WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT of HEALTH SERVICES

Division of Public Health

User Guide: Wisconsin Local Community Dataset

Contents

Introduction

The Wisconsin Local Community Dataset is an Excel formatted dataset that includes local data on community and social conditions from multiple state, federal, and other data sources. The goal of this dataset is to provide public health practitioners with a guide for finding and evaluating data in their Wisconsin communities.

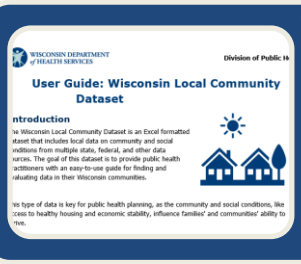
This type of data is key for public health planning, as the community and social conditions, like access to healthy housing and economic stability, influence families' and communities' ability to thrive.

This user guide walks through how to use the dataset to find the data you are looking for.

Figure 1. The dataset combines data on different social and community topics into one dataset, which can then be used to inform action.

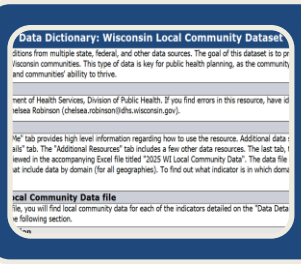
File structure

There are three files associated with the Wisconsin Local Community Dataset.



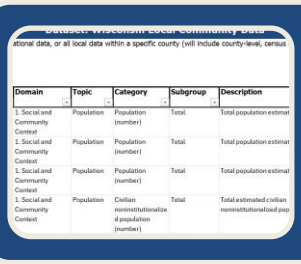
The **User Guide: Wisconsin Local Community Dataset (.docx)**

- Details how to use the dataset.
- Provides high-level information about the dataset purpose and contents.
- Answers frequently asked questions.



The **Data Dictionary: Wisconsin Local Community Dataset (.xlsx)**

- Describes each specific indicator included in the dataset.
- Details what exact data topics are included in the dataset, what local populations each data topic is available at, and what years of data are included.
- Includes some important definitions and notes for specific data topics.



The **Dataset: Wisconsin Local Community Data (.xlsb)**

- Includes the actual data values for all included local populations and data years.
- Includes filters to easily find specific data.

Use cases

Whether you are looking for social or community data for a grant report, a community health assessment, or something else, this dataset should be a helpful starting point. This data is particularly useful for describing a community and for looking at recent trends over time. This data is **not** useful for looking at cause and effect relationships between variables.

Generally, there are two ways people may navigate through the dataset to find the data they are looking for, depending on if they want to:

- Find data for a **specific topic** for many geographies (for example, counties) **across the state**
- Find data on a **variety of topics** within **one geographic area** (for example, county)

Tip: Open the dataset, data dictionary, and user guide, so you can easily switch between files. If available, consider using **two monitors** when navigating the dataset. With two screens, you can more easily view multiple files at once.

Find data for a specific topic for many geographies across the state.

This procedure will walk through how to find data on a specific topic for many local geographies (for example, counties) across Wisconsin.

Tip: You would use this procedure if you wanted to find data on housing affordability for every county in Wisconsin.

View the boxes on the left for a step-by-step process on how to find the data. View the boxes on the right for an example of how to go through the process.

Step-by-step process	Example
1. Find the data topic in the data dictionary. Open up the "Data Dictionary: Wisconsin Local Community Dataset" file and navigate to the "Data Details" tab. Data topics are sorted first by the Domain column, then grouped by Topic.	Let's find data on housing affordability for every county in Wisconsin.
1.1 Decide which Domain you are interested in. The Domains included are: • Social and Community Context. • Economic Stability. • Education Access and Quality. • Neighborhood and Built Environment. • Health Care Access and Quality.	Housing data would be in the Neighborhood and Built Environment Domain.
1.2 After you decide on a Domain, filter to only show rows within that domain. To do this, select the dropdown arrow next to the Domain column header and select only the domain you are interested in.	Select the dropdown arrow next to the Domain column and select only "4. Neighborhood and Built environment." This will show only rows within that domain. Data on housing costs starts at row 630. **Tip:** You might find it helpful to highlight the rows you are considering, so you don't lose your place in the data dictionary.
1.3 Next, review the Topic column within that Domain and decide which topic is most relevant to your need. To only show rows within a specific topic, click on the drop-down arrow next to the Topic column header to select the options you want to see.	By clicking the drop-down arrow next to the Topic column, I can see all the included topics. There is a topic called "Housing costs," which is relevant to what I am looking for. Select only that topic. Now only rows showing data for housing costs should appear.

