2018 New Hampshire Residential Rental Cost Survey

June 2018







NEW HAMPSHIRE HOUSING FINANCE AUTHORITY 2018 Residential Rental Cost Survey Report ■ JUNE 2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	3
Overview of NHHFA's Annual Survey	4
Rental Cost Data - Statewide	5
Vacancy Rates	9
Rental Affordability	11
Rental Cost Data - Counties	13
Rental Cost Data - Select Cities	15
Rental Cost Data - HUD Metro Fair Market Rent Area	16

Download the 2018 NHHFA Residential Rental Cost Survey at NHHFA.org.

NHHFA greatly appreciates the assistance of the property owners and rental managers who participated in this survey. The data is referenced throughout the year by state and local officials, businesses, and others with an interest in housing in New Hampshire.

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Front cover: Kensington Woods, Bedford (Cheryl Senter Photography)

STATE'S RENTAL MARKET REMAINS TIGHT

Dean J. Christon *Executive Director*New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority

This year's NHHFA survey of residential rental units confirms the actual and anecdotal status of New Hampshire's rental market: it is challenging to find an apartment to rent, let alone one that is affordable. Recent national housing studies indicate that tight rental and homebuyer markets have become the norm in many other states as well.

Our 2018 survey, conducted by the University of New Hampshire Survey Center, polled the owners and managers of more than 23,000 unsubsidized (market rate) rental housing units around the state (15% of the total number of units). The survey found that the statewide median gross rent of \$1,296 (including utilities) for two-bedroom units has increased nearly 19% in the past five years, and that for the fifth year in a row rents have increased.

Meanwhile, New Hampshire's vacancy rate stands at 1.96% for two-bedroom units. In comparison, the U.S. vacancy rate is 7% and in the Northeast it is 5.1%. (A vacancy rate of 4% to 5% is considered a balanced market for supply and demand.) The availability of units in our southern tier counties (Hillsborough, Merrimack, Rockingham and Strafford) as well as in the Upper Valley's Hanover / Lebanon area is especially low.

While this year's survey shows rent in Hillsborough and Merrimack counties for a two-bedroom unit decreased slightly over the prior year, it's unlikely that this is a trend. The percent change over the past five years shows a trend where Merrimack has increased by 9% and and Hillsborough by 19%.

The highest rents are located in the southern counties near the state's largest cities and close to employers as well as the Boston job market. This is also where most of the state's

A tight rental market, while challenging for households, provides developers with an opportunity to create more units. rental housing properties are located. In order to afford the statewide median cost of a typical two-bedroom apartment with utilities, a renter would have to earn 117% of the statewide median renter income, or over \$47,100 a year.

The good news is that there has been an increase in the construction of new rental housing in the past few years, although many of these units tend be more expensive. The current housing market also reflects households that continue to rent because there's a scarcity of affordable homes to buy.

Reports from the BIA, NH Office of Strategic Initiatives and the UNH Carsey Institute, along with groups such as StayWorkPlay and the state's Young Professionals Network, all have noted that to sustain New Hampshire's healthy economy, more housing is needed for our workforce. Addressing this need for housing requires an ongoing commitment from the public and private sectors to change local land use policies that may be constraining reasonable opportunities for housing development. Other factors constraining new construction include increasing construction costs and a shortage of building tradespeople.

Last year NHHFA financed the creation or rehabilitation of more than 1,300 high-quality affordable rental units for working families and seniors, and provided direct rental assistance to thousands of very low-income households. This translates to an investment of about \$200 million into the state's economy last year.

New Hampshire Housing is committed to working creatively with public and private partners to provide housing to meet the needs of our state's residents and businesses.

OVERVIEW OF 2018 RENT SURVEY PROCESS

If you own or manage rental property, your participation is appreciated and needed for this annual survey. Please contact us at comments@nhhfa.org. Thank you.

New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority conducts an annual statewide survey to monitor rental housing costs and provide housing data to the general public and organizations that administer housing programs.

The NHHFA survey was conducted by the University of New Hampshire Survey Center via telephone and online from December 2017 - May 2018. The Survey Center obtained information on 23,142 market rate rental housing units across the state. Rental properties polled included those who have participated in past surveys and those identified through advertisements.

