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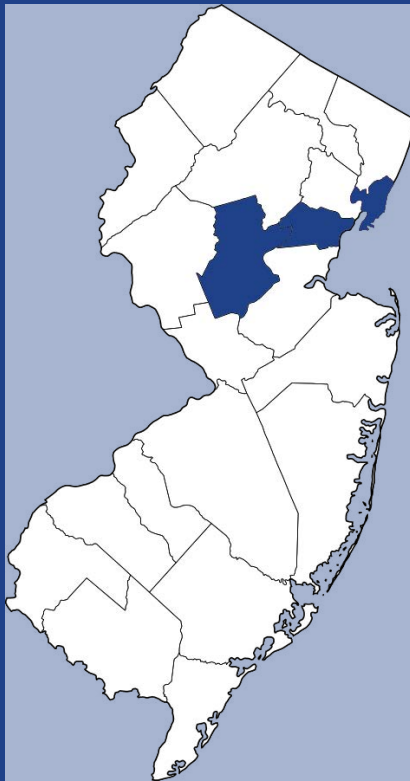
HOPES

**Empowering people.
Strengthening communities.
Inspiring innovation.**

2017 COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

Triennial Assessment of Community Needs Indicators
in Somerset County, New Jersey

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GEOGRAPHY & GOVERNANCE

Geographic Boundaries of Service Area

Somerset County is a 305 square mile county with 330,604 residents that is located in north-central New Jersey. The County's geographic boundaries include Morris County to the north, Hunterdon County to the west, Mercer County to the south, Middlesex County to the southeast, and Union County to the east. Out of New Jersey's 21 counties, Somerset is the 13th largest by both population and land area.

There are 21 municipalities that comprise Somerset County ranging in size from 400 to 62,000 residents. Of the 21 municipalities, eight have a combined 45 "sub-communities," or Census Designated Places (CDPs), historical areas, unincorporated areas, and enclaves that exist within their boundaries. When added to the total number of municipalities without sub-communities, there are 58 total communities in Somerset County.
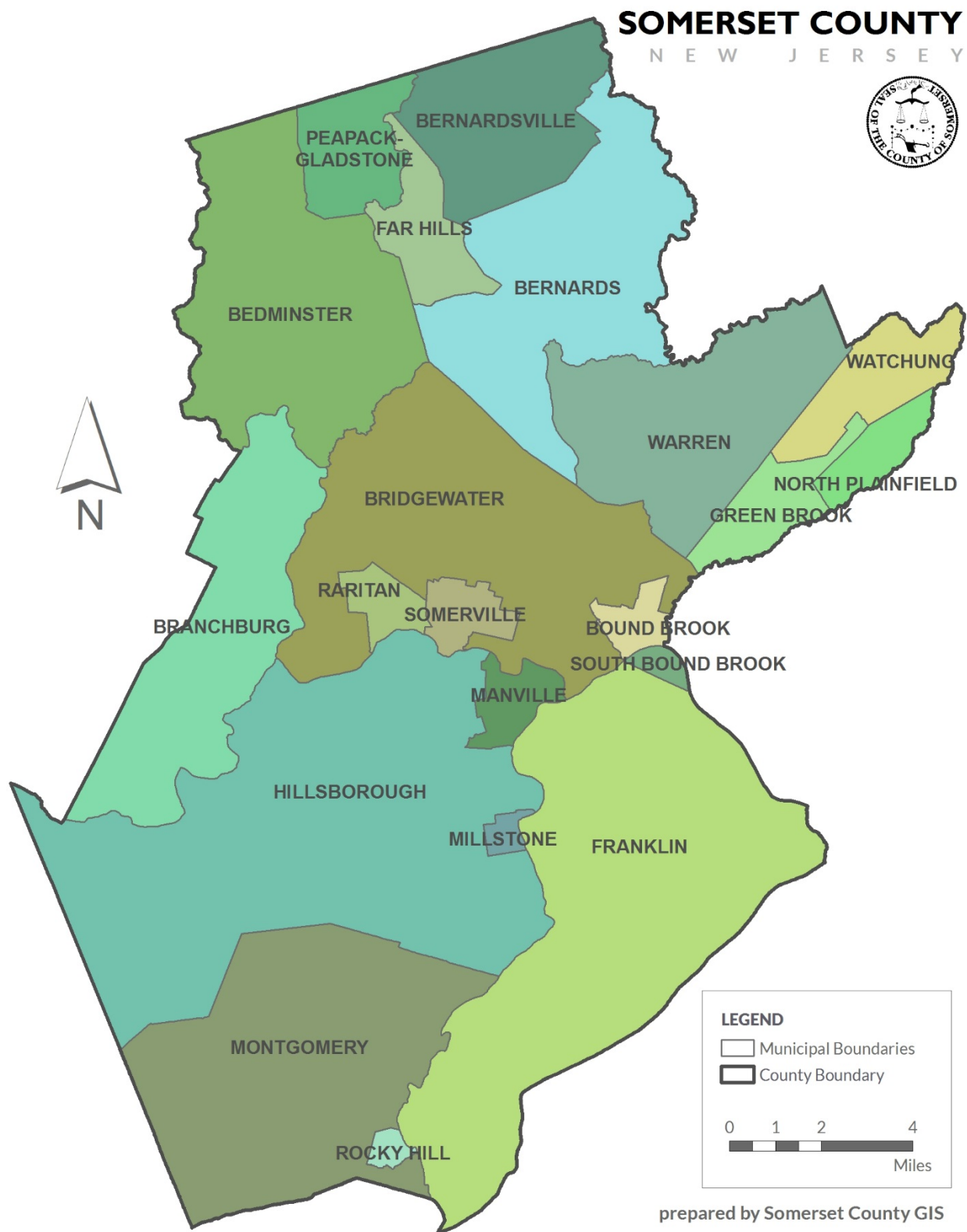
- Bedminster
- Bernards
- Bernardsville
- Bound Brook
- Branchburg
- Bridgewater
- Far Hills
- Franklin (Township)
- Green Brook
- Hillsborough
- Manville
- Millstone
- Montgomery
- North Plainfield
- Peapack-Gladstone
- Raritan
- Rocky Hill
- Somerville
- South Bound Brook
- Warren
- Watchung

Although common in southern New Jersey, the concentration of non-municipal communities in Somerset County far outpaces other northern counties. This is an important distinction as sub-communities of a larger municipal unit can (and oftentimes do) have very different ethnic, linguistic, socioeconomic, cultural, and other characteristics than other sub-communities within that unit or the municipal unit as a whole. Also, some communities comprise a large percentage of Somerset County's land area, and the needs of populations within those municipalities can vary greatly from border to border.

Table 1. Somerset County Municipalities by Total Land Area (including water)					
Rank	Municipality	Area (sq. mi)	Rank	Municipality	Area (sq. mi)
1	Hillsborough	55	12	Far Hills	4.88
2	Franklin (Township)	46.85	13	Green Brook	4.48
3	Bridgewater	32.51	14	North Plainfield	2.81
4	Montgomery	32.48	15	Manville	2.45
5	Bedminster	26.3	16	Somerville	2.36
6	Bernards	24.06	17	Raritan	2.04
7	Branchburg	20.28	18	Bound Brook	1.69
8	Warren	19.64	19	Millstone	0.76
9	Bernardsville	12.98	20	South Bound Brook	0.75
10	Watchung	6.05	21	Rocky Hill	0.62
11	Peapack-Gladstone	5.85			

Image 1. Map of Somerset County, New Jersey

SOMERSET COUNTY
N E W   J E R S E Y

BERNARDSVILLE

PEAPACK-
GLADSTONE

FAR HILLS

BERNARDS

BEDMINSTER

WATCHUNG

WARREN

NORTH PLAINFIELD

BRIDGEWATER

GREEN BROOK

RARITAN

SOMERVILLE

BRANCHBURG

BOUND BROOK

SOUTH BOUND BROOK

MANVILLE

HILLSBOROUGH

MILLSTONE

FRANKLIN

MONTGOMERY

ROCKY HILL

LEGEND
☐ Municipal Boundaries
☐ County Boundary

0   1   2   4
                Miles

prepared by Somerset County GIS

Governing Structure

Somerset County is governed by a five-member Board of Chosen Freeholders, whose members are elected at-large (i.e. county-wide) to three-year terms of office. Other constitutional officers elected on a county-wide basis include the County Clerk, Sheriff, and Surrogate. Somerset County is part of Vicinage 13 of the New Jersey Superior Court (along with Hunterdon County and Warren County), which is seated at the Somerset County Courthouse in Somerville. The Freeholders employ a full-time County Administrator who managers the day-to-day operations of county government. Department heads are appointed by resolution of the Board. Somerset County has approximately 1,110 full-time and 130 part-time employees in 52 divisions, including a library system.

The 7th and 12th Congressional Districts cover the entirety of Somerset County. Additionally, Somerset County is part of the 16th, 17th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, and 25th New Jersey Legislative Districts. Although one of New Jersey's most reliably conservative-voting counties, registered members of the Democratic Party outnumber registered members of the Republican Party, with unaffiliated registered voters outnumbering both parties by a 2 to 1 margin.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population and Related Trends

As of the release of the 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, the population of Somerset County is estimated at 330,604 residents. This represents an influx of 33,114 residents, or a more than 11% increase in population, since the 2000 United States Census.

Rank	Municipality	2015	2000	# Increase	% Increase
	Table 2. Somerset County Municipalities by Population (Est. 2015)				
1	Franklin (Township)	64,779	50,903	13,876	27.26%
2	Bridgewater	45,120	42,940	2,180	5.08%
3	Hillsborough	39,378	36,634	2,744	7.49%
4	Bernards	26,983	24,575	2,408	9.80%
5	Montgomery	22,693	17,481	5,212	29.82%
6	North Plainfield	22,156	21,103	1,053	4.99%
7	Warren	15,867	14,259	1,608	11.28%
8	Branchburg	14,673	14,566	107	0.73%
9	Somerville	12,212	12,423	-211	-1.70%
10	Bound Brook	10,515	10,155	360	3.55%
11	Manville	10,454	10,343	111	1.07%
12	Bedminster	8,251	8,302	-51	-0.61%
13	Bernardsville	7,786	7,345	441	6.00%
14	Raritan	7,328	6,338	990	15.62%
15	Green Brook	7,155	5,654	1,501	26.55%
16	Watchung	5,900	5,613	287	5.11%
17	South Bound Brook	4,612	4,492	120	2.67%
18	Peapack-Gladstone	2,588	2,433	155	6.37%
19	Far Hills	1,052	859	193	22.47%
20	Rocky Hill	615	662	-47	-7.10%
21	Millstone	487	410	77	18.78%

The largest municipalities in Somerset County, among those with more than 25,000 residents, are Franklin Township (64,779), Bridgewater (45,120), Hillsborough (39,278) and Bernards (26,983). The fastest growing towns in Somerset County are Franklin Township and Montgomery (see Table 3). Three towns experienced negative growth between 2000 and 2015: Bedminster, Somerville, and Rocky Hill.