1.4 Further specify the exact indicator you want. Within many topics, there are multiple different data indicators. Review the Category column on the "Data Details" tab in the data dictionary to further specify what indicator is most helpful for you.

Tip: The Category column will also indicate whether a data point is a number, a percent, a dollar amount, or a ratio. Often, data is included both as a number and as a percent.

We already found the "Housing costs" topic starting at row 630. Now, look at the Category column and decide which option best meets your need. Let's say we want to look further at "Cost-burdened housing by tenure (percent)," which begins on row 633.

Tip: If you aren't sure what a specific Category means, look further at the Description column. By looking at the Description column, we see that this data shows the estimated percentage of occupied housing units with housing costs greater than or equal to 30 percent of monthly household income.

1.5 Decide what subgroups you want to look at. For many categories, data for a specific indicator is available for a variety of subgroups (for example, by race and ethnicity, gender, age). Review the Subgroup column on the "Data Details" tab in the data dictionary to further specify what subgroups you want to look at.

We already decided that we wanted to look at "Cost-burdened housing by tenure (percent)" starting at row 633. By reviewing the "Subgroup" column, we see that we can look at this data for owner-occupied households, renter-occupied households, and for both (total). Let's say we want to look at all these subgroups.

1.6 Review the indicator description. Read the Description column, Definitions and Notes column, and other columns in the data dictionary to get a better understanding of what the data will mean.

By looking at the Description column, we see that this data shows the estimated percentage of occupied housing units with housing costs greater than or equal to 30 percent of monthly household income.

1.7 Decide what geographies and years of data you want to look at. For most topics, data is available for many geographies and many different years. Review the "Geographies Included" and "Years Included" columns on the "Data Details" tab of the data dictionary to learn about what data is available.

By looking at the "Geographies Included" column, we see that this data is available at the following geographies: country, state, county, county subdivision, census tract.

When we look at the "Years Included" column, we see that this data is available for three periods.

Let's say we decide to look at county-level data for all counties in Wisconsin for the most recent time period.

1.8 Note the number indicated in the "Tab" column of the data dictionary. This number corresponds to the tab in the dataset file where you can find the data.

The Tab column says 4.1, so we know we can find this data on the tab titled 4.1 in the dataset file.

2. Open up the dataset file. Now that you know what data you are looking for, open the Dataset: Wisconsin Local Community Data Excel file.

We already decided that we wanted to look at "Cost-burdened housing by tenure (percent)" for all available subgroups for all counties in Wisconsin for the most recent time period. Now, open the dataset file.

2.1 Navigate to the appropriate tab. Recall the number in the "Tab" column that you noted in the previous step. Go to the tab titled with that number.

The Tab column in the data dictionary said 4.1, so we are going to click on the tab titled "4.1 Neighborhood" in the dataset file.

2.2 Filter the data to only show the data relevant to you. Click on the drop-down arrow next to each column header to select the options you want to see.

Tip: If the text appears cut off, select wrap text to show all text in the cell.

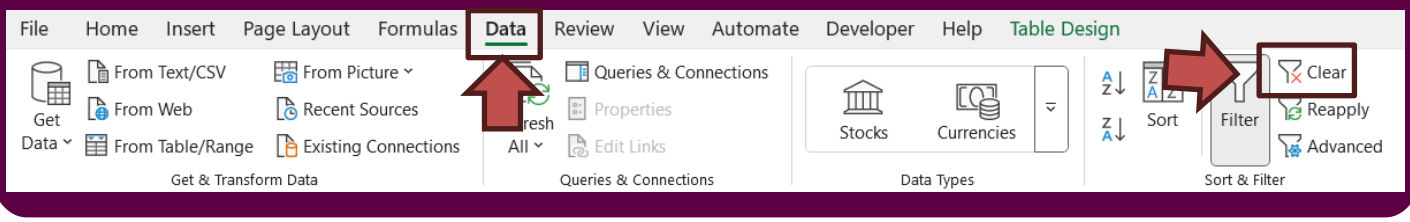
Once we are on the correct tab in the dataset file, we see a lot of data. To make this more digestible, we are going to filter to only show select data.

