

# West Philadelphia Promise Zone

Demographic and Workforce Characteristics

Prepared by Philadelphia Works

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# Purpose

At the request of the City of Philadelphia’s Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity, Philadelphia Works prepared this brief analysis of the West Philadelphia Promise Zone. Its primary objective is to highlight the area’s labor market and workforce trends, offering insight into potential avenues for future investment.

**Note that for much of this analysis, we have relied on data from the U.S. Census Bureau, aggregated to the 19104 zip code. In most cases, when referring to the characteristics of the Promise Zone, we rely on this slightly larger geography.**



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## Executive Summary

Located along the eastern edge of West Philadelphia, the West Philadelphia Promise Zone is heavily affected by large healthcare & postsecondary institutions. **This report focuses on employment data from 2022, as it is the most recently available in the Census.** This area has undergone rapid change in recent years, experience strong overall employment growth since 2017 while also experiencing shifts in occupational and industry employment.

- In the past five years, strong employment growth in the Promise Zone has been concentrated among occupations that typically require at least a bachelor's degree for entry [\[page 8\]](#). Over this span, zip code has seen strong growth in Management, Transportation, and Healthcare industries. [\[page 6\]](#).
- Meanwhile, the unemployment rate for residents with a high school diploma or less was over three times higher than for those with a bachelor's degree [\[page 17\]](#). Like Philadelphia, educational attainment and employment outcomes are both uneven across race and ethnicity. African American residents are much less likely to possess a bachelor's degree [\[page 18\]](#).
- Reflecting the Promise Zone's proximity to large universities, more than half of adult area residents are currently enrolled in school [\[page 19\]](#), and more than 20% of working age adults possess a graduate or professional degree. While still a smaller share than that of Philadelphia County, roughly 10% of Promise Zone residents do not have a high school diploma [\[page 16\]](#).
- **A list of in-demand and well-paying entry-level and middle-skill occupations, those that would be more accessible to someone without a bachelor's degree, are found on [page 9](#).**

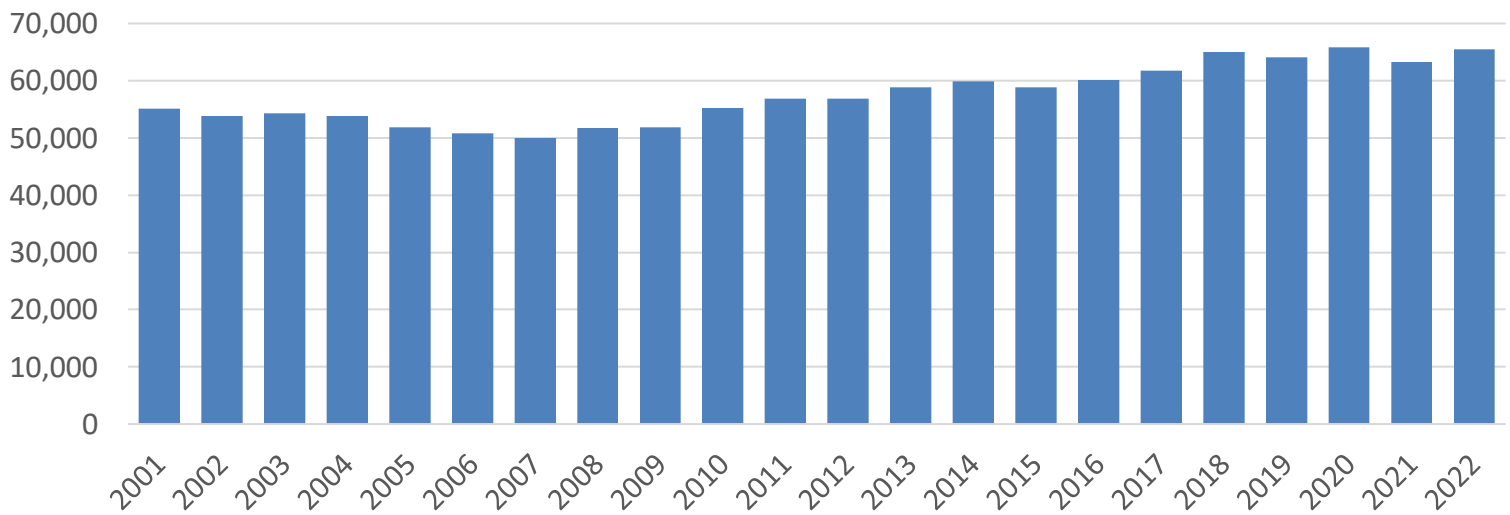
# Promise Zone Employers and Workers



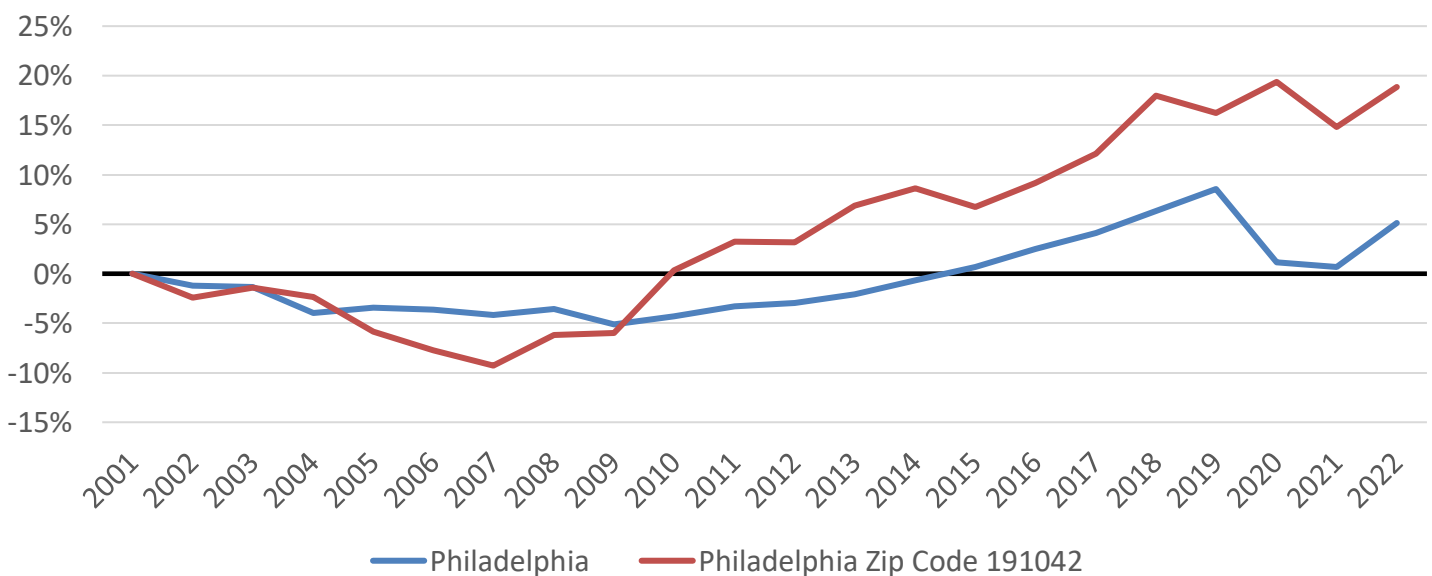
# Total Employment

In 2022, an estimated 65,490 people worked in the 19104 zip code. Beginning in 2017, the 19104 zip code has grown by at least 10% every year, far outpacing the growth rate of total employment in the city as a whole.