Municipality	Population Increase	Municipality	% Population Increase
	Table 3. Fastest Growing Somerset County Municipalities 2000-2015		
Franklin Township	13,876	Montgomery	29.82%
Montgomery	5,212	Franklin Township	27.26%
Hillsborough	2,744	Green Brook	26.55%
Bernards	2,408	Far Hills	22.47%

Image 2. Map of Somerset County Municipalities by Population
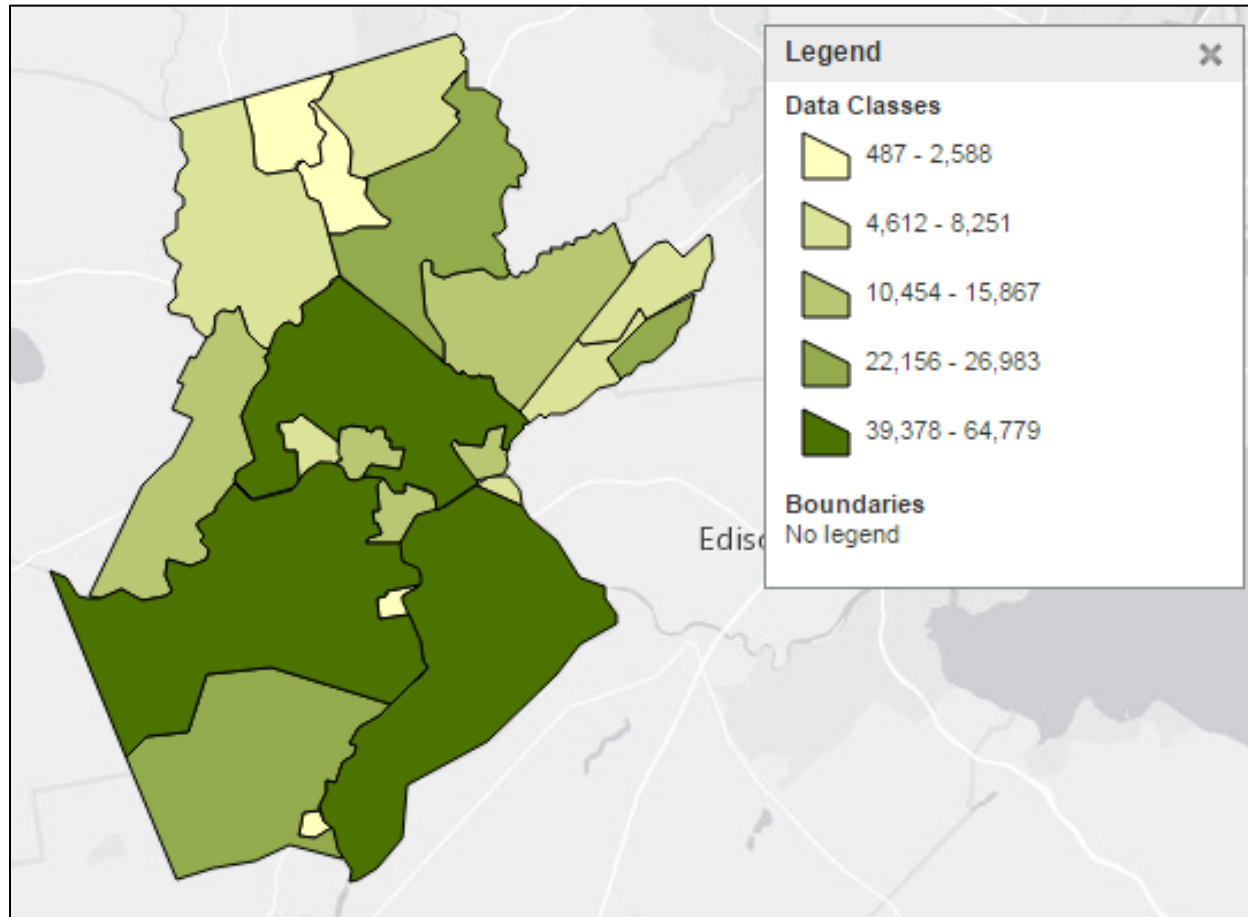
Racial and Ethnic Composition

The resident population of Somerset County is 59.4% White/Non-Hispanic, 16% Asian, 13.9% Hispanic/Latino, 8.8% Black/African-American, and 1.9% Other/Mixed Race. The most predominant countries origin among the Asian population include India (51%), China (26%) and the Philippines (10%). The most predominant countries/territories of origin among the Hispanic/Latino population are Puerto Rico (19%), Ecuador (13%), Mexico (12%) and Colombia (11%). Among the Hispanic/Latino population, 42% are from North America, 36% are from South America, 18% are from Central America, and 4% are from Europe.

Table 4. Demographic Characteristics					
Municipality	**Hispanic/ Latino**	**White/Non-Hispanic**	**Black/African-American**	**Asian**	**Other**
Somerset County	13.9%	59.4%	8.8%	16%	1.9%
Bedminster	6%	83%	2%	8%	1%
Bernards	4%	76%	2%	16%	2%
Bernardsville	14%	80%	0%	5%	1%
Bound Brook	43%	48%	5%	3%	1%
Branchburg	5%	80%	6%	9%	0%
Bridgewater	10%	64%	3%	21%	2%
Far Hills	13%	77%	3%	6%	1%
Franklin (Township)	13%	36%	26%	22%	3%
Green Brook	8%	63%	3%	25%	1%
Hillsborough	8%	71%	5%	15%	1%
Manville	21%	72%	4%	2%	1%
Millstone	6%	86%	1%	4%	3%
Montgomery	4%	63%	2%	30%	1%
North Plainfield	48%	29%	16%	5%	2%
Peapack-Gladstone	12%	83%	4%	1%	0%
Raritan	18%	60%	4%	15%	3%
Rocky Hill	4%	92%	2%	1%	1%
Somerville	23%	54%	10%	12%	1%
South Bound Brook	33%	43%	10%	5%	9%
Warren	8%	73%	1%	17%	1%
Watchung	11%	72%	2%	14%	1%

Minority Communities

Among Somerset County's 21 municipalities, there are four that are predominantly minority communities: Bound Brook, Franklin, North Plainfield and South Bound Brook. The communities with the highest percentage and total population of Hispanic/Latino and Black/African-American residents are Franklin and North Plainfield. Bound Brook also has a high percentage of Hispanic/Latino residents. The communities with the highest percentage and total population of Asian residents are Montgomery, Franklin, Green Brook and Bridgewater.

Table 5. Municipalities with the Highest:					
% Hispanic/ Latino	# Hispanic/ Latino	% Black/ African-American	# Black/ African-American	% Asian	# Asian
North Plainfield	North Plainfield	Franklin	Franklin	Montgomery	Franklin
Bound Brook	Franklin	North Plainfield	North Plainfield	Green Brook	Bridgewater
South Bound Brook	Bridgewater	Somerville	Hillsborough	Franklin	Montgomery
Somerville	Bound Brook	South Bound Brook	Bridgewater	Bridgewater	Hillsborough
Manville	Hillsborough	Branchburg	Somerville	Warren	Bernards

Changes in Ethnic Composition

The racial and ethnic composition of Somerset County has changed drastically over the past 15 years. The percent of the population that is comprised of White/Non-Hispanic residents decreased in every single municipality in the County, with only two communities (Millstone and Far Hills) reporting an increase in the number of White/Non-Hispanic residents. According to an analysis of demographic changes between the 2000 US Census and the 2015 American Community Survey, the municipalities with the most rapidly changing racial and ethnic composition are Far Hills, Green Brook, and Manville. Far Hills measured among the top five of all municipalities in terms of both percent of population increase and total population increase comprised of Hispanic/Latino, Black/African-American, and Asian residents, the only community in the County to rank in the top five of all six categories.

Table 6. Municipalities with the Greatest Increase in:					
% Hispanic Residents	# Hispanic Residents	% Black/African-American Residents	# Black/African-American Residents	% Asian Residents	# Asian Residents
Manville	Far Hills	Raritan	Manville	Millstone	Millstone
Watchung	Manville	Far Hills	Far Hills	Green Brook	Green Brook
Far Hills	Watchung	Branchburg	Raritan	Far Hills	Montgomery
Peapack-Gladstone	Peapack-Gladstone	Bernards	Branchburg	Montgomery	Far Hills
Warren	Warren	Rocky Hill	Green Brook	Hillsborough	Franklin

Gender and Ages

Of the 330,604 residents of Somerset County, 161,252 are male and 169,352 are female. Males (48.8%) and females (51.2%) comprise the same percent of the population today as they did at the time of the 2000 Census. Communities with the highest percentage of young children (under 5 years) include Bound Brook, Franklin, Hillsborough, Millstone, North Plainfield, Somerville, South Bound Brook and Watchung.

Category	-	Population	Male	Female	Under 5 Years	Under 18 Years	19 to 64 Years	65+ Years	85+ Years
Somerset County	% Pop.		48.77%	51.23%	5.57%	23.48%	62.87%	13.65%	2.12%
	Total	330,604	161,252	169,352	18,412	77,636	207,854	45,114	7,014
Bedminster	% Pop.		42.66%	57.34%	3.28%	15.28%	65.86%	18.86%	1.68%
	Total	8,251	3,520	4,731	271	1,261	5,434	1,556	139
Bernards	% Pop.		47.37%	52.63%	4.24%	27.27%	59.09%	13.65%	2.68%
	Total	26,983	12,782	14,201	1,144	7,358	15,943	3,682	723
Bernardsville	% Pop.		55.52%	44.48%	5.37%	25.61%	59.79%	14.60%	1.27%
	Total	7,786	4,323	3,463	418	1,994	4,655	1,137	99
Bound Brook	% Pop.		53.34%	46.66%	9.68%	21.37%	68.54%	10.09%	1.53%
	Total	10,515	5,609	4,906	1,018	2,247	7,207	1,061	161
Branchburg	% Pop.		47.68%	52.32%	5.19%	23.67%	64.85%	11.48%	1.43%
	Total	14,673	6,996	7,677	761	3,473	9,515	1,685	210
Bridgewater	% Pop.		47.78%	52.13%	4.42%	23.71%	61.96%	14.34%	2.90%
	Total	45,120	21,559	23,521	1,995	10,696	27,955	6,469	1,310
Far Hills	% Pop.		52.47%	47.53%	5.13%	23.00%	63.12%	13.88%	1.90%
	Total	1,052	552	500	54	242	664	146	20
Franklin (Township)	% Pop.		48.60%	51.40%	6.24%	20.87%	63.01%	16.13%	2.15%
	Total	64,779	31,480	33,299	4,042	13,518	40,815	10,446	1,392
Green Brook	% Pop.		47.21%	52.79%	3.10%	22.05%	60.36%	17.58%	2.80%
	Total	7,155	3,378	3,777	222	1,578	4,319	1,258	200
Hillsborough	% Pop.		48.30%	51.70%	6.61%	24.57%	65.00%	10.42%	1.45%
	Total	39,378	19,021	20,357	2,603	9,677	25,596	4,105	572
Manville	% Pop.		49.68%	50.32%	5.39%	19.98%	64.32%	15.70%	2.44%
	Total	10,454	5,194	5,260	563	2,089	6,724	1,641	255
Millstone	% Pop.		50.31%	49.69%	9.65%	28.34%	56.47%	15.20%	0.41%
	Total	487	245	242	47	138	275	74	2
Montgomery	% Pop.		49.23%	50.77%	3.92%	28.87%	59.20%	11.93%	2.14%
	Total	22,693	11,172	11,521	890	6,552	13,434	2,707	485
North Plainfield	% Pop.		49.37%	50.63%	6.52%	24.07%	67.73%	8.20%	0.91%
	Total	22,156	10,939	11,217	1,444	5,332	15,007	1,817	201
Peapack-Gladstone	% Pop.		48.38%	51.62%	5.83%	26.51%	60.09%	13.41%	3.17%
	Total	2,588	1,252	1,336	151	686	1,555	347	82
Raritan	% Pop.		47.23%	52.77%	5.53%	23.46%	61.78%	14.77%	1.75%
	Total	7,328	3,461	3,867	405	1,719	4,527	1,082	128
Rocky Hill	% Pop.		52.85%	47.15%	5.53%	22.28%	56.42%	21.30%	0.00%
	Total	615	325	290	34	137	347	131	0
Somerville	% Pop.		52.82%	47.18%	7.77%	22.05%	65.08%	12.87%	2.55%

