

COMMUNITIES IN CRISIS

More than half of Illinois cities get “F” grades for local pensions

Harvey

2019 Grade: F

In 2003, Harvey’s police, fire and municipal pension funds already faced a shortfall of **\$7.4 million**. That meant every Harvey household, on average, was on the hook for **\$817** in future taxes just to eliminate that shortfall.

Harvey began contributing more money – taxpayer dollars – to pensions in an attempt to make the plans healthier. Over the next 16 years, city contributions increasingly crowded out spending for public safety, roads and other core services.

	2003	2019	Change
City (taxpayer) contributions to pensions	\$0.61 million	\$5.16 million	Up 8.5X
Share of city general budget for pensions	3.6%	22.5%	Up 6.3X

Despite the ramp-up in city payments over those 16 years, Harvey’s pension debts didn’t decrease. Instead, they jumped by 8.3 times!

By 2019, the shortfall in Harvey’s police, fire and municipal pension funds totaled **\$60.8 million**. That means each Harvey household, on average, is now on the hook for **\$7,350** in debt.

Everyone loses under Harvey’s pension crisis:



Taxpayers are tapped out

Harvey residents are paying more and more into a broken system. City taxpayers in 2019 contributed 8.5 times more to pensions than in 2003, yet city debts are 8.3 times larger.



Pension costs are devouring the city’s budget

Harvey pension contributions have grown to consume 22.5% of the city’s budget, up from 3.6% in 2003. That’s crowded out spending on public safety, roads and other core services.



Harvey worker retirement security is collapsing

The health of Harvey’s local pension plans have worsened despite those increased taxpayer contributions. In 2003, the plans had 85.2% of the money they needed. By 2019, that had dropped to just 41.1%.



Harvey’s crisis will only get worse

Harvey has fewer active government workers available to help pay for a growing number of retirees. In 2003, there were 1.07 active workers for every pensioner. By 2019, there were 0.61 active workers per pensioner.

2019 GRADE

F

2003 GRADE

C

Harvey receives an "F" grade for its local pension crisis

Local officials handcuffed by state pension mandates.

Wirepoints quantified the negative impact of local pensions by examining the finances of Illinois' 175 largest cities from 2003 to 2019. The analysis was based on ten equally-weighted metrics. Cities were given an A through F grade based on a 100-point scale (10 points per metric).*

Harvey received an "F" grade in 2019. The city's total score dropped from 70 in 2003 to 36 in 2019, a decline of 34 points.

Harvey was one of 102 cities to receive an "F" grade in 2019.

175 Cities – Summary Scores			
Grade	Score	Number of cities	
		2003	2019
A	≥90	4	0
B	80-89	35	1
C	70-79	81	8
D	60-69	48	64
F	≤59	7	102

Harvey Key Facts		
City demographics	2000	2019
Population	30,000	24,386
Households	9,018	8,271
Median household income	\$31,958	\$30,306
City budget	2003	2019
General revenues	\$16,926,012	\$22,962,165
Total revenues	\$30,325,550	\$51,135,428
Total property taxes	\$9,614,519	\$12,466,032
Pension health (police, fire & IMRF)	2003	2019
Total accrued liabilities (benefits owed)	\$49,738,905	\$103,256,417
Total pension assets	\$42,373,316	\$42,460,554
Funded ratio	85.2%	41.1%
Total pension shortfall	\$7,365,589	\$60,795,863
Per household	\$817	\$7,350
Active public safety workers	109	71
Public safety pension beneficiaries	102	117
City pension contributions	2003	2019
City contributions	\$606,687	\$5,163,585
Per household	\$67	\$624
Percentage of city's general budget	3.6%	22.5%
Employees' contributions	\$509,442	\$597,741

Harvey Score				
Metric	2003	2019	2003	2019
1. Police pension funded ratio	78.8%	47.7%	7	4
2. Firefighter pension funded ratio	68.7%	18.7%	6	1
3. Municipal (IMRF) pension funded ratio	161.3%	159.5%	10	10
4. City pension debts per household as a percentage of median household income	2.6%	24.3%	8	1
5. City contributions per household as a percentage of median household income	0.21%	2.06%	8	1
6. City contributions as a percentage of total budget	2.0%	10.1%	9	1
7. Ratio of city contributions to employee contributions	1.19	8.64	9	1
8. Percentage surplus/shortfall in actuarially-required city contribution (Police & Fire only)	-78.0%	16.5%	1	10
9. Asset-to-payout ratio (Police & Fire only)	13.8	6.0	7	4
10. Worker-to-beneficiary ratio (Police & Fire only)	1.07	0.61	5	3
Total score			70	36
Grade			C	F

*Wirepoints analyzed 175 of Illinois' largest cities, excluding Chicago, that have a local police, firefighter and municipal (IMRF) pension fund.

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