- Select the dropdown arrow next to GeographicLevel column and select only "County," since we are only interested in county-level data.
- Select the dropdown arrow next to the Topic column and select only "Housing costs".
- Select the dropdown arrow next to the Category column and select only "Cost-burdened housing by tenure (percent)."
- Select the dropdown next to "Year" and select only the most recent time period. Now, we have the data we are looking for.

3. Copy the data into your report or analysis.

Tip: You might find it helpful to highlight the rows you are analyzing, so you don't lose your place in the datset!

Tip: Wondering how you can easily clear all your filters in either the data dictionary or dataset to start fresh? In Excel, go to the tab at the top labeled "Data", then select "Clear" in the "Sort & Filter section". View the following image.



Find data for a variety of topics within one geographic area.

This procedure will walk through how to find data on a variety of topics within one geographic area (for example, county). This option allows you to easily query national data, statewide data, or data for geographies within one county (includes county-level data and all census tracts and county subdivision within that county).

Tip: You would use this procedure if you wanted to look at lots of different data points for one county's community health assessment.

View the boxes on the left for a step-by-step process on how to find the data. View the boxes on the right for an example of how to go through the process.

Step-by-step process	Example
1. Become familiar with the data included by looking at the data dictionary. Open up the "Data Dictionary: Wisconsin Local Community Dataset" file and navigate to the "Data Details" tab. Data topics are sorted first by the Domain column, then grouped by Topic. This file gives you detailed information about the types of data available in the dataset.	Let's look at all data topics for Outagamie County.
2. Open up the dataset file. Now that you know what data you are looking for, open the "Dataset: Wisconsin Local Community Data" Excel file.	To find data for Outagamie County, open up the dataset file.
2.1 Navigate to the tab titled "All Data by Geography." This tab allows you to view either Wisconsin statewide data, national data, or data for all local geographies within a specific county. Select a geography in cell B4 and the table will auto-populate with data for all included data topics.	Click on cell B4, and select "Outagamie County." The table should auto-populate with Outagamie County's data for all included data topics, years, and geographies (that are within Outagamie County).
2.2 Filter the data to only show the data relevant to you. Click on the drop-down arrow next to each column header to select the options you want to see. **Tip**: If the text appears cut off, select wrap text to show all text in the cell.	Let's say we only want to see data for Appleton city (within Outagamie County), we can click the dropdown arrow next to the GeographyName column and select only Appleton city. If we want to only view data for specific topics or for specific years, we can filter the Topic column and Year column in the same way.
3. Copy the data into your report or analysis.	Now, use the data you found in your report, analysis, or visualization!

Frequently asked questions

What data is included in the dataset?

This dataset includes local Wisconsin data on community and social conditions from multiple state, federal, and other data sources. This type of data is often referred to as structural and social determinants of health (SDoH) data. Specifically, the dataset includes over 800 indicators across a wide array of the following topics

Tip: View the "Data Details" tab of the "Data Dictionary: Wisconsin Local Community Dataset" file for a full list of indicators included within each data topic.

Social and Community Context

- Population
- Language
- Living arrangements
- Social support
- Residential segregation
- Census participation
- Juvenile arrests

Economic Stability

- Food assistance
- Poverty
- Income and wages
- Wealth
- Labor force
- Employment
- Unemployment
- Hours worked
- Jobs
- Debt
- Asset limited, income constrained, employed (ALICE) households

Education Access and Quality

- Educational attainment
- School enrollment
- Disconnected youth
- School health staff
- Suspensions
- Third grade reading scores

Neighborhood and Built Environment

- Housing availability
- Housing quality
- Housing costs
- Internet and computer access
- Transportation
- Access to parks
- Child care access
- Food insecurity
- Alcohol outlet density

Health Care Access and Quality

- Health care access
- Health insurance
- Health care quality
- Substance use services access
- Population to health providers ratio
- Dental care access

How were data selected to be included in the dataset?