**Total Employment in 19104 Zip Code, 2001 to 2022 Estimates**



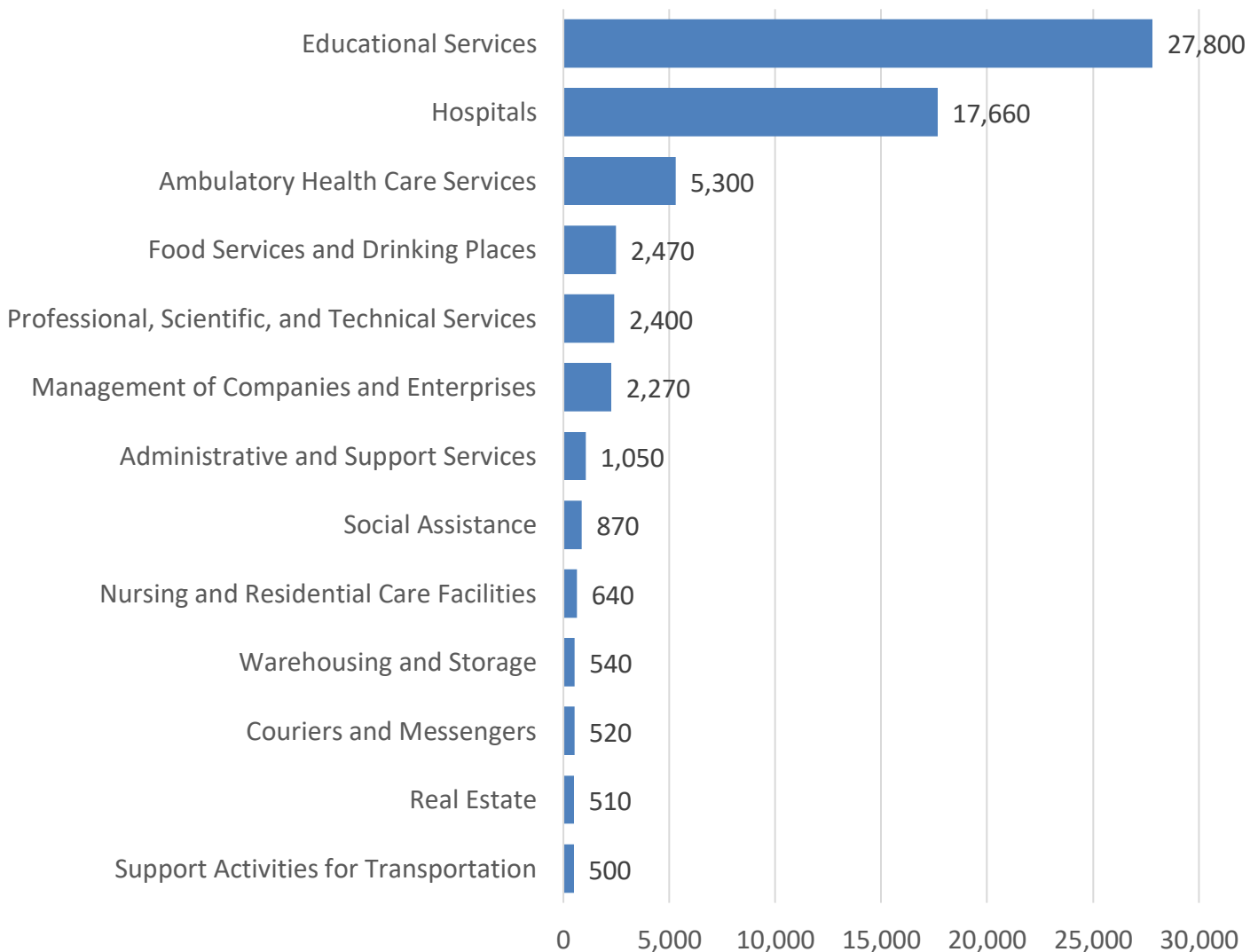
**Relative Employment Change in 19104 Zip Code and Philadelphia, 2001 to 2022 Estimates**



# Industry Employment

Industry employment in the Promise Zone and surrounding area is dominated by large, institutional employers. University and healthcare systems serve as the area’s economic base, with other supporting industries also playing important roles. The figures below were drawn from Lightcast employment data, which uses a combination of public and private data sources to produced detailed estimates.

## Top Industries by Employment in 19104 Zip Code, 2022 Estimates



Over the last 5 years, the **Management of Companies and Enterprises**, **Transportation and Warehousing**, and **Health Care and Social Assistance** industries have added the most jobs in the 19104 zip code, combining for over 4,700 new jobs and at least +1,000 each.

While there is a large share of local employment in **Educational Services**, this industry has struggled the most locally since COVID, with industry employed roughly -13% below 2018 totals in 2022.

### Change in Promise Zone and City Industry Employment by Total Promise Zone Employment, 2018 to 2022 Estimates

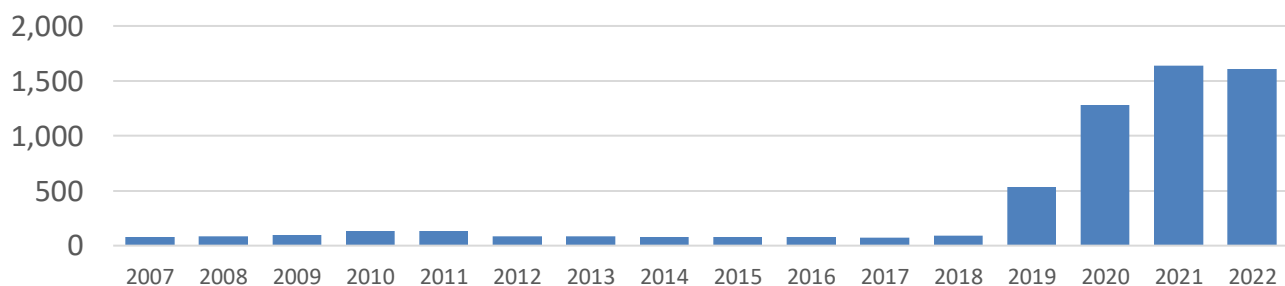
NAICS	Description	2022 Jobs	2018-2022 Change	Local Change	City Change
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	220	+2,050	934%	(6%)
48	Transportation and Warehousing	1,610	+1,520	1659%	(1%)
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	24,480	+1,280	6%	5%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	1,060	+280	36%	(2%)
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	610	+170	38%	7%
44	Retail Trade	920	+60	6%	(5%)
42	Wholesale Trade	120	+30	34%	(12%)
31	Manufacturing	90	+20	39%	(4%)
51	Information	70	+10	10%	18%
90	Government	100	(10)	(10%)	(2%)
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	2,400	(10)	(1%)	10%
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	240	(10)	(6%)	(3%)
22	Utilities	20	(40)	(66%)	(2%)
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	320	(40)	(12%)	(6%)
52	Finance and Insurance	380	(200)	(34%)	(7%)
23	Construction	270	(210)	(43%)	(1%)
72	Accommodation and Food Services	2,730	(350)	(11%)	(8%)
61	Educational Services	27,800	(4,080)	(13%)	(6%)
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>65,490</b>	<b>+470</b>	<b>+1%</b>	<b>(1%)</b>

In terms of what has driven employment growth, both **Management of Companies and Enterprises** and **Transportation and Warehousing** have seen recent growth in detailed sub-industries that, before 2018, had very little industry employment.

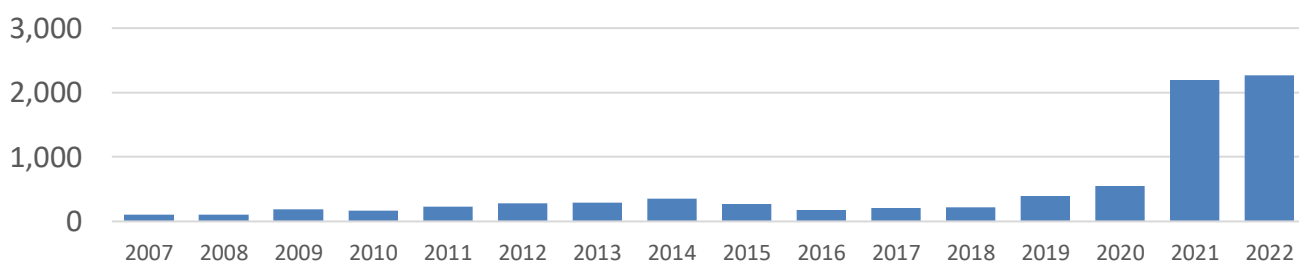
### Largest Growth in Detailed Industry Employed in the Promise Zone, 2018-2022

Detailed Industry Name	2018 - 2022 Change	2022 Jobs	Industry
Management of Companies and Enterprises	+2,050	2,270	Management of Companies and Enterprises
Offices of Physicians	+750	4,160	Health Care and Social Assistance
General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	+460	14,200	Health Care and Social Assistance
Couriers and Express Delivery Services	+350	350	Transportation and Warehousing
Investigation, Guard, & Armored Car Services	+230	810	Administrative and Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services
Home Health Care Services	+100	280	Health Care and Social Assistance

#### Transportation and Warehousing Employment in Promise Zone



#### Management of Companies and Enterprises Employment in Promise Zone





# Occupational Employment

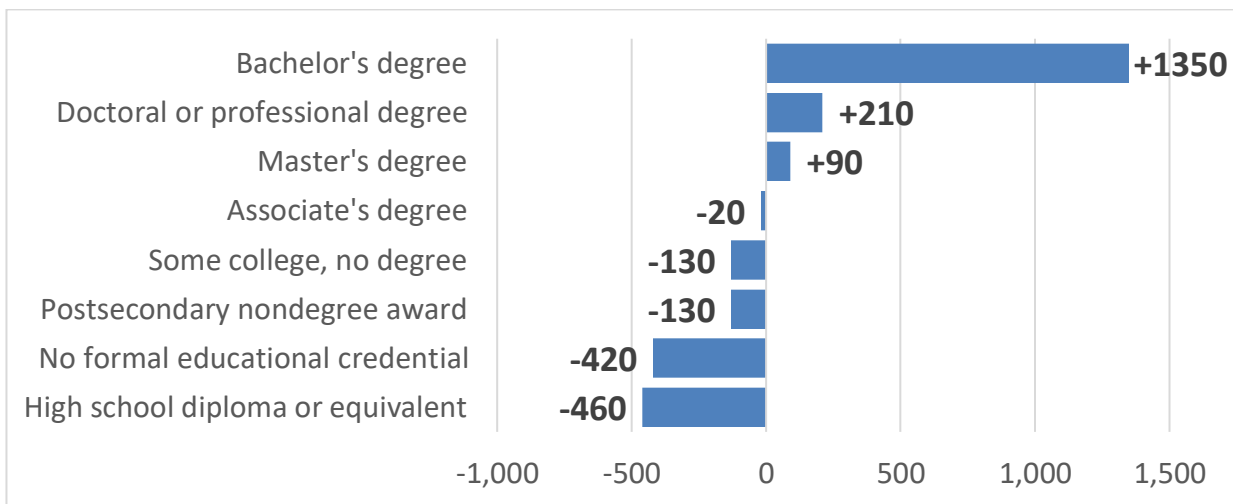
Reflecting the area’s large institutional presence, occupational employment is made up primarily of **healthcare**, **administrative**, and **service workers**. While many of these occupations require higher levels of education, a large portion of existing employment opportunities are open to entry-level and middle-skill workers. Growth, however, has primarily concentrated among high-skill occupations.

