Washington

Income Inequality Grew in Washington Over the Past Two Decades

Washington’s Richest Families vs. Poorest Families

- The richest 20 percent of families have average incomes 6.9 times as large as the poorest 20 percent of families.
- This ratio was 5.1 in the late 1980s.
- This growth in income inequality is the 10th largest in the nation.
- The very richest families — top 5% — have average incomes 11.2 times as large as the poorest 20 percent of families.

The gap between Washington’s richest and poorest families is 27th largest in the nation.

Washington’s Richest Families vs. Families in the Middle

- The richest 20 percent of families have average incomes 2.5 times as large as the middle 20 percent of families.
- This ratio was 2.0 in the late 1980s.
- This growth in income inequality is the 9th largest in the nation.

The gap between Washington’s richest families and families in the middle is 27th largest in the nation.

A Closer Look: Short- and Long-term Trends

Late 1990s to mid-2000s

- The average income of the poorest fifth of families did not change significantly.
- The average income of the middle fifth of families did not change significantly.
- The average income of the richest fifth of families increased by $14,136, from $119,954 to $134,090.

Late 1980s to mid-2000s

- The average income of the poorest fifth of families did not change significantly.
- The average income of the middle fifth of families increased by $5,666, from $48,117 to $53,783.
- The average income of the richest fifth of families increased by $39,159, from $94,930 to $134,090.

WASHINGTON: Richest Families Had Greatest Income Gains Over Last Two Decades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Income Group</th>
<th>Change in Income</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bottom 20%</td>
<td>-4.2%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle 20%</td>
<td>2.5%*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Top 20%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
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*Not statistically significant at a 90 percent level of confidence

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Based on the latest available data (2004-2006)

Source: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and Economic Policy Institute


Available at: http://www.cbpp.org/4-9-08sfp.htm