2021

A pilot version of this dataset project was created, which included housing, transportation, and childcare data.

2022

- Wisconsin Division of Public Health (DPH) staff were invited to participate in a survey to prioritize additional data to add to the dataset. A DPH workgroup then evaluated the indicators proposed for availability and data quality.
- After this, the workgroup had a semi-final list of indicators to include in the dataset.

2023

Local health department staff provided feedback on the list via the Community Health Assessment Data Sharing Project Community of Practice series.

2024

- This feedback was incorporated and published in the CHA-CHIP Indicator List, where the tab titled "Community Conditions" includes a comprehensive list of social and community condition indicators.
- This list was used as the basis for data included in this dataset.

2025

For data to be included in this dataset, certain additional criteria needed to be met. We prioritized including data that is:

- Available locally across at least most of Wisconsin.
- Known to be updated regularly.
- Available in a structured format that can be easily processed.
- Able to be correctly interpreted outside of the original source.
- Less than five years old.

Excel is giving me an error message saying that "Excel ran out of resources…". What do I do?

The dataset file is large, which can sometimes cause performances issues within Excel. This error message most commonly occurs when Milwaukee County is selected in cell B4 on the tab titled "All Data by Geography," since Milwaukee County has the most data rows to load.

Here are a few tips to try to address this issue.

Start a new session in the Excel app.

- Sometimes Excel gets particularly bogged down after we have been using the file for a while.
- If you are trying to select Milwaukee County in cell B4 on the tab titled "All Data by Geography," but you are getting an error message, try closing out of the file and reopening it. Often, that function will work fine on a fresh Excel session.
- If you are using the web-based Excel, close out and open the dataset in the **Excel app**. This dataset operates best using the Excel app.

Close other files that aren't needed.

- Try to close other Excel files or programs you don't need open to further optimize performance.

Keep "Wisconsin" selected in cell B4 on the "All Data by Geography" tab.

- Whenever you are not using the "All Data by Geography" tab, keep "Wisconsin" or "United States" selected in cell B4. This optimizes performance since there is less data loaded when "Wisconsin" or "United States" is selected.
- For example, you may get an error message if you select "Milwaukee County" in cell B4 then decide to move to the "1. Social and Community" tab and apply filters on that tab. If this happens, go back to the "All Data by Geography" tab and select "Wisconsin" or "United States," then try your task again.

If available, consider using the 64-bit version of Excel instead of the 32-bit version.

- These performance issues are all much more likely to occur when using the 32-bit version of Excel. Check what version of Excel you have by following these steps:
  1. Open Excel.
  2. Click the File tab in the top-left corner.
  3. Select Account from the menu.
  4. Click the About Excel button the right.
  5. Read the dialogue box that appears, which states the Excel version.
- If you are using the 32-bit version and facing challenges, consider seeing if you can access the 64-bit version.

Tip: Learn more about the different versions of Excel here.

What geographic levels are included in the dataset?

This dataset prioritized including data that is available locally in Wisconsin.

Data is available at the following geographic levels, where available:

- National
- State (Wisconsin)
- County
- Census tract
- County subdivision

Tip: View the "Data Details" tab of the "Data Dictionary: Wisconsin Local Community Dataset" file for a full list of geographic levels available for each data topic.

What is a county subdivision?

County subdivisions closely align with cities, towns, and villages within a given county. Some cities, towns, and villages overlap county lines. In these instances, the city, town, or village will be reflected in multiple county subdivisions (that are in different counties).

Example: Appleton city data can be found in the following three county subdivisions: Appleton city, Calumet County, Wisconsin; Appleton city, Outagamie County, Wisconsin; and Appleton city, Winnebago County, Wisconsin.

What census tracts and county subdivisions are within my local health department's jurisdiction?

For all data at the census tract and county subdivision levels, the dataset column titled "LHD" displays the name of the local health department (LHD) jurisdiction that overlaps with the census tract or county subdivision. For census tracts that cross into multiple local health jurisdictions, all LHD names are listed. In these instances, the percent of the census tract population within each LHD jurisdiction is also listed.

