



Michelle Lujan Grisham
Governor

Stephanie Schardin Clarke
Cabinet Secretary

Media Contact: Megan Gleason
megan.gleason@tax.nm.gov
(505) 231-3801

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Census data shows New Mexico best in nation for reducing child poverty

SANTA FE — New Mexico is leading the nation delivering state programs and tax credits to battle poverty — especially amongst children.

[New data](#) from the U.S. Census Bureau indicate that New Mexico reduced child poverty more than any other state in the most recent year. While the national official poverty measure for children improved just 0.4% in the new survey, New Mexico reduced child poverty by 3.2%.

“Our federal government is moving in the wrong direction, but New Mexico has proven its commitment to eradicating poverty. We will continue to improve and deliver for families in need,” said **Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham**.

In the new survey, New Mexico’s official poverty measure for the entire population improved by 1.3%, while the national rate improved by just 0.3%.

Also notable is the supplemental poverty measure, which incorporates state-targeted programs and tax provisions. Although New Mexico’s official poverty measure for children is 24.2%, child poverty falls to 10.3% under the supplemental poverty measure, ranking New Mexico 21st in the nation and better than the nationwide average. The stark 13.9% difference between the two measurements — the largest difference of any state — is an indication that recent initiatives have effectively moved thousands of New Mexico families out of poverty.

“Despite the challenges all states face in light of federal cuts, New Mexico has built a strong financial foundation that will protect the most vulnerable New Mexicans for decades to come,” said **Secretary of Taxation & Revenue Stephanie Schardin Clarke**.

New Mexico has expanded direct benefits to low- and moderate-income families, such as food and housing assistance, free college tuition, affordable health insurance coverage, and expanded early childhood education in recent years.

New Mexico's tax code has been extensively revised since 2019 to become more progressive, benefitting low- and moderate-income families. Since 2019, the state has twice expanded its working families tax credit, created a targeted child income tax credit, expanded the low-income comprehensive tax rebate, reduced the statewide gross receipts tax for the first time in 40 years, and exempted most social security income from taxation.

The state's recent announcement to expand free universal child care to all New Mexico families represents the next step in New Mexico's commitment to provide a prosperous future for all children. Universal childcare saves families tens of thousands of dollars per child annually.

"New Mexico's progress in reducing child poverty shows the impact of investing in children and families. Expanding access to food, housing, health care, and early childhood education has helped thousands move above the poverty line. With universal child care, we can continue this progress so all New Mexico families and young children are thriving," said **Early Childhood Education and Care Department Secretary Elizabeth Groginsky**.

"New Mexico has supported our families and children by investing our state budget in anti-poverty policies like robust tax credits, universal school meals, and now universal free childcare. Bold investments like these can break the cycle of poverty for good," said **Gabrielle Uballez**, executive director of NM Voices for Children. "Sadly, looming federal cuts threaten the progress we've made in our state, so unless we protect vital programs like SNAP and Medicaid, we may see our poverty rates rise next year and into the future."

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The Taxation and Revenue Department serves the State of New Mexico by providing fair and efficient tax and motor vehicle services. It administers more than 35 tax programs and distributes revenue to the State and to local and tribal governments throughout New Mexico.

The Department strives to reduce taxpayer burden through clearer communication, statutes, regulations, forms, correspondence and instructions.

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