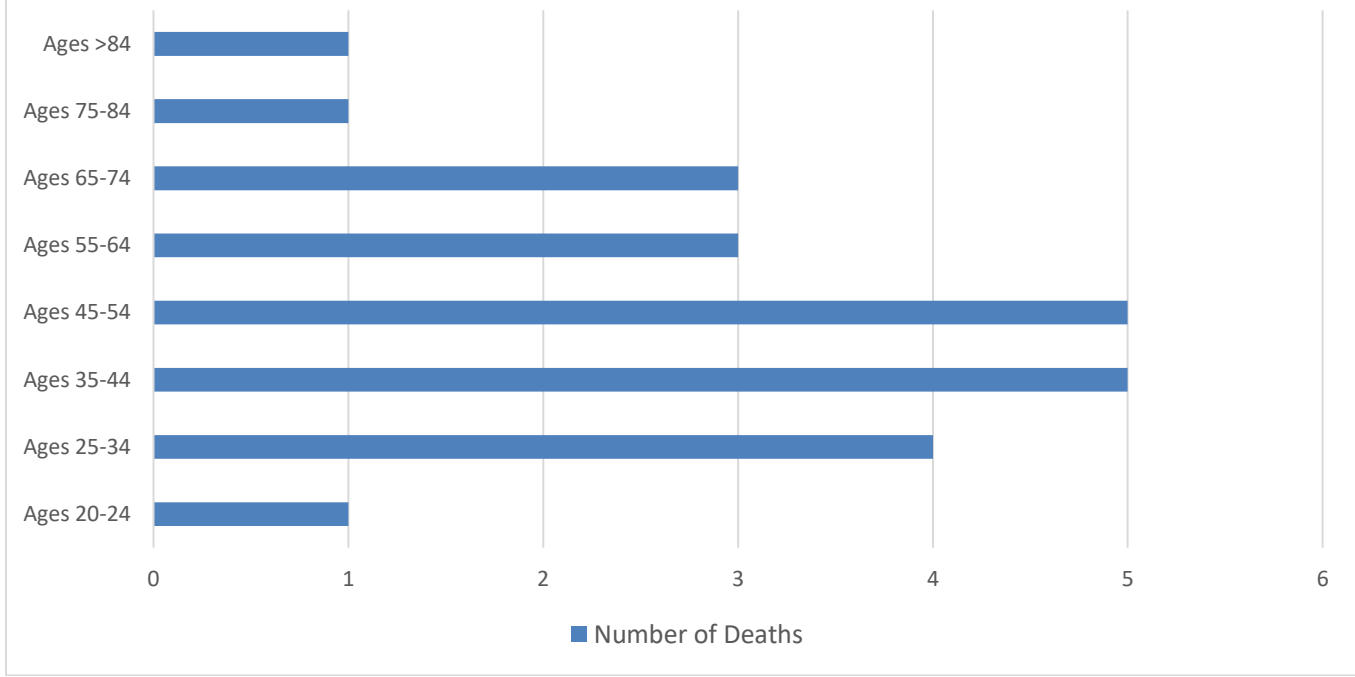
More than half of the violent deaths during this time frame in Richmond County were determined to be a homicide, while suicide represented almost a third of the violent deaths. According to Mental Health America, suicide in rural communities can be perceived

differently than in urban areas. Individuals impacted by suicide in rural areas are more likely to turn to religious or community organizations for support. Factors that may lead to an increased suicide rate in rural areas include: a lack of mental health providers, financial hardships, substance use, mental health stigma, social isolation, or increased access to firearms.



