

Data Highlights: Economic Stability



Housing Costs and Affordability



In Siouxland, housing conditions and affordability vary significantly across counties. Union County has the strongest housing situation, with only 9% of residents facing severe housing problems and a steady 6%-9% of households dealing with severe housing cost burdens in recent years. Dakota County, however, faces the most difficulties, with 15% of residents experiencing severe housing issues and a rising number of households under housing cost burdens. Woodbury County falls in between, with 12% of residents facing severe housing problems and an increase in housing cost burdens from 9% in 2019 to 11% in 2023 and 2024. Overall, residents in Dakota and Woodbury Counties are more likely to struggle with housing quality and affordability than those in Union County.

Income inequality trends across Siouxland's counties vary. Woodbury County has seen a steady rise, increasing from 4.1 in 2018 to 4.4 in 2024, with the biggest jump between 2022 and 2023, showing a growing gap between high and low earners. Dakota County, on the other hand, improved significantly, dropping from 4.2 in 2018 to 3.6 in 2023 and 2024, especially between 2019 and 2022. Union County stayed mostly stable, but has seen improvement over the last few years, decreasing from 4.2 in 2022 to 3.8 as of 2024. Overall, Woodbury has the highest and growing inequality, Dakota has the lowest, and Union has remained relatively stable with recent improvement.

Income Inequality



Living Wage



Between 2022 and 2024, the living wage required to cover basic household expenses rose across the Siouxland Area. In Woodbury County, the living wage surged from \$37.00 to \$44.80, reflecting a sharp rise in living costs. Similarly, Iowa's living wage increased from \$37.38 to \$45.54. Dakota County saw the biggest jump, rising from \$38.07 to \$47.56. Nebraska also experienced an increase, from \$37.63 to \$46.08. Union County, starting lower at \$34.62, rose to \$41.98. South Dakota's living wage went up from \$34.83 to \$40.66, showing a smaller increase compared to other areas. Overall, the Siouxland Area saw significant increases in living costs, affecting affordability and financial stability for residents.

Data Highlights:

Education



Academic Completion

Woodbury County maintained relatively stable graduation rates, improving from 85.5% in 2017-18 to a peak of 90% in 2021-22, before slightly dropping to 87.9% in 2022-23. Dropout rates remained consistent, ranging from 1.7% to 2.2%, suggesting minimal disruptions to student retention. Dakota County experienced fluctuations, with graduation rates falling from 92.2% in 2018-19 to 80% in 2022-23. Dropout rates increased from 0.6% in 2019-20 to 3.0% by 2022-23. Union County consistently outperformed state and national averages, maintaining graduation rates above 90%, reaching 98% in 2021-22 and 2022-23, with dropout rates remaining under 1% throughout the period.



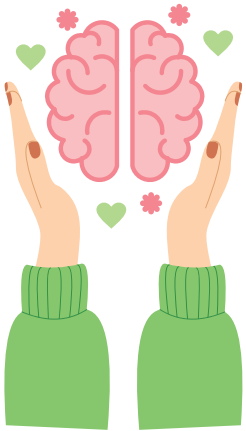
School Funding

School funding adequacy trends in recent years show significant progress in closing the gap between actual and required spending per pupil. Woodbury County reduced its funding gap from \$1,530 in 2022 to just \$75 in 2024, almost eliminating it. Iowa cut its gap from \$1,880 to \$297, and Nebraska decreased from \$2,607 to \$769. Union County saw a drop from \$2,749 to \$912. South Dakota even reversed its gap, going from a \$1,956 shortfall to a \$385 surplus. However, Dakota County still faces a large gap, though it has decreased from \$3,950 to \$2,760. Nationally, the funding gap fluctuated, rising from \$741 in 2022 to \$1,062 in 2023, then dropping to \$634 in 2024. Overall, while most regions have made notable improvements, Dakota County and the national average still show ongoing funding disparities.

Data Highlights: Health



Mental Health



Mental health data across Siouxland shows improvements in provider access, but persistent challenges in mental health outcomes. Woodbury County improved its provider ratio from 470:1 in 2019 to 390:1 in 2024, while Iowa reduced its ratio from 700:1 to 500:1. Nebraska improved from 440:1 to 310:1, and South Dakota from 590:1 to 440:1. Dakota County remained stable from 2019 to 2024 at 440:1 with some fluctuation. Union County, after hitting a low of 1,950:1 in 2020, saw its ratio rise to 2,410:1 by 2023 and then decrease to 2,130:1 in 2024. Despite these improvements, poor mental health days (in the past 30 days) have increased. Woodbury County rose from 3.4 to 4.8 days, Iowa from 3.3 in 2019 to 4.0 in 2024, and Nebraska from 3.2 to 3.9 days. South Dakota peaked at 3.7 days before dropping to 3.3, while Dakota County fluctuated, peaking at 3.8 days in 2022 before decreasing to 3.3 in 2023 and then increasing again to 4.0 in 2024. Union County saw a slight improvement, with poor mental health days dropping from 3.4 in 2022 to 3.3 in 2023, but then increased to 3.7 in 2024. While provider access has improved, accessibility remains an issue, especially in Union County

In Woodbury County, premature deaths increased from 7,000 per 100,000 population in 2019 to 8,500 in 2024, with a notable rise in 2022 and 2023 at 8,300. Iowa remained stable at 6,200 from 2019 to 2021 but saw a rise to 6,900 in 2024. Dakota County initially saw a decrease from 6,200 in 2019 to 5,600 in 2020 and 2021, but then rose to 6,500 by 2024. Nebraska had a stable rate of 6,100 from 2019 to 2020 but increased to 6,800 in 2024. Union County experienced fluctuations, rising from 4,600 in 2019 to 5,700 in 2022 and 2023, before decreasing slightly to 5,400 in 2024. South Dakota saw a consistent increase from 7,300 in 2019 to 8,500 in 2024. Overall, the data shows a troubling rise in premature deaths across most regions, with both Woodbury County and South Dakota experiencing the largest increases from 2019-2024. It is important to note the Covid-19 Pandemic as a potential leading factor in these increases.

