



## Aging and Disability Care Factsheet: Illinois

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Care Can't Wait Research/Case-making Committee

August 28, 2023

### The U.S. Caregiving Crisis

Our nation's need for care is rising. The need for caregivers has been on the rise. By 2030, all baby boomers will be over 65, raising the percent of our country's senior population from 13 percent in 2010 to 20 percent ([U.S. Census Bureau 2018](#)). At the same time, rates of disability are on the rise due to population aging and an increase in chronic health conditions, among other causes.

Meanwhile, the nation is facing a shortage of caregivers, as caregiving has been systematically undervalued and underpaid. The workforces of traditional health care such as physicians, nurses, and nursing assistants, and care workforces such as home health aides have all been facing a labor shortage, a trend exacerbated by the pandemic. Family members—[disproportionately women](#)—have been filling the gaps to provide care for their loved ones. But the number of traditional family caregivers is small relative to the increasing need for care—an unsustainable reality given the inadequate financial, emotional, and social support available to family caregivers.

This fact sheet draws on various data sources from the U.S. Census Bureau to paint a picture of population aging and the economic status of disabled people in the state of Illinois. Results show:

- Illinois has an aging population with a high share of disabled adults.
- Disabled people are more likely than nondisabled people in the same age group to live in poverty.
- In 2021, more than a third of disabled people ages 20 to 64 who were unemployed or not in the labor force lived in poverty.
- A substantive share (27.7 percent) of people with long-term care needs live alone.

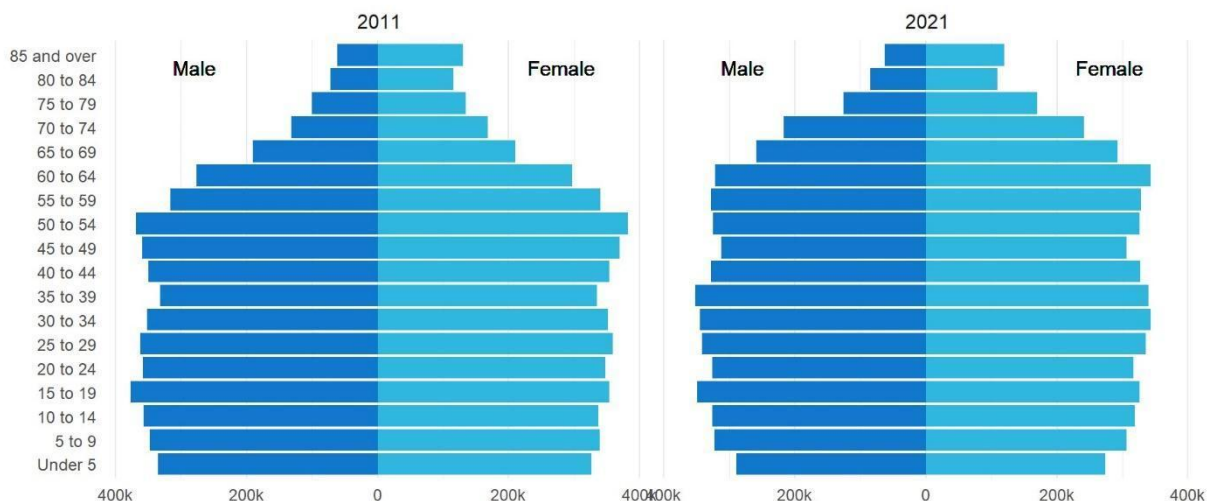
These findings point to an urgent need for long-term, robust investments in programs and services supporting disabled people and caregivers.

*\*Note: In this fact sheet, disabled people refer to those who have identified themselves as having any physical or cognitive difficulty, as measured by affirmative responses to any of the American Community Survey's six physical or cognitive difficulties: hearing difficulty, vision difficulty, cognitive difficulty, ambulatory difficulty, self-care difficulty, and independent living difficulty. Respondents who report any of the six disability types are considered to have a disability.*

## Population Aging in Illinois

Illinois's population age structure in 2021 shows a noticeable increase in the share of older adults relative to children when compared with that in 2011 (see Figure 1).