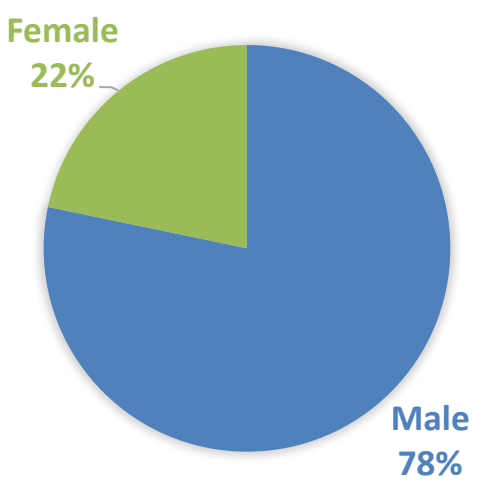
From 2019 to 2023, there were 23 total suicides recorded in Richmond County. The highest number reported was in 2023, with 8 suicides recorded. When adjusted for population size, this number correlates to a rate of 21.6 per 100,000 people which is higher than the previous year for Richmond County at 5.4 and higher than the North Carolina rate for 2023 which was 16.6. This graph also shows a decrease in the suicide rate for Richmond County for the years of 2020 through 2022. This temporary drop could potentially be associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Suicide rates decreased nationwide for the years of 2019 and 2020 (US. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022).