## Top Occupations in 19104 Zip Code, 2022 Estimates

Description	Typical Entry Level Education	2022 Jobs	Median Hourly Earnings	Commuter Share
Postsecondary Teachers	Doctoral or professional degree	12,080	\$43.06	91%
Registered Nurses	Bachelor's degree	6,220	\$38.42	90%
Nursing Assistants	Postsecondary nondegree award	1,770	\$18.50	86%
Office Clerks, General	High school diploma or equivalent	1,530	\$21.33	75%
Education Administrators, Postsecondary	Master's degree	1,480	\$49.98	91%
Physicians, All Other	Doctoral or professional degree	1,380	\$107.94	90%
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants*	High school diploma or equivalent	1,380	\$20.83	79%
Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	High school diploma or equivalent	1,230	\$19.59	88%
Security Guards	High school diploma or equivalent	1,150	\$15.11	81%
Fast Food and Counter Workers	No formal educational credential	940	\$13.87	63%

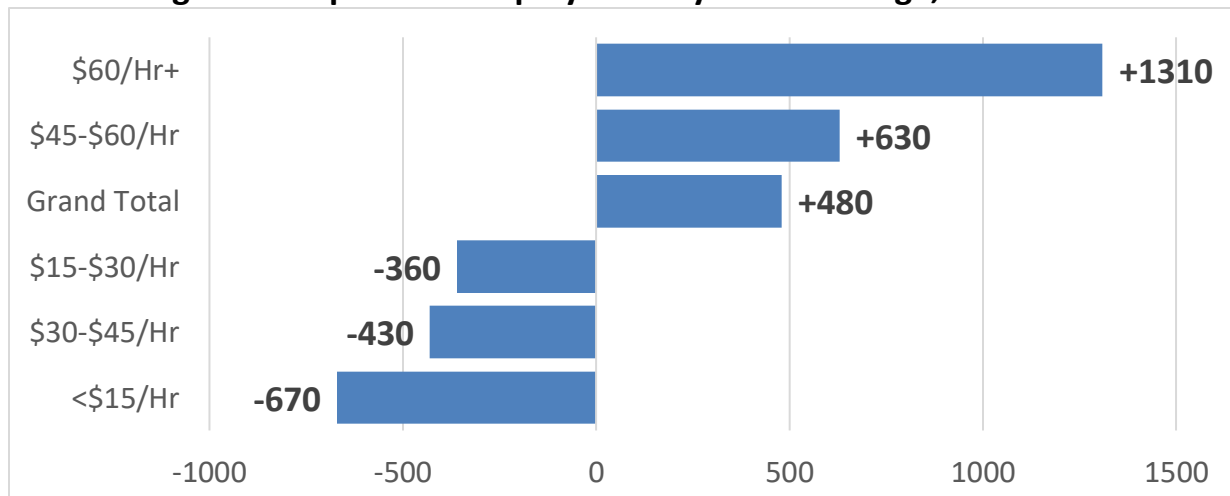
## In the Last Five Years, Employment Growth Has Concentrated Among High-Skill Occupations

Change in Occupational Employment by Typical Educational Requirements, 2018 to 2022



## Employment Growth Has Also Concentrated Among High Wage Occupations

Change in Occupational Employment by Median Wage, 2018 to 2022



**Despite overall trends, entry-level and middle skill opportunities with decent wages do exist.** These occupations typically require less than a bachelor’s degree, have median wages of at least \$15 per hour, and could be potential candidates for future workforce development efforts.

### Largest Entry-Level and Middle-Skill Occupations with Living Median Wages in 19104 Zip Code, 2018 to 2022 Estimates

Description	Typical Entry Level Education	2022 Jobs	Median Hourly Earnings	2018 Jobs	Avg. Annual Openings	Jobs Change, 2018-2022
<b>Nursing Assistants</b>	Postsecondary nondegree award	1770	\$18.50	1720	300	+1,470
<b>Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants</b>	High school diploma	1230	\$19.59	790	210	+1,020
<b>Security Guards</b>	High school diploma	1150	\$15.11	960	230	+920
<b>First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers</b>	High school diploma	840	\$31.68	780	110	+730
<b>Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand</b>	No formal educational credential	580	\$17.53	130	160	+420
<b>Light Truck Drivers</b>	High school diploma or equivalent	280	\$19.30	50	100	+180
<b>Orderlies</b>	High school diploma	270	\$18.73	150	60	+210
<b>Stockers and Order Fillers</b>	High school diploma	250	\$15.14	170	50	+200
<b>Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers</b>	Postsecondary nondegree award	140	\$24.08	40	40	+100
<b>Shipping, Receiving, and Inventory Clerks</b>	High school diploma	110	\$18.93	50	20	+90
<b>*First-Line Supervisors of Transportation &amp; Material Moving Workers</b>	High school diploma	90	\$28.86	20	20	+70

\*Except Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisors

# Promise Zone Residents

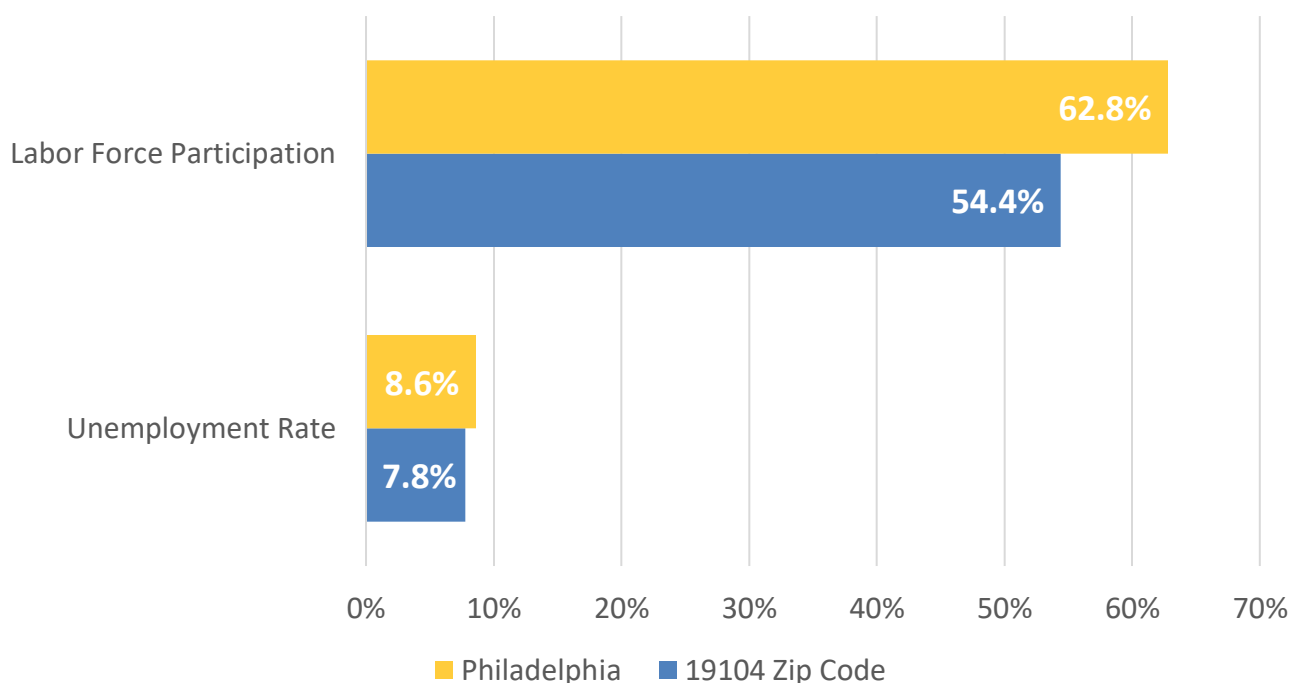


# Employment Characteristics

Based on 2022 estimates, residents of the Promise Zone and 19104 zip code are less likely to participate in the labor force and be employed compared to Philadelphia as a whole.

