



For Immediate Release – September 12, 2022

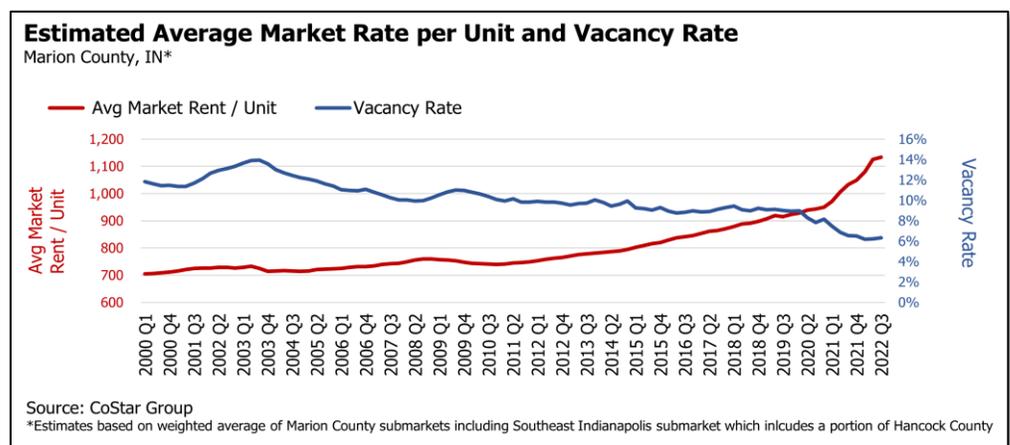
Contact: Amy Nelson, Executive Director
Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana
Phone: 317-644-0673 x1001
Email: anelson@fhcci.org

FHCCI Releases Report on Rising Rents and Rent Burdens in Marion County

INDIANAPOLIS, IN – Rising rents and scarce inventory are hitting renters in Marion County, Indiana especially hard, resulting in many tenants struggling to make ends meet. Record-low vacancy rates and a lack of affordable housing supply make the search for low-cost rental housing a near-impossible task. Historically underserved neighborhoods of color, as well as households of color, female-headed households, and families with children bear the brunt of the impact of these trends.

In the new analysis by the Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana (FHCCI), titled [State of Fair Housing Report – At What Cost? Rents, Burdens, Evictions, and Profits in Marion County](#), the FHCCI examines the causes and consequences for Indy’s rental housing market identifying areas of significant concern.

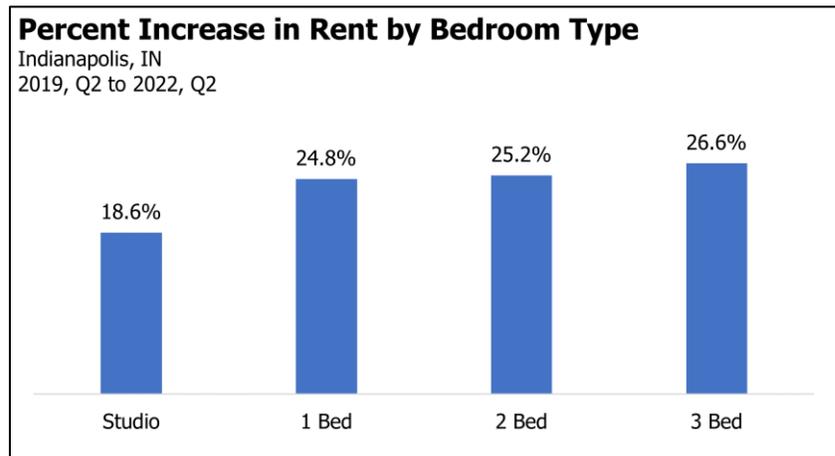
“Marion County is in a housing crisis with low vacancy rates driving rents across the County to unaffordable levels for most of our residents,” states Amy Nelson, Executive Director of the Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana. “However, that is not the only burden being placed on our renters, add in the lack of affordable housing options, substandard housing conditions, increasing income-based rent burdens, along with housing discrimination, and the current climate is extremely troubling.”



To understand the reasons underlying the difficulties in the rental market, the FHCCI reviewed recent pressures on rental demand, the lack of existing (and newly constructed) affordable rental units, the recent wave of outside investors buying single-family houses for use as rental properties, and other barriers impacting housing choice.

Key Findings

- Since the beginning of the pandemic, Marion County renters have paid, on average, \$200 to \$300 more per month, with rents having increased by more than 20%. Some areas of the County have seen rent increases upwards of 30%.
- As rental costs have risen, wages have not kept pace. Household income in Marion County has increased on average just 4-5% annually over the past few years.
- Despite the record-high rent increases, landlords aren't having any trouble filling their units, with multi-family vacancy rates hovering around 6% – their lowest point in at least 20 years.
- Half of renters in Marion County earn \$35k or less annually, but only an estimated 35% of the County's multifamily rental units are affordable to them. This disproportionately affects households of color. While households of color represent 36% of all households, roughly half of the households earning less than \$35k in income are Black and 13% are Hispanic.
- Families with three or more children face steep competition. There are less than 250 three- or four-bedroom units with monthly rents less than \$875 currently available in the County at the time of this report.
- Newly constructed multifamily units do not meet affordability needs. Compared to units built or renovated prior to 2019, the average asking rent for a new or renovated apartment is 20% to 30% higher, or about \$300 a month
- Affordable housing is scarce in Central Indiana outside of Marion County. Of the 63k units affordable to a family earning less than \$35k in income, 80% are in Marion County.
- In Marion County, investor activity has increased dramatically over the past decade. In 2012, less than 15% of residential single-family property purchases were by investors, but, by 2021, 26% of residential property purchases were by investors.
- In 2020, 50% of Marion County renters were cost-burdened, paying 30% or more of their income to rent. Nearly 25% of renters were severely cost-burdened, paying more than 50% of their income to rent. For renters earning less than \$35k annually, the share of rent-burdened households increased from 78% to 87% over the past decade in Marion County. As of June this year, nearly 11% of households were not currently caught up on rent in Indiana.



Eviction filings have risen, with more than 43,000 eviction filings – 400 to 600 weekly – in Marion County

since March 2020. Of the Top 5 property-owning or -managing companies by eviction filings, all were in the multifamily rental market with some properties having 40 to 50 filings per 100 units. According to an analysis of property level rent trends from the CoStar Group, many of these properties had increases in rental rates upwards of 50% since the pandemic began.

To download the full report, visit the [FHCCI's News Page](#) or our [Reports Page](#).

In recent years, the FHCCI has released the following consumer driven housing reports including:

- [The State of Fair Housing in Indiana Report – Mortgage Lending in Marion County 2018-2020](#)
- [The State of Fair Housing in Indiana Report - FHA & VA Mortgage Lending in Marion County 2018-2021](#)
- [The State of Fair Housing in Indiana Report – Fair Housing Complaint Filing 2000-2018](#)

The Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana (FHCCI) is a private, nonprofit fair housing organization in Indianapolis, Indiana. Its mission is to ensure equal housing opportunities by eliminating housing discrimination through advocacy, enforcement, education, and outreach. For more information, visit: www.fhcci.org

The work that provided the basis for this publication was supported by funding under a grant with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The substance and findings of the work are dedicated to the public. The author and publisher are solely responsible for the accuracy of the statements and interpretations contained in this publication. Such interpretations do not necessarily reflect the views of the federal Government.