Suicide Deaths in Richmond County By Age 2019-2023

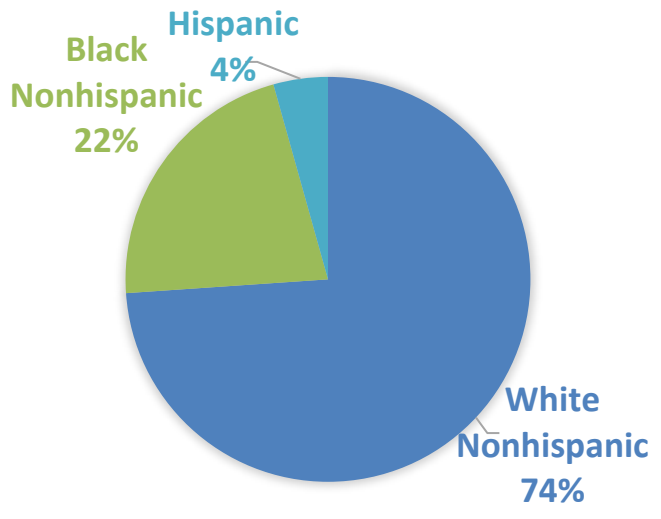


Data source: NCDHHS Division of Public Health Violent Death Reporting System

SUICIDE DEATHS IN RICHMOND COUNTY BY SEX 2019-2023



SUICIDE DEATHS IN RICHMOND COUNTY BY RACE 2019-2023

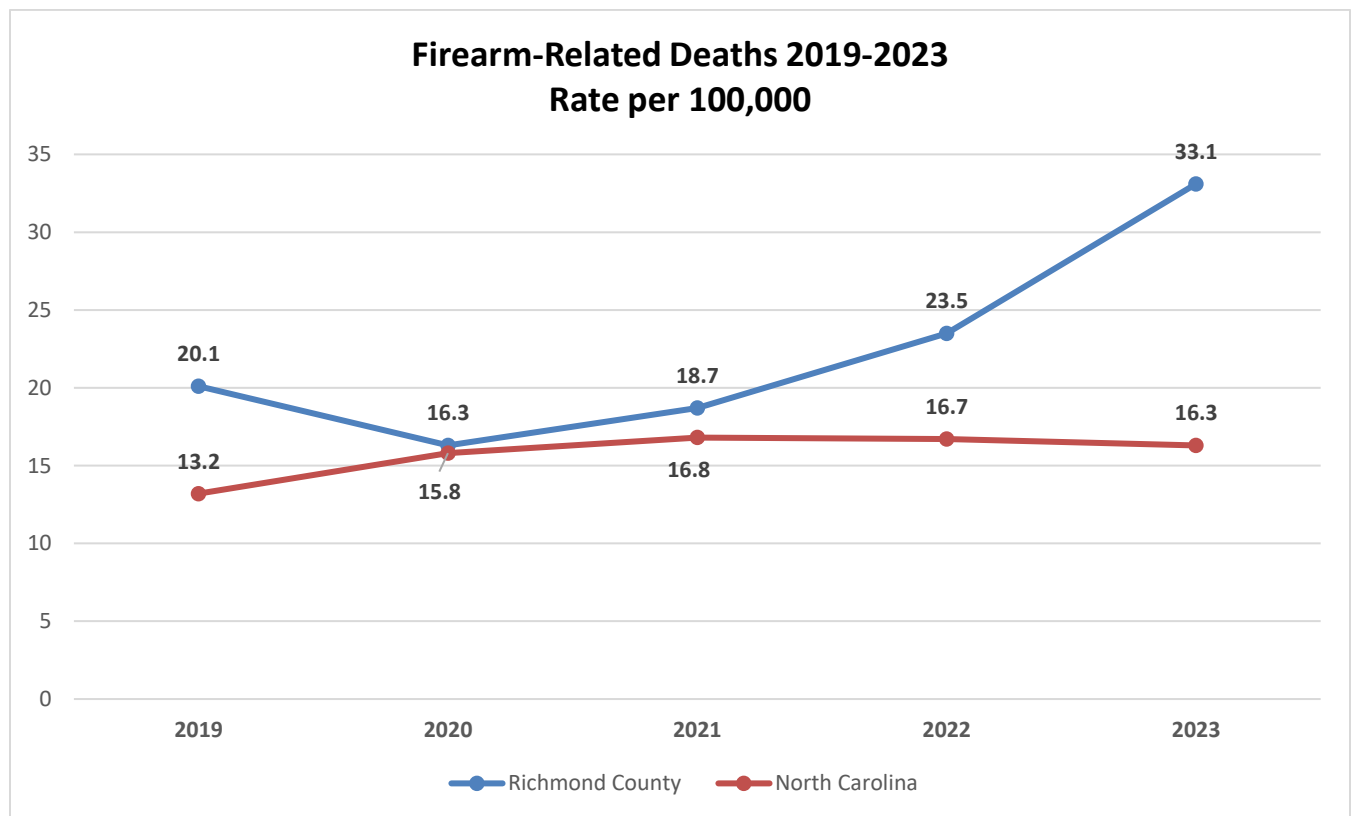


Data source: NCDHHS Division of Public Health Violent Death Reporting System

In Richmond County for the 5-year period measured 18 of the 23 suicides were males while only 5 of the suicides reported were female. White non-Hispanics represented 74% of the suicide deaths which was more than 3 times the number of black non-Hispanics. The age demographics for suicide deaths were spread out with no suicide deaths recorded among those 19 and under. There was only one suicide death recorded of an individual in the age groups 20-24, 75-84, and greater than 84. According to the World Health Organization (2025), social stigma often prevents individuals experiencing suicidal thoughts from obtaining help.

Firearm-Related Deaths

Firearm-related deaths, both homicide and suicide, are also a concerning factor in Richmond County. For the past several years, Richmond County has had a higher rate of firearm-related deaths than the state of North Carolina.



Data source: NCDHHS Division of Public Health Violent Death Reporting System

In 2023, the firearm-related death rate in Richmond County was twice as high as the overall rate for North Carolina. Richmond County Health Department is in partnership with the Richmond County Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) which is a community program funded by North Carolina Department of Public Safety. At community events, the JCPC distributes gun locks and handgun lock boxes to attendees and educates them on the importance of securing firearms to help reduce the firearm-related deaths in our county.

The American Public Health Association lists gun violence as the leading premature cause of death in the United States. Even beyond fatalities, firearm-related incidents leave lasting impacts on communities. According to the Office of the Surgeon General (2024), there are many firearm-related injuries that go under reported. These injuries can cause lasting health consequences including disability, physical limitations, and chronic pain. Firearm injuries also negatively impact mental health, including an increased risk for PTSD, anxiety, depression, and substance use disorders.

