



Definitions of who is counted as a veteran varies by data source. These data are from the Census Bureau who defines veterans this way: "A "civilian veteran" is a person 18 years old or over who has served (even for a short time), but is not now serving, on active duty in the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, or the Coast Guard, or who served in the U.S. Merchant Marine during World War II. People who served in the National Guard or military Reserves are classified as veterans only if they were ever called or ordered to active duty, not counting the 4-6 months for initial training or yearly summer camps. All other civilians 16 years old and over are classified as nonveterans."

For counties with small populations and small population groups, the margins of error (indicated by a +/-) can be quite large.

The **margin of error** tells us how precise the estimate is by indicating the **range within which the estimate most likely falls**.

For help in understanding the margin of error, see the brief Kentucky: By The Numbers publication "[And Now for the Grain of Salt](#)."

The 2023 American Community Survey 5-year estimates (2019-2023) that there were 235,118 (+/- 3,869) veterans in Kentucky. This issue of Kentucky: By The Numbers is in conjunction with the **Kentucky Extension Military Collaborative**. With funding from the UK Engage initiative, the Extension Military Collaborative is designed to increase awareness of the University's military engagement across the Commonwealth through developing a multidisciplinary statewide collaborative. <https://extension.ca.uky.edu/military>

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Overview

	Estimate	Margin of Error
Total number of Veterans	235,118	+/- 3,869
Male Veterans	213,235	+/- 3,611
Female Veterans	21,883	+/- 1,184
Percent of civilian population ages 18 and over who are Veterans	6.8%	+/- 0.1

Period of Service

	Estimate	Margin of Error
Gulf War (9/2001 or later) Veterans	53,357	+/- 1,918
Gulf War (8/1990 to 8/2001) Veterans	57,906	+/- 2,141
Vietnam era Veterans	81,439	+/- 2,132
Korean War Veterans	9,134	+/- 684
World War II Veterans	2,908	+/- 475

Veterans may have served in more than one period. To see estimates of veterans only serving during peace time, see ACS Table B21002.

Age Groups

	Veterans		Percent of Veterans		Percent of Nonveterans	
	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error
18-34 years	17,418	+/- 1,124	7.4%	+/- 0.4	30.0%	+/- 0.1
35-54 years	56,856	+/- 1,867	24.2%	+/- 0.7	32.9%	+/- 0.1
55-64 years	47,563	+/- 1,625	20.2%	+/- 0.6	16.9%	+/- 0.1
65-74 years	60,043	+/- 1,779	25.5%	+/- 0.6	12.6%	+/- 0.1
75 years and over	53,238	+/- 1,328	22.6%	+/- 0.5	7.6%	+/- 0.1


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Veterans Across Kentucky

Kentucky

Julie N. Zimmerman, 2025


 Kentucky: By The Numbers
<http://kybtn.ca.uky.edu>

Educational Attainment

(Population ages 25 and over)	Veterans		Percent of Veterans		Percent of Nonveterans	
	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error
Less than high school graduate	15,625	+/- 844	6.7%	+/- 0.4	11.9%	+/- 0.2
High school graduate (includes equiv.)	76,422	+/- 2,315	32.8%	+/- 0.7	32.7%	+/- 0.3
Some college or associate's degree	84,157	+/- 2,201	36.2%	+/- 0.7	28.2%	+/- 0.2
Bachelor's degree or higher	56,574	+/- 1,811	24.3%	+/- 0.7	27.2%	+/- 0.3

Economic Characteristics

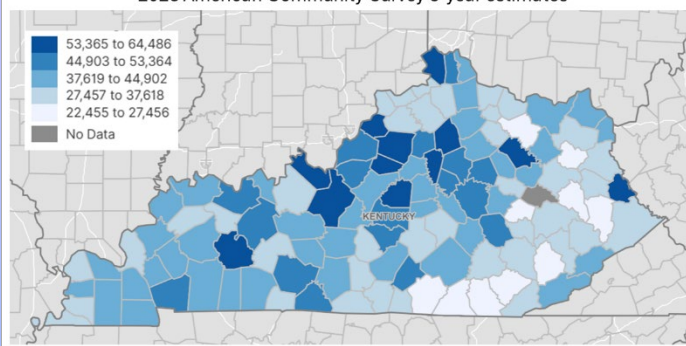
	Veterans		Nonveterans	
	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error
Poverty Rate	8.6%	+/- 0.4	15.2%	+/- 0.2
Labor Force Participation Rate (Ages 18-64 years)	73.3%	+/- 0.9	72.8%	+/- 0.2
Median Income	\$46,074	+/- \$703	\$33,915	+/- \$239

Percent of Civilian Population 18 Years and over who are Veterans
 2023 American Community Survey 5-year estimates



Median Income of Veterans

2023 American Community Survey 5-year estimates



These data are from **Table S2101** of the 2023 American Community Survey 5-year estimates and can be accessed at <https://data.census.gov/>

Kentucky: By The Numbers is an Extension program in the Department of Community and Leadership Development at the University of Kentucky. For more information contact your local Cooperative Extension office or Dr. Julie N. Zimmerman, Professor of Rural Sociology, Department of Community and Leadership Development, 500 Garrigus Building, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40546-0215. email: jzimm@uky.edu. The entire series is online at <http://kybtn.ca.uky.edu>

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