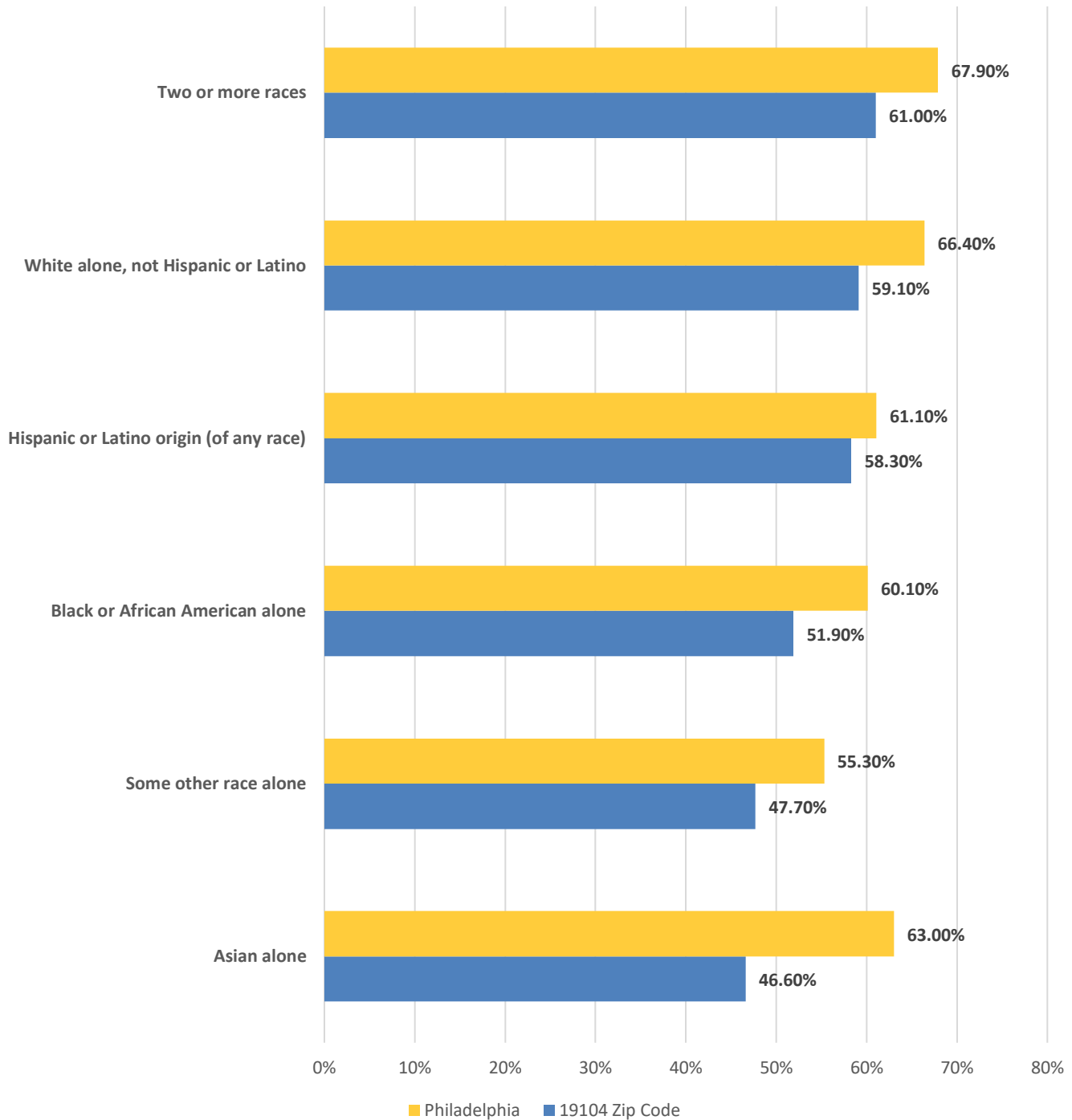
These high-level trends reflect the area’s unique demographics. A large student population pushes the labor force participation rate down. Historically, the areas’ unemployment rate had been below that of Philadelphia due to the educated workforce. As seen in the following sections, these trends are not experienced evenly across the area’s population. Less educated residents as well as Black and African American residents are much more likely to experience higher rates of unemployment.

## Unemployment and Labor Force Participation Rates in Philadelphia and Philadelphia Promise

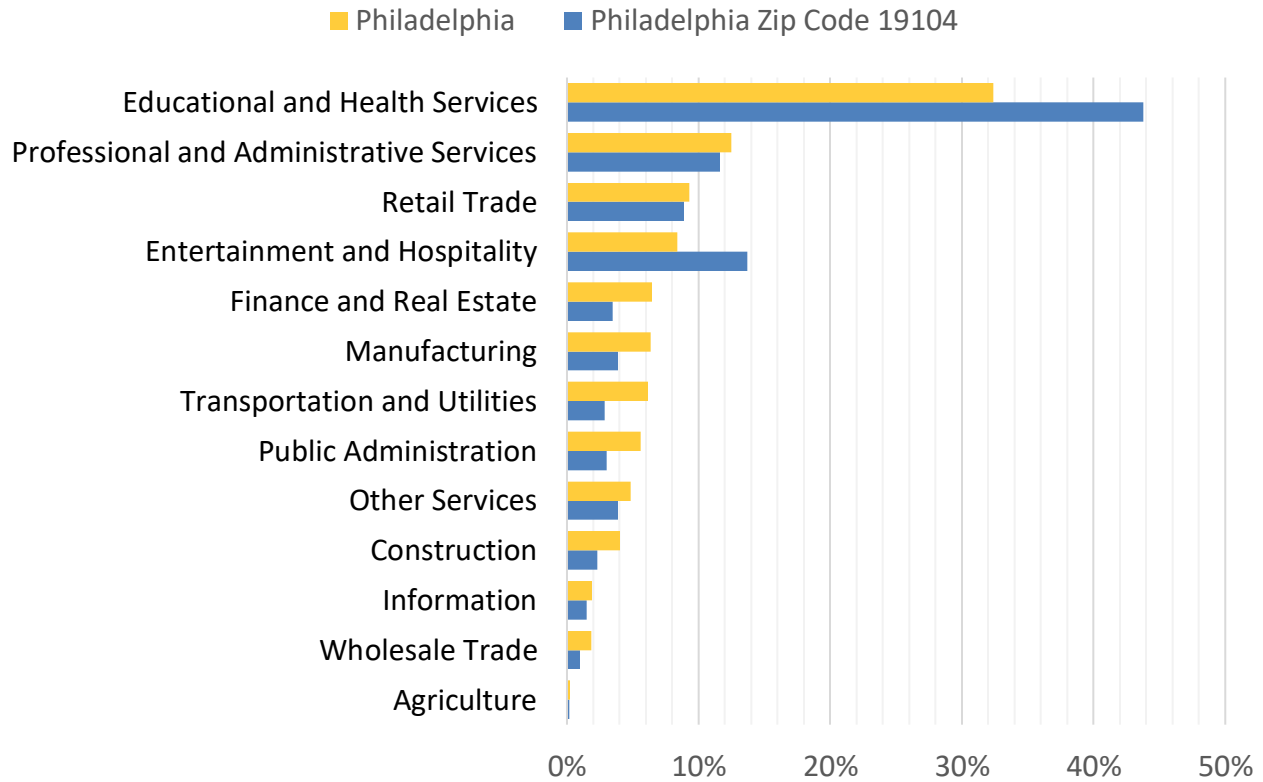


# Residents of the Largest Race & Ethnicity Groups Have a Lower Labor Force Participation Rate in the Promise Zone

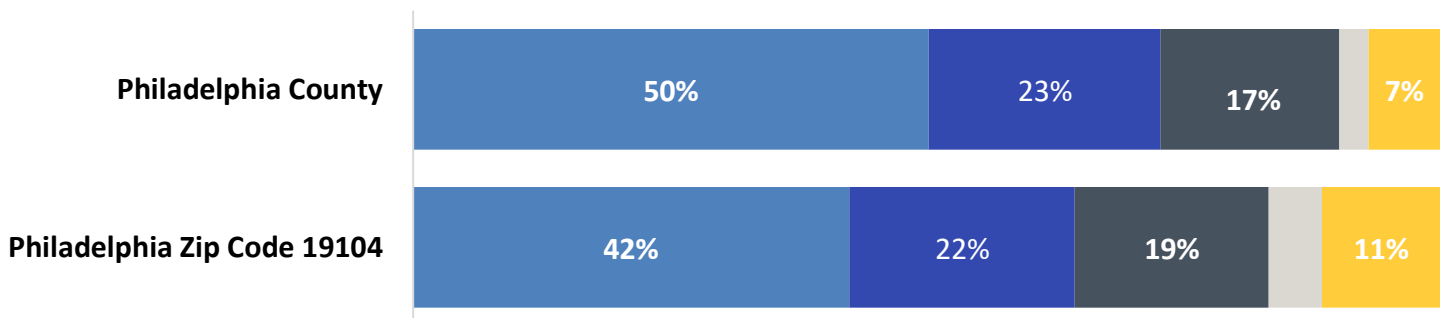
Labor Force Participation by Race & Ethnicity, 2022



## Industry Sector Employment Among Philadelphia and Promise Zone Residents, Share of Total, 2022 Estimates



## Major Occupational Employment Among Philadelphia and Promise Zone Residents, 2022



- Management, business, science, and arts occupations
- Service occupations
- Sales and office occupations
- Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations
- Production, transportation, and material moving occupations:



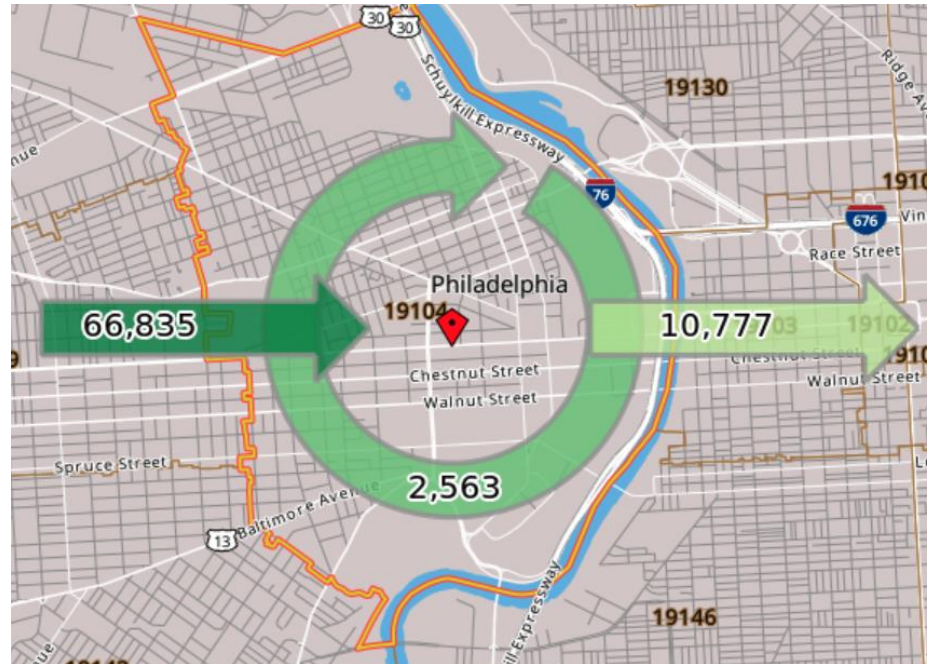
## Daily Outflow of 19104 Residents and Workers, 2021

In 2021\* about 80% of all zip code resident workers were commuting outside the zip code for work.

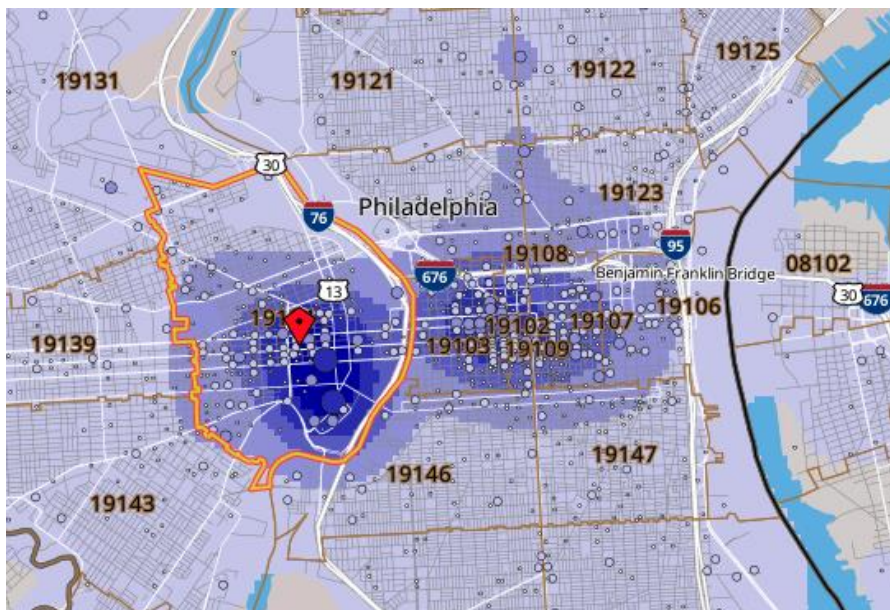
**High-wage earners were slightly less likely to commute out than workers overall.**

*Note that the methods to tabulate these employment figures differ from other areas of this document, Totals may not match.*

*\*2021 is the most recent available year for commuting data.*



## Major Employment Destinations of 19104 Residents, 2021



Employment destinations were concentrated around **Center City** and **University City**.

Some residents commuted as far as Wilmington, Delaware, and Princeton, New Jersey.

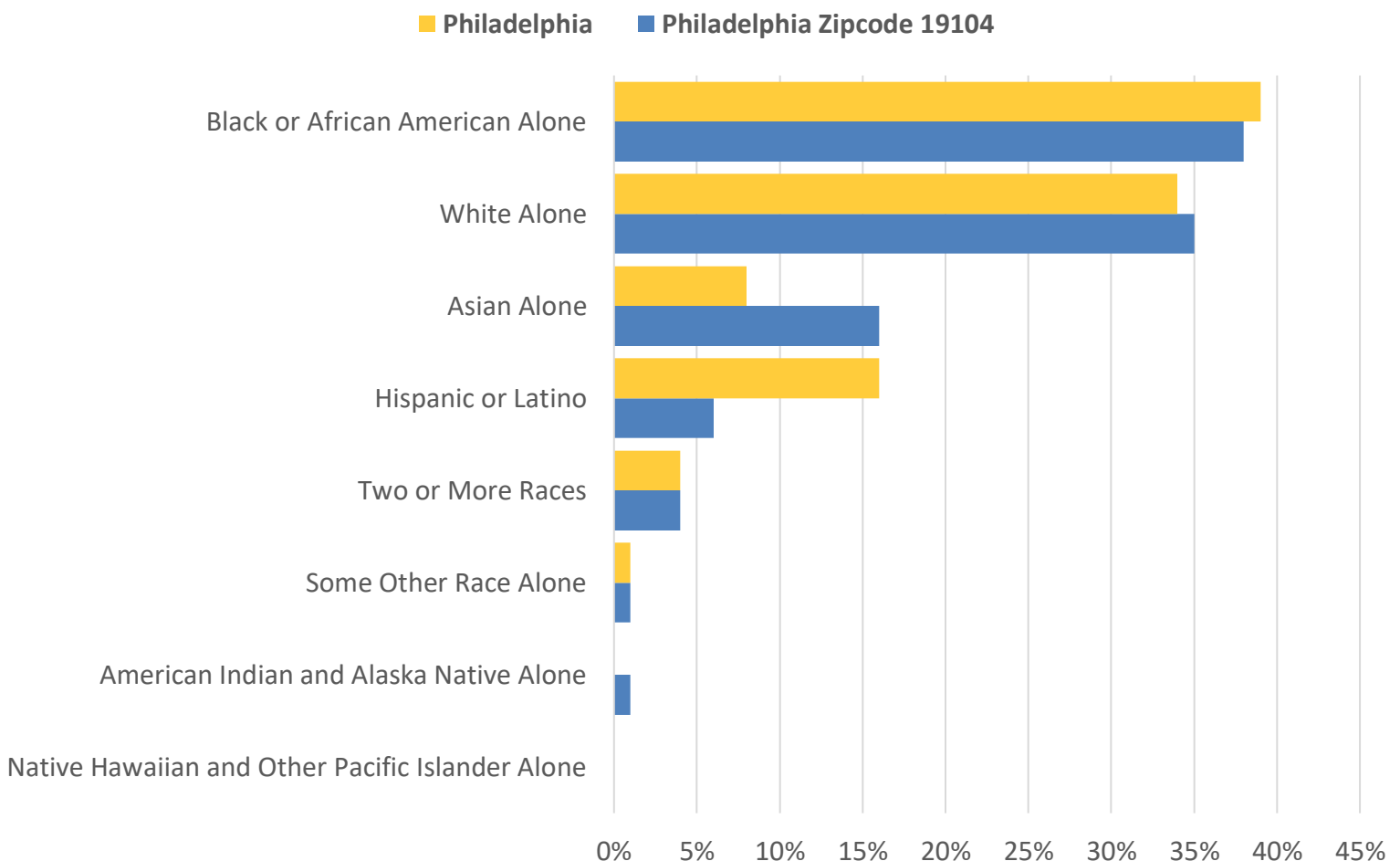


# Race, Ethnicity, and Language

By race and ethnicity, Promise Zone residents roughly mirror the population of the city overall. Black and African American residents and white residents make up just over 38% and 35% of the population, respectively.

However, there are two notable and important exceptions: the 19104 zip code has a higher share of Asian residents and a lower share of Hispanic residents. This dynamic has important implications for language accessibility, programming, and outreach.

**Race & Ethnicity of Philadelphia and Promise Zone Residents, 2021**



### Asian Population of 19104 by Major Origin Group, 2021 Estimates

Origin Group	Individuals	Share of Total
Chinese	3,700	44%
Asian Indian	1,970	24%
Korean	840	10%
Bangladeshi	360	4%
Vietnamese	330	4%
Pakistani	310	4%
<i>All Other</i>	<i>860</i>	<i>10%</i>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>8,370</b>	<b>100%</b>

Among Asian residents in the 19104 zip code, Chinese and Asian Indian individuals make up the two largest origin groups.

For limited English-speaking households, about 64% speak an Asian or Pacific Island language, while 6% speak an Indo-European language. Just 2% speak Spanish.