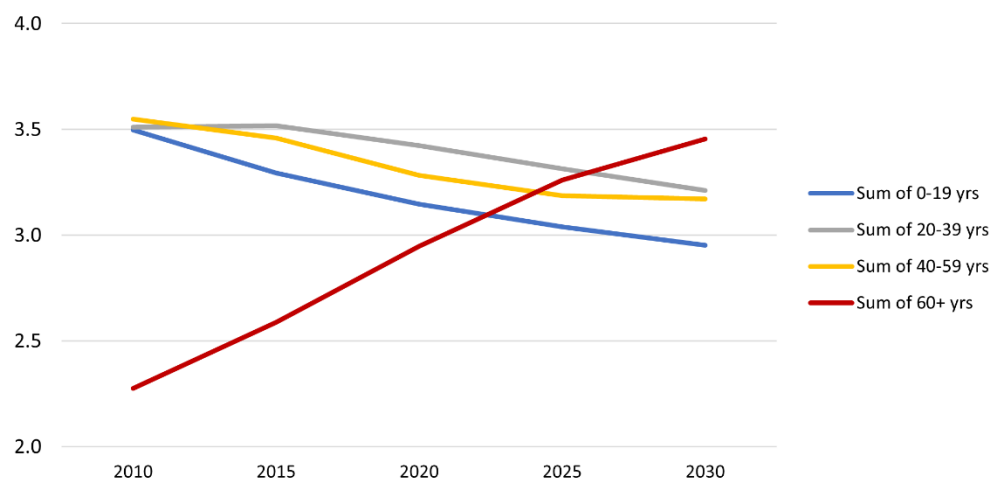
Figure 1. Population by Age Group, Illinois, 2011 & 2021



Source: NWLC and Caring Across calculations of the Census Bureau, 2011 and 2021 American Community Survey 1-Year estimates, using Table B01001.

The number of Illinois residents ages 60 years and older is projected to rapidly increase (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. IL Population Projection by Age Group, 2010 to 2030  
(Population in millions)



Source: NWLC and Caring Across calculations based on Illinois Department of Public Health, *Population Projections: Illinois, Chicago and Illinois Counties by Age and Sex: July 1, 2015 to July 1, 2030* (2019 Edition), Table 1 "Population Projections for Illinois by Age and Sex: 2010 to 2030." Available at <https://dph.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/idph/files/publications/population-projections-report-2010-2030.pdf>.