Life Expectancy



Data Highlights: Safety



Vehicle Safety



.In Woodbury County, crash deaths remained at 10 per 100,000 from 2019 to 2020 but increased to 11 by 2022 and remains stable. Alcohol-impaired driving deaths dropped from 22% in 2019 to 20% in 2020 but surged to 29% from 2021 to 30%, where it sits in 2024. Dakota County saw a decline in crash deaths from 13 per 100,000 in 2019 to 12 in 2020, followed by a rise to 15 in 2023 and then a decrease to 11 in 2024 . However, alcohol-impaired driving fatalities dropped sharply from 23% in 2020 to 10% by 2023 and then increased sharply to 40% in 2024. In Union County, alcohol-impaired driving deaths rose sharply from 14% in 2019 to 33% from 2020 onwards until 2024 where it decreased to 25%. Rising crash deaths in Woodbury and Dakota Counties, along with persistent issues in Union County, highlight the need for enhanced safety measures and enforcement across the region.

In Siouxland, injury death rates per 100,000 people are generally increasing. Woodbury County's rate dropped from 59 in 2019 to 56 in 2021 but then rose to 63 by 2024. Iowa's rate climbed steadily from 67 in 2019 to 71 in 2024. Dakota County saw a decrease from 46 in 2019 to 35 in 2024. Nebraska's rate increased from 58 in 2019 to 63 in 2024. Union County's rate rose from 48 in 2019 to 61 in 2021, then increased again to 63 by 2024. South Dakota's rate grew from 80 in 2019 to 87 in 2024. Nationally, the rate rose from 67 in 2019 to 80 in 2024. This data reveals that most Siouxland regions, particularly South Dakota and Union County, face significant increases in injury deaths, while Dakota County's consistent decrease suggests effective strategies. The overall rise in injury deaths highlights a pressing public health issue, often linked to preventable causes and broader concerns about safety, healthcare access, and community well-being.

Fatal Injuries



Overdose Deaths



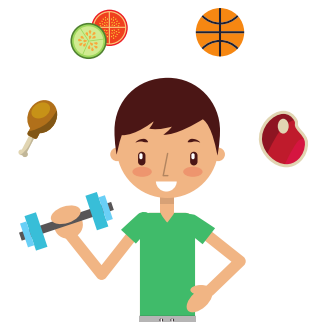
Drug overdose death rates per 100,000 people show a concerning increase across Siouxland and the nation. In Woodbury County, the rate was stable at 8 per 100,000 people from 2019 to 2020, dropped to 7 in 2021, but then surged to 9 people in 2022 and 11 people in 2024. Iowa saw a steady rise from 10 per 100,000 people in 2019 to 13 people in 2024. Nebraska's rate increased from 7 people in 2019 to 10 people in 2024. South Dakota's rate remained at 8 per 100,000 people from 2019 to 2022 before rising to 10 people by 2024. Nationally, the rate jumped from 19 per 100,000 people in 2019 to 27 people in 2024.

Data Highlights: Quality of Life



Access to a healthy lifestyle in Siouxland shows mixed results. In Woodbury County, the food environment index improved from 7.9 in 2019 to 8.5 by 2024, reflecting better access to healthy food. Access to exercise opportunities slightly declined from 94% in 2019 to 91% in 2024. Iowa's food environment index also rose from 8.2 in 2019 to 8.8 in 2024, while exercise access dropped slightly from 83% to 79%. Dakota County's food environment index fell from 8.5 in 2019 to 7.8 in 2021 but recovered to 8.2 by 2023 and increased to 8.3 in 2024, with exercise access remaining stable at 87%. Nebraska's index decreased from 8.1 in 2019 to 7.6 in 2021, then improved to 7.8 in 2023 and 8.0 in 2024. Exercise access dipped from 84% to 83% in 2023 but increased back to 84% in 2024. Union County's food index increased from 8.7 in 2020 to 9.3 in 2024 but saw a rather significant drop in exercise access from 72% to 67% by 2023 and then a significant increase to 77% in 2024. South Dakota's index improved from 6.6 in 2019 to 7.7 in 2024, though exercise access fluctuated, peaking at 74% in 2020-2021 before falling to 73% in 2024. Overall, healthy food access has improved in most areas: Woodbury, Iowa, and South Dakota have seen increases, while Dakota and Nebraska had mixed results.

Healthy Lifestyle



Residential Segregation



Residential segregation refers to the physical separation of groups, often by race or income, into different neighborhoods or areas within a city or region. The Residential Segregation Index trends reveal varied patterns across Siouxland. Woodbury County improved significantly from 64 on the index in 2019 to 44 in 2023 but saw a slight increase to 48 in 2024. Iowa and Nebraska showed stable high levels of segregation, with Iowa ranging between 61 and 63 and Nebraska between 64 and 65. Dakota County saw a sharp rise from 44 in 2019 to 77 in 2023, improving slightly to 68 in 2024, while South Dakota fluctuated between 65 and 69, indicating persistent segregation issues. Union County data is missing. Nationally, the index remained steady between 61 and 63, reflecting consistent segregation patterns. Overall, Woodbury County made notable progress but experienced some regression, Iowa and Nebraska remains stable, and Dakota County and South Dakota faces high and persistent segregation challenges. Disparities in residential segregation can contribute to unequal access to resources, opportunities, and quality of life across different communities.