Community Context

Primary Language

According to the U.S. Census as of July 2024, it was estimated that 8.1% of people aged 5 and older do not speak English at home in Richmond County. Resources are needed to provide services and education for this population. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (2022) states that language barriers in healthcare can lead to poor clinical outcomes and language assistance is needed to deliver high-quality care. Language assistance can include in-person interpreters, remote interpreters, and translation of written materials.

Health Literacy

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2024) defines health literacy as “the degree to which individuals have the ability to find, understand, and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others.”



Source: Jimmy McDonald

Hamlet City Lake

Health literacy is important for individuals to make educated decisions about their health and wellbeing.

Organizations have a role to play in providing health education materials that are accessible and understandable to the general public. In Richmond County, less than 3 out of 20 people, or 14.3%, of the population aged 25+ has a bachelor’s degree. Only 84.1% of the population of Richmond County graduated high school on time (NCIOM, n.d.). According to the National Institutes of Health, anyone can be confused by health information if the topic is complex or emotionally charged. Individuals may also be embarrassed to ask clarifying questions or lack the ability to find trusted evidence-based resources. Health care communities and systems should work to overcome obstacles in health literacy. The CDC recommends working with trusted community leaders to share information, considering cultural and linguistic norms, and using certified interpreters (2024).

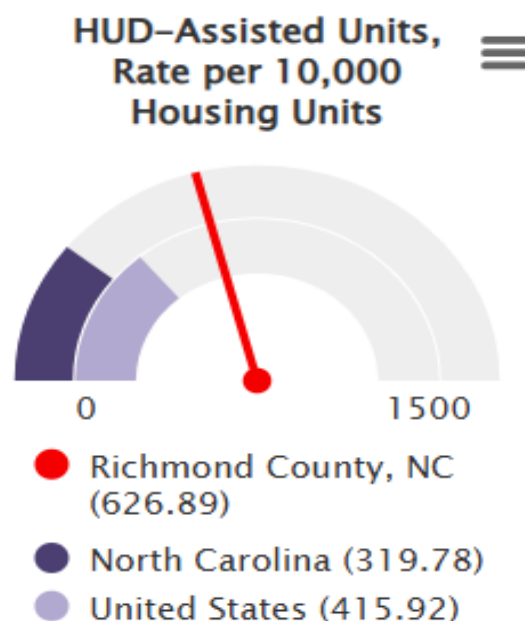
Physical Environment

Housing

HUD-Funded Assisted Housing

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, commonly referred to as HUD, provides funding for housing and community development programs with the goal to provide fair and equal housing opportunities.

- **Public Housing:** Owned and managed by local housing agencies with federal funds, offering subsidized units
- **Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8):** A tenant-based program that provides vouchers to low-income individuals to pay for rent in the private market
- **Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA):** HUD provides subsidies directly to private landlords who reserve units for low-income tenants
- **Specialized Programs:** Includes Section 202 (supportive housing for the elderly) and Section 811 (housing for people with disabilities)



Report Area	Total Housing Units (2022)	Total HUD-Assisted Housing Units	HUD-Assisted Units, Rate per 10,000 Housing Units
Richmond County, NC	18,201	1,141	626.89
North Carolina	4,031,592	128,924	319.78
United States	123,559,968	5,139,087	415.92

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.

Data Source: US Department of Housing and Urban Development. 2024. → Show more details

Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

Richmond County’s HUD-Assisted Units, rate per 10,000 housing units is 627, almost double the North Carolina rate, at 320 units per 10,000.

According to the North Carolina Housing Coalition (2026), 51% of renters and 24% of homeowners in Richmond County have difficulty affording their homes. According to the Legal Services Cooperation, during the year of June 2022 to June 2023 over 600 families in Richmond County faced an eviction filing. These totals have been consistent since 2016, except for a decrease in 2020 and 2021, partly due to the eviction moratorium in place at that time.