Table 7: Municipalities by Gender and Age

	Total	12,212	6,450	5,762	949	2,693	7,947	1,572	312
South Bound Brook	% Pop.		44.75%	55.25%	6.14%	21.40%	68.71%	9.89%	1.08%
	Total	4,612	2,064	2,548	283	987	3,169	456	50
Warren	% Pop.		49.28%	50.72%	4.77%	26.10%	57.80%	16.10%	2.96%
	Total	15,867	7,819	8,048	757	4,142	9,171	2,554	469
Watchung	% Pop.		52.05%	47.95%	6.12%	22.32%	57.54%	20.14%	3.46%
	Total	5,900	3,071	2,829	361	1,317	3,395	1,188	204

Dependency Ratio

The table below summarizes the median age and dependency ratios for each community in Somerset County. According to the United States Census Bureau, one way to analyze "age distributions is the dependency ratio, or the ratio of the dependent-age population (young or old) to the working age population. The higher this ratio is, the greater the burden of support on working people in specific geographic areas." The youngest communities in the County include Bound Brook, Somerville, North Plainfield, and South Bound Brook. Communities with the highest child dependency ratios include Millstone, Montgomery, Bernards, Warren and Peapack-Gladstone. Communities with the highest old-age dependency ratio include Rocky Hill, Watchung, Green Brook, Bedminster and Warren.

Table 8: Dependency Ratios			
Category	Median Age	Child Dependency	Old Age Depenency
Somerset County	40.8	37.7	21.8
Bedminster	47.3	23.2	28.6
Bernards	43.4	47.7	23.3
Bernardsville	41.6	42.8	24.4
Bound Brook	35.1	31.2	14.7
Branchburg	42.5	36.5	17.7
Bridgewater	42.2	38.5	23.2
Far Hills	45	36.4	22
Franklin (Township)	40.2	33.2	25.6
Green Brook	45.4	36.5	29.1
Hillsborough	40.3	37.8	16
Manville	41.2	31.1	24.4
Millstone	37.8	50.2	26.9
Montgomery	42	48.8	20.2
North Plainfield	36.9	35.5	12.1
Peapack-Gladstone	40.9	44.1	22.3
Raritan	38.9	38	23.9
Rocky Hill	47.4	39.5	37.8
Somerville	36.5	33.9	19.8
South Bound Brook	37	31.1	14.4
Warren	43.6	45.2	27.8
Watchung	44.6	38.8	35

Household Composition

There are 115,998 households in Somerset County, 73.25% of which are family households. Additionally, 35.04% of households are comprised of families with children. Of families with children, 82.7% are married couples, 14.2% are single mothers, and 3.1% are single fathers. The average household size is 2.81 and the average family size is 3.34.

Table 9: Household Composition								
Households	**Total**	**Family**	**w/ Children**	**Married w/ Children**	**Single Fathers**	**Single Mothers**	**Average Size**	**Average Family Size**
Somerset County	115,998	84,966	40,645	33,629	1,265	5,751	2.81	3.34
Bedminster	4,098	2,131	658	498	50	110	1.99	2.71
Bernards	9,577	6,762	3,757	3,214	31	512	2.72	3.37
Bernardsville	2,804	2,076	1,055	1,019	16	20	2.77	3.33
Bound Brook	3,713	2,439	1,149	807	68	274	2.82	3.39
Branchburg	5,078	4,012	1,849	1,615	41	193	2.89	3.28
Bridgewater	15,307	11,631	6,037	5,239	263	535	2.9	3.4
Far Hills	370	276	131	107	9	15	2.84	3.31
Franklin (Township)	23,632	16,667	7,185	5,481	279	1,425	2.7	3.28
Green Brook	2,288	1,975	885	767	43	75	3	3.28
Hillsborough	13,300	10,376	5,107	4,584	106	417	2.95	3.39
Manville	3,789	2,605	943	641	21	281	2.76	3.31
Millstone	158	117	59	54	0	5	2.97	3.58
Montgomery	7,575	6,318	3,483	3,080	25	378	2.98	3.31
North Plainfield	7,321	5,190	2,564	1,712	130	722	3.02	3.56
Peapack-Gladstone	881	692	371	258	27	86	2.68	3.07
Raritan	2,712	1,755	885	727	17	141	2.7	3.42
Rocky Hill	247	152	70	64	2	4	2.43	3.19
Somerville	4,548	2,909	1,339	1,023	57	259	2.6	3.28
South Bound Brook	1,605	1,061	453	325	23	105	2.85	3.44
Warren	5,010	4,260	2,009	1,840	57	112	3.15	3.49
Watchung	1,985	1,562	656	574	0	82	2.9	3.31

Households with Children

The communities with the highest percentage of family households with children include Montgomery, Peapack-Gladstone, Warren, Bridgewater and Bernards and the communities with the highest percentage of married couple households with children include Montgomery, Warren, Bernardsville, Hillsborough and Bridgewater. The communities with the highest percentage of single fathers include Peapack-Gladstone, Far Hills, Green Brook, Bound Brook and North Plainfield. The communities with the highest percentage of single mothers include North Plainfield, Peapack-Gladstone, Manville, and Bound Brook, closely followed by South Bound Brook, Franklin and Somerville.

Table 10: Households with Children					
Municipality	**Family Households**	**Households w/ Children**	**Married Couples w/ Children**	**Single Fathers**	**Single Mothers**
Somerset County	73.25%	35.04%	28.99%	1.09%	4.96%
Bedminster	52.00%	16.06%	12.15%	1.22%	2.68%
Bernards	70.61%	39.23%	33.56%	0.32%	5.35%
Bernardsville	74.04%	37.62%	36.34%	0.57%	0.71%
Bound Brook	65.69%	30.95%	21.73%	1.83%	7.38%
Branchburg	79.01%	36.41%	31.80%	0.81%	3.80%
Bridgewater	75.98%	39.44%	34.23%	1.72%	3.50%
Far Hills	74.59%	35.41%	28.92%	2.43%	4.05%
Franklin (Township)	70.53%	30.40%	23.19%	1.18%	6.03%
Green Brook	86.32%	38.68%	33.52%	1.88%	3.28%
Hillsborough	78.02%	38.40%	34.47%	0.80%	3.14%
Manville	68.75%	24.89%	16.92%	0.55%	7.42%
Millstone	74.05%	37.34%	34.18%	0.00%	3.16%
Montgomery	83.41%	45.98%	40.66%	0.33%	4.99%
North Plainfield	70.89%	35.02%	23.38%	1.78%	9.86%
Peapack-Gladstone	78.55%	42.11%	29.28%	3.06%	9.76%
Raritan	64.71%	32.63%	26.81%	0.63%	5.20%
Rocky Hill	61.54%	28.34%	25.91%	0.81%	1.62%
Somerville	63.96%	29.44%	22.49%	1.25%	5.69%
South Bound Brook	66.11%	28.22%	20.25%	1.43%	6.54%
Warren	85.03%	40.10%	36.73%	1.14%	2.24%
Watchung	78.69%	33.05%	28.92%	0.00%	4.13%

ECONOMICS & POVERTY

Economic Activities

Somerset County is one of the top 10 most affluent counties in the United States. The median household income is $100,667 and the per capita income is $48,791, both of which are nearly twice the national average. However, there are communities within the county that struggle across a range of economic indicators. Communities such as Bound Brook, Manville, North Plainfield, Franklin, Somerville, and South Bound Brook have lower median household and per capita incomes and have higher rates of households receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI), cash public assistance and SNAP benefits. Communities with the highest rate of uninsured residents include Bound Brooks, North Plainfield, Manville, Raritan, Somerville and South Bound Brook.

Table 11: Key Economic Characteristics							
Municipality	Unemployment	Median Household Income	SSI	Cash Public Assistance	SNAP	Per Capita Income	Uninsured Rate
Somerset County	6.00%	$100,667	2.39%	1.50%	3.18%	$48,791	8.02%
Bedminster	5.20%	$96,644	0.00%	1.10%	1.93%	$68,550	4.47%
Bernards	3.70%	$129,690	1.73%	0.20%	1.50%	$67,854	1.89%
Bernardsville	4.00%	$114,444	1.68%	0.75%	2.14%	$75,383	6.72%
Bound Brook	7.50%	$62,263	2.40%	1.56%	4.74%	$31,859	26.77%
Branchburg	6.20%	$124,306	2.48%	0.53%	1.40%	$49,982	3.80%
Bridgewater	6.70%	$114,510	2.43%	2.25%	3.29%	$49,909	4.47%
Far Hills	6.00%	$103,333	1.35%	1.62%	0.54%	$78,446	8.94%
Franklin (Township)	6.40%	$90,949	2.29%	1.27%	3.24%	$40,861	8.39%
Green Brook	4.40%	$130,053	1.88%	1.22%	3.28%	$53,669	5.48%
Hillsborough	5.80%	$112,788	2.23%	1.37%	1.67%	$47,079	5.52%
Manville	10.50%	$64,514	6.60%	3.40%	8.47%	$28,108	14.95%
Millstone	2.80%	$103,000	1.27%	1.27%	3.80%	$35,451	3.49%
Montgomery	5.90%	$155,334	2.63%	0.51%	1.17%	$63,574	3.33%
North Plainfield	6.70%	$66,272	2.58%	4.96%	7.36%	$27,998	20.77%
Peapack-Gladstone	3.80%	$132,250	0.57%	0.00%	1.48%	$74,528	4.82%
Raritan	4.10%	$73,827	1.11%	1.33%	3.69%	$37,545	11.42%
Rocky Hill	3.10%	$104,219	0.81%	0.00%	0.00%	$52,570	5.20%
Somerville	6.70%	$70,643	3.69%	1.43%	6.93%	$33,185	13.15%
South Bound Brook	5.90%	$72,180	2.93%	0.69%	4.74%	$30,875	15.44%
Warren	5.00%	$143,833	1.60%	1.04%	2.28%	$64,042	5.09%
Watchung	3.20%	$140,163	5.99%	0.60%	0.76%	$71,369	8.40%

Number Below Poverty Level

The poverty rate in Somerset County is 5% for all people, 3.6% for all families, and 6% for all children. At 13.6%, the poverty rate for single mothers is 7.5 times the poverty rate for married couple families. More than two-thirds of Early Head Start and Head Start eligible infants, toddlers and preschoolers are within five communities, totaling 870 children, or more than four times Head Start-funded enrollment: Franklin, North Plainfield, Bound Brook, Manville and Somerville.

