Affordable Housing National Report

July 2026

Affordable Housing Collections Vary, Shaped by Local Policies

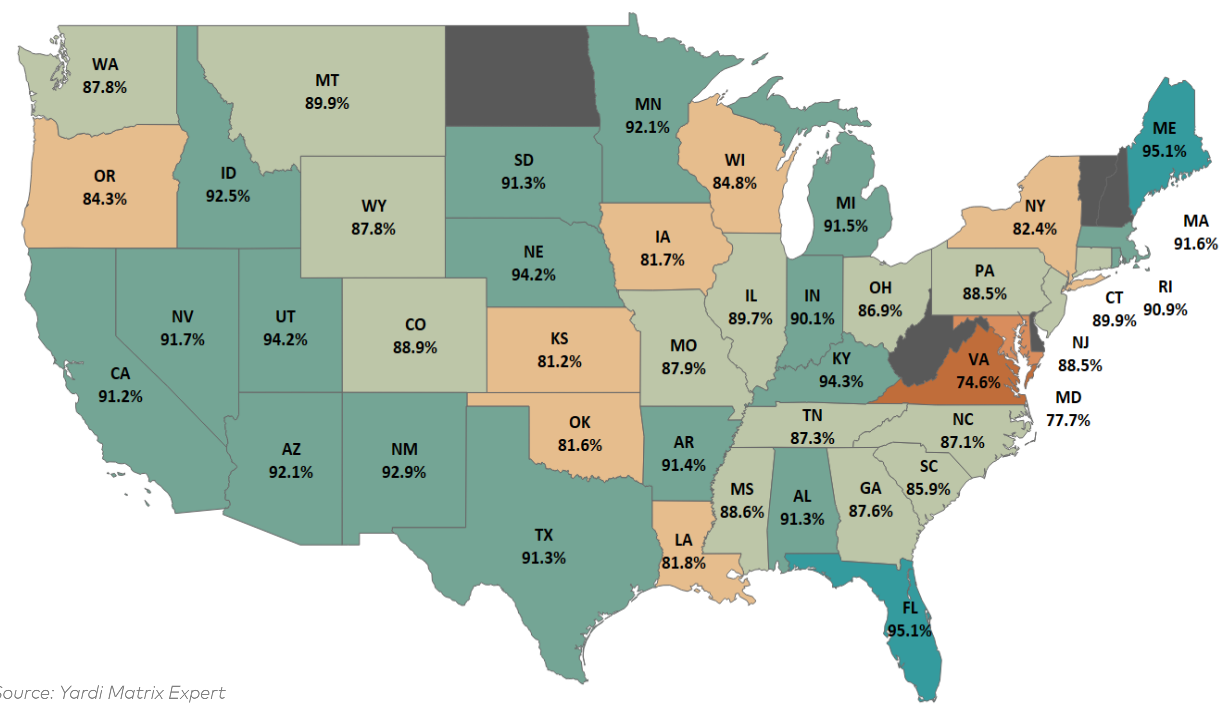
Affordable housing performance has been positive from a big-picture standpoint. Even though expenses have grown at above-trend levels, income growth has been robust and has boosted net operating income. But that doesn't tell the whole story, as there is wide variation in performance at the metro and individual property levels.

One big reason for the disparity is the difference in rent collection success. The degree of rent collected varies widely by property and market, according to an analysis of Yardi Matrix's database. Among Matrix's Top 30 metros, the percentage of realized revenue in May ranged from 96.8% in Miami to 70.9% in Washington, D.C., with the typical large market collecting just under 90% of scheduled rent.

Rent collection in properties filled with low-income tenants has always been fraught. The percentage of rent collected by operators each month has only been available within Matrix for a short time, so precise historical data is elusive. However, affordable property operators say the payment rate worsened in recent years after the expiration of eviction bans that were implemented during the Covid-19 lockdowns. In some cases, tenants got used to not paying rent, either because they could not or did not want to pay.

The responsiveness of the judicial system is another major factor. Collections tend to be lower in jurisdictions in which it takes months or years to evict tenants that are not paying rent. Collections can also be related to the type of program under

Fully Affordable Collection % by State



Source: Yardi Matrix Expert

which the property operates. Government subsidy programs such as Section 8 are more reliable than programs in which tenants pay their own rent.