The calculation of median rents is based on a total sample of 8,962 units. Median rents were determined by using a portion of the unit data gathered from those projects with more than 10 units so as to reduce the bias toward larger apartment complexes.

GROSS RENTS are calculated for each property in the survey by taking the rent charged by the landlord (the contract rent) and adding a dollar allowance for those utilities the tenant pays. The addition of allowances for tenant-paid utilities has the effect of standardizing rental costs. These utility allowances are calculated at the time of the rental survey and are based on physical consumption allowances determined by HUD and current energy costs as determined in a separate survey conducted by NHHFA.

MEDIAN GROSS RENTS are presented for various geographic areas and for various unit sizes. The median represents the gross rent at the middle when gross rents are ordered from lowest to highest. Thus 50% of the sample units in each calculation have gross rents below the median, and 50% have gross rents above the median. The median (rather than a mean or average) is used because it is less influenced by extremes in rental costs.

Some median rents are not reported because the sample was not large enough to result in a reliable calculation. In general, median rents were not calculated when the sample contained 20 or fewer units. Despite the suppression of results for categories with small sample sizes, the data for those units have been included in the calculation of the overall median rents.

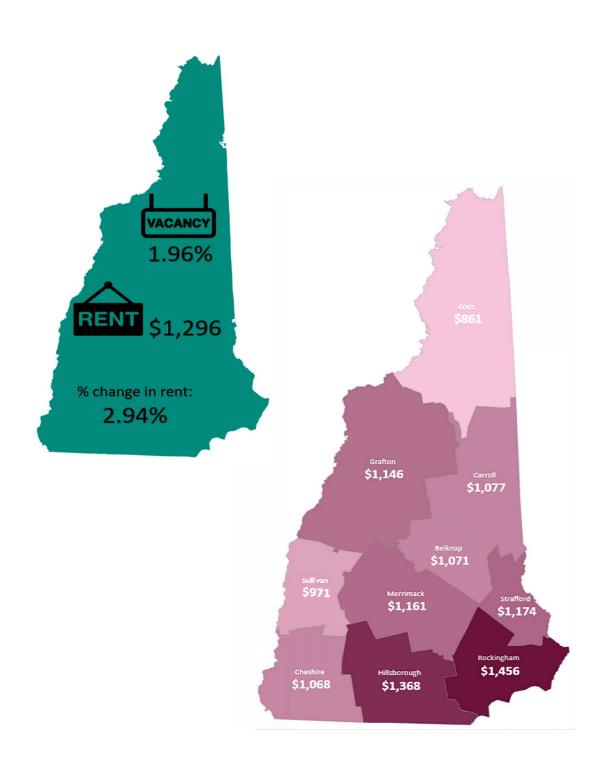
Finally, a chart for each area summarizing the results of the *Residential Rental Cost Survey* from 2008 to the present is included here. The median gross rents for two-bedroom units show general trends. Please note that since the sample set changes each year, changes in rents may be due to both the change in the sample and changes in utility costs used in calculating gross rents.

Categories for which there are insufficient data are notated with ****. Additionally, all median gross rents reported include utilities.

All data contained in this report, plus additional data, are available at NHHFA.org/housing-and-demographic-data.

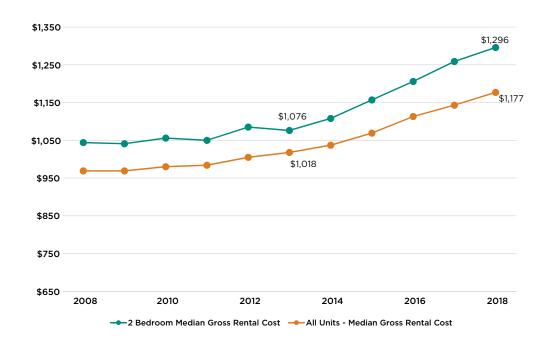


MONTHLY MEDIAN GROSS RENTAL COST FOR 2-BEDROOM UNITS, BY COUNTY The statewide median gross rent for a two-bedroom unit in 2018 was \$1,296; 81% of the rental units surveyed are in the southern tier (Hillsborough, Rockingham, Merrimack, and Strafford counties) and they have the highest median gross rents. The high median rental costs in Grafton County are driven by the robust market in the Hanover/Lebanon area, which represents the largest percent of rental units in the county.