## Demographics of Disabled People in Illinois

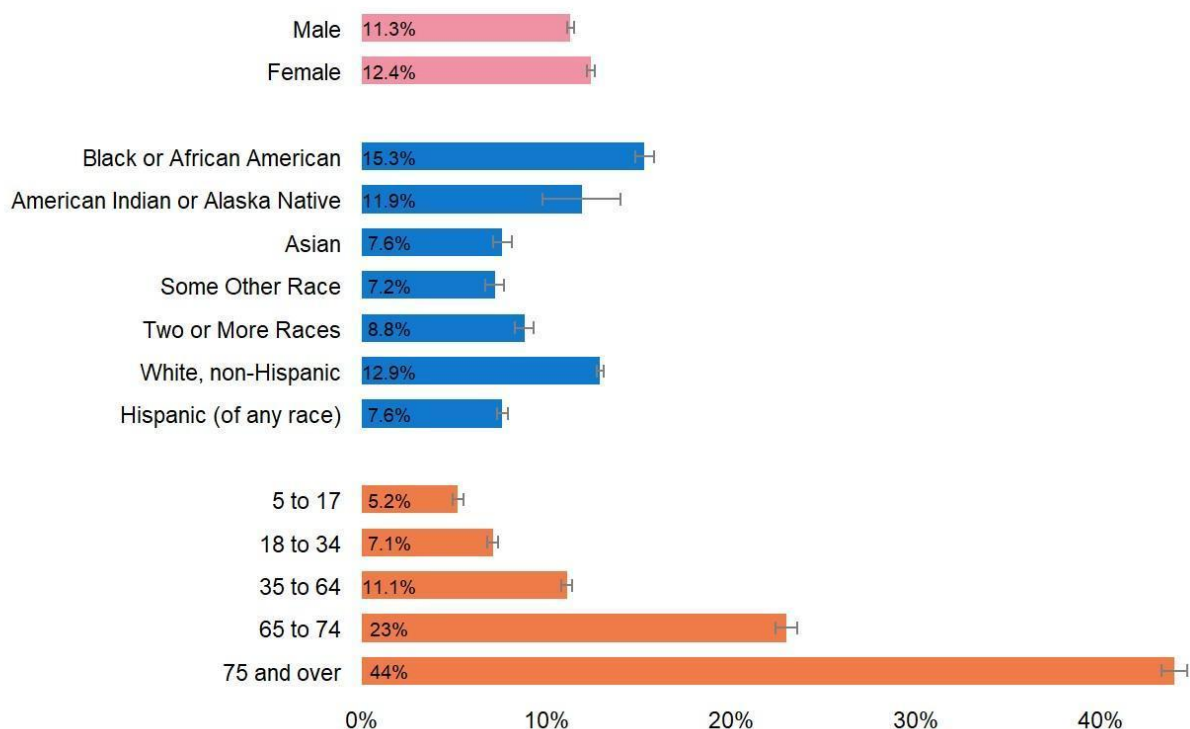
More than 1 in 9 (11.9 percent) people in Illinois are disabled. A higher share of women (12.4 percent) than men (11.3 percent) in Illinois are disabled.

15.3 percent of the Black population in Illinois are disabled, compared with 12.9 percent of the white, non-Hispanic population, 11.9 percent of the American Indian or Alaska Native population, and 7.6 percent of the Latinx and Asian populations each.

Age is highly correlated with disability status: 44 percent of people aged 75 and older and 23 percent of people aged 65 to 74 are disabled.

**Figure 3. Nearly one in four adults ages 65 to 74 and nearly half of adults aged 75 and over are disabled.**

Share of Disabled People in Illinois by Gender, Race/Ethnicity, and Age Group, 2021



Source: NWLC and Caring Across calculations of the Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey 1-Year estimates, using Table S1810.

Notes: The sample includes civilian noninstitutionalized population, but excludes children under age 5. The "American Indian or Alaska Native" race category includes those who identified themselves as such. The "Asian" race category includes those who identified themselves as Asian. The "Black or African American" race category includes those who identified themselves as such. The "Hispanic (of any race)" category includes respondents of any race who identified themselves to be of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin. The "Two or More Races" category includes those who identified themselves with more than one race. The "White, non-Hispanic" race category includes those who identified themselves as white, but not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin. The degree of uncertainty for an

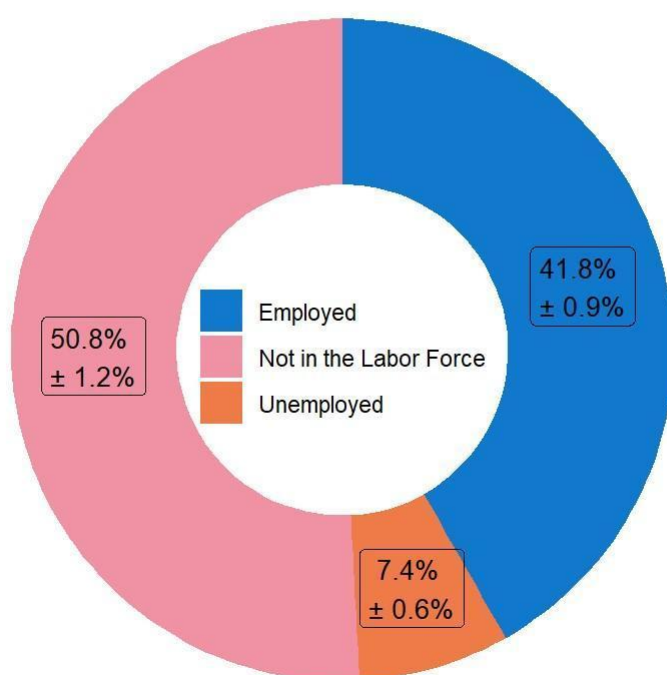
estimate arising from sampling variability is represented through the use of a margin of error. The value shown here is the 90 percent margin of error.

