

# PRICED OUT OF LIVING ON LONG ISLAND

High rent, other costs cited  
as reasons people decide  
to move to other regions

Lorraine McAvoy-Mowl,  
with her husband, Alex  
Mowl, runs a Facebook  
group for LIers who  
have moved or are  
thinking of moving to  
North Carolina.

MOWL FAMILY



## ONLY IN NEWSDAY

BY BRIANNE LEDDA  
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Former Oceanside resident Alexa Trippiedi loved her proximity to beaches, farms on the East End and New York City. The 25-year-old, who grew up

in the Nassau hamlet, likely would have stayed in the apartment she shared with her boyfriend for around \$1,600 a month but their landlords decided to sell the house. A new place to rent would have cost them more than \$2,000 a month. "We were like, 'That's crazy,'" she said. "So we left." Trippiedi, who works re-

motely for a law firm in Manhattan, moved to Pennsylvania in October with her boyfriend, Nick Adduci, joining thousands of Long Islanders who have fled the region in search of affordable housing. More than 434,000 people moved away from Long Island between 2017 and 2021, according to a 2024 report from the

Long Island Association's Research Institute. The "root cause" for that migration continues to be the "cost of living crisis" facing the region, LIA President Matt Cohen said in a letter introducing the analysis. The LIA is the region's leading business group. More than 350,000 people moved to the Island during that

same time period, the report said, resulting in a net loss of nearly 84,000 residents. Households moving to Long Island often had higher median incomes than households leaving the region, the report notes. While Florida remains a top contender for Long Island resi-

See **HOUSING** on A34

**PEOPLE ON THE MOVE** See who has been hired or promoted on Long Island [newsday.com/onthemove](https://www.newsday.com/onthemove)

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NEWSDAY, SUNDAY, MARCH 16, 2025

# LEAVING LI DUE TO HIGH COSTS

## HOUSING from A33

dents leaving the region, Pennsylvania is the second-most popular state and North Carolina is the third, according to the report.

The problem isn't new. But it hasn't improved, either, as the Island continues to contend with an affordability crisis

### 'This is a tough place to live'

"For anybody earning under \$100,000 a year, frankly, this is a tough place to live. And that's why folks are leaving," said Richard Koubek, chair of the Suffolk County Welfare to Work Commission, an advisory board to the Suffolk County Legislature.

The median income for households in Suffolk County between 2019 and 2023 was \$128,329, and \$143,408 in Nassau County, according to the most recent census data.

More than a third of Long Island renters and homeowners are "cost-burdened," which means they pay more than 30% of their income toward housing, according to a 2024 report from the state comptroller. New York ranked third among states with the highest cost burden for homeowners, and 13th for renters in 2022, the report said.

Property taxes on Long Island are also among the highest in the country with median property taxes over \$10,000 per year, according to the Tax Foundation, a nonprofit focused on tax policy.

Fair market rent for a two-bedroom on Long Island in 2025 is \$2,586, according to data from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Assuming most people aim to spend 30% of their income on housing, a family would need to earn more than \$90,000 to afford those rates.

Just over 17% of housing stock in Suffolk and 16% in Nassau are rentals, Newsday has reported, falling far below the national average of 34.6%.

### Keeping up with high costs

"It's a problem, there's no

question about it," said Gail Lamberta, associate dean of community development at St. Joseph's University in Patchogue. "The cost of living is high on Long Island."

Besides housing, "almost one salary is going to child care," she said. In 2023, according to the state Department of Labor, infant care cost Nassau families \$21,914 and Suffolk families \$21,599.

There has also been an increasing reliance on local food pantries, according to a September report from the Welfare to Work Commission. Thirty percent of people who use the Harry Chapin Regional Food Bank represent the "working poor" — people working two or three jobs to keep up with the cost of living in the region, the report says.

"Almost everything," including food, "is more expensive on Long Island than in similar suburban areas around the country," said Peter Crescenti, spokesman for the food bank.

Also in 2023, Long Island ranked fourth among regions with the highest level of move-outs in the country, according to data from PODS, a popular storage and moving business. Rising rent, affordable housing crises and high tax rates were popular reasons cited for the move, the company said.