Allowable rents establish the amount of revenue a property can bill, but collections determine how much of that revenue ultimately becomes operating income. The financial impact is not always immediate. Delinquent balances eventually reduce recorded rental revenue on the property's income statement, often with a lag as collection efforts, repayment agreements and legal proceedings play out over time.

Collection Rates Have Local Flavor

Affordable housing programs—in conjunction with federal, state and local governments—establish guidelines for who qualifies for housing and how rents are priced, but they do not determine how unpaid rent is ultimately recovered. Once rent becomes delinquent, the process is subject to state and local laws and judicial processes.

That's why collection rates take on a local bent. Nationally, affordable housing properties collected an average of 88.6% of rent in May, with performance differing substantially across markets and states. Maine and Florida tied for the highest statewide collection rate at 95.1%, with Kentucky (94.3%), Nebraska (94.2%) and Utah (94.2%) rounding out the top 5 markets. Florida dominated the best-performing markets. Fort Lauderdale (97.3%), the Southwest Florida Coast (96.9%), Miami (96.8%), Orange County (96.2%) and Orlando (96.1%) all ranked among the nation's highest collection markets.

Virginia (74.6%) and Maryland (77.7%) recorded the weakest statewide collection rates, while Kansas (81.2%), Oklahoma (81.6%) and Iowa (81.7%) also finished below the national average. The weakest-performing markets were concentrated along the East Coast. Northern Virginia (66.8%), Macon (68.6%), Wilmington (71.0%), Queens (72.7%) and Brooklyn (72.8%) recorded the lowest collection rates.

Those differences are especially visible in markets where local policymakers have taken different approaches to balancing housing stability and property operations. Some jurisdictions have gradually expanded procedural protections surrounding nonpayment. Others have returned to longstanding administrative frameworks that provide greater certainty once rent becomes delinquent.

Top 10 Markets	Collection %
Ft Lauderdale	97.3%
SW Florida Coast	96.9%
Miami	96.8%
Orange County	96.2%
Asheville	96.2%
Orlando	96.1%
Port St. Lucie	96.0%
West Palm Beach	95.9%
Tampa	95.8%
West Houston	95.6%

Source: Yardi Matrix

Bottom 10 Markets	Collection %
Tulsa	79.4%
Appalachian	79.0%
Cincinnati	78.2%
Washington DC - Suburban Maryland	74.3%
Brooklyn	72.8%
New Orleans	72.8%
Queens	72.7%
Wilmington	71.0%
Macon	68.6%
Northern Virginia	66.8%

