



One Sheet: Poverty

As a community, Memphis is aware of the challenges it faces and the necessity of long-term solutions that uplift vulnerable and struggling citizens. Like many cities across the nation, Memphis faces complex problems that require equally complex solutions, and no more so than poverty. This is one of Memphis' most complicated issues, as there isn't one particular reason poverty exists in our communities, but rather a culmination of factors that many of our leaders are working to address. From economic equality to jobs and education, there are a multitude of issues that are important to us, and the issue of poverty is at the forefront.

Memphis has always been a haven for people of the region, whether it was former freed slaves or agricultural workers who lost jobs to mechanization, many fell victim to mergers and shifts in the market that contributed to trends of poverty. The good news is that no city in America is working harder to tackle poverty, and the leaders and organizations of our community are constantly providing comprehensive, innovative solutions to address this issue. Notable poverty initiatives include:

- As a part of their Vision2020 plan, the Women's Foundation for a Greater Memphis has made strides to reduce poverty in the 38126 zip code. This includes \$5.8 million invested in the area.
- JUICE Orange Mound works to unite, empower, and support each resident in the historic Orange Mound neighborhood through finding and funding innovative ideas within the community.

Beyond these few examples, the City of Memphis is unified in the fight against poverty. Of the hundreds of organizations that exist, more than 60% of all non-profits in the city are working to reduce poverty, and countless for-profit businesses have developed programs to aid in the fight for economic opportunity for all. Institutions across the city are also committed to economic equality. In 2021, The University of Memphis raised its wage floor to \$15 to ensure that their staff receive a livable wage.

As a leader in the larger history of the Civil Rights Movement, we recognize and own racially related poverty problems that result from long-standing trends of injustice. Numerous large companies like First Tennessee Bank and Methodist Le Bonheur Health Care have set up specific programs aimed at economic justice. In 2017, an effort was made to honor the sanitation strikers from 1968 with \$50,000 each, and countless financial literacy and counseling programs exist in the most economically challenged neighborhoods in Memphis. Among the 50 largest regions in the U.S., Memphis is #1 in the number of non-profit organizations per 10,000 population, and almost 60% of them are working to serve low-income and disadvantaged populations. For example, Memphis' Hospitality Hub which works to end homelessness in the city. The organization has created services and initiatives such as the Hub Hotel and Hub Plaza to assist Memphians who are currently experiencing homelessness.

These are just a few examples from a long list that demonstrate just how unified and committed

we are in creating pathways out of poverty. Throughout our history, Memphis has overcome challenges and continues to do so. We are proud of the effort our community has already made and remain vigilant in the continued efforts to reduce poverty. Together, Memphians will continue to find innovative and impactful solutions that improve our city.