Regional Differences in California Poverty

Caroline Danielson
August 18, 2014
Supplemental Poverty Measure Shows Higher Poverty in California (2011)
Half of Children Live Under One and a Half Times the Poverty Threshold

However, Deep Poverty Relatively Low

- 49% Under 50%
- 26% 50% to 99%
- 19% 100% to 149%
- 6% 150% and above
But Poverty Varies Across California
Apparently not Driven by Differences in Earnings

![Bar chart showing the percentage of earnings for different regions. The chart compares 'Any earnings' with 'Earnings of $12,000 or more' for Northern, Sacramento area, Bay Area, Central Sierra, Central Coast, Inland Empire, Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego.]
Poverty Thresholds do Vary Substantially

Statewide mean (2 adults, 2 children, renting): $30,363
Regions with Lower Thresholds Tend to See Larger Safety Net Role

San Diego
Orange
Los Angeles
Inland Empire
Central Coast
Central Sierra
Bay Area
Sacramento area
Northern

CPM rate
Percentage points higher if no safety net

Percent Children in Poverty

Northern: 27
Sacramento area: 19
Bay Area: 8
Central Sierra: 25
Central Coast: 16
Inland Empire: 16
Los Angeles: 16
Orange: 9
San Diego: 10
Summary

- New insights into poverty from California Poverty Measure
- Income from working provides the largest share of resources to families in poverty
- But use of safety net programs substantially moderates poverty
- Cost of living drives poverty in the opposite direction, both directly and indirectly