What data years are included in the dataset?

The exact data years included vary by topic. The dataset prioritized including data for at least the last three available time frames whenever available.

Tip: View the "Data Details" tab of the "Data Dictionary: Wisconsin Local Community Dataset" file for a full list of data years included for each data topic.

When will this dataset be updated?

The goal is for this dataset to be updated (with more recent data years) and revised annually. For five-year estimates, all values will be overwritten to reflect the most recent three non-overlapping five-year estimates. Because of this, you may prefer to save a copy of the dataset locally, so you can reference it later. To find the most updated dataset version, visit the Structural and Social Determinants of Health (SDoH) Data webpage.

What are five-year estimates and why don't the periods overlap?

For some data sources, like the American Community Survey (ACS), five-year estimates were used. These estimates aggregate information over a five-year period, providing estimates that are more reliable for smaller geographies and population subgroups. For most counties in Wisconsin, ACS only provides five-year data, meaning that there is no single-year data available for most of the ACS data included in this dataset.

Tips for comparing five-year estimates	Example
Five-year estimates should not be compared to estimates from an overlapping period since much of the data in both estimates is the same.	The 2020-2024 ACS five-year estimates **should not** be compared to 2019-2023 ACS five-year estimates, since the years overlap.
The difference in two overlapping five-year estimates is essentially measuring the difference in the non-overlapping portions of the two estimates, which is not what the data user is usually looking for.	Comparing 2020-2024 ACS five-year estimates to 2019-2023 ACS five-year estimates would be comparing 2019 data to 2024 data, which isn't very useful.
Five-year estimates should only be compared with preceding non-overlapping five-year data. This dataset prioritized including data for the last three available non-overlapping periods.	The 2020-2024 ACS five-year estimates **can be** compared to 2015-2019 ACS five-year estimates.

Tip: To learn more about making comparisons using five-year estimates, review Period Estimates in the American Community Survey.

How is the dataset set up and structured?

The dataset is formatted as an Excel workbook.

- The workbook has one tab (titled "All Data by Geography") that allows you to view data for all topics for geographies within a specific county.
- The data is also provided by domain in a series of other tabs. These tabs allow you to view data for a specific topic for many geographies across Wisconsin.

Regardless of what tab you are viewing data on, the structure of the data is the same. The data is formatted as a vertical dataset, where each row represents a unique data value.

How can I find data for only my specific community?

Read the previous section titled "Find data for a variety of topics for geographies within one county" for a step-by-step guide on how to find data for a local geography within the dataset.

How can I find data on a specific topic in the dataset?

Read the previous section titled "Find data for a specific topic for many geographies across the state" for a step-by-step guide on how to find data for a specific topic within the dataset.

What is a margin of error (MOE)?

A margin of error is a statistic that reflects the uncertainty associated with a sample from a population. Where relevant and available, the dataset includes information on the margin of error (MOE) for each data value. These MOEs are provided at the 90 or 95 percent confidence level, depending on what is standard for the data source.

A margin of error is the difference between an estimate and its upper or lower confidence bounds. Add the MOE value to the estimate to create the upper confidence bound and subtract the MOE from the estimate to create a lower confidence bound. For a 90% MOE, this can be interpreted as 90% of similar surveys would obtain an estimate within the confidence interval specified. So, a wider confidence interval indicates a higher degree of uncertainty about the true value. MOEs for derived estimates from the American Community Survey were calculated using Census guidance.

How can I request the dataset in a different file type?

If you are having issues opening the Excel file dataset, or if you need it in a different file type (such as a csv file, Rdata file, xlsx file, SAS file) reach out to us! Following is our contact information.

How can I request a smaller version of this dataset with only data for my jurisdiction or region?

If you prefer a smaller file with only select data, reach out to us! Following is our contact information.

How can I ask questions or provide feedback on how to improve this dataset resource?

If you need assistance navigating this resource, find errors in this resource, have ideas on how to improve this resource, or have other feedback, please let us know! You can fill out our feedback survey, or you can contact us directly.

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