Table 12: Percent Below Poverty Level

Municipality	Overall Poverty	Family Poverty	Childhood Poverty	Children Under 5	EHS/HS Eligible	% EHS/HS of County Total
Somerset County	5.00%	3.60%	6%	18,412	1,251	6.79%
Bedminster	4%	2%	5.30%	271	14	1.12%
Bernards	3.80%	3%	2.60%	1,144	30	2.40%
Bernardsville	1.30%	1.60%	0.10%	418	0	0.00%
Bound Brook	10.20%	7.20%	18%	1,018	183	14.63%
Branchburg	3.80%	3.10%	5%	761	38	3.04%
Bridgewater	3.60%	2.50%	3.40%	1,995	68	5.44%
Far Hills	4.30%	4.30%	4.10%	54	2	0.16%
Franklin (Township)	5.30%	3.20%	6.90%	4,042	279	22.30%
Green Brook	5.90%	3.70%	4.30%	222	10	0.80%
Hillsborough	3.60%	2.60%	2.70%	2,603	70	5.60%
Manville	9.90%	8.30%	19.30%	563	109	8.71%
Millstone	2.70%	0%	0%	47	0	0.00%
Montgomery	3.80%	3.60%	4.70%	890	42	3.36%
North Plainfield	10.60%	8%	15.30%	1,444	221	17.67%
Peapack-Gladstone	2.40%	3.20%	1.80%	151	3	0.24%
Raritan	5.70%	4.60%	8%	405	32	2.56%
Rocky Hill	4.20%	0%	0%	34	0	0.00%
Somerville	6.40%	5.20%	8.20%	949	78	6.24%
South Bound Brook	8.50%	6.10%	10.80%	283	31	2.48%
Warren	2.90%	2%	3.80%	757	29	2.32%
Watchung	3%	1.20%	3.20%	361	12	0.96%

Education

There are 17 public school districts in Somerset County and 11 public high schools. The county-wide graduation rate is 92.5%, slightly higher than the statewide adjusted cohort graduation rate of 90.5%. There are three high schools with a graduation rate lower than the state and county averages: Bound Brook (77%), Franklin (86%), and Somerville (89%).

The countywide dropout rate is 0.7%. Three school districts have a dropout rate higher than the state average: Bound Brook (2.9%), Franklin (1.2%), and Manville (1.5%). In terms of total students who dropped out during the 2015-2016 school year, the top five districts were Franklin (33), Bound Brook (17), Somerville (9), Hillsborough (9) and North Plainfield (8).

Communities with the highest percentage of economically disadvantaged students, defined as those eligible for free and reduced price lunch, include Franklin, North Plainfield, Somerville and South Bound Brook. The county-wide rate of economically disadvtanged students is 21.8%.

The county-wide rate of students with a disability is 14.6%. Most districts have a rate of students with disability that is relatively consistent with the county-wide average.

The county-wide rate of English Language Learners is about 4%. Districts with the highest percentage of English Language Learners include Bound Brook, Franklin, and North Plainfield. The most common non-English language that is the primary language spoken at home is Spanish, followed by Chinese.

Table 13. Local School District K-12 Education Data						
School	Graduation Rate	Drop Out Rate	Free/ Reduced Lunch	Percent w/ Disability	English Language Learners	Primary Non-English Language at Home
Bedminster*	n/a	n/a	7.2	20	3.3	Spanish
Bernards	98	0	2.4	14.8	0.9	Chinese
Bound Brook	77	2.9	70	13	10.5	Spanish
Branchburg**	n/a	n/a	5.7	16.3	1.2	Spanish
Bridgewater	95	0.2	9.2	14.9	0	Spanish
Franklin	86	1.2	43.3	13	15.4	Spanish
Green Brook***	n/a	n/a	7.7	14.5	1.5	Chinese
Hillsborough	94	0.4	9.1	18.6	4	Spanish
Manville	93	1.5	48	20	3.4	Spanish
Montgomery	96	0.1	4.3	12.8	1.6	Chinese
North Plainfield	95	0.5	70.3	15.8	6.8	Spanish
Somerset Hills	97	0.7	10.6	14.3	2.8	Spanish
Somerville	89	0.6	32.4	15.7	3.1	Spanish
South Bound Brook^	n/a	n/a	46.9	12	3.7	Spanish
Warren***	n/a	n/a	1.2	17.4	3.7	Chinese
Watchung	98	0.3	1.5	15	5.9	Spanish

Notes on Table 13:

* Students in grades 9 through 12 in Bedminster attend Somerset Hills Regional High School with students from Bernards and Bernardsville, therefore, graduation and drop-out rates are not available for the local K-8 districts.
** Students in grades 9 through 12 in Branchburg attend Somerville High School with students from Somerville, therefore, graduation and drop-out rates are not available for the local K-8 district.
*** Students in grades 9 through 12 in Green Brook and Warren attend Watchung Hills Regional High School with students from Watchung, therefore, graduation and drop-out rates are not available for the local K-8 districts.
^ Students in grade 9 through 12 in South Bound Brook attend Bound Brook High School with students from Bound Brook, therefore, graduation and drop-out rates are not available for the local K-8 district.

Literacy Levels

The table below shows the percentage of students who met or exceeded expectations on standardized assessments of English Language Arts Literacy for each school district in Somerset County. Sample scores were collected from three grade levels spanning elementary, intermediate and high school: 3rd, 8th, and 11th. The school districts with the lowest average literacy rate include Bound Brook, North Plainfield, Franklin, and Somerville. All four of these districts rank in the bottom six, in different variations, of districts in Somerset County in terms of functional literacy.

Table 14. Literacy Levels			
School	**Literacy 3rd**	**Literacy 8th**	**Literacy 11th**
Bedminster	57	69	n/a
Bernards	69	73	69
Bound Brook	20	26	27
Branchburg	56	65	n/a
Bridgewater	66	82	62
Franklin	30	35	39
Green Brook	61	66	n/a
Hillsborough	63	47	35
Manville	44	58	30
Montgomery	61	79	87
North Plainfield	16	33	33
Somerset Hills	59	81	61
Somerville	28	56	26
South Bound Brook	43	53	n/a
Warren	64	82	n/a
Watchung	74	76	48

Adult Educational Attainment

In Somerset County, 5.9% of adults over 25 do not have a high school diploma, and 27.8% have a high school diploma, equivalency, or less. More than half, or 52.5% of residents, have a Bachelor's Degree or higher. Communities with the lowest rates of adult educational attainment include North Plainfield, Bound Brook, Manville, Green Brook and Somerville. These communities have the largest percentage of adult residents without a high school diploma and the highest percentage of adult residents who did complete a college degree.

Table 15. Adult Educational Attainment								
Municipality	**Less than HS**	**High school graduate (or GED)**	**Some college, no degree**	**AA degree**	**Bachelor's degree**	**Graduate degree**	**Percent high school graduate or higher**	**Percent bachelor's degree or higher**
Somerset County	5.9%	21.9%	14.1%	5.7%	29.2%	23.3%	94.2%	52.5%
Bedminster	2.0%	13.9%	12.2%	8.8%	35.3%	27.9%	98.1%	63.2%
Bernards	2.7%	10.3%	9.7%	4.3%	37.1%	35.9%	97.2%	73.0%
Bernardsville	1.0%	16.2%	8.8%	4.3%	34.0%	35.7%	99.0%	69.7%
Bound Brook	15.1%	41.1%	15.9%	6.9%	13.4%	7.5%	84.8%	20.9%
Branchburg	3.3%	18.1%	14.7%	5.5%	33.3%	25.1%	96.7%	58.4%
Bridgewater	4.5%	19.0%	13.3%	5.9%	30.3%	27.0%	95.5%	57.3%
Far Hills	5.0%	14.9%	15.6%	4.0%	35.3%	25.2%	95.0%	60.4%
Franklin	6.4%	22.2%	15.0%	6.0%	28.3%	22.1%	93.6%	50.4%
Green Brook	10.8%	15.9%	16.7%	4.3%	32.6%	19.7%	89.2%	52.3%
Hillsborough	2.7%	20.1%	14.8%	6.9%	34.5%	20.9%	97.2%	55.4%
Manville	11.3%	50.9%	20.0%	4.3%	10.4%	3.1%	88.7%	13.5%
Millstone	6.4%	26.6%	15.4%	6.1%	25.3%	20.1%	93.5%	45.4%
Montgomery	1.9%	8.9%	7.7%	3.6%	35.2%	42.7%	98.1%	77.9%
North Plainfield	15.6%	33.9%	19.8%	5.9%	15.3%	9.5%	84.4%	24.8%
Peapack-Gladstone	7.0%	16.0%	12.1%	3.0%	36.0%	26.0%	93.0%	62.0%
Raritan	4.8%	34.8%	17.2%	6.7%	25.0%	11.5%	95.2%	36.5%
Rocky Hill	4.3%	11.8%	15.7%	2.7%	28.0%	37.5%	95.7%	65.5%
Somerville	8.5%	30.2%	18.2%	5.1%	27.6%	10.3%	91.5%	38.0%
South Bound Brook	5.1%	40.9%	20.1%	10.5%	18.4%	4.9%	94.9%	23.3%
Warren	4.4%	17.6%	10.3%	4.6%	33.7%	29.3%	95.6%	63.0%
Watchung	6.0%	17.3%	11.0%	5.5%	26.4%	33.7%	93.9%	60.1%

HEALTH

Insurance Coverage

Approximately 8% of Somerset County residents do not have health insurance, including 3.34% of children, 3.68% of children under 6, 11.05% of adults, 1.94% of seniors, and 25.95% of individuals below poverty. The communities of Bound Brook, North Plainfield, South Bound Brook, Manville and Somerville have the highest rates of uninsured, particularly for total uninsured and adults uninsured. The communities of Bound Brook, Manville, Far Hills and Watchung have the highest rates of children without health insurance coverage.

Table 16. Rates of Uninsured Residents						
Municipality	**Uninsured Total**	**Children Uninsured**	**Under 6 Uninsured**	**Adults Uninsured**	**Seniors Uninsured**	**Below Poverty and Uninsured**
Somerset County	8.02%	3.34%	3.68%	11.05%	1.94%	25.95%
Bedminster	4.47%	1.11%	2.90%	6.40%	0.45%	17.11%
Bernards	1.89%	1.11%	0.00%	2.37%	1.37%	14.13%
Bernardsville	6.72%	3.31%	0.00%	9.82%	0.00%	38.44%
Bound Brook	26.77%	12.06%	16.01%	35.05%	1.70%	47.89%
Branchburg	3.80%	0.84%	0.00%	4.75%	4.51%	10.80%
Bridgewater	4.47%	2.86%	2.00%	5.57%	2.26%	14.34%
Far Hills	8.94%	6.20%	10.96%	11.90%	0.00%	24.48%
Franklin	8.39%	4.52%	5.39%	11.24%	1.91%	30.67%
Green Brook	5.48%	1.96%	0.00%	7.01%	4.61%	14.08%
Hillsborough	5.52%	3.17%	3.16%	7.11%	0.98%	28.55%
Manville	14.95%	6.41%	2.44%	20.55%	2.86%	20.04%
Millstone	3.49%	0.00%	0.00%	6.18%	0.00%	11.76%
Montgomery	3.33%	1.96%	0.00%	3.93%	3.66%	14.51%
North Plainfield	20.77%	3.41%	1.22%	29.36%	0.72%	32.02%
Peapack and Gladstone	4.82%	0.00%	0.00%	7.98%	0.00%	22.45%
Raritan	11.42%	4.25%	0.00%	16.66%	0.92%	29.43%
Rocky Hill	5.20%	5.84%	0.00%	6.92%	0.00%	8.57%
Somerville	13.15%	5.12%	6.15%	17.99%	3.05%	20.96%
South Bound Brook	15.44%	0.00%	0.00%	22.47%	0.00%	32.11%
Warren	5.09%	3.92%	6.90%	6.42%	2.19%	23.31%
Watchung	8.40%	3.19%	10.37%	13.09%	0.44%	33.92%