MONTHLY MEDIAN GROSS RENT, 2-BEDROOM & ALL UNITS

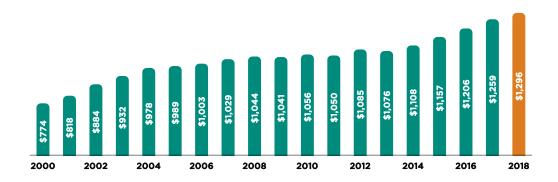
Includes utilities



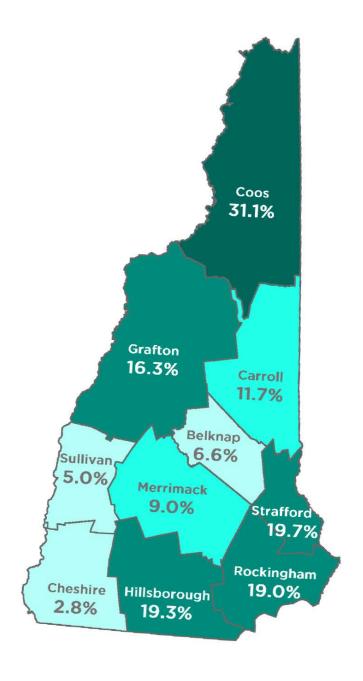
The statewide median gross rent (including utilities) for a two-bedroom unit has increased 20% in the past 5 years.