### Limited English-Speaking Households of 19104 Zip Code by Major Language Group, 2021 Estimates

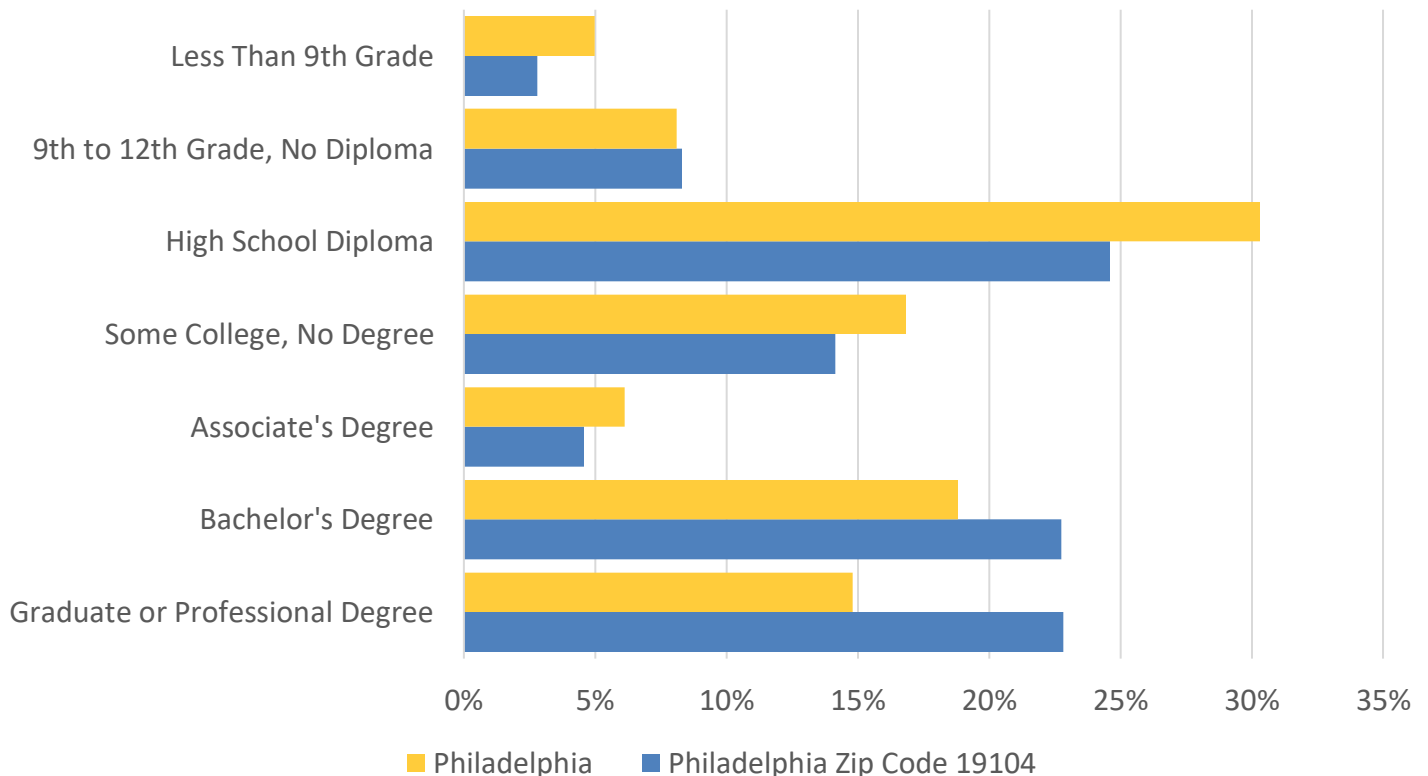
Primary Language Group	19104 Zip Code	Philadelphia
<b>Limited English-Speaking Households</b>	<b>890</b>	<b>45,200</b>
Spanish	2%	42%
Asian and Pacific Island languages	64%	28%
Other Indo-European languages	26%	26%
Other languages	5%	5%

# Educational Attainment and School Enrollment

Reflecting the important presence of area universities, Promise Zone residents are more likely to possess higher levels of education. More than 20% of adults over the age of 25 have a graduate or professional degree.

**Nevertheless, the area also has a greater share of individuals that have completed some level of high school education but have not obtained a degree. These individuals are much more likely to experience unemployment and not participate in the labor force.**

**Educational Attainment of Promise Zone and Philadelphia Residents (Age 25 and Older), Share of Total, 2022 Estimates**



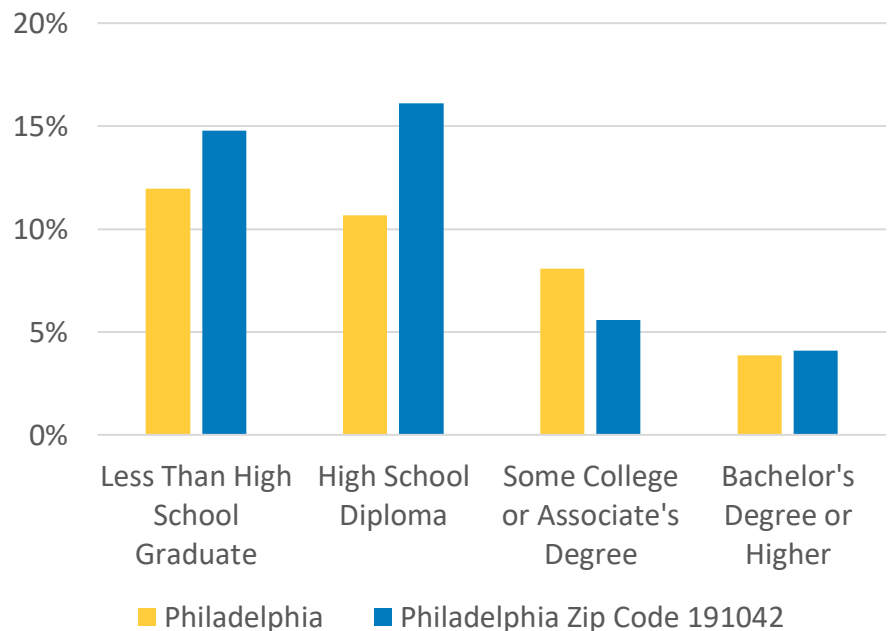
**Those without a college degree more likely to be unemployed in the 19104 zip code compared to Philadelphia, whereas those with a college education are less likely to be unemployed.**

In the 19104 zip code in 2022, 15% of those without a high school diploma were unemployed (defined as out of work but looking for a job). Even for those with a high school diploma, the unemployment rate was 16%.

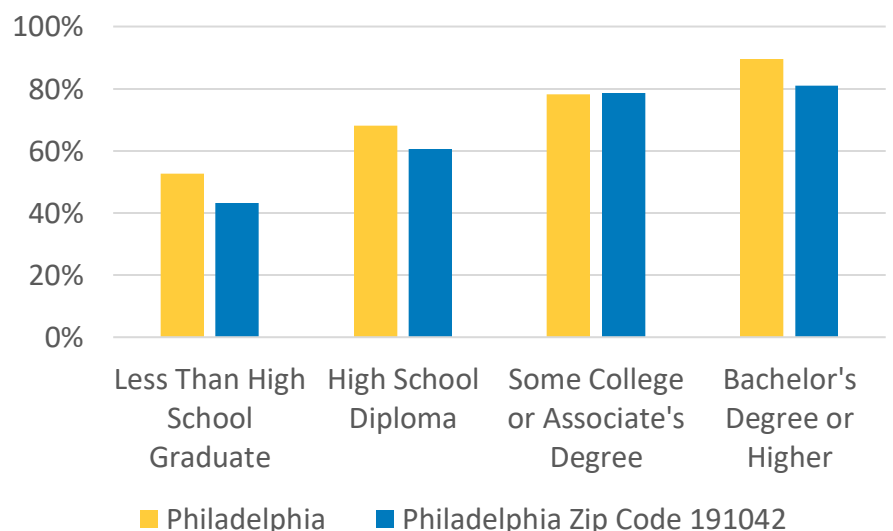
Labor force participation is also highly correlated with educational attainment. Just 43% of area residents without a high school diploma were in the labor force in 2022.

While labor force participation overall is lower than in Philadelphia, this is likely due to the area's large student population.

