

Thursday, September 15, 2011

POVERTY NUMBERS INCREASE IN AMERICA

The ranks of the nation's poor have swelled to a record 46.2 million — nearly 1 in 6 Americans. The figures are in a Census Bureau report, released Tuesday. Measured by total numbers, the 46 million now living in poverty are the most on record dating back to when the census began to track in 1959. The 15.1 percent tied the level of 1993 and was the highest since 1983. The overall poverty rate climbed to 15.1 percent, from 14.3 percent the previous year. For last year, the official poverty level was an annual income of \$22,314 for a family of four. The official poverty level is based on a government calculation that includes only income before tax deductions. It excludes capital gains or accumulated wealth, such as home ownership. The official poverty rate takes into account the effects of some stimulus programs passed in 2009, such as unemployment benefits, as well as jobs that were created or saved by government spending. It does not factor in noncash government aid such as tax credits and food stamps. Next month, the government will release new supplemental poverty numbers for the first time that will factor in food stamps and tax credits as well as everyday costs such as commuting. Preliminary census estimates show a decline in child poverty based on the new measure but increases in poverty among working-age Americans as well as those 65 and older due to rising out-of-pocket medical costs. Poverty rose among all racial and ethnic groups except Asians. The number of Hispanics in poverty increased from 25.3 percent to 26.6 percent; for blacks it rose from 25.8 percent to 27.4 percent and for Asians it was flat at 12.1 percent. The number of whites in poverty rose from 9.4 percent to 9.9 percent. Child poverty rose from 20.7 percent to 22 percent. Poverty among people 65 and older was statistically unchanged at 9 percent, after hitting a record low of 8.9 percent in 2009. SOURCE: [nearly-1-in-6-americans-in-poverty-census-says](#)

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