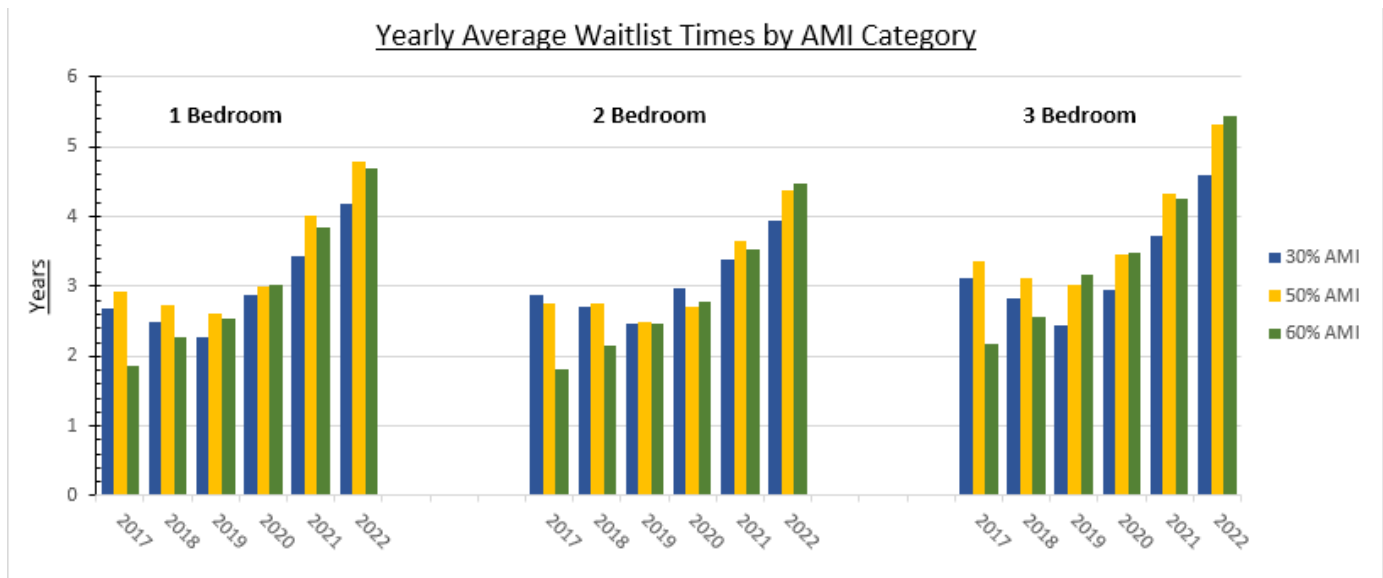
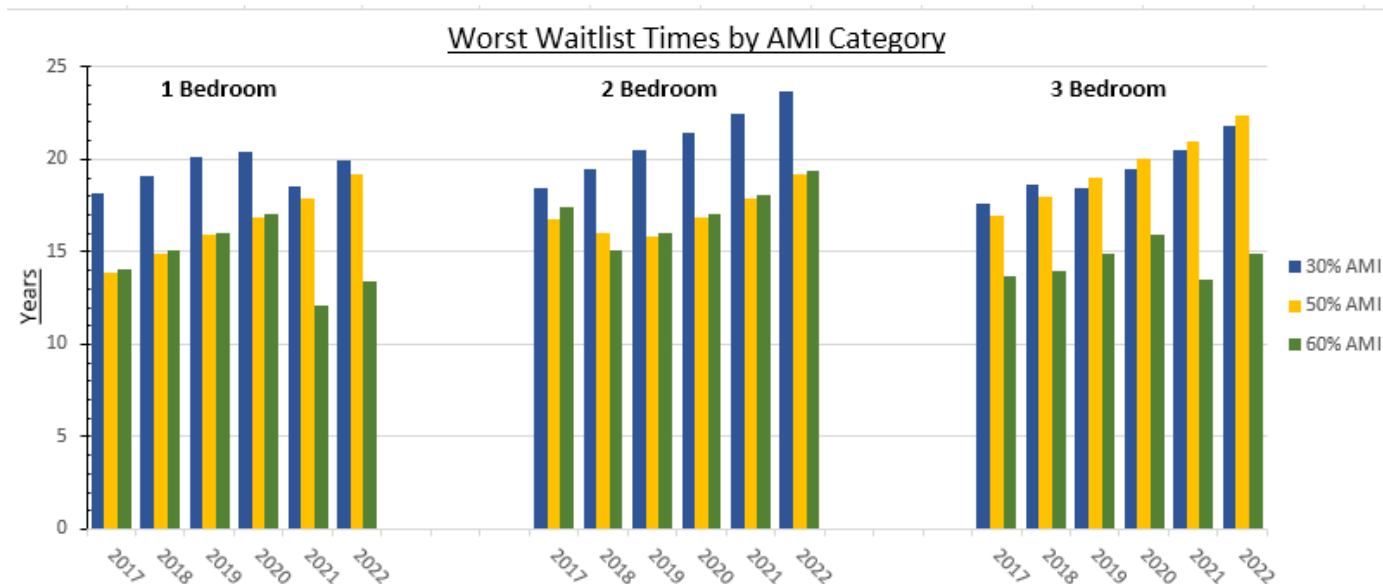