Prevalent Health Problems

- Lead: According to the New Jersey Department of Health for Somerset County, 1.36% of children ages 6-26 months, 1.15% of children under 6 years of age, and 1.44% of children under 17 years of age have an Elevated Blood Lead Level (equal to or above 5 micrograms per deciliter). This is the third lowest rate in the state and less than half the statewide average for all age ranges.
- Diabetes: According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, approximately 9% of adults over the age of 20 years old have diabetes, which is the fifth lowest rate in the state and below the statewide average.
- HIV: The HIV prevalence rate in Somerset County is 225 per 100,000 residents, the sixth lowest rate in the state. There are approximately 617 HIV diagnoses in Somerset County.
- Mortality: The premature age-adjusted mortality rate in Somerset County is 210 per 100,000 residents, the third lowest rate in the state.
- Sexually Transmitted Infection: The rate of sexually transmitted infection in Somerset County is 173 per 100,000 residents, the sixth lowest rate in New Jersey.
- Clinical Care: In Somerset County, the ratio of primary care providers to residents is 926:1 (4th in state); the ratio of dental care providers to residents is 1,112:1 (5th in state); and, the ratio of mental health care providers to residents is 406:1 (3rd in the state).
- Preventable Hospital Stays: Somerset County has over 35,000 Medicare enrollees. The rate of preventable hospital stays among Medicare beneficiaries in Somerset County is 42 per 100,000, the lowest rate in the state.
- Mammography Screening: Approximately 65% of Medicare enrollees received a mammography screening in Somerset County, the second highest rate in the state.

Communicable Diseases

According to the New Jersey State Health Assessment Data, there were 798 reported cases of communicable disease in Somerset County in 2015. The most common cases reported were Lyme Disease (258), Hepatitis C – Chronis (141), Campylobacteriosis (89), Influenza Type A (84), and Salmonella – Non-Typhoid (38). The average county in New Jersey reported 1,226 cases of communicable disease in 2015.

Hospitals and Health Clinics

There is one hospital in Somerset County, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, located in Somerville, New Jersey. There is one Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), also located in Somerville, New Jersey. FQHC's play a vital role in providing health care services to low-income populations, as they accept patients irrespective of their ability to pay. Further, parts of Somerset County are up to 20 miles away from either facility. For families without or with limited access to a vehicle, traveling to and from these medical facilities is extremely difficult.

Foster Care

According to the New Jersey Child Welfare Data Hub, there are currently 151 out-of-home foster care placements in Somerset County. The placement rate is 2.3 per 1,000 children.

Incidence of Child Abuse and Neglect

In Somerset County, there were approximately 2,190 cases of child abuse and neglect reported to the New Jersey Department of Children and Families in 2015. In about 7% of those cases, the investigator determined that the reported abuse/neglect was substantiated or established, meaning abuse or neglect did occur. This totaled 153 youth in 2015.

Drug and Alcohol Abuse

During calendar year 2015 there were 1,397 unduplicated substance abuse treatment admissions from Somerset County and 1,862 total admissions. Male admissions, accounting for 69% of all admissions, more than doubled the percentage of female admission (31%). Of all admissions, 44% were for alcohol, 31% were for heroin, 12% were for marijuana, and 13% were for other opiates, cocaine or other drugs. Of all referrals, 28% were self-referrals, 25% were from criminal justice sources, and 20% were from the intoxicated driver resource center. A total of 43% of admissions had no health insurance and 36% had Medicaid or Medicare. Also, 75% of admissions were of individuals with incomes below poverty, 53% were unemployed or not in the labor force, and 64 individuals were homeless.

Number of Children Born to Addicted Mothers

According to New Jersey State Health Assessment Data, there were 13 women who gave birth in Somerset County between 2011 and 2013 that reported tobacco, alcohol or drug use during the term of their pregnancy.

Infant and Child Death Rates

According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's County Health Rankings and Roadmap, the infant mortality rate in Somerset County is 3 in 1,000 live births, which is the lowest rate of any county in New Jersey. The County Health Rankings and Roadmap also calculates the child mortality rate at 20 in 100,000 children, which is also the lowest rate in New Jersey.

Low Birth Weight

According to New Jersey State Health Assessment Data, 7.6% of babies born in Somerset County are born with a low-birth weight, defined as less than 2,500 grams. This below the statewide average of 7.9% of babies born with a low-birth weight. Communities with the highest percentage of babies born with low birth weight include Watchung, Bedminster, Green Brook and Montgomery. Communities with the highest number of babies born with low birth weight include Franklin, Bridgewater, Hillsborough and North Plainfield.

Prenatal Care

According to New Jersey State Health Assessment Data, 88.8% of pregnant women received early prenatal care, defined as receiving prenatal care during the first trimester. About 1% of pregnant women, or 32 total women, did not receive prenatal care at any point of their pregnancy. Communities with the lowest percentage of pregnant women receiving early prenatal care include North Plainfield (77.2%), Bound Brook (78.9%), and Somerville (79.6%).

Table 17. Prenatal Care					
Municipality	**Total Births**	**Low Birth Weight**	**Prenatal Care**	**% Low Birth Weight**	**% Prenatal Care**
Somerset County	3,297	253	2,926	7.49%	89.76%
Bedminster	110	13	102	11.82%	92.73%
Bernards	153	11	143	7.19%	93.46%
Bernardsville	70	2	64	2.86%	91.43%
Bound Brook	161	14	127	8.70%	78.88%
Branchburg	131	6	126	4.58%	96.18%
Bridgewater	415	36	388	8.67%	93.49%
Franklin	824	65	736	7.89%	89.32%
Green Brook	55	6	51	10.91%	92.73%
Hillsborough	349	34	321	9.74%	91.98%
Manville	107	5	90	4.67%	84.11%
Montgomery	149	15	135	10.07%	90.60%
North Plainfield	329	18	254	5.47%	77.20%
Peapack and Gladstone	20	1	19	5.00%	95.00%
Raritan	75	6	66	8.00%	88.00%
Somerville	152	6	121	3.95%	79.61%
South Bound Brook	64	5	57	7.81%	89.06%
Warren	86	4	79	4.65%	91.86%
Watchung	47	6	47	12.77%	100.00%

Teen Pregnancy

The teen pregnancy rate is defined as the rate of births over the past 12 months per 1,000 women ages 15 to 19. The teen pregnancy rate in Somerset County is 7 per 1,000 women, totaling 76 births. Communities with teen births in Somerset County include Bound Brook (17 births, or 53 per 1,000 teenaged women), Hillsborough (35 births, or 24 per 1,000 teenaged women), and South Bound Brook (24 births, or 115 per 1,000 teenaged women). No other town in Somerset County reported a teen birth over the past 12 months.

Immunization Levels Among School Children

According to the New Jersey Department of Health, the immunization rate for all Pre-K to 12th grade students in Somerset County is 95.7%, including 96.7% of public school students and 94.2% of non-public school students. All three rates are higher than the statewide average.

Air and Water Quality

According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's County Health Rankings and Roadmap, "Particulate Matter is the average daily density of fine particulate matter in micrograms per cubic meter (PM2.5) in a county. Fine particulate matter is defined as particles of air pollutants with an aerodynamic diameter less than 2.5 micrometers. These particles can be directly emitted from sources such as forest fires, or they can form when gases emitted from power plants, industries and automobiles react in the air. The relationship between elevated air pollution, particularly fine particulate matter and ozone, and compromised health has been well documented. Negative consequences of ambient air pollution include decreased lung function, chronic bronchitis, asthma, and other adverse pulmonary effects." The average daily density of fine particulate matter in Somerset County is 11.3 micrograms per cubic meter, which is equivalent to the statewide average.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency operates the Safe Drinking Water Information System (SDWIS), which contains information about public water systems and their violations of EPA's drinking water regulations, as reported to EPA by the states. These regulations establish maximum contaminant levels, treatment techniques, and monitoring and reporting requirements to ensure that water systems provide safe water to their customers. Somerset County is one of six counties in New Jersey that does not have a health-related drinking water violation.

Children with Disabilities

Number of Children with Disabilities

There are 2,073 children with a disability in Somerset County, or 2.67% of all children. Communities with the highest childhood disability rate include Manville, Montgomery, Bridgewater, Branchburg and Rocky Hill. Communities with the highest disability rate for children under 5 years of age include Bernardsville, Bedminster, Branchburg, Manville, Franklin, and North Plainfield. No other Somerset County municipality reported children with disabilities under the age of 5 years old.

Table 18. Children with Disabilities				
Municipality	**Number**	**Under 5 Years**	**5 to 17 Years**	**Under 18 Years**
Somerset County	2,073	0.70%	3.30%	2.67%
Bedminster	35	7.40%	1.50%	2.78%
Bernards	143	0.00%	2.30%	1.94%
Bernardsville	58	8.60%	1.40%	2.91%
Bound Brook	0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Branchburg	149	2.60%	4.80%	4.29%
Bridgewater	459	0.00%	5.30%	4.29%
Far Hills	6	0.00%	3.20%	2.48%
Franklin	298	1.00%	2.70%	2.20%
Green Brook	0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Hillsborough	189	0.00%	2.70%	1.95%
Manville	107	2.00%	6.30%	5.12%
Millstone	0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Montgomery	284	0.00%	5.10%	4.33%
North Plainfield	117	0.30%	2.90%	2.19%
Peapack-Gladstone	20	0.00%	4.20%	2.92%
Raritan	49	0.00%	3.70%	2.85%
Rocky Hill	4	0.00%	3.90%	2.92%
Somerville	73	0.00%	4.20%	2.71%
South Bound Brook	0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Warren	47	0.00%	1.40%	1.13%
Watchung	35	0.00%	3.70%	2.66%

Children with Disabilities by Type of Disability

Table 19. Children with Disabilities by Type					
Municipality	**Hearing**	**Vision**	**Cognitive**	**Ambulatory**	**Self-Care**
Somerset County	0.50%	0.40%	2.40%	0.20%	0.90%
Bedminster	0.30%	1.60%	0.70%	0.00%	1.10%
Bernards	0.40%	0.00%	1.60%	0.00%	0.40%
Bernardsville	0.00%	1.80%	0.00%	0.00%	1.40%
Bound Brook	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Branchburg	0.00%	0.80%	4.50%	0.30%	0.30%
Bridgewater	1.60%	0.80%	3.90%	0.10%	1.90%
Far Hills	0.80%	0.00%	2.10%	0.00%	2.10%
Franklin	0.40%	0.40%	2.20%	0.30%	1.30%
Green Brook	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Hillsborough	0.20%	0.50%	1.50%	0.20%	0.60%
Manville	0.50%	0.00%	6.30%	0.00%	1.10%
Millstone	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Montgomery	0.90%	0.00%	3.60%	0.20%	0.70%
North Plainfield	0.00%	0.40%	2.50%	0.00%	0.30%
Peapack-Gladstone	2.10%	0.00%	1.50%	0.00%	1.50%
Raritan	0.00%	1.00%	2.40%	0.00%	0.00%
Rocky Hill	0.00%	0.00%	3.90%	0.00%	0.00%
Somerville	0.00%	0.20%	3.00%	0.90%	0.50%
South Bound Brook	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Warren	0.60%	0.00%	0.40%	0.00%	0.70%
Watchung	0.00%	1.50%	3.70%	2.10%	2.10%

CRIME

Overall Crime Statistics

Somerset County has the third lowest violent crime rate per 1,000 residents and fourth lowest crime rate per 1,000 residents among 21 counties in New Jersey. Communities with the highest crime rate and violent crime rate include Bound Brook, North Plainfield, Somerville, Watchung, Manville, Raritan and Franklin. Communities with the highest overall incident of violent crime include Franklin, North Plainfield, Somerville, Bridgewater and Bound Brook.