Homelessness

In 2024, the total number of homeless persons in the United States reached a record high at 771,480 (Saucy et al., 2025). According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness (n.d.), anyone can experience homelessness, and systemic high housing costs and low incomes put individuals at risk.

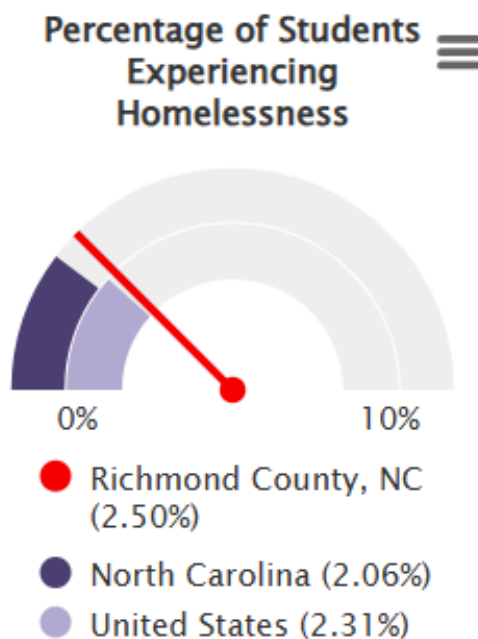
Homelessness is commonly cited, as it was in our primary data focus groups, as a concern for Richmond County residents. In 2025, the Rockingham Chief of Police, George Gillenwater, said in a presentation to the Rockingham City Council that Richmond County has seen an

increase in the homeless population in recent years. In August of 2025, Rockingham City Council passed an ordinance that prohibits individuals from using city property for sleeping arrangements, to store personal belongings, or to place any temporary structure. In addition, lighting bonfires or campfires are also prohibited (Toler, 2025). Chief Gillenwater stated that the department has started using a database to track information on homeless people including their name and why they came to Rockingham.

Homeless Children and Youth

The effects of homelessness are not limited to adults. Richmond County Schools reported for the 2024 – 2025 school year they had 208 homeless children and youth recorded. Youth experiencing homelessness are more likely to be chronically absent from school, lack access to dental and medical care, and to be physically or sexually abused. Homeless youth are also more likely to abuse alcohol or substances (American Psychological Association, 2024).

Data Source: US Department of Education, Express Additional data analysis by CARES. 2021-2022.



Report Area	Students in All Districts	Students Reporting Experiencing Homelessness	Students Reporting Experiencing Homelessness, Percent	Districts Reporting	Students in Reported Districts
Richmond County, NC	6,810	170	2.50%	100.00%	100.00%
North Carolina	1,391,967	28,716	2.06%	98.00%	99.78%
United States	45,802,935	1,056,199	2.31%	88.40%	99.27%

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.

Data Source: US Department of Education, ED Data Express. Additional data analysis by CARES. 2021-2022. → Show more details

During the 2021-2022 school year, 170 of the 6,810 or 2.50% of Richmond County Public School students reported experiencing homelessness. These students lacked a fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence. They were sharing a house with others (doubled-up), living in motels, hotels, camping grounds, staying in emergency transitional shelters, or were unsheltered. The percentage of students in Richmond County experiencing homelessness was slightly higher than the percentage reported in the United States and North Carolina.

Report Area	Total	Doubled-up	Unsheltered	Hotels/motels	Shelters and transitional housing
Richmond County, NC	170	122	6	35	7
North Carolina	28,716	19,989	1,002	5,465	1,830
United States	1,056,199	785,532	40,035	95,315	87,097

Data Source: US Department of Education, ED Data Express. Additional data analysis by CARES. 2021-2022. → Show more details

Of the 170 students reporting homelessness, 122 were doubled-up, 35 were in hotels/motels, 7 were in shelters or transitional housing, and 6 were unsheltered.

Richmond County Schools Homelessness Coordinator, Kim Childers, reported the last 3 years of local child homelessness of enrolled students.