MEDIAN GROSS RENT FOR 2-BEDROOM UNITS, 2000 - 2018

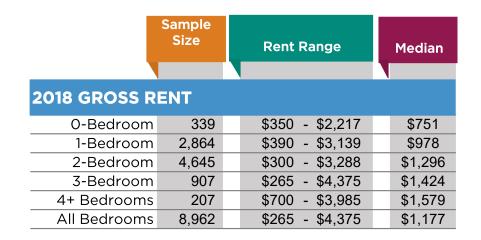
Includes utilities

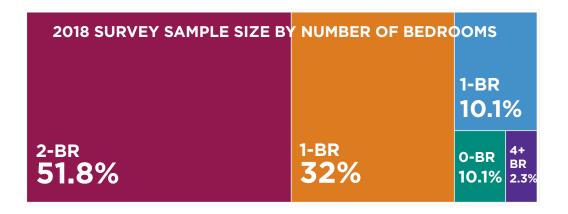


PERCENT CHANGE IN 2-BEDROOM MEDIAN GROSS RENT OVER FIVE YEARS, 2013 - 2018

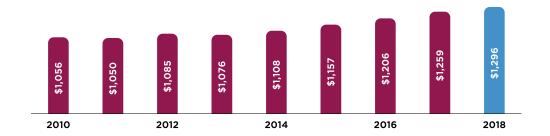


STATEWIDE GROSS RENT BY NUMBER OF BEDROOMS

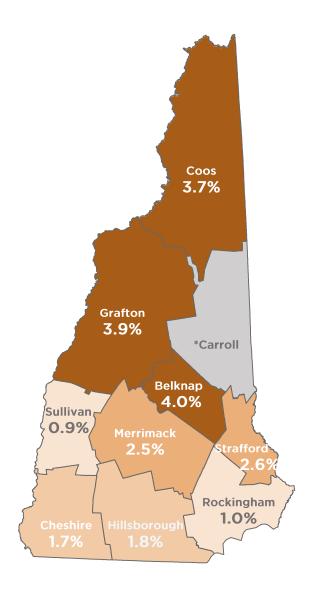




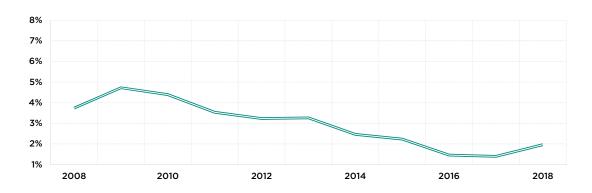
STATEWIDE MEDIAN MONTHLY GROSS RENT FOR 2-BEDROOM UNITS, 2010 - 2018



PERCENT OF 2-BEDROOM UNITS VACANT BY COUNTY



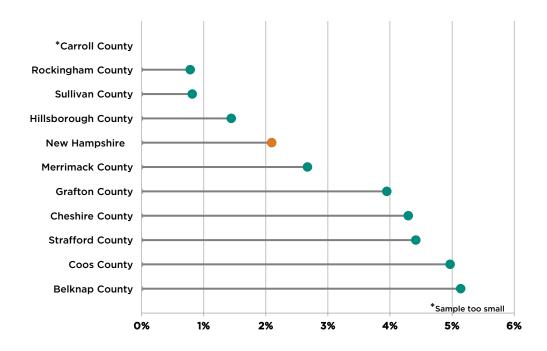
STATEWIDE VACANCY RATE, 2008 - 2018



^{*} Calculations based on smaller sample sizes are viewed as providing inconstant and highly volatile results and are not typically released.

2018 VACANCY RATE BY COUNTY FOR 2-BEDROOM UNITS

The rental housing vacancy rate has increased slightly to 2.1% for all units and 1.96% for 2-bedroom units. New Hampshire's vacancy rate is still below that of the U.S., which is 7% and the Northeast region which is 5.1%. (A balanced rental market is between 4 - 5% vacancy rate.)



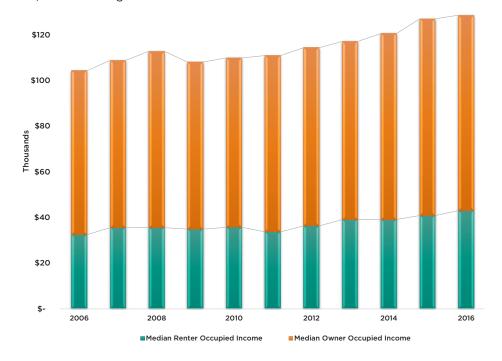
STATEWIDE VACANCY RATE

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Statewide	3.7%	4.7%	4.4%	3.5%	3.2%	3.3%	2.5%	2.2%	1.5%	1.4%	2.0%
Belknap County	3.5%	6.8%	6.4%	8.9%	3.3%	7.5%	5.3%	1.2%	4.9%	4.6%	4.0%
Carroll County	11.0%	7.8%	9.7%	11.3%	5.1%	3.1%	3.6%	3.9%	1.4%	*N/A	*N/A
Cheshire County	3.5%	4.3%	7.4%	6.4%	7.1%	2.5%	3.7%	3.2%	4.5%	1.0%	1.7%
Coos County	7.7%	6.3%	10.6%	15.2%	12.6%	9.5%	7.9%	9.2%	6.9%	10.7%	3.7%
Grafton County	2.0%	6.8%	7.0%	7.6%	7.5%	3.0%	3.9%	2.7%	3.0%	3.0%	3.9%
Hillsborough County	4.6%	4.9%	3.8%	2.2%	2.2%	2.6%	2.1%	2.3%	0.9%	1.2%	1.8%
Merrimack County	3.0%	5.6%	4.9%	4.8%	2.7%	3.3%	2.5%	1.7%	1.2%	1.1%	2.5%
Rockingham County	3.1%	3.2%	3.0%	2.7%	3.2%	3.4%	2.1%	1.9%	1.0%	1.1%	1.0%
Strafford County	2.4%	4.5%	5.7%	3.3%	3.6%	4.9%	2.1%	2.3%	1.4%	1.2%	2.6%
Sullivan County	3.4%	5.9%	6.4%	5.7%	7.4%	7.3%	5.8%	2.7%	6.4%	2.2%	0.9%

^{*} Calculations based on smaller sample sizes are viewed as providing inconstant and highly volatile results and are not typically released.

OWNER AND RENTER MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2005-2016), 1 Year Estimates The median renter-occupied household income has increased year over year for the past five years. This may be due to full employment in the state as well as because higher income households are remaining renters, rather than becoming owners, due to the tight market.



HOUSEHOLD INCOME REQUIRED TO AFFORD A 2-BEDROOM APARTMENT

In New Hampshire, 43% of rental households are paying 30% or more of their household income on rent. Lower-income families are likely to be paying an even higher percentage of their household income towards rent.

