

STATE WIDE

New York StateWide Senior Action Council, Inc.

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Columbia County Seniors Living on the Edge

1. Elders in Columbia County at the poverty level or with the average Social Security benefit cannot make ends meet.

The average Social Security benefit provides an elder living alone in Columbia County 49% - 73% of the amount needed to cover their basic living expenses.

In Columbia County, elder living on an income equivalent to the federal poverty guideline can cover only 37% - 55% of their basic living expenses.

The average Social Security benefit provides an elder couple living in Columbia County 58% - 75% of the amount needed to cover their basic living expenses.

In Columbia County, elder couples living on an income equivalent to the federal poverty guideline can cover only 36% - 47% of their basic living expenses.

2. Elders living alone in Columbia County need \$19,656-\$28,944 to cover their basic annual living costs.

Elders still paying a mortgage face housing costs more than double those for homeowners without a mortgage, increasing annual living expenses to \$40,152.

Elders with lower incomes need rent subsidies and/or elder affordable housing units, as well as assistance to cover supplemental health plan costs.

Elders living alone in Columbia who own their home without a mortgage need \$19,656 a year to cover their basic living expenses.

If elders rent an apartment in Columbia County, their basic living expenses increase to \$22,236.

3. Elder couples in Columbia County need \$30,864-\$40,152 to cover their basic annual living costs.

Elder couples in Columbia County who own their home without a mortgage need \$30,864 a year to cover their basic living expenses.

If elders rent an apartment in Columbia County, their basic living expenses increase to \$33,444.

Elders still paying a mortgage face housing costs more than double those for homeowners without a mortgage, increasing annual living expenses to \$40,152.

Elder couples with lower incomes need rent subsidies and/or affordable housing units, as well as assistance to cover supplemental health plan costs.

4. Elders experiencing changes in their life circumstances, such as losing a spouse or experiencing a decline in health status face an uncertain economic future.

A member of an elder couple paying market rate rent in Columbia County has expenses reduced by only 34% when a spouse dies; \$22,236 from \$33,444, yet his or her income may decrease substantially based on the mix of Social Security and/or pension income.

Elders in good health in Columbia County face healthcare costs of \$401 per month—more than they spend on food. Declines in health status result in a rise in health care expenses, increases the cost per month for a single elder.

Wider Opportunities for Women

Elder Economic Security Initiative™: The Elder Economic Security Standard™ Index for New York

Regional Chapters: Capital District ■ Finger Lakes ■ Long Island ■ Lower Hudson Valley ■ New York City ■ North Country ■ Rockland County ■ Western New York