Age, by Citizenship Status
California, 2015–2016

Fact #1
Children and seniors make up a smaller portion of undocumented California residents compared to other California residents.

Notes: Includes all income levels. Citizen and documented includes US born, naturalized, legal permanent residents, and others with legal status such as refugees and those with work visas. Segments may not add to 100% due to rounding.
Six Facts About Undocumented Californians

Race/Ethnicity, by Citizenship Status
California, 2015–2016

Fact #2

A higher proportion of undocumented Californians are Latino and a much smaller proportion are white compared to other California residents.

Notes: Includes all ages and income levels. Other includes non-Latino African Americans, Pacific Islanders, Native Hawaiians, Native Americans, Alaska Natives, and those reporting more than one race. Citizen and documented includes US born, naturalized, legal permanent residents, and others with legal status such as refugees and those with work visas. Segments may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Poverty Level, by Citizenship Status
Adults, California, 2015–2016

Fact #3
About two-thirds of undocumented adult Californians are low income compared to less than one-quarter of other Californian adults.

Note: Low income is defined as family income at or below 138% FPL. With the exception of undocumented adults, Californians with incomes up to 138% FPL are eligible for Medi-Cal.

Notes: Poverty level is calculated based on household income and size, and compared to federal poverty level (FPL). Citizen and documented includes US born, naturalized, legal permanent residents, and others with legal status such as refugees and those with work visas. Source: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research analysis of California Health Interview Survey (CHIS), 2015–2016.
Work Status, by Citizenship Status
Low-Income Adults Under 65, California, 2015–2016

Fact #4
Among low-income undocumented adults under 65, a greater proportion are employed compared to other California residents.

Notes: Work status is based on a survey question about whether the individual was employed last week. Examples of reasons for being unemployed, not looking for work may include keeping house, caring for children/others, going to school, retirement, physical disability, illness, or being unable to find a job. Low income is defined as family income at or below 138% FPL. With the exception of undocumented adults, Californians with incomes up to 138% FPL are eligible for Medi-Cal. Citizen and documented includes US born, naturalized, legal permanent residents, and others with legal status such as refugees and those with work visas.

Uninsured Rate, by Citizenship Status
Low-Income Adults, California, 2015–2016

Fact #5
Undocumented low-income Californians are much more likely to be uninsured, compared to other low-income Californians.

Notes:
- Low income is defined as family income at or below 138% FPL. With the exception of undocumented adults, Californians with incomes up to 138% FPL are eligible for Medi-Cal. Undocumented adults reporting Medi-Cal coverage are assumed to have restricted-scope Medi-Cal and are considered uninsured. Restricted-scope Medi-Cal covers emergency and pregnancy-related services and, when needed, state-funded long-term care. Citizen and documented includes US born, naturalized, legal permanent residents, and others with legal status such as refugees and those with work visas.
No Usual Source of Care, by Citizenship Status
Low-Income Adults, California, 2015–2016

Fact #6
Almost twice as many undocumented low-income adult Californians report having no usual source of care compared to other low-income Californians.

Notes:
Survey respondents are asked if they have a place they usually go when they are sick or need advice about their health. Those who reported using the emergency room or alternative providers (e.g., acupuncturist, herbalist) are grouped with those who do not have a usual source of care. Low income is defined as family income at or below 138% FPL. With the exception of undocumented adults, Californians with incomes up to 138% are eligible for Medi-Cal. Citizen and documented includes US born, naturalized, legal permanent residents, and others with legal status such as refugees and those with work visas.

Six Facts About Undocumented Californians

Author
Nadereh Pourat, PhD, UCLA Center for Health Policy Research

About the Foundation
The California Health Care Foundation is dedicated to advancing meaningful, measurable improvements in the way the health care delivery system provides care to the people of California, particularly those with low incomes and those whose needs are not well served by the status quo. We work to ensure that people have access to the care they need, when they need it, at a price they can afford.

CHCF informs policymakers and industry leaders, invests in ideas and innovations, and connects with changemakers to create a more responsive, patient-centered health care system.

For more information, visit www.chcf.org.