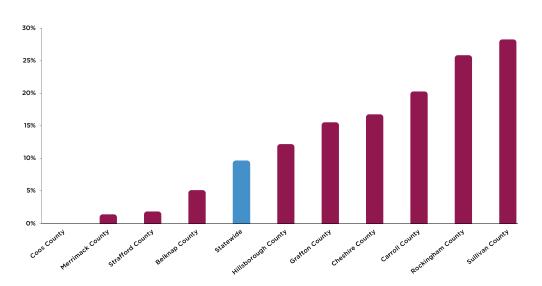
	Median 2-BR Rent	Household Income Required	% of Est. 2018 Renter Household Median Income
Statewide	\$1,177	\$47,100	117%
Belknap County	\$1,071	\$42,800	126%
Carroll County	\$1,077	\$43,100	116%
Cheshire County	\$1,068	\$42,700	133%
Coos County	\$861	\$34,400	143%
Grafton County	\$1,146	\$45,800	125%
Hillsborough County	\$1,368	\$54,700	129%
Merrimack County	\$1,160	\$46,400	129%
Rockingham County	\$1,456	\$58,200	124%
Strafford County	\$1,174	\$47,000	123%
Sullivan County	\$971	\$38,800	110%

HOUSEHOLD INCOME REQUIRED TO AFFORD A 2-BEDROOM APARTMENT IN EACH NH COUNTY

U.S. Census Bureau 2012-2016 American Community Survey, Median Income for Renter Households by County

	Estimated 2018 Renter Household Income*	Affordable Gross Rent Based on Income	% of 2BR Units in Survey Below Affordable Rent
Statewide	\$40,305	\$1,008	9%
Belknap County	\$33,903	\$848	5%
Carroll County	\$37,031	\$926	20%
Cheshire County	\$32,043	\$801	16%
Coos County	\$24,035	\$601	0%
Grafton County	\$36,615	\$915	15%
Hillsborough County	\$42,342	\$1,059	12%
Merrimack County	\$35,982	\$900	1%
Rockingham County	\$47,026	\$1,176	25%
Strafford County	\$38,225	\$956	1%
Sullivan County	\$35,232	\$881	28%

HOUSEHOLD INCOME REQUIRED TO AFFORD A 2-BEDROOM APARTMENT (EACH NH COUNTY, BY PERCENT)



RENTAL COST DATA - COUNTIES

	Sample Size	Rent Range	Median
BELKNAP COL	INTY		
0-Bedroom	17	\$500 - \$1,100	****
1-Bedroom	80	\$600 - \$1,158	\$858
2-Bedroom	129	\$616 - \$1,533	\$1,071
3-Bedroom	28	\$975 - \$2,400	\$1,333
4+ Bedrooms	9	\$1,449 - \$3,453	****
All Bedrooms	263	\$500 - \$3,453	\$1,002



	Sample Size		Rent Range		Median
		N		N	
CARROLL COL	INTY				
0-Bedroom	8		\$678 - \$1,000		****
1-Bedroom	68		\$710 - \$2,021		\$894
2-Bedroom	70		\$774 - \$2,360		\$1,077
3-Bedroom	25		\$931 - \$1,785		\$1,261
4+ Bedrooms	4		\$1,269 - \$2,800		****
All Bedrooms	175		\$678 - \$2,800		\$990



	Sample Size	Rent Range	Median
CHESHIRE COL	JNTY		
0-Bedroom	18	\$525 - \$985	****
1-Bedroom	196	\$487 - \$1,797	\$808
2-Bedroom	276	\$558 - \$1,738	\$1,068
3-Bedroom	56	\$1,039 - \$2,200	\$1,380
4+ Bedrooms	17	\$1,534 - \$2,699	****
All Bedrooms	563	\$487 - \$2,699	\$985



	Sample Size	Rent Range		Median		
COOS COUNT	Y					
0-Bedroom	2	\$565 - \$782		****		
1-Bedroom	46	\$491 - \$1,045		\$726		
2-Bedroom	78	\$643 - \$1,371		\$861		
3-Bedroom	25	\$789 - \$1,697		\$985		
4+ Bedrooms	6	\$896 - \$1,416		****		
All Bedrooms	157	\$491 - \$1,697		\$846		



	Sample Size	Rent Range	Median		
GRAFTON COL	JNTY				
0-Bedroom	48	\$350 - \$1,492	\$672		
1-Bedroom	178	\$390 - \$1,678	\$858		
2-Bedroom	197	\$300 - \$2,410	\$1,146		
3-Bedroom	40	\$686 - \$3,093	\$1,561		
4+ Bedrooms	11	\$700 - \$3,111	****		
All Bedrooms	474	\$300 - \$3,111	\$975		