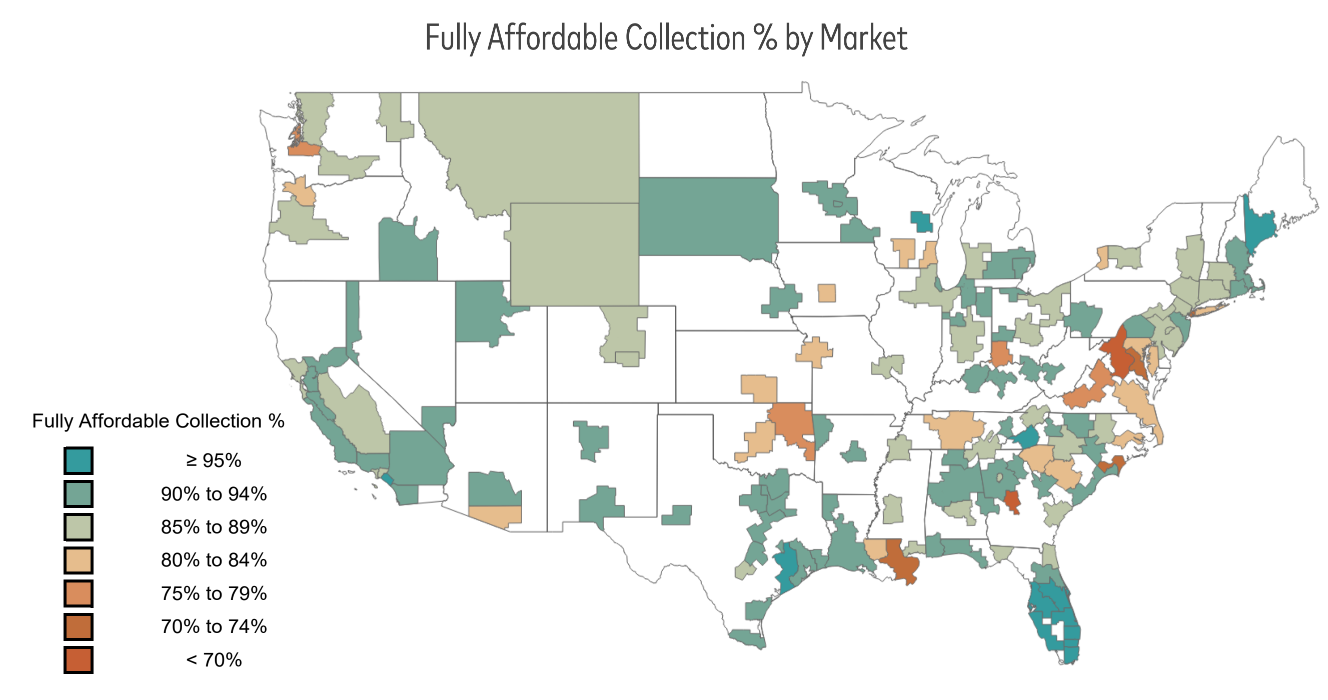
Source: Yardi Matrix

Washington, D.C.: Delinquency Threatens Affordable Progress

Few markets illustrate the operating consequences of collection loss more clearly than Washington, D.C. The metro recorded the weakest May collection rate (70.9%) in the Matrix Top 30 while also containing one of the largest inventories of affordable housing. Weak collections in a market of that scale influence a substantial amount of affordable housing revenue, making the issue more significant than a simple ranking might suggest.

Washington's operating environment reflects decades of policy focused on preserving housing stability through procedural protections surrounding nonpayment. Recovering unpaid rent requires navigating a process that emphasizes due process and tenant protections before possession can ultimately be recovered. The framework is intended to reduce housing instability, but it also extends the period during which unpaid balances remain unresolved while operating expenses continue uninterrupted.

Recognizing that prolonged periods of unpaid rent had become a broader housing issue, the district government last year enacted the Rebalancing Expectations for Neighbors, Tenants and Landlords (RENTAL) Act. The legislation shortened portions of the nonpayment process, reduced the pre-filing notice period, updated eviction notices, modified aspects of the Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA) and introduced procedural changes that were intended to improve the efficiency of housing disputes. More importantly, the legislation acknowledged that prolonged rent delinquency had become a threat not only to individual owners but to the long-term preservation and production of affordable housing.



Source: Yardi Matrix Expert

New York: Tenant Protection at the Expense of Owners

New York City faces a similar collection issue through a different policy path. The metro collected 76.7% in May despite containing one of the nation's largest affordable housing inventories. Unlike Washington, where policymakers are actively reassessing portions of the operating framework, New York reflects the cumulative effect of long-term institutional change.

The Housing Stability and Tenant Protection Act of 2019 fundamentally altered New York's landlord-tenant framework before the pandemic began. It permanently eliminated high-rent vacancy decontrol and limited rent increases associated with capital improvements and apartment turnover. The legislation also expanded tenant protections in nonpayment cases, creating a more complex operating environment for owners seeking to recover delinquent rent.

The upshot is a more difficult environment for operators. Before 2019, if a tenant left, units could exit rent stabilization and achieve market-rate rents. The limits on capital improvements make owners less likely to modernize and fix apartments. The effect of these policies is that thousands of units are taken off the market rather than being leased, a lose-lose proposition for operators and tenants.

Washington and New York arrive at similar outcomes through different policy histories. One market reflects a continuing effort to balance housing stability with affordable housing finance. The other reflects the cumulative effect of long-term institutional change. The common outcome is not identical legislation but an operating environment in which recovering delinquent rent becomes more difficult than in many peer markets.

Predictability Reinforces Collections

Miami (96.8%), Orlando (96.1%) and Tampa (95.8%) achieved strong rent collections in May, reflecting Florida's operating environment. Strong collections in those markets are notable because they are sustained across the state, rather than being limited to select markets.

Florida law provides owners with a comparatively direct path for addressing nonpayment. Once rent becomes delinquent, landlords may issue a three-day notice to pay rent or vacate. If payment is not made within that period, the owner may file a summary eviction action. Tenants who wish to contest the eviction usually must deposit the disputed rent into the court registry while the case proceeds, helping discourage prolonged nonpayment without legal consequence. Compared with many Northeast and West Coast jurisdictions, the process involves fewer pre-filing requirements and fewer opportunities for extended delay before the court can hear the case.

