NOTE ON DATA COLLECTION, SURVEY INSTRUMENTS, AND INCLUSION:
The data collection for this brief was conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. Data collection efforts across many survey instruments have yet to fully address the need to include the diverse identities of Texans. Therefore, the demographic breakdown provided in this brief primarily reflects binary, cisgender sex-disaggregation of data. Such binary focus excludes important information about transgender and gender nonconforming populations. The categories of race and ethnicity utilized also do not adequately reflect the multiracial and multiethnic population of Texas. The way that many primary sources for data collect racial and ethnic data must evolve to be more inclusive and representative of the geographic, social, and cultural dimensions that define the concepts.

Every Texan honors and celebrates the past and present contributions of Texans with disabilities. Data from the 2021 American Community Survey (ACS) show that **people with disabilities make up 12% of our state’s total civilian noninstitutionalized population.** That’s **over 3.5 million Texans** that have at least one disability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO ARE TEXANS WITH DISABILITIES?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The phrase “persons with disabilities” is used to apply to all persons with disabilities, including those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which could hinder their experiences in society on an equal basis with others. The U.S. Census Bureau tracks data across six disability categories: hearing, vision, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care, and independent living difficulties. However, it is important to note that this minimal list does not include all disabilities, such as overlapping disabilities and experiences that people face.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For far too long, people with disabilities have faced systemic inequities, barring them from opportunities and resources. It was not until July 26, 1990 that the Americans with Disabilities Act was passed, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment, state and local government; public accommodations; commercial facilities; transportation; and telecommunications.¹ This legislation was a move in the right direction, but we acknowledge that people with disabilities in Texas and across the nation still face significant systemic barriers.

**Age and Race/Ethnicity Breakdown**

- Over a third (35%) of Texans age 65 and older have a disability, and about half (49%) of all Texans age 75 and older have a disability. One in ten (10%) working-age Texans age 18 to 64 have a disability, and one in twenty (5%) Texas children under 18 have a disability.

- Of all Texans with disabilities, 51% are working age (age 18 to 64).

- Black and Non-Hispanic White Texans have the highest rates of all people with disabilities.

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**Disability rates vary by race and ethnicity.**

Percent of Texans with a disability by race and ethnicity in 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Texans</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian and Alaska Native</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic White</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Every Texan analysis of 2021 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

Note: Hispanic or Latino includes all racial groups. Only White is non-Hispanic.

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**OVER HALF OF TEXANS WITH DISABILITIES ARE WORKING AGE.**

Source: Every Texan analysis of 2021 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

Note: Working age people are 18 to 64 years.
Types of Disabilities

Of Texans with disabilities, 47% have an ambulatory difficulty and 38% have a cognitive difficulty.\(^2\)

That's over 1.6 million Texans with an ambulatory difficulty and over 1.3 million with a cognitive difficulty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disability</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With a hearing difficulty</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With a vision difficulty</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With a cognitive difficulty</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With an ambulatory difficulty</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With a self-care difficulty</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With an independent living difficulty</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Every Texan analysis of 2021 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

Note: Totals do not sum to 100% across the six disability categories as individuals may have more than one type of disability.

Employment & Income Characteristics

While legislation within recent decades has led to much-needed rights within and outside the workplace for people with disabilities, systemic barriers still prevent people with disabilities from fully being able to participate and thrive within our economy.

- 31% of Texans with disabilities are employed.
- Of Texans age 18 to 64 in the labor force, 7% have a disability. Texans with disabilities make up 6% of all employed and 13% of all unemployed Texans of working age.
- A little over one fifth (22%) of Texans with disabilities work within the educational services, health care, and social assistance industries.
- The majority (66%) of Texans with disabilities are not in the labor force.
- The median income for Texans with disabilities is $29,427, while the median income for Texans without disabilities is higher at $39,412.\(^3\)
- The gender pay gap is exacerbated when looking at Texans with disabilities. While the median income for Texas women with disabilities is $24,783, the median income for Texas men with disabilities is $34,112.

\(^2\) Totals do not sum to 100% across the six disability categories as individuals may have more than one type of disability.

\(^3\) All median income data is in 2021 inflation-adjusted dollars.
Health Insurance & Poverty

Systemic inequities also make it challenging for people with disabilities to receive adequate health care in Texas and to stay above the poverty threshold.

- Of Texans with disabilities, 12% are uninsured. The rate is much higher for Texans with disabilities aged 19 to 64 — one in five (20%) are uninsured.
- One in five (20%) Texans with a disability live in poverty. Of Texas adults with a yearly income below the poverty threshold in Texas, 22% have a disability.
- Of households that receive food stamps, 42% have at least one person with a disability living in the household.

One in Five Working Age Texans with a Disability are Uninsured.

Veterans with disabilities face poverty. This shows how Texans who serve our country are not always able to sustain their lives and thrive after their service.

- 30% of veterans in Texas have a disability.
- Of veterans with disabilities in Texas, 15% live in poverty.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities deserve adequate funding to support their educational needs in order to thrive in school. The Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services should keep these students in mind as they form budgets for the upcoming year in order to ensure all Texans, including Texans with disabilities and their families, get the support they need.

- Children receiving special education services made up 5% of those enrolled in the 2021-22 pre-kindergarten school year.4
- Of all students enrolled in public education in Texas during the 2021-22 school year, almost one-third (32%) had a learning disability.5

People With Disabilities Deserve a More Accessible Texas

People with disabilities have a right to be included in all aspects of their communities. These data highlight the fact that too many Texans with disabilities are not given fair and equitable opportunities to thrive in our state. People with disabilities are at a greater risk for abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violation of legal and human rights. Texas leaders must address and remedy systemic barriers that prevent people with disabilities from participating fully in our society and economy.

4 Texas Education Agency, Texas Public Prekindergarten Programs and Enrollment Ages 3 and 4 - Statewide 2021-2022 Data.
5 Texas Education Agency, 2021-2022 Special Education Reports. Rate calculated using 2020 ACS 5-year estimates.