

Regional Snapshot: Southland



New Zealand Council Of
Christian Social Services

16,000

people in Southland (15.6%) experience poverty after housing costs are paid

3,000 adults over 65 years old in Southland (18.37%) experience poverty after housing costs
5,500 children in Southland (22.6%) live in households experiencing poverty after housing costs

7,900

people in Southland (7.7%) are unable to afford essential items

3,000 children in Southland (12.5%) live in households that are unable to afford the essentials



Income adequacy

Average monthly power prices were \$38 higher in May 2026 compared to May 2025 in Invercargill

Over the past 3 years the cheapest available home insurance premiums increased on average \$555/year

Salvation Army are seeing a rise in the number of middle-income households needing their services in Invercargill

Housing

While average income increased 42% in the past 10 years, average rental costs have more than double (increasing 103%)

Census 2023 estimated 102 people sleeping rough, while a further 1,014 lived in uninhabitable housing, for example lacking basic amenities like cooking facilities or a toilet

35% of people in Southland experienced food insecurity in the past year

Health

39.1% people in Southland had unmet dental treatment due to costs, with this disproportionately impacting 25-34 year olds (49.8%)

More than 1 in 5 adults aged 25-34 (23.6%) and 45-54 (23.2%) were unable to access a doctor due to cost

A population bigger than Te Anau, Winton and Bluff combined are unable to afford the essentials

Visit our website for more information on steps we recommend to help free New Zealanders from poverty
nzccss.org.nz