## Employment Status of Disabled People in Illinois

Among disabled people ages 18 to 64 in Illinois, more than half (50.8 [percent]) were not in the labor force in 2021, 2 in 5 (41.8 percent) were employed, and 7.4 percent were unemployed.

**Figure 4. Half of disabled people ages 18 to 64 in Illinois not in the labor force.**

Employment Status of Disabled People Ages 18-64 in Illinois, 2021



Source: NWLC and Caring Across calculations of the Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey 1-Year estimates, using Table C18120.

Notes: The sample includes civilian noninstitutionalized population ages 18 to 64 in Illinois. People not in the labor force include those who are not employed and not actively looking for work. Unemployed people are those who are not currently working but are actively looking for work. The degree of uncertainty for an estimate arising from sampling variability is represented through the use of a margin of error. The value shown here is the 90 percent margin of error.

## Poverty Rates among Disabled Children and Adults in Illinois

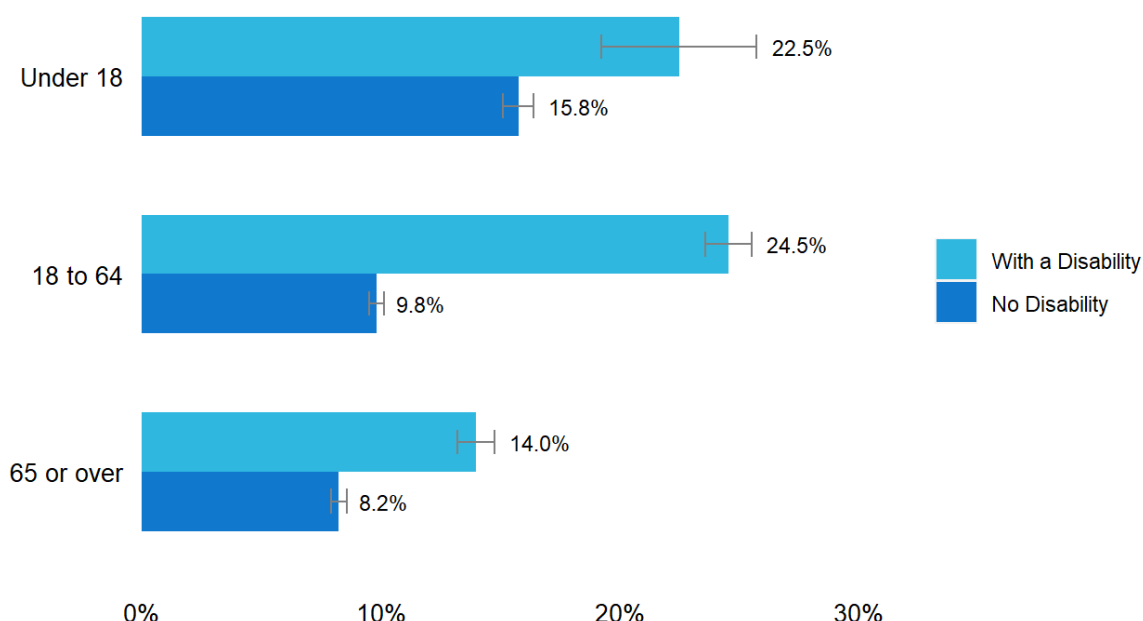
Nearly a quarter (22.5 percent) of disabled children in Illinois lived in poverty in 2021, compared to 15.8 percent of nondisabled children.