2022 – 2025 Homeless Students in Richmond County Schools						
School Year	Total	Doubled-Up	Unsheltered	Hotels/Motels	Shelters	Total School Population
2024-2025	208	159	2	46	1	6757
2023-2024	188	156	2	29	1	6952
2022-2023	194	143	3	48	0	6938

The percentage of homelessness was the highest during the 2024-2025 school year with 3.08%, followed by school year 2022-2023 with 2.80%, and school year 2023-2023 with 2.70%. No state or National data was available for these reporting years for comparison.

Transportation

Report Area	Total Occupied Households	Households with No Motor Vehicle	Households with No Motor Vehicle, Percent
Richmond County, NC	16,863	1,890	11.21%
North Carolina	4,186,924	223,126	5.33%
United States	127,482,865	10,602,826	8.32%

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2019-23. → Show more details

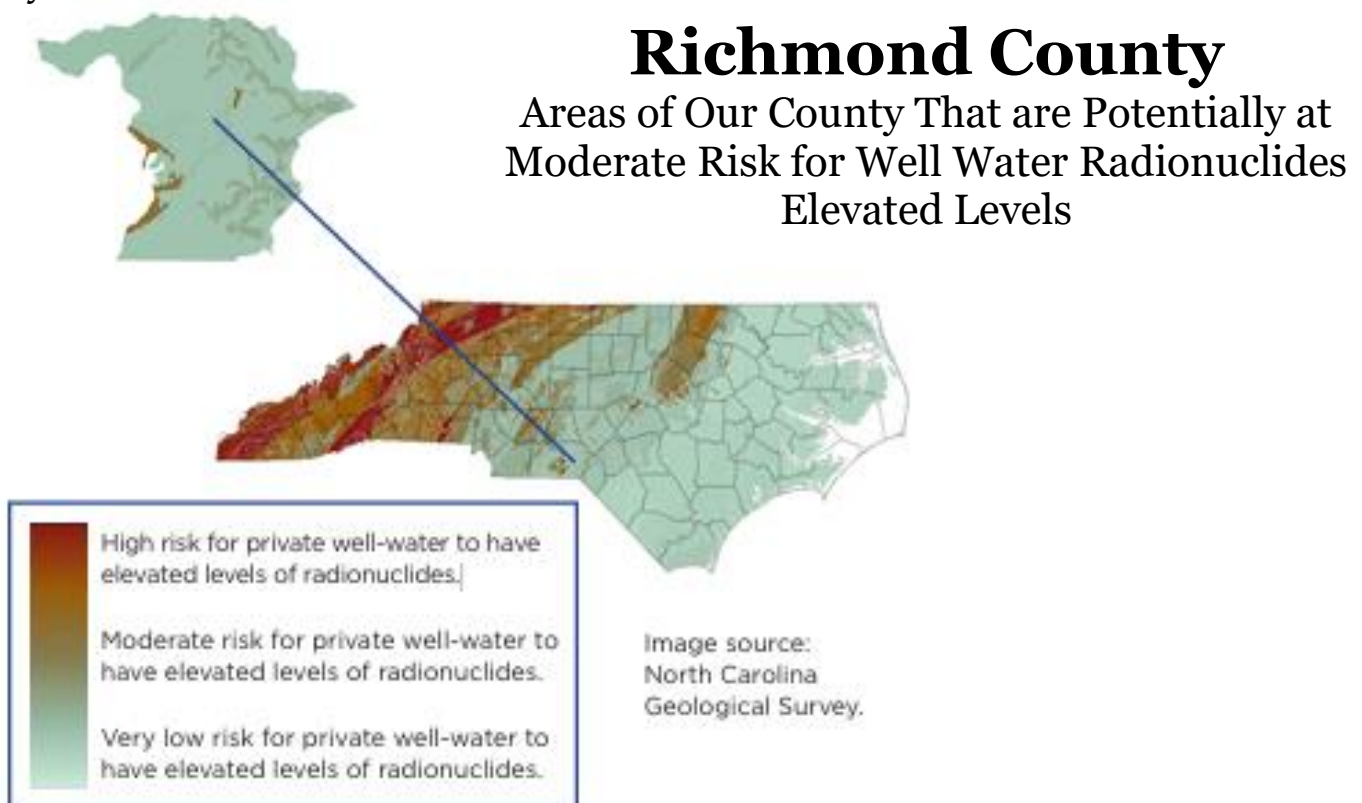
Data Source: NC Data Portal, Richmond County