Interest in leaving the region seems to come "in spurts," said Lorraine McAvoy-Mowl, who moderates a Facebook group with around 4,500 members for Long Islanders who have moved, or are considering moving, to North Carolina.

"Someone will mention the group in another [Facebook] group like, say, Smithtown Moms, or Rocky Point Moms, or whatever Moms group, and we'll notice an influx of people requesting to join the group" seeking information about schools and how affordable it is to live in North Carolina, she said.

The Long Island native, who now lives near Raleigh, North Carolina, said the state is a popular choice for Long Islanders.

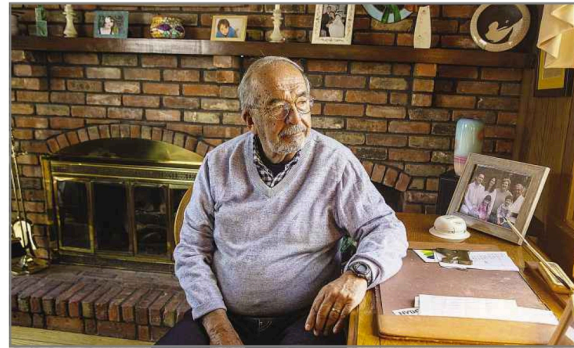


Gail Lamberta, of St. Joseph's University, said she sees hope that the trend can be reversed because of an effort by LI lawmakers and developers to create more mixed-use facilities and affordable housing.

NEWSDAY / STEVE FROST

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— Gail Lamberta, associate dean of community development at St. Joseph's University in Patchogue



Richard Koubek, of Suffolk County Welfare to Work Commission, said LI can be tough for anyone making less than \$100,000.

MORGAN CAMPBELL

Among her friends in the area, just one isn't from the region.

"I think the coastal areas can remind you of Long Island in the summertime," she said, plus the mountains are just a few hours away — also similar to Long Island.

"I will also say that prices down here are not as cheap as

they used to be," she added. "I think it's starting to catch up with the rest of the country."

### 'I would not go back'

Hayley Krupp, 31, left Long Island in 2022.

With her parents and siblings, she packed up and moved to New Kensington, Pennsylvania,

where the family rented a three-story, five-bedroom house for around \$2,500 per month.

They split the costs, and everybody had their own space. Within two months, Krupp found a job at AAA making the same salary she earned on Long Island and eventually moved into a two-bedroom apartment with her boyfriend, where the couple split the \$800 monthly rent.

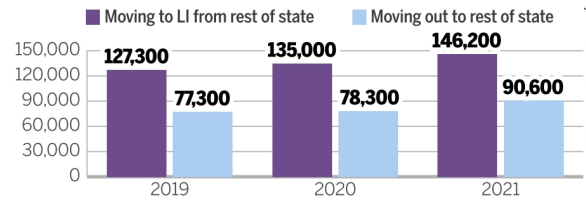
It's cheaper there, Krupp said, especially without a sales tax on clothes in Pennsylvania. There aren't as many restaurants, but that might be "a good thing, because you save money in that way too," she said.

There's no traffic, she's close to nature, and people seem to be nicer, Krupp said. Even if she was single, she could afford to live on her own.

"I would not go back to Long Island for anything, and I lived there for my entire life up until I was 29," she said. "I was by myself for a long time and there

**Median incomes of movers within New York State**

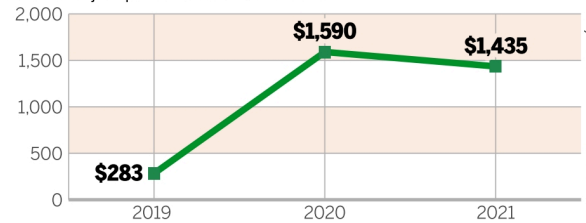
Households moving to Long Island from other parts of New York State have higher median incomes than those leaving Nassau or Suffolk to settle elsewhere in the state.



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS DATA ANALYZED BY LONG ISLAND ASSOCIATION'S RESEARCH INSTITUTE

**NYers moving to LI with incomes of \$500,000 or more**

The number of households with annual incomes of \$500,000 or more that moved to Long Island from elsewhere in the state jumped from 2019 to 2021.



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS DATA ANALYZED BY LONG ISLAND ASSOCIATION'S RESEARCH INSTITUTE

was just no way that I was going to be able to get out of a basement."