Nearly a quarter (24.5 percent) of disabled adults ages 18 to 64 lived in poverty in 2021, compared to 9.8 percent of nondisabled adults of the same age.

Nearly 1 in 7 (14.0 percent) disabled adults ages 65 and older lived in poverty, compared with 8.2 percent of their nondisabled counterparts.

**Figure 5. Nearly a quarter of disabled children in Illinois live in poverty.**

Poverty rate by age and disability status, Illinois, 2021



Source: NWLC and Caring Across calculations of the Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey 1-Year estimates, using Table C18130.

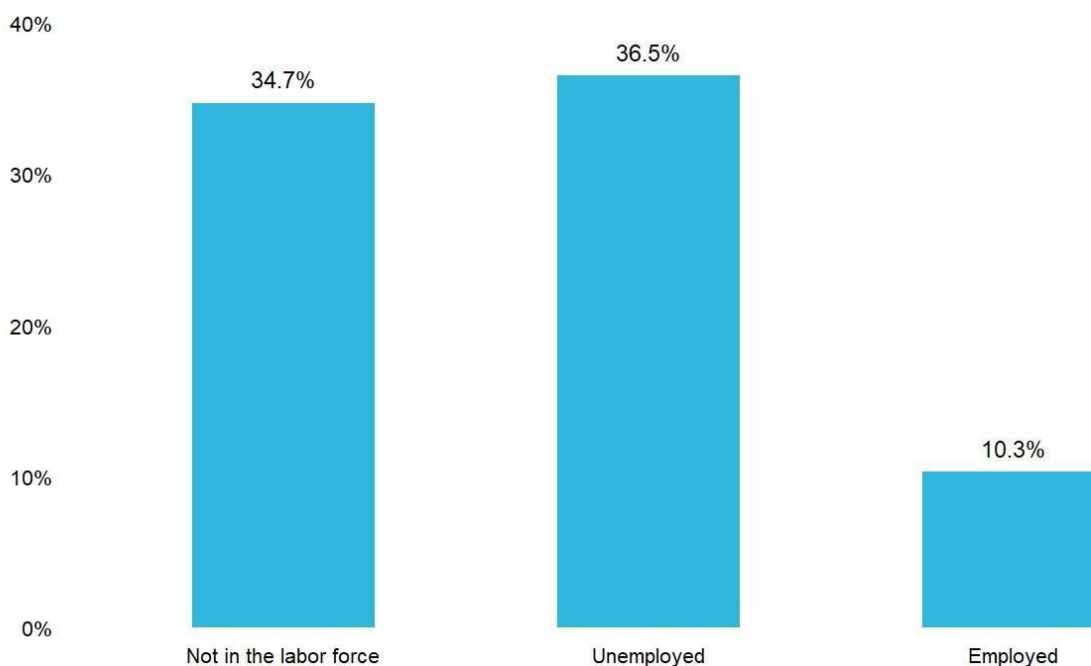
Notes: The sample includes civilian noninstitutionalized population for whom poverty status is determined. Poverty rate is defined as the percentage of the population whose income in the past 12 months falls below the official poverty level. The degree of uncertainty for an estimate arising from sampling variability is represented through the use of a margin of error. The value shown here is the 90 percent margin of error.

## Poverty Rates among Disabled People by Employment Status

Among disabled people ages 20-64 in Illinois in 2021, more than a third of those who were unemployed and those who were out of the labor force lived in poverty (36.5 percent and 34.7 percent, respectively), compared to 10.3 percent of those who were employed.