Since Richmond County has no public transit system, it is alarming that 11.21% of households have no motor vehicle. This makes access to grocery stores, businesses, healthcare, and other resources more challenging.

Environmental Health

Air and Water – Radon Testing

According to the North Carolina Health and Human Services (NCHHS) Radiation Protection Section, radon is a gas that is naturally present in rocks and soil in North Carolina. It is created when uranium in the ground decays. Some building materials can also contain uranium. Overtime, inhalation of Radon can cause lung cancer. Radon cannot be seen, smelled, or tasted. The only way to determine if radon is being released indoors is by testing the air. It is recommended that homes and buildings are radon tested every two years.



For homes tested with a high level of radon, it is recommended to hire a qualified professional to install a Radon Reduction System (CDC, 2024).

Richmond County Environmental Health Section

The Richmond County Environmental Health Section of the Richmond County Health Department is responsible for enforcing North Carolina Laws and Rules to safeguard Public Health and protect the environment.

Services offered by Richmond County Environmental Health Section include:

- On-site Wastewater (Septic Systems)
- On-site Water Protection (Wells)
- Food
- Lodging
- Institutions
- Childhood Lead Prevention
- Emergency Preparedness Programs

The Onsite Water Protection section provides regulatory oversight and enforcement of the laws and rules governing onsite wastewater systems, private drinking, and irrigation water wells. Services provided by this section include site evaluations for septic and well permits, septic and well construction inspections, well water testing, and complaint investigations. Private water supplies can be sampled for coliform bacteria, chemicals, and petroleum to certify the well yields water that is safe to drink.

Food, lodging, and institution sanitation helps to ensure the public that establishments operating in Richmond County meet the minimum

sanitation standards as required by the NC Department of Health and Human Services. Richmond County Environmental Health Specialists routinely inspect all the establishments which include the establishment's level of cleanliness, food handling practices, and proper food protection during preparation, storage, and transportation.

Recognition

In 2023, the Richmond County Environmental Health Section was responsible for Richmond County becoming the first county in North Carolina to meet all nine of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards.

In 2024, the Richmond County Environmental Health Section was awarded the Samuel J. Crumbine Consumer Protection Award for Exemplary Strides in Food Safety at the Local Level. This national award was recognized at the February 2025 Richmond County Board of Commissioners Meeting.



Photo by William R. Toler - Richmond Observer

<https://richmondobserver.com/stories/commissioners-honor-richmond-county-environmental-health-team-for-national-awards,30308>

Conclusion

The Richmond County Health Department continuously develops and implements strategies to improve the health and quality of life in our communities. We engage the community through partnerships and collaborations to provide health initiatives and to make a difference in Richmond County. These partnerships play a part in increasing access to healthcare services, educating community members, and addressing social determinants of health. Strong relationships between health departments, local agencies, and community members are essential to providing effective health interventions.

The 2025 Richmond County Community Health Assessment has highlighted priority areas impacting health in Richmond County. Focusing on these issues can improve well-being and quality of life for Richmond County residents. The Richmond County Health Department will be working on creating a Community Health Improvement Plan for these issues.

To become a community partner with the Richmond County Health Department, please call our health education department at (910) 997-8292 or visit our website at:

richmondnc.com/202/Health-department

Richmond County residents are invited to visit the Richmond County Health Department at 127 Caroline Street Rockingham, NC 28379. We are open Monday – Thursday from 8:00am – 6:00pm or on Fridays from 8:00am – 5:00pm.

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