### Unemployment Rates for Promise Zone and Philadelphia Residents, Age 25 to 64, 2022 Estimates

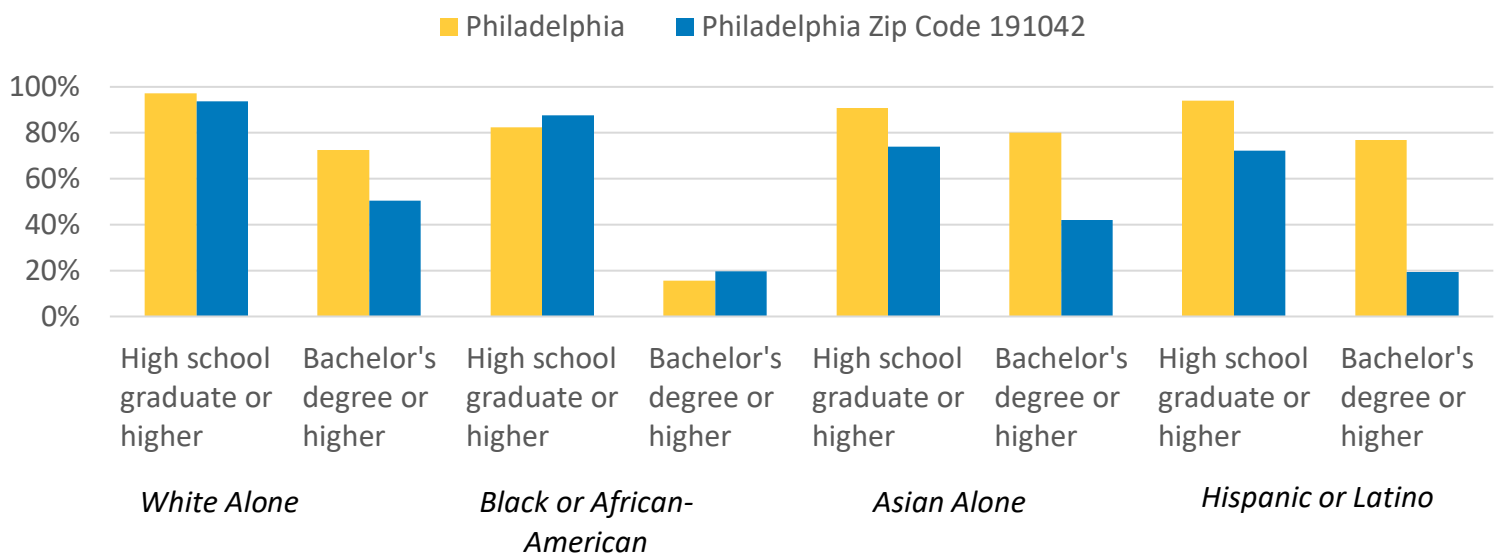


### Labor Force Participation Rates for Promise Zone and Philadelphia Residents, Age 25 to 64, 2022 Estimates



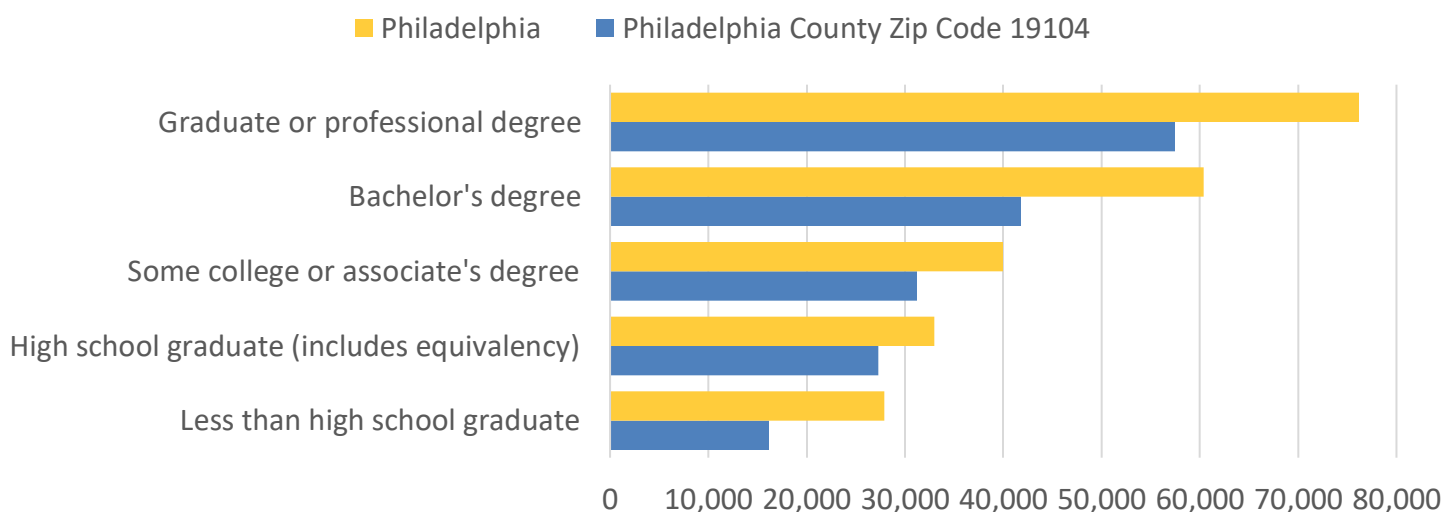
## Black and African American Residents are Far Less Likely to Possess a Bachelor's Degree or Higher

**Educational Attainment Rates of Promise Zone and Philadelphia Residents by Race and Ethnicity, 2022 Estimates**



## Across all Levels of Education, Promise Zone Residents Earn Less

**Annual Incomes for Full-Time, Year-Round Resident Workers in the Promise Zone and Philadelphia, 2022 Estimates**



# 19,800

**Undergraduate Student  
Residents in 2022**

# 4,580

**Graduate Student  
Residents in 2022**

## Most Common Degree Programs for 19104 Graduates, 2021

Description	All Completions	Certificates	Bachelor's	Master's	Doctoral
Health Professions and Related Programs	3,750	200	1,200	1,400	940
Business, Management, Marketing, and Related	3,670	60	1,730	1,820	40
Engineering	1,500	10	860	520	100
Computer and IT and Support Services	1,200	30	460	700	20
Biological and Biomedical Sciences	1,000	40	520	290	150
Education	890	70	20	650	150
Social Sciences	740	0	600	80	50
Legal Professions and Studies	570	0	30	120	430
Psychology	520	40	180	270	20
Visual and Performing Arts	500	0	420	70	10
Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies	320	20	140	160	0
Physical Sciences	290	10	130	90	70
Public Administration and Social Service Professions	290	10	30	240	20
Architecture and Related Services	250	30	30	190	10
Philosophy and Religious Studies	220	0	210	10	10
Mathematics and Statistics	220	30	120	50	20
Foreign Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics	200	70	70	30	30

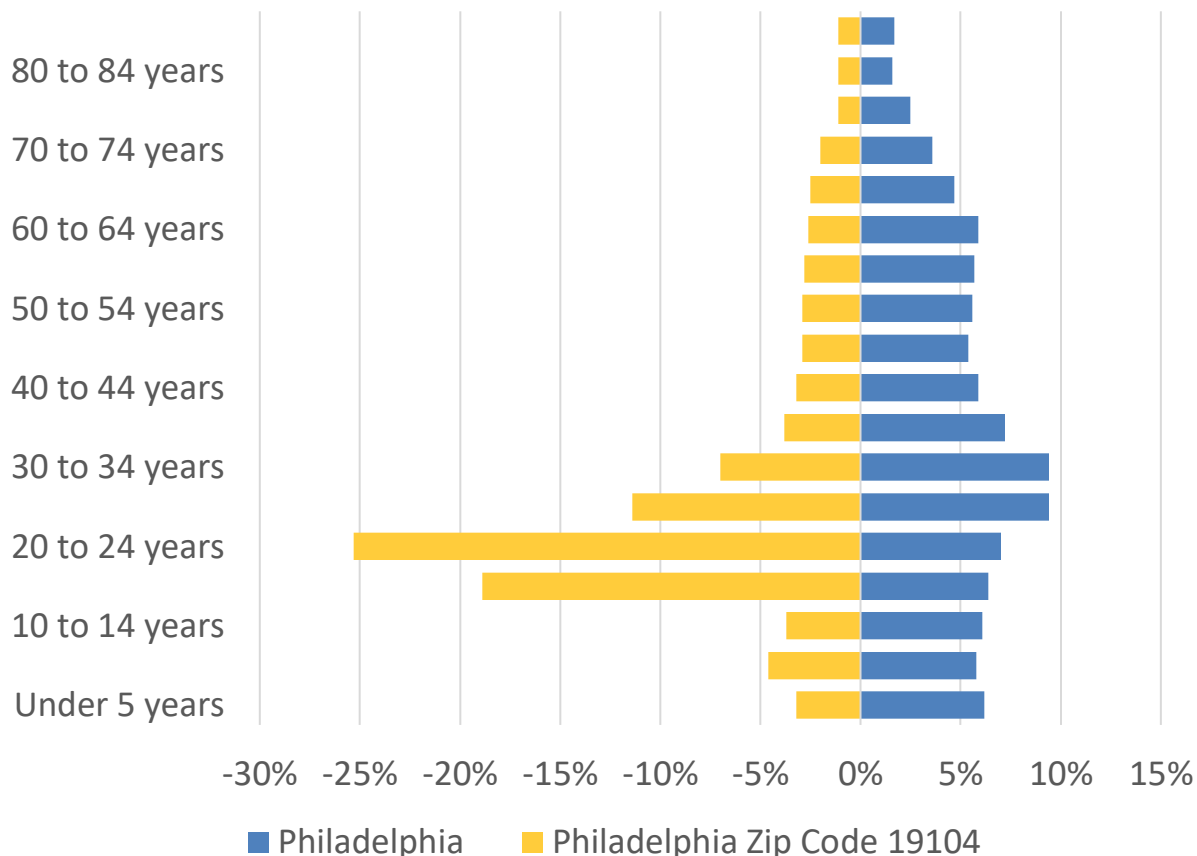
# Age Distribution

Promise Zone residents are younger than the population of Philadelphia overall. The largest age cohort (20- to 24-year-olds) makes up about one-quarter of the area’s population.

At the same time, an estimated 7,100 children under the age of 18 lived in the 19104 zip code, roughly 4,000 of whom lived in single-parent households.

**Childcare will play a critical role in the area’s workforce development and economic recovery efforts.**

**Age of Promise Zone and Philadelphia Residents, Share of Total, 2022 Estimates**

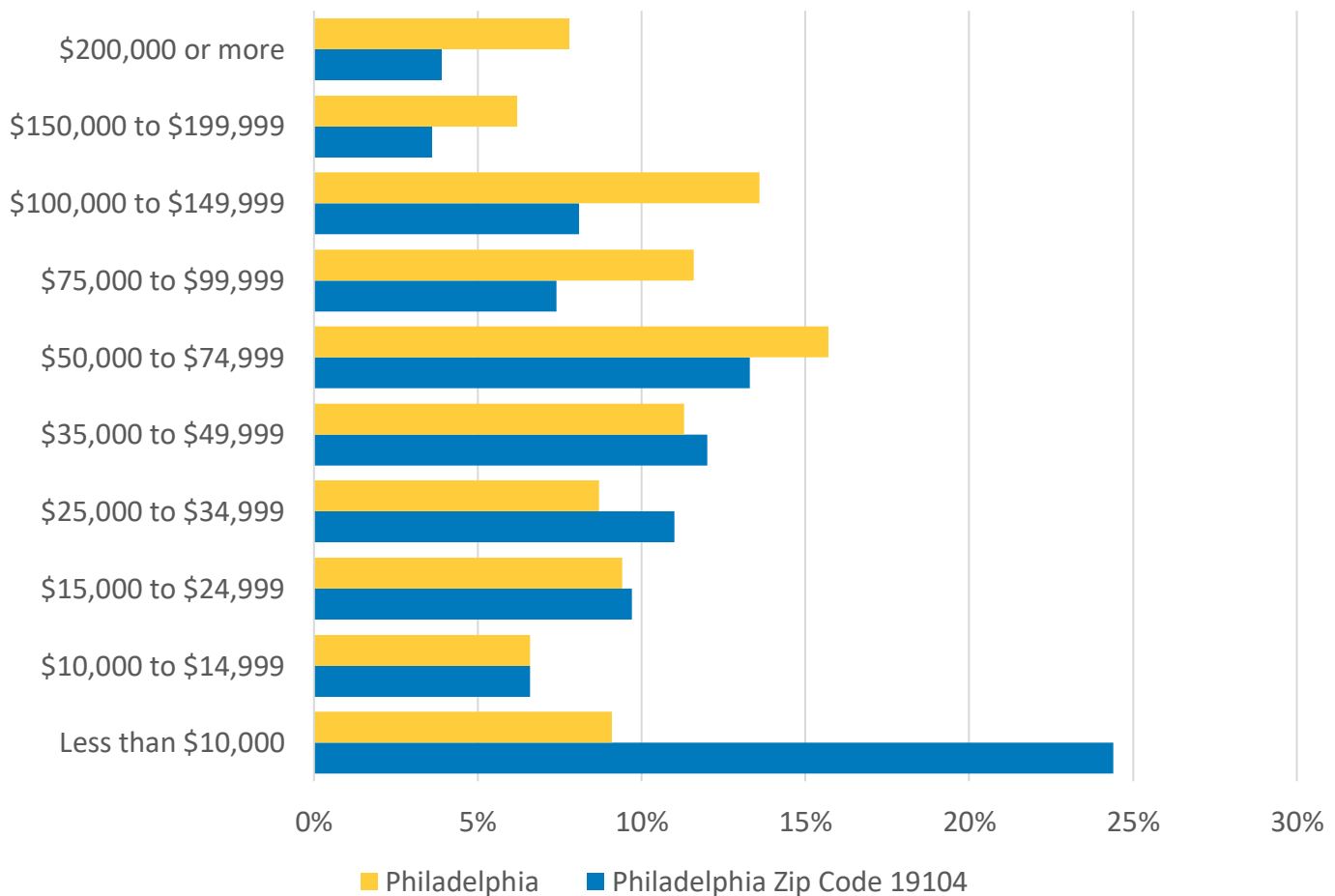


# Wages and Household Income

Household incomes in the Promise Zone are lower than in Philadelphia overall. About 24% of 19104 households reported incomes of less than \$10,000 in 2024. Because of the area’s high concentration of college and university students, many of these low-income households are likely not in the labor force and potentially skew the available data.

When looking only at full-time, year-round workers, the median earnings for 19104 residents is about \$7,900 less than that of the city overall.

**Household Incomes of Philadelphia and Promise Zone Residents, Share of Total, 2022**





## Excluding Part-time and Intermittent Workers, Promise Zone Residents Earn Less

Median Earnings for Full-Time, Year-Round Workers, 2022 Estimates

**\$48,100**

19104 Zip Code

**\$56,000**

Philadelphia

## Fewer Promise Zone Residents Rely on Public Assistance than in Philadelphia Overall

**5,000**

Households (27%) Had No Earnings  
Higher than Philadelphia

**3,300**

Households (17%) Had Social Security  
Income  
Lower than Philadelphia

**1,300**

Households (7%) Had Supplemental  
Security Income  
Lower than Philadelphia

**1,000**

Households (6%) Had Public Cash  
Assistance Income  
Equal to Philadelphia

**4,900**

Households (26%) Received SNAP  
Benefits  
Equal to Philadelphia

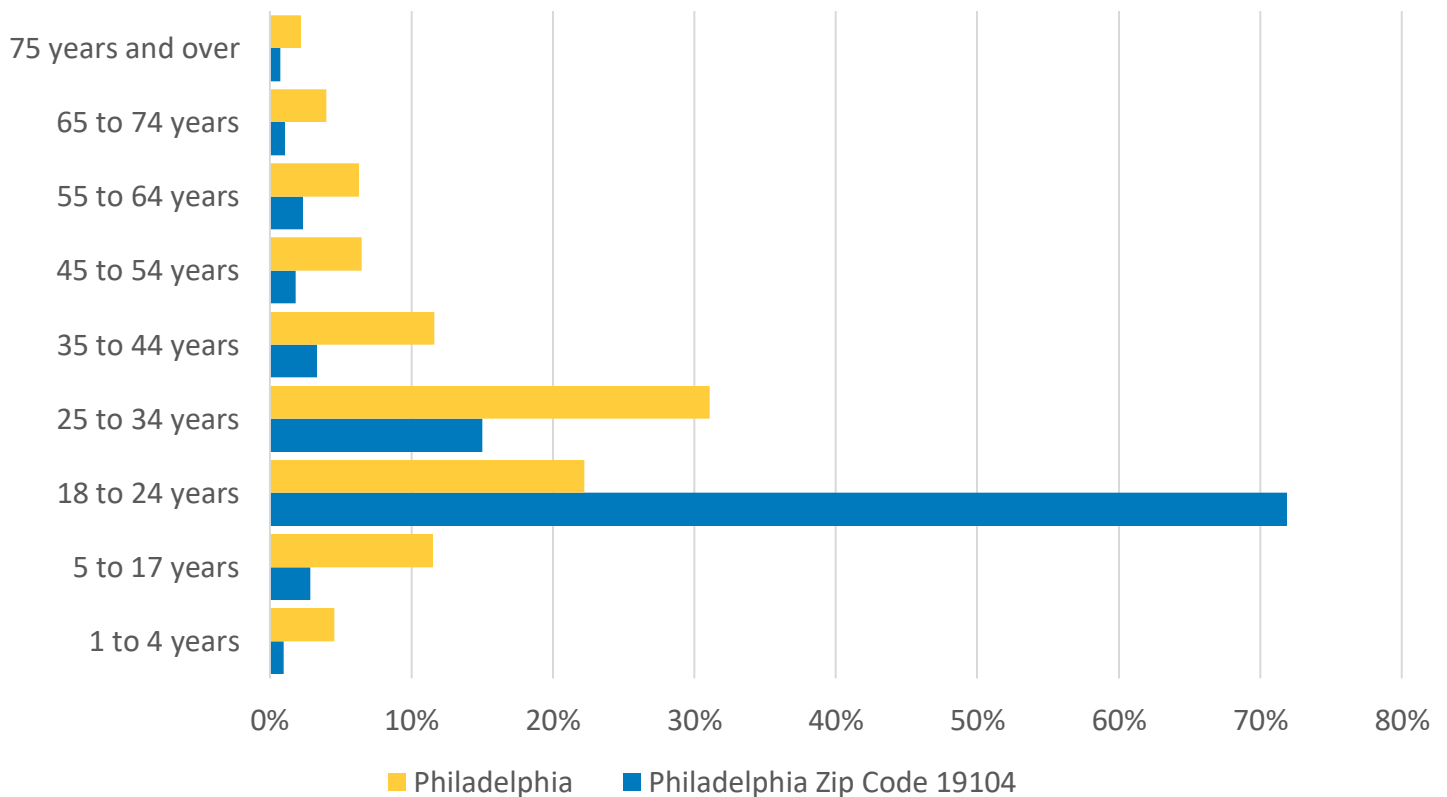
# Geographic Mobility

In 2021, an estimated 18,600 residents (35%) had moved within the last year. In Philadelphia overall, the same figure was xx%. Of those that moved into 19104:

- **43%** moved from within Philadelphia
- **15%** moved from a different county within Pennsylvania
- **31%** moved from a different state
- **10%** moved from a different country

## Seventy-Two Percent of Individuals Moving within or into the 19104 Zip Code Were Between 18 and 24

**Age Geographically Mobile Philadelphia and Promise Zone Residents, Share of Total, 2022 Estimates**



**For comments or questions about the contents of  
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