Table 20. Crime Statistics								
Municipality	Crime Index Total	Violent Crime	Crime Rate per 1,000	Violent Crime Rate per 1,000	Murder	Rape	Robbery	Aggravated Assault
Somerset County	3,994	197	12.1	0.6	5	18	92	82
Bedminster	38	0	4.6	0.0	0	0	0	0
Bernards	148	6	5.5	0.2	0	4	1	1
Bernardsville	57	1	7.3	0.1	0	0	0	1
Bound Brook	232	18	22.1	1.7	0	0	7	11
Branchburg	68	3	4.7	0.2	0	0	0	3
Bridgewater	557	20	12.4	0.4	0	3	10	7
Far Hills	6	0	6.5	0.0	0	0	0	0
Franklin	983	42	15.1	0.6	1	2	23	16
Green Brook	97	5	13.4	0.7	0	2	2	1
Hillsborough	219	13	5.6	0.3	2	3	1	7
Manville	267	12	25.6	1.2	0	1	6	5
Millstone	3	0	7.2	0.0	0	0	0	0
Montgomery	118	2	5.2	0.1	1	0	1	0
North Plainfield	359	36	16.3	1.6	0	1	19	16
Peapack-Gladstone	10	0	3.9	0.0	0	0	0	0
Raritan	157	4	20.4	0.5	0	0	2	2
Rocky Hill	2	2	2.9	2.9	0	1	0	1
South Bound Brook	36	1	7.8	0.2	0	0	1	0
Somerville	207	20	17.0	1.6	1	1	13	5
Warren	79	4	5.0	0.3	0	0	2	2
Watchung	351	8	59.8	1.4	0	0	4	4

Gang Membership

In Somerset County, there are 60 gangs, accounting for 4% of all gangs in New Jersey. In Franklin, there are 12 blood sets and more than 20 gangs in total. North Plainfield identified the MS-13 gang as the most serious gang problem in three consecutive surveys, the only New Jersey municipality to do so.

Table 31. Gang Membership		
Community	**Number of Gangs**	**Estimated Membership**
Bound Brook	2	45
Branchburg	1	1
Bridgewater	15	83
Franklin	20	420
Hillsborough	7	9
North Plainfield	13	73
Raritan	2	13

Reports of Domestic Violence

According to the New Jersey Coalition to End Domestic Violence, there were 630 individuals from Somerset County admitted to domestic violence services in 2015. There are approximately 2,200 offences resulting in about 600 domestic violence arrests each year in Somerset County.

FOOD & NUTRITION

Children Receiving Free and Reduced Lunch

More than 7,800 K-12 public school students in Somerset County receive free lunch, or 14.95% of all students. Districts with the highest percentage of free lunch participation include Bound Brook, North Plainfield, Franklin, South Bound Brook and Manville.

Table 21. School Lunch Participation					
District	**Total Enrollment**	**Free Lunch**	**Reduced Price Lunch**	**% FRL**	**% Free**
Bedminster	586	23	19	7.17%	3.92%
Bernards	5,679	67	14	1.43%	1.18%
Bound Brook	1,605	925	219	71.25%	57.60%
Branchburg	1,693	62	21	4.90%	3.66%
Bridgewater	8,646	532	143	7.80%	6.15%
Franklin	7,653	2,785	655	44.95%	36.39%
Green Brook	927	54	11	7.01%	5.83%
Hillsborough	7,195	368	181	7.63%	5.11%
Manville	1,292	370	177	42.30%	28.60%
Montgomery	4,881	101	56	3.22%	2.07%
North Plainfield	3,245	1,665	453	65.25%	51.31%
Somerset Hills	2,017	128	54	9.00%	6.32%
Somerville	2,482	564	132	28.00%	22.70%
South Bound Brook	445	140	69	46.97%	31.46%
Warren	2,015	18	0	0.89%	0.89%
Watchung	2,141	48	19	3.08%	2.22%
County Total	52,502	7,847	2,222	19.18%	14.95%

Children Receiving Free Breakfast

Somerset County has the 6th highest percentage of low-income children eating breakfast at school, with the County's public schools serving breakfast to 49% of eligible children, according to Advocates for Children of New Jersey (ACNJ).

Table 22. School Breakfast Participation				
District	**# Eligible for Free Breakfast**	**Eligibility as % of Enrollment**	**% Receiving Free Breakfast**	**Total Receiving Free Breakfast**
Bound Brook	1,310	73%	87%	1,140
Franklin	3,296	45%	63%	2,076
Manville	570	40%	28%	160
North Plainfield	2,142	67%	26%	557
Somerville	660	28%	8%	53
South Bound Brook	227	50%	15%	34
COUNTY TOTAL	8,205	-	49%	4,020

WIC Participants

There are approximately 2,256 women, infants and children who receive WIC benefits in Somerset County, including approximately 209 pregnant women and 145 post-partum women. There are two local agencies who administer the WIC program in Somerset County: the Visiting Nurse Association of Central Jersey (only Franklin Township) and NORWESCAP for all areas of Somerset County except for Franklin Township. There are 24 authorized WIC vendors in Somerset County, spanning 13 municipalities.

Nutrition

Among 21 counties in New Jersey, Somerset County has the second highest food environment index rating 9.1 out of a possible 10. This is due to the fact that Somerset County has a comparatively low percentage of residents without access to healthy foods and low percentage of residents experiencing food insecurity.

SNAP Participation

In Somerset County, 3.18% of households receive SNAP benefits, along with 4.28% of households with children. Communities with the highest SNAP participation rates include Manville, North Plainfield, Somerville, Bound Brook and South Bound Brook. These communities have high rates of SNAP participation rates among all different types of households, including married couples with children, single fathers, and single mothers.

Table 23. SNAP Participation					
Municipality	Households	Households w/Children	Married Couple w/ Children	Single Father	Single Mother
Somerset County	3.18%	4.28%	2.27%	10.39%	13.50%
Bedminster	1.93%	0.89%	1.17%	0.00%	0.00%
Bernards	1.50%	1.03%	1.04%	0.00%	1.17%
Bernardsville	2.14%	3.70%	3.83%	0.00%	0.00%
Bound Brook	4.74%	5.99%	6.71%	8.11%	3.56%
Branchburg	1.40%	1.50%	1.23%	0.00%	3.96%
Bridgewater	3.29%	3.17%	2.14%	12.59%	7.94%
Far Hills	0.54%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Franklin (Township)	3.24%	5.10%	2.60%	10.08%	12.74%
Green Brook	3.28%	3.39%	3.91%	0.00%	0.00%
Hillsborough	1.67%	2.85%	2.10%	7.87%	7.65%
Manville	8.47%	13.41%	5.05%	20.59%	30.18%
Millstone	3.80%	9.68%	7.41%	100.00%	14.29%
Montgomery	1.17%	1.28%	0.00%	0.00%	10.98%
North Plainfield	7.36%	13.72%	3.47%	33.33%	32.82%
Peapack-Gladstone	1.48%	3.46%	0.00%	0.00%	15.12%
Raritan	3.69%	4.55%	2.60%	0.00%	14.04%
Rocky Hill	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Somerville	6.93%	6.59%	1.03%	0.00%	31.27%
South Bound Brook	4.74%	7.87%	6.18%	0.00%	13.57%
Warren	2.28%	4.42%	4.36%	0.00%	7.44%
Watchung	0.76%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

HOUSING

There are 124,672 housing units in Somerset County, including 115,998 occupied housing units. The owner vacancy rate is 1.5% and the rental vacancy rate is 9.7%. Approximately 23.9% of housing units are renter occupied, with a median rent of $1,411. Roughly 43% of renters are housing burdened, meaning they spend more than 30% of gross rent as a percentage of income. The communities with the highest rental vacancy rates include Somerville, Bernardsville, Bound Brook, Manville and Bridgewater. The communities with the highest percentage of renters include Bound Brook, North Plainfield, Somerville, South Bound Brook, Raritan and Manville. Understandably, Bound Brook, North Plainfield, Somerville, South Bound Brook, and Manville have the lowest median rent in the county; however, housing burdened renters are more prevalent in communities such as Watchung, Millstone, Warren, Bernardsville and Hillsborough.

Table 24. Housing Statistics							
Municipality	Total Housing Units	Occupied Housing Units	Owner Vacancy Rate	Rental Vacancy Rate	Renter Occupied	Median Rent	Housing Burdened Renters
Somerset County	124,672	115,998	1.5	9.7	23.90%	$1,411	43.43%
Bedminster	4,476	4,098	0.4	11.8	19.74%	$1,814	38.07%
Bernards	9,929	9,577	0.4	7.1	17.09%	$1,905	36.84%
Bernardsville	3,105	2,804	1.6	17.9	17.51%	$1,653	52.95%
Bound Brook	4,539	3,713	4.9	16.7	46.38%	$1,179	50.93%
Branchburg	5,252	5,078	1.5	3.7	12.90%	$1,320	26.72%
Bridgewater	15,868	15,307	0.6	12.9	16.23%	$1,670	47.42%
Far Hills	393	370	0	12.8	22.16%	$2,000	45.12%
Franklin (Township)	25,397	23,632	1.9	5.7	30.50%	$1,488	39.63%
Green Brook	2,458	2,288	1.6	0	7.34%	$1,442	28.57%
Hillsborough	14,038	13,300	1.7	9.1	13.71%	$1,351	51.15%
Manville	4,478	3,789	4.9	14.1	35.42%	$1,266	47.32%
Millstone	172	158	0	0	13.29%	$1,275	57.14%
Montgomery	7,832	7,575	0.7	0	16.38%	$1,755	38.60%
North Plainfield	7,727	7,321	1.5	3.8	45.51%	$1,197	44.57%
Peapack-Gladstone	936	881	2.3	5.9	27.01%	$1,423	42.44%
Raritan	3,071	2,712	3.5	7.2	37.06%	$1,431	42.09%
Rocky Hill	262	247	3.1	0	23.89%	$1,492	33.90%
Somerville	5,549	4,548	2.4	25.9	44.48%	$1,232	41.82%
South Bound Brook	1,851	1,605	2.8	7.9	38.94%	$1,262	48.16%
Warren	5,153	5,010	0.5	0	8.86%	$1,439	55.63%
Watchung	2,186	1,985	4.4	12.1	15.72%	$2,027	68.91%

Housing Conditions

In Somerset County, 5.21% of households do not own a vehicle. Approximately 2.1% of occupied units are substandard (lacking adequate plumbing, kitchen or telephone facilities). Additionally, 10.95% of housing units were constructed prior to 1939 and about 40% of units pre-date 1970, which suggests that a significant number of housing units could contain lead-based paint, which was not banned from residential use until 1978. Communities with the lowest rate of vehicle ownership are Manville, Somerville, North Plainfield, Raritan, South Bound Brook and Bound Brook, all large renter communities with low median rental rates. Communities with the oldest housing stock, and thus the highest risk of lead based paint exposure, include Rocky Hill, Peapack-Gladstone, Millstone, North Plainfield, Bound Brook, and Manville.