The practical effect is greater certainty rather than simply greater speed. Owners understand when legal remedies become available, residents understand the consequences of continued nonpayment, and unresolved balances are less likely to accumulate over extended periods before formal action begins. Florida's consistently strong collection performance suggests that a more predictable collection framework can support stronger realized revenue even across large and diverse affordable housing markets.

Texas reaches similar collection outcomes through a different policy framework. Houston collected 93.5% in May, while Dallas collected 91.7% and Austin collected 90.6%, placing all three above the Matrix Top 30 average.

As with Florida, Texas law requires landlords to provide at least a three-day notice to vacate for nonpayment. The key difference is that cases of eviction are heard in Justice Courts, which provide a standardized statewide process for possession cases. Unlike jurisdictions where local courts or municipalities impose substantially different procedures, Texas relies on a relatively uniform administrative framework across the state. While tenants retain the right to contest an eviction and appeal adverse decisions, the overall process remains comparatively consistent regardless of market.

Collections No Small Part of Operating Performance

Affordable housing performance has traditionally been evaluated through rent limits, operating expenses, financing conditions and long-term preservation needs. Those measures remain fundamental to understanding the sector. Collection performance increasingly belongs alongside them because it determines how much revenue ultimately translates into operating income.

While affordable housing programs establish the framework for scheduled revenue, local operating environments increasingly determine realized revenue. Markets participating in similar federal programs continue to produce different financial outcomes because the regulations governing delinquent rent differ across jurisdictions. Those differences are no longer isolated operational issues. They have become part of the market itself.

For owners, lenders and investors, the implications extend beyond current collections. Realized revenue influences cash flow, reserve funding, capital planning and long-term asset preservation. As operating margins remain constrained, understanding local collection environments becomes an increasingly important component of market analysis. Rent limits continue to define what affordable housing owners are permitted to charge. Collection environments increasingly determine what they are ultimately able to realize.

—Paul Fiorilla, Director of Research, and Jacob Gonzalez, Senior Analyst, Yardi Matrix

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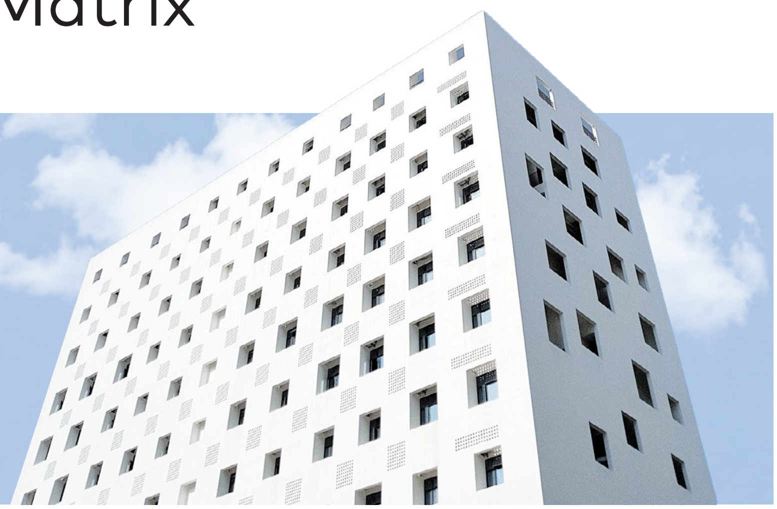

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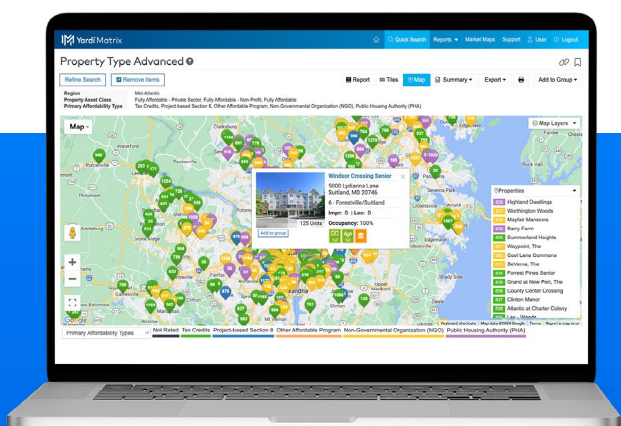

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