RENTAL COST DATA - COUNTIES

	Sample Size		Rent Range	Median
HILLSBOROUG	H COU	١T	Υ	
0-Bedroom	127		\$390 - \$1,739	\$850
1-Bedroom	1,152		\$525 - \$1,863	\$1,187
2-Bedroom	2,045		\$622 - \$3,288	\$1,368
3-Bedroom	380		\$874 - \$2,920	\$1,380
4+ Bedrooms	48		\$1,117 - \$2,867	\$1,717
All Bedrooms	3,752		\$390 - \$3,288	\$1,346



	Sample Size	Rent Range	Median		
MERRIMACK C	OUNTY				
0-Bedroom	42	\$640 - \$1,750	\$832		
1-Bedroom	350	\$602 - \$1,775	\$1,022		
2-Bedroom	477	\$628 - \$1,921	\$1,160		
3-Bedroom	97	\$265 - \$1,897	\$1,383		
4+ Bedrooms	22	\$1,071 - \$3,985	\$1,675		
All Bedrooms	988	\$265 - \$3,985	\$1,114		



	Sample Size		Rent Range	Median
ROCKINGHAM	COUNT	Υ		
0-Bedroom	50		\$620 - \$2,217	\$796
1-Bedroom	486		\$710 - \$3,139	\$978
2-Bedroom	783		\$900 - \$3,260	\$1,456
3-Bedroom	144		\$939 - \$4,375	\$1,635
4+ Bedrooms	9		\$1,789 - \$3,332	****
All Bedrooms	1,472		\$620 - \$4.375	\$1.245



	Sample Size	Rent Range		Median
STRAFFORD C	OUNTY			
0-Bedroom	25	\$550 - \$2,000		\$808
1-Bedroom	287	\$512 - \$2,200		\$933
2-Bedroom	521	\$718 - \$2,572		\$1,174
3-Bedroom	104	\$875 - \$2,745		\$1,393
4+ Bedrooms	79	\$875 - \$3,299		\$1,108
All Bedrooms	1,016	\$512 - \$3,299		\$1,146



	Sample Size	Rent Range			Median		
SULLIVAN COL	JNTY						
0-Bedroom	2	\$450	-	\$560		****	
1-Bedroom	21	\$620	-	\$993		\$896	
2-Bedroom	69	\$600	-	\$1,425		\$971	
3-Bedroom	8	\$920	-	\$1,691		****	
4+ Bedrooms	2	\$1,369	-	\$1,496		****	
All Bedrooms	102	\$450	-	\$1,691		\$936	



RENTAL COST DATA - SELECT CITIES

	Sample Size	Rent Range		Median
CITY OF CONC	ORD			
0-Bedroom	25	\$700 - \$1,750		\$900
1-Bedroom	224	\$642 - \$1,775		\$1,041
2-Bedroom	285	\$731 - \$1,582		\$1,276
3-Bedroom	59	\$700 - \$1,897		\$1,414
4+ Bedrooms	6	\$1,071 - \$1,675		****
All Bedrooms	599	\$642 - \$1,897		\$1,157



	Sample Size	Rent Range		Median
CITY OF MANC	HESTER			
0-Bedroom	85	\$390 - \$1.739		\$715
1-Bedroom	463	\$525 - \$1,590		\$1,036
2-Bedroom	704	\$710 - \$2,158		\$1,270
3-Bedroom	167	\$943 - \$2,920		\$1,293
4+ Bedrooms	17	\$1,333 - \$2,867		****
All Bedrooms	1,436	\$390 - \$2,920		\$1,180











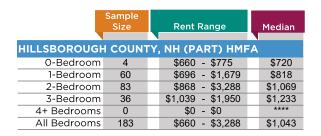




RENTAL COST DATA - HUD HMFA

Metropolitan Statistical Areas

HMFA (HUD Metropolitan Fair Market Rent Area) designations were established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as a result of information gathered from the 2000 Census.