**'Signals of hope'**

All hope is not lost though, said Lamberta of St. Joseph's, highlighting a greater push for mixed-use facilities and affordable housing among lawmakers and developers on Long Island.

The local job market also remains strong, said Lamberta, who is involved with several community organizations, including the Long Island Regional Economic Development Council. According to the state Labor Department, there was a 1.4% increase in private sector employment over the past year on Long Island, where unemployment in December 2024 stood at 3%.

There's also a greater effort to educate high school and college students about careers in the area and how to manage finances, she said. "These are all signals of hope."

But, for now, Trippiedi doesn't plan to come back any time soon.

"We've been here a few months and we love it. We're thinking about staying here," she said, citing lower expenses in Pennsylvania, and a bigger



**Former Oceanside resident Alexa Trippiedi recently moved to Pennsylvania and plans to stay because of affordability.**

apartment than she would have been able to afford on Long Island.

"I didn't want to leave, but it is exciting to experience a new place and not have to worry about finances and making everything count," she said, adding: "It's a lot easier here. I'm not as stressed. And we could always go back."

# Retailers warn of little 2025 growth

## Inflation, tariffs cut into sales outlook for year

The Washington Post

Retailers sent a clear message to investors and analysts this week: Don't expect much growth this year.

Companies such as Target, Abercrombie & Fitch, and Best Buy recently painted a gloomy picture for the upcoming year as consumers contend with stubborn inflation and potential fallout from President Donald Trump's tariffs on imported goods. Other retail chains signaled weak expectations for consumer spending even before trade impacts hit.

Retailers want to proceed with caution as they weigh the volatility that tariffs and other economic challenges could bring, said John Mercer, head of global research at CoreSight, a retail data firm. "There's so much unpredictability that I think companies want to play it quite safe" with their financial projections, Mercer said.

**Consumer sentiment down**

Recent consumer sentiment surveys show Americans now feel worse about their finances and inflation than they did shortly after the election. Consumer sentiment had generally been rising since June, according to a closely watched metric from the University of Michigan, but it declined for two straight months at the start of 2025.

Slowdowns in hiring, manufacturing and home purchases have recently raised fears of a weakening U.S. economy. After years of resilience, consumers in 2025 may be stretched too thin to sustain another year of strong spending, said Brandon Svec, head of U.S. retail analytics at CoStar Group, a provider of data and analysis for real estate markets.

That trend is troubling for companies that sell discretionary products such as ap-



**Retailers paint a gloomy 2025 picture with continuing economic challenges and the uncertainty of Trump administration tariffs.**

parel, home goods and accessories, Mercer said. Those retailers have spent years trying to attract cautious consumers with discounts and deals and now have little room to jumpstart weary spenders, especially if inflation continues to tick up, Svec said.

"The margin for error in the event of a downturn in employment and the economy is very, very little," Svec said. "The upside appears to be relatively minimal, as well, given how little consumers have left in the tank."

Three U.S. retail chains said this week that they expect another year of consumer reluctance.

Macy's projected that comparable store sales will fall slightly this year. Meanwhile, Best Buy predicted comparable sales growth of 2% or less.

That projection from Best Buy does not account for tariffs. However, Best Buy chief executive Corie Barry said during a call with analysts Tuesday that price increases are "highly likely" because of increased import costs and economic uncertainty in general.

"This is bigger than just a discussion about tariffs," Barry

said during the call. "It's just kind of a volatile environment for the consumer."

Target forecast flat comparable sales growth for 2025 and said it will no longer provide quarterly profit predictions because of expected economic volatility this year. The discount retailer, which has stumbled in recent quarters, said its muted performance expectations reflect "a wide range of potential scenarios and uncertainty" and possible declines in consumer demand because of tariffs, chief financial officer Jim Lee told analysts.

**Poor growth expected**

Growth rates for discretionary retail categories — including apparel, accessories, footwear and beauty — appear to be "some of the worst, or near the worst of the last year," said Michael Gunther, the head of insights at Consumer Edge, which tracks transaction data on more than 100 million U.S. credit and debit cards.

Off-price retailers are often less exposed to tariffs because they source fewer products from overseas, Mercer said. But even those chains expect a challenging year.