**Figure 6. High poverty rates among disabled people who are unemployed or out of the labor force.**

Poverty Rates among Disabled People Ages 20 to 64 in Illinois, by Employment Status, 2021



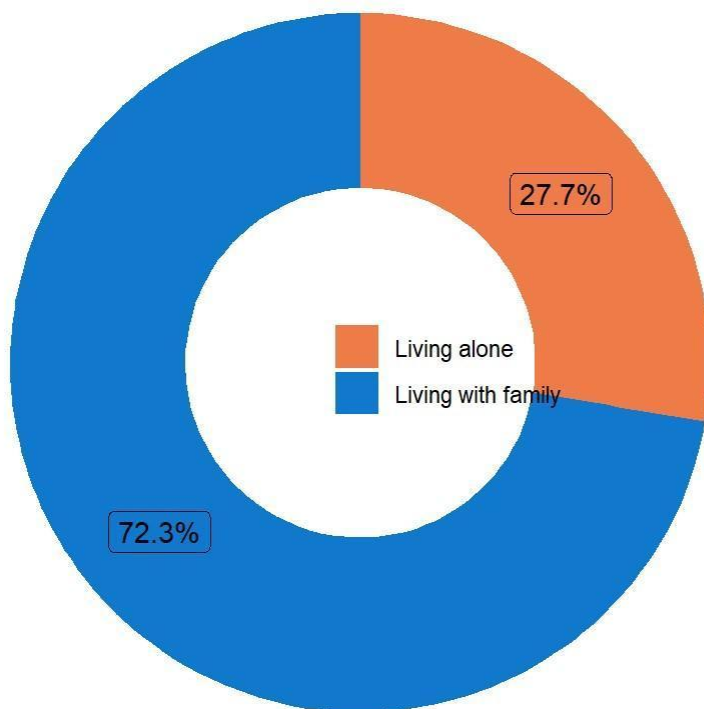
Source: NWLC and Caring Across calculations of the Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey 1-Year estimates, using Table B23024.

Notes: The sample includes civilian noninstitutionalized population ages 20 to 64 for whom poverty status is determined. Poverty rate is defined as the percentage of the population whose income in the past 12 months falls below the official poverty level. People not in the labor force include those who are not employed and not actively looking for work. Unemployed people are those who are not currently working but are actively looking for work. The degree of uncertainty for an estimate arising from sampling variability is represented through the use of a margin of error. The value shown here is the 90 percent margin of error.

## Living Arrangement of People with Long-Term Care Needs

Among household residents with long-term care needs, 1 in 5 (20.4 percent) live alone, while 4 in 5 (79.6 percent) live in households with family or relatives.

Figure 7. Living Arrangements of The Broadly Defined Long-Term Care (LTC) Population in IL, 2021



Source: NWLC and Caring Across calculations of the Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey 1-Year microdata, using Steven Ruggles, Sarah Flood, Matthew Sobek, Danika Brockman, Grace Cooper, Stephanie Richards, and Megan Schouweiler. IPUMS USA: Version 13.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.18128/D010.V13.0>.

Notes: The sample includes civilian noninstitutionalized population, but excludes children under age five and people living in group quarters or institutions. People with long-term care needs are broadly defined as people with difficulty performing self-care activities such as bathing and dressing, generally known as activities of daily living (ADL).

## Appendix. Share of Disabled People in Illinois by Legislative District, 2021

Figure 8a. Percentage of Disabled People in Illinois by Legislative Districts, Lower Chamber

