

The Accumulated Costs of Migrants

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Expenses incurred by the City and County of Denver alone do not accurately reflect the total amount of costs borne by the community at-large. Costs for shelters, food, and transportation are incurred by the city directly, but expenditures such as healthcare and education have also put a strain on already limited budgets. Furthermore, costs are not limited to Denver alone, but also have been absorbed by other neighboring metro communities. **City, healthcare, and education costs have now reached \$170 million.**

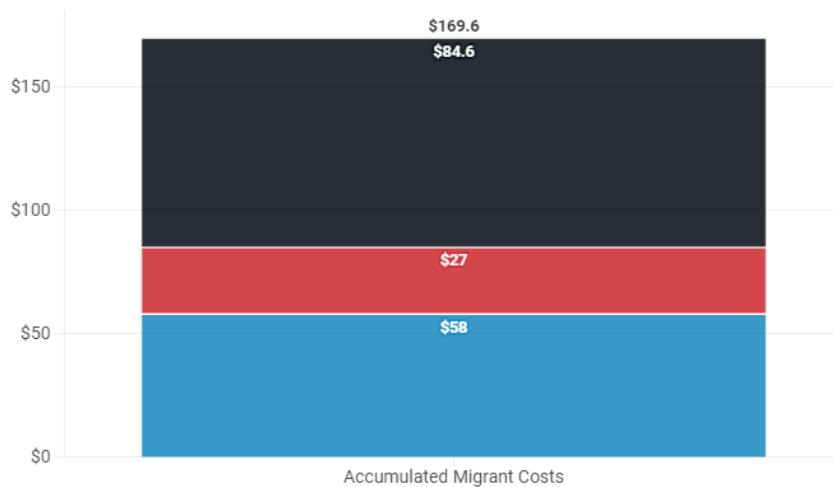
City of Denver

As of March 18, just under 1,400 migrants were staying in Denver shelters, down from a height of 5,210 in January. Occupancy of city shelters has not been this low since late September 2023. To date, the city has seen just under 40,000 migrants arrive in the Denver area, though the proportion who ultimately stay in Denver or in Colorado is unknown.

Migrant Costs in Metro Denver

In Millions

■ City of Denver ■ Denver-area hospitals ■ Denver-area school districts



From the onset of the migrant arrival crisis in December 2022 through the present, Denver has spent an estimated \$58 million caring for migrants. Mayor Mike Johnston had previously projected the costs to the City of Denver would equal \$180 million in 2024 but has since revised that estimate to \$120 million.



Healthcare Costs

Migrant arrivals have put additional stress on the region’s hospital system, increasing uncompensated care by over \$27 million by only two of the area’s 17 healthcare systems.

Denver Health, which is the city’s designated charitable care provider, has been experiencing an uptick in uncompensated care in the last several years, growing from \$60 million in 2020 to

\$135 million in 2023. In 2023, [CEO Donna Lynne](#) said migrants contributed about \$10 million to that total.

UCHealth, which has hospitals in nearby cities but not Denver, says it has spent \$17 million in uncompensated healthcare for migrants.