Table 25. Conditions of Housing				
Municipalities	**No Vehicle**	**Substandard**	**Built 1939 or Earlier**	**Build 1970 or Earlier**
Somerset County	5.21%	2.10%	10.95%	40.01%
Bedminster	2.39%	1.22%	5.72%	14.05%
Bernards	3.10%	1.37%	5.62%	26.50%
Bernardsville	6.38%	0.64%	32.59%	66.22%
Bound Brook	7.30%	2.45%	32.91%	83.90%
Branchburg	1.77%	0.85%	5.33%	23.36%
Bridgewater	5.73%	1.54%	4.91%	40.26%
Far Hills	0.54%	0.54%	25.19%	46.06%
Franklin	4.85%	2.07%	4.85%	26.51%
Green Brook	1.14%	0.00%	3.34%	34.38%
Hillsborough	3.17%	1.44%	2.98%	19.68%
Manville	11.48%	8.66%	17.66%	80.50%
Millstone	0.63%	0.63%	40.12%	90.12%
Montgomery	4.53%	1.00%	4.18%	15.40%
North Plainfield	9.90%	1.60%	34.02%	86.59%
Peapack-Gladstone	2.38%	0.00%	40.49%	55.13%
Raritan	8.48%	4.17%	24.39%	65.16%
Rocky Hill	2.02%	6.07%	43.51%	81.30%
Somerville	10.73%	5.80%	28.17%	77.17%
South Bound Brook	8.10%	8.41%	10.43%	66.13%
Warren	3.29%	1.72%	7.76%	37.82%
Watchung	4.63%	2.77%	10.48%	35.36%

HUD Housing

There are currently 5,915 housing vouchers available to very low-income families, as well as the elderly and disabled, in Somerset County. There are more than 5,772 family households living in poverty in Somerset County, in addition to more than 10,000 senior citizens and 10,000 adults with disabilities.

Homeless Count

Somerset County conducted its annual Point-In-Time Count of the Homeless in collaboration with Monarch Housing Associates on January 26, 2016. The following excerpts are taken verbatim from the report published online at www.monarchhousing.org. On the night of January 26, 2016 a total of 184 households, including 218 persons, were experiencing homelessness in Somerset County. A total of one household, with one person, was identified as chronically homeless and nine unsheltered homeless persons were counted. This is a decrease of 124 persons (36.3%) and 95 households (34.1%) from 2015. Somerset County had 2.4% of New Jersey's statewide homeless population in 2015. Of the 184 homeless households counted in Somerset County in 2016, 18 (9.8%) were families with at least one child under the age of 18 and one adult, 15 less (45.5%) than 2015. These families included 51 persons, including 30 children under age 18, and 21 adults.

CHILDCARE NEEDS

While there are a number of childcare providers and child development programs operating throughout Somerset County, not all are accessible to low-income families. HOPES is the only provider of free childcare and education for infants, toddlers and preschoolers ages birth to five in Somerset County, offering services at two locations. All other providers are fee-based or voucher-based programs, which are not affordable to Head Start eligible families.

Names and Locations of Other Child Development Programs

Table 27. Childcare and Child Development Programs			
Center	**Ages**	**Capacity**	**Municipality**
Childtime Learning Center	0 to 6	99	Bedminster
The Children's Corner	0 to 6	161	Bernards
Alan E. Zimmer Chabad Preschool	0 to 6	103	Bernards
Crawlers 2 Scholars Early Childhood Education Center	0 to 6	175	Bernards
Gentle Shepherd Christian Pre-school	0 to 6	75	Bernards
Little Lambs	0 to 6	59	Bernards
Mendham Country Day School at Basking Ridge	0 to 6	96	Bernards
Millicent Fenwick Day Care Center	0 to 6	125	Bernards
Somerset Hills Montessori School, Inc.	0 to 6	105	Bernards
Sunshine Preschool	0 to 6	120	Bernards
The Learning Experience	0 to 6	164	Bernards
The Tree House Child Caring Center	0 to 6	175	Bernards
Tiny Turtle Academy	0 to 6	180	Bernards
The Palmer School	0 to 6	89	Bernardsville
Middle Earth's Little Ducklings	0 to 6	20	Bound Brook
Apples & Books Learning Center	0 to 6	87	Branchburg
Kangaroo Kids Child Care & Learning Center	0 to 6	147	Branchburg
KinderCare Learning Center	0 to 6	181	Branchburg
Rainbow Child Care Center	0 to 6	116	Branchburg
The Children's Campus at R.V.C.C.	0 to 6	72	Branchburg
The Goddard School	0 to 6	147	Branchburg
The Grit Academy	0 to 6	135	Branchburg
Childtime Learning Center	0 to 6	75	Bridgewater
Creme De La Creme	0 to 6	300	Bridgewater
Jewish Community Early Childhood Center	0 to 6	144	Bridgewater
Kiddie Academy of Bridgewater	0 to 6	143	Bridgewater
Kinder Kastle Childcare/Learning Center	0 to 6	235	Bridgewater
Rainbow Child Care Center	0 to 6	174	Bridgewater
Stellar Academy	0 to 6	225	Bridgewater
The Learning Gate, an Asso. of Child Care Ctrs, Inc	0 to 6	128	Bridgewater
Bright Horizons at Somerset	0 to 6	150	Franklin
Bright Start Pre-School and Daycare	0 to 6	47	Franklin

Cedar Hill Prep School	0 to 6	248	Franklin
Childtime Learning Center	0 to 6	150	Franklin
Community Christian Academy and Preschool	0 to 6	90	Franklin
HOPES CAP, Inc Belmont Site	*0 to 6*	*200*	*Franklin*
HOPES CAP, Inc Hamilton Site	*0 to 6*	*92*	*Franklin*
Kids Come First Learning Center	0 to 6	73	Franklin
KinderCare Learning Center #915	0 to 6	99	Franklin
Kingdom Kidz Academy, LLC	0 to 6	186	Franklin
Little Gems Montessori Academy	0 to 6	60	Franklin
Little XYZ Inc DBA The Goddard School	0 to 6	202	Franklin
Our Little Schoolhouse	0 to 6	49	Franklin
Rainbow Child Care Center	0 to 6	100	Franklin
Somerset Community Action Program, Inc	0 to 6	60	Franklin
The Academy Child Care Center of ELCC	0 to 6	120	Franklin
The Center for Great Expectations	0 to 6	36	Franklin
The Learning Experience	0 to 6	120	Franklin
The Learning Experience at Somerset, LLC	0 to 6	180	Franklin
The Wonder Years Academy	0 to 6	159	Franklin
Bright Beginnings Pre-School of New Jersey, Inc.	0 to 6	60	Green Brook
Bright Beginnings pre-School of NJ, Inc.	0 to 6	30	Green Brook
Little Angel's Family Day Care, Inc.	0 to 6	45	Green Brook
All Day Learning Centers	0 to 6	208	Hillsborough
Blooming Hearts Child Development Center, Inc	0 to 6	37	Hillsborough
Childtime Learning Center	0 to 6	99	Hillsborough
Incredible Kids Academy	0 to 6	83	Hillsborough
Kids Playway Learning Center	0 to 6	98	Hillsborough
KinderCare Learning Center	0 to 6	180	Hillsborough
Our Nation's Children Linguistic Day Care Learning Center	0 to 6	50	Hillsborough
Seedlings Infant Toddler Preschool	0 to 6	138	Hillsborough
Somerset Valley YMCA Gregory Scott Lowe Child Care Center	0 to 6	165	Hillsborough
Stellar Academy Of Hillsborough	0 to 6	260	Hillsborough
The Goddard School	0 to 6	177	Hillsborough
The Learning Experience	0 to 6	162	Hillsborough
Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center	0 to 6	90	Manville
Johnson & Johnson Child Development Center at Skillman	0 to 6	219	Montgomery
New Horizons Montessori	0 to 6	120	Montgomery
The Learning Experience	0 to 6	173	Montgomery
Cookies & Juice	0 to 6	37	North Plainfield
Kiddie Academy at Watchung Square	0 to 6	180	North Plainfield
Johnson & Johnson Child Development Center	0 to 6	210	Raritan
The Learning Gate, an Asso. of Ctrs, Inc	0 to 6	100	Raritan
Somerset County YMCA Somerville Early Education Center	0 to 6	126	Somerville
The Ethicon Family Center	0 to 6	275	Somerville
The Wonder Years Academy	0 to 6	60	Somerville
Curious Minds	0 to 6	60	Warren

Kindercare Learning Center	0 to 6	200	Warren
Mountain Top School for Young Children	0 to 6	100	Warren
Primrose School Of Warren	0 to 6	210	Warren
Spring Academy Warren	0 to 6	45	Warren
The Learning Experience at Warren	0 to 6	255	Warren
The Orchard Academy	0 to 6	124	Warren
Warren Giving Nest	0 to 6	28	Warren
The Sundance School	2 to 6	287	North Plainfield
Black River School	2 to 6	15	Bedminster
Pluckemin Church Preschool	2 to 6	118	Bedminster
The Kids House Nursery School	2 to 6	30	Bedminster
Little Footprints Learning Center	2 to 6	60	Bernards
Robin's Nest Nursery School	2 to 6	60	Bernardsville
Saint John's on the Mountain Nursery School	2 to 6	53	Bernardsville
Wee People Preschool & Kindergarten	2 to 6	80	Bound Brook
Whiton Elementary Before & After School Program	2 to 6	150	Branchburg
Children's Corner of Bridgewater United Methodist Church	2 to 6	92	Bridgewater
Little Friends Of Jesus Nursery School	2 to 6	94	Bridgewater
Nicholas Montessori School	2 to 6	37	Bridgewater
North Branch Reformed Church Preschool	2 to 6	109	Bridgewater
Preschool Place & Kind. at Temple Sholom	2 to 6	99	Bridgewater
Saint Bernard Pre-School & Kindergarten	2 to 6	125	Bridgewater
Saint Martin's School	2 to 6	69	Bridgewater
The Giving Nest Preschool & Kindergarten in Martinsville	2 to 6	42	Bridgewater
The Giving Nest Preschool in Martinsville	2 to 6	81	Bridgewater
Central Jersey enrichment Center, Inc	2 to 6	93	Franklin
Franklin Montessori School	2 to 6	60	Franklin
Little Children of God Preschool & Kindergarten	2 to 6	81	Franklin
Peace N Joy Academy	2 to 6	35	Franklin
Play & Grow Learning Center	2 to 6	44	Franklin
Play and Learn Workshop/Safety Town	2 to 6	116	Franklin
The Ark of Care Child Development Center	2 to 6	50	Franklin
American Montessori School	2 to 6	38	Hillsborough
Mary Mother of God Nursery School	2 to 6	59	Hillsborough
PALS Play and Learn School	2 to 6	60	Hillsborough
South Branch Reformed Church Nursery School	2 to 6	60	Hillsborough
The Christian Nurturing Center	2 to 6	100	Hillsborough
Kindercapers Preschool	2 to 6	40	Montgomery
Montgomery Kid Connection	2 to 6	192	Montgomery
The Blawenburg Village School	2 to 6	94	Montgomery
Growing Tree Pre-School and Kindergarten	2 to 6	49	North Plainfield
Holy Cross Pre-School	2 to 6	60	North Plainfield
Taylor's Learning Center	2 to 6	30	North Plainfield
Taylor's Learning Center II	2 to 6	24	North Plainfield
The Giving Nest Preschool & Kindergarten	2 to 6	121	North Plainfield

The Cottage School	2 to 6	28	Peapack-Gladstone
Rocky Hill Cooperative Nursery School	2 to 6	20	Rocky Hill
First Baptist Church Preschool	2 to 6	77	Somerville
Good Shepherd Christian Day Care	2 to 6	75	Somerville
Union Village Nursery School	2 to 6	75	Warren
Best Time, LLC	2 to 6	100	Watchung
The Giving Nest II	2 to 6	115	Watchung

Estimated Number of Children Served

Communities with the largest deficit of birth to five childcare slots include Franklin, Bound Brook, North Plainfield, Hillsborough, Manville and Somerville. These communities also have the highest numbers of Early Head Start/Head Start eligible children and families in Somerset County.