Includes Antrim, Bennington, Deering, Francestown, Greenfield, Hancock, Hillsborough, Lyndeborough, New Boston, Peterborough, Sharon, Temple, Windsor

	Sample Size		Rent Range	Median		
				7		
MANCHESTER,	NH HMF	A				
0-Bedroom	88		\$390 - \$1,739		\$715	
1-Bedroom	494		\$525 - \$1,682		\$1,037	
2-Bedroom	807		\$710 - \$2,158		\$1,309	
3-Bedroom	179		\$943 - \$2,920		\$1,308	
4+ Bedrooms	17		\$1,333 - \$2,867		\$1,533	
All Bedrooms	1,585		\$390 - \$2,920		\$1,188	

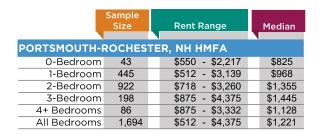
Includes Bedford, Goffstown, Manchester, Weare

Median Monthly Gross Rent for Two-Bedroom Units								
\$1,026	\$1,034	\$1,003	\$1,099	\$1,275	\$1,309			
2008	2010	2012	2014	2016	2018			

	Sample Size		Rent Range	Median		
		A				
NASHUA, NH HI	MFA					
0-Bedroom	35		\$632 - \$1,456		\$1,035	
1-Bedroom	598		\$583 - \$1,863		\$1,283	
2-Bedroom	1,155		\$622 - \$2,386		\$1,566	
3-Bedroom	165		\$874 - \$2,284		\$1,592	
4+ Bedrooms	31		\$1,117 - \$2,782		\$2,035	
All Bedrooms	1.984		\$583 - \$2.782		\$1.419	



Includes Amherst, Brookline, Greenville, Hollis, Hudson, Litchfield, Mason, Merrimack, Milford, Mont Vernon, Nashua, New Ipswich, Pelham, Wilton



New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority



Includes Barrington, Brentwood, Dover, Durham, East Kingston, Epping, Exeter, Farmington, Greenland, Hampton, Falls, Kensington, Lee, Madbury, Middleton, Milton, New Castle, New Durham, Newfields, Newington, Newmarket, North Hampton, Portsmouth, Rochester, Rollinsford, Rye, Somersworth, Strafford, Stratham

	Sample Size		Rent Range		Median
WESTERN ROC	KINGHAI	M	COUNTY, NH HM	IF/	4
0-Bedroom	1		\$750 - \$750		\$0
1-Bedroom	6		\$823 - \$953		\$936
2-Bedroom	27		\$918 - \$1,831		\$1,566
3-Bedroom	5		\$1,139 - \$1,879		\$1,474
4+ Bedrooms	0		\$0 - \$0		****
All Bedrooms	39		\$750 - \$1,879		\$1,493



Includes Auburn, Candia, Deerfield, Londonderry, Northwood, Nottingham

	Sample Size	Rent Range Median
BOSTON-CAMB	RIDGE-G	UINCY, MA-NH HMFA
0-Bedroom	0	\$0 - \$0 ****
1-Bedroom	1	\$1,292 - \$1,292 ****
2-Bedroom	13	\$1,433 - \$1,733 ****
3-Bedroom	1	\$1,524 - \$1,524 ****
4+ Bedrooms	1	- ***
All Bedrooms	16	\$1,292 - \$2,007 ****

Includes Seabrook, South Hampton

Median Monthly Gross Rent for Two-Bedroom Units

	Sample Size		Rent Range	1	Median
LAWRENCE, MA	NH HM	FÆ	V		
0-Bedroom	31		\$620 - \$1,140		\$730
1-Bedroom	321		\$710 - \$1,554		\$928
2-Bedroom	342		\$1,012 - \$2,262		\$1,316
3-Bedroom	44		\$939 - \$2,575		\$1,928
4+ Bedrooms	1		\$1,789 - \$1,789		****
All Bedrooms	739		\$620 - \$2.575		\$1.080



Includes Atkinson, Chester, Danville, Derry, Fremont, Hampstead, Kingston, Newton, Plaistow, Raymond, Salem, Sandown, Windham

^{*} Calculations based on smaller sample sizes are viewed as providing inconstant and highly volatile results and are not typically released.



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As a self-supporting public benefit corporation created by the New Hampshire legislature, New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority promotes, finances, and supports affordable housing.

New Hampshire housing market, economic and demographic data are available at NHHFA.org/data-resources-planning.