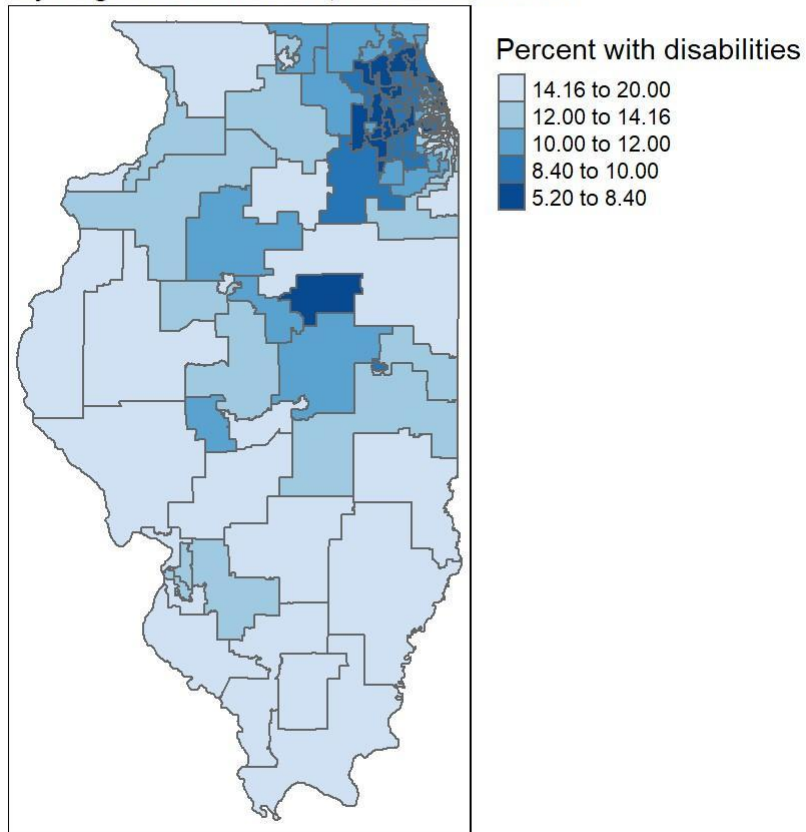
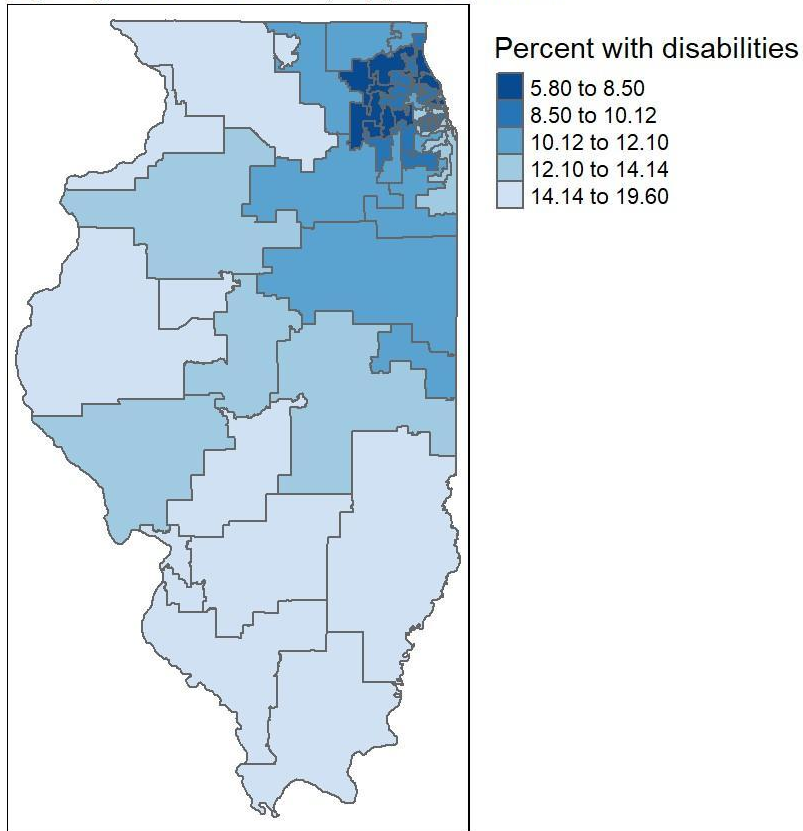


Figure 8b. Percentage of Disabled People in Illinois  
by Legislative Districts, Upper Chamber



Source: NWLC and CAG calculations of the Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year estimate, using Table DP02.

Notes: The sample includes civilian noninstitutionalized population with disabilities.

## Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank Cristina E. Martinez at the University of Texas at San Antonio for technical assistance, Kathryn Domina at the National Women's Law Center for fact-checking, Nicole Jorwic at Caring Across Generations and David Goldfarb at The Arc of the United States for their review, and Mandy Culbertson at Caring Across Generations for layout.