Table 28. Capacity of Existing Childcare Centers

Municipality	Capacity 0 to 6 Years	Capacity 2.5 to 6 Years	Number of Centers	Population 0 to 5	Surplus/ Deficit	Head Start Eligible
Somerset County	10,910	3,497	129	17,569	3,162	1,251
Bedminster	99	163	4	271	9	14
Bernards	1,538	60	13	1,144	-454	30
Bernardsville	89	113	3	418	216	0
Bound Brook	20	80	2	1,018	918	183
Branchburg	885	150	8	761	-274	38
Bridgewater	1,424	748	17	1,995	-177	68
Far Hills	0	0	0	54	54	2
Franklin	2,421	479	27	4,042	1,142	279
Green Brook	165	0	3	222	57	10
Hillsborough	1,657	317	17	2,603	629	70
Manville	90	0	1	563	473	109
Millstone	0	0	0	47	47	0
Montgomery	512	326	6	47	-791	42
North Plainfield	217	571	8	1,444	656	221
Peapack-Gladstone	0	28	1	151	123	3
Raritan	310	0	2	405	95	32
Rocky Hill	0	20	1	34	14	0
Somerville	461	152	5	949	336	78
South Bound Brook	0	0	0	283	283	31
Warren	1,022	75	9	757	-340	29
Watchung	0	215	2	361	146	12

Percent of Working Parents

The table below depicts the percentage of families with children where both parents work, or in the instance of single parent families, where the primary parent/caregiver is in the labor force. Communities with a higher percentage of parent(s) working have a greater need for childcare options. Communities with the highest labor force participation rate among married couples include Rocky Hill, Millstone, Green Brook, Hillsborough, and South Bound Brook. Communities with the highest labor force participation rate among single fathers include Green Brook, South Bound Brook, Bedminster, Bridgewater and North Plainfield. Communities with the highest labor force participation rate among single mothers include Millstone, Watchung, Green Brook, Bridgewater, and Far Hills.

Table 29. Percentage of Children with Working Parents				
Municipality	**All Parents Working**	**Both Parents Working**	**Single Father Working**	**Single Mother Working**
Somerset County	63.77%	60.69%	98.29%	74.36%
Bedminster	71.84%	73.09%	100.00%	44.44%
Bernards	46.80%	41.31%	42.86%	94.96%
Bernardsville	41.55%	41.55%	-	-
Bound Brook	54.04%	47.22%	100.00%	59.06%
Branchburg	60.81%	61.76%	-	43.18%
Bridgewater	69.86%	65.19%	100.00%	100.00%
Far Hills	54.79%	45.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Franklin	66.60%	61.15%	100.00%	85.81%
Green Brook	79.61%	77.68%	100.00%	100.00%
Hillsborough	76.20%	76.09%	94.81%	68.31%
Manville	63.73%	61.86%	100.00%	65.89%
Millstone	80.43%	80.00%	-	100.00%
Montgomery	57.62%	59.37%	-	30.43%
North Plainfield	68.69%	65.79%	100.00%	64.43%
Peapack-Gladstone	44.44%	26.67%	100.00%	100.00%
Raritan	64.14%	57.01%	-	88.19%
Rocky Hill	88.00%	88.00%	-	-
Somerville	51.06%	50.51%	100.00%	43.04%
South Bound Brook	72.98%	57.05%	100.00%	85.51%
Warren	58.71%	60.51%	-	43.62%
Watchung	37.92%	30.12%	-	100.00%

TRANSPORTATION

Public Transportation Services

New Jersey Transit operates two commuter rail lines that travel through Somerset County: the Raritan Valley Line and the Gladstone Branch of the Morristown Line, the latter of which offers Midtown Direct service to New York Penn Station. There are a total of ten train stations in the county, two of which are accessible to individuals with disabilities (denoted by * in the table below).

Raritan Valley Line Peak Time Trip to NYC (75-90 minutes) Peak Time Trip to Newark (50-60 minutes)	**Gladstone Branch** Peak Time Trip to NYC (80-100 minutes) Peak Time Trip to Newark (50-70 minutes)
• Bound Brook • Bridgewater • Somerville* • Raritan • North Branch (Branchburg)	• Lyons* (Bernards) • Basking Ridge (Bernards) • Bernardsville • Far Hills • Gladstone

Commuter rail transportation from Somerset County to employment centers such as Newark and New York City is time consuming and can be cost-prohibitive for low-income families. The trip from Somerset County to Newark ranges from 50 to 70 minutes and the trip to New York City ranges from 75 to 100 minutes. The cost of round trip rail travel to and from Newark ranges from $18 to $24 and the cost of round trip rail travel to and from New York City ranges from $28 to $32. The annual cost of commuting for an individual from points in Somerset County to major employment centers such as Newark and New York City exceeds $4,000 and could top $7,000 from some points of origin.

There are six commuter bus lines serving Somerset County that are operated by New Jersey Transit. Bus routes are primarily oriented around the central part of the county, including the US Route 22, US Route 202 and Interstate 287 corridors. Bus fare to New York City is also a costly expense, with prices averaging over $20 for round trip tickets.

The County of Somerset offers fee-based community transportation services to the general public through three systems comprising a total of eight transportation routes. SCOOT provides services in the central part of Somerset County, including Hillsborough, Manville, Somerville, Bridgewater and Bedminster. Each one-way ride costs $2.00 and the route includes a stop at Somerville Train Station. DASH provides service between Bound Brook and the New Brunswick (Middlesex County), passing through the Somerset section of Franklin Township. Each one-way ride costs $2.00 and the route includes stops at Bound Brook Train Station and New Brunswick Train Station. CAT provides access to Raritan Valley Community College in Branchburg. Each one-way ride costs $2.00 and the route includes stops at Bound Brook Train Station and Somerville Train Station.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Concentration of Poverty:

As a whole, Somerset County is one the most affluent places in the United States. However, unlike older, more densely populated communities in northern New Jersey, poverty in Somerset County is distributed throughout the county. In Union County, Hudson County, Essex County, Bergen County and Passaic County, poverty is highly concentrated in specific areas. Yet, some of the most affluent communities in Somerset County demonstrate high indicators of need. As a result many high-need families, such as single mothers/fathers, may not have readily available access to supportive services within the boundaries of their communities. Transportation barriers (i.e. limited mass transit, long travel times, low vehicle access) further complicate accessibility to services for many households in need. A proactive and mobile approach to delivering services in these areas would be highly beneficial to ensure low-income families have accessibility to resources that support self-sufficiency.

Highest Need Communities:

There is no single community of Somerset County that stands out as the highest need community in the region. However, the communities of Bound Brook, Manville, North Plainfield, Franklin, Somerville and South Bound Brook appear to consistently exhibit indicators of need across major categories explored in the community assessment. Other communities with significant needs include Green Brook, Hillsborough, Bridgewater and Raritan. Based on the research conducted to prepare the community assessment, there does not appear to be any one particular (non-governmental) entity that delivers services on a county-wide basis, despite the arguable need for a truly county-wide operation. Exploring ways to scale the delivery of services throughout county would help address existing service gaps.

Co-Location of Services

As a result of distributed, rather than concentrated poverty, Somerset County residents tend to access supportive services through a very fragmented system. For example, NORWESCAP, the Community Action Agency for Hunterdon, Sussex and Warren Counties, operates a WIC and LIHEAP office in the Bridgewater-Raritan area of Somerset County, despite their main offices being nearly 40 miles away and two counties over. There does not appear to be a "one stop shop" for social services, despite the multiple systems that families in need are typically required to navigate when seeking support. Centralizing and co-locating services in high traffic areas (community centers, commercial districts, libraries, etc.) and developing a center-based, one-stop blueprint for making connections to multiple systems would streamline service delivery to Somerset County families displaying the highest levels of need. The benefits to client families would far surpass the current system, which is highly decentralized, fragmented, and not serving the best interests of families in terms of ease of access.

Supportive Housing

As almost half of all Somerset County renters are housing burdened, access to affordable housing is a major need. The number of housing vouchers available is well below the demand, a large percentage of the housing stock predates 1970 and may contain lead-based paint, and affordable housing appears to only be available in low-income areas. The low-income families who are more likely to confront the issues

of housing burden, lead-based paint, and affordability, would benefit from support that helps them find and maintain permanent housing solutions. This may include, but not be limited to, supportive housing services such as housing search and lease assistance, tenant-landlord conflict resolution, weatherization, minor repair workshops, and lead remediation.

Childcare Accessibility

There are limited affordable childcare options available to Somerset County families. Families with the highest needs for free or affordable childcare, such as single parents or low-income parents who both work, also face the most difficulty in locating childcare. Finding ways to expand the availability of and/or access to free or affordable childcare should be a high priority in serving the residents of Somerset County.

Community-Based Partnerships

There are a number of organizations based in Somerset County that are potential partners in building a collaborative framework for centralizing services and expanding access to supportive services for families. These organizations include, but are not limited to, the County of Somerset, Somerset County Community Action, United Way of Northern New Jersey (based in Morris County, local offices in Bridgewater), Empower Somerset, Family Support Organization of Hunterdon, Somerset and Warren (based in Hunterdon County with no Somerset County offices), Family and Community Services of Somerset County, NORWESCAP, Interfaith Hospitality Network, and Harvest of Hope. Below is a list of the primary focus areas of each of the organizations (with respect to Somerset County services). It is also recommended to establish working relationships, collaborations, and partnerships with Somerset County's many faith-communities, including churches, temples, and mosques.

Organization	Focus Areas
County of Somerset	Government-based Assistance
Somerset County Community Action	Affordable Childcare, Financial Education, Case Management
United Way of Northern New Jersey	
Empower Somerset	Life Skills, Family Success, Prevention, Health & Wellness
Family Support Organization	Emotional, Mental and Behavioral Health
Family and Community Services of Somerset County	Mental Health and Counseling
NORWESCAP	WIC and LIHEAP
Interfaith Hospitality Network	Homelessness
Harvest of Hope	Children in Foster Care

Preventative Health

As a whole, Somerset County is a very healthy community. This should come with little surprise as it is one of the most affluent areas of the United States, is home to operations of several of the country's largest pharmaceutical companies, and affords residents with some of the top performing hospitals in the state. However, there are many residents who do not have readily accessible health care, access to affordable health coverage, or other knowledge or resources that support preventative health. It is vital to ensure these families are reached and supported to ensure Somerset County's tradition of health is experienced by all.