The Housing Crisis in MA: Average and Longest Waitlist Times, Trends of Last Six Years

Key Data and Talking Points (TP) Average waitlist times have become slightly longer over the last seven years; **The worst waitlist times are now over 20 years.**



Note that the Worst Waitlist Times data (below) uses a different time-scale (25 years instead of 6).



Findings

1. **Since 2016, average waitlist times continue to hover around 3 years**, in contrast with average waitlist times in the 90s which were closer to 6-months. In the same time period, **worst waitlist times have continued to increase higher and higher**, now reaching the 20-year mark. Current housing policies may help the middle class but have not been successful at addressing applicants on truly low-income waitlists.

2. **Reporting waitlist times via trend is more helpful than reporting only a single year**, because simply opening a waitlist at a large property radically changes the *reported* waiting time for that property or neighborhood, while not actually shortening the *actual* waiting time.
3. **The meaning of “Affordable” changes** when the data shows that waitlist times are connected to income: Households with income above the 60% level generally do not have to wait a long time for housing; they find it elsewhere quickly. Households below the 60% AMI level are forced to wait years for a housing opportunity. This suggests that current definitions of “Affordable housing” may be missing an important variable: unreasonable waitlist times.
4. **The connection between worst waitlist times and those displaced needs further exploration.** Examining all five reports from Jan 2021 can help explain why some households need/choose to wait two decades or more for a housing opportunity. Do the worst waitlist times belong to those applicants desperate to return to a neighborhood that contains family, employment, and community?

Credits:

Data Conceptualization, Data Conclusions, Editing, Chart and Report Design

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The Data Set Explained: What is the data? Where do the numbers come from? How are they Real-Time?

HousingWorks.net is comprised of three modules of service and data collection:

THE FIRST MODULE lets applicants and housing advocates locate and apply to all low-income housing across the [40+ different independent housing inventories](#). The first component allows applicants to anonymously search for and download applications free of cost. The second component is a subscription-based program for advocates to enter applicant information and download applications that are prepopulated with the entered information. This second component records and stores applicant information the moment they start applying, and updates information every time an applicant applies for any other housing property. This makes HousingWorks.net the only system that can quantify and unduplicate applicant information across private and public housing properties.

THE SECOND MODULE is the only a comprehensive inventory listing of truly low-income housing in Massachusetts tied with a subscription-based waitlist software and service for low-income housing administrators. This service product lets us build and update waitlists for more than 125 properties, mostly on the Eastern side of the state. This module allows HousingWorks.net to quantify and unduplicate applicant information up to the moment they are housed or rejected for housing. This module is connected to the first module so that HousingWorks.net also has comprehensive data on applicants from the moment they first apply to the moment their housing search ends across numerous, independent housing properties.

THE THIRD MODULE is a real-time data reporting system. Since applicants sit on waitlists for years, it's necessary to pull data from the first two modules to achieve a clear picture of the relationship between the applicant population and the housing inventory. Our datasets pull from the two service modules and the data sets are a byproduct of the increased service, which is a crucial feature. Further, by combining these two unique sets of data, these interactive modules allow HousingWorks.net to run real-time, supply-demand data comparisons that have never before been available; data that identifies gaps and can help suggest more efficient policy and planning.

Since its inception in 2000, the HousingWorks team has understood that it was essential to offer all three modules simultaneously, and that the data module needed to be an automatic side-effect of improved service delivery because data quality is inevitably better when there is an immediate benefit to the applicant – getting housed - and the landlord – filling vacancies.

HousingWorks is alone in being able to provide real-time affordable housing data. **For More Information**

Contact HousingWorks, 617-504-0577 (or 617-304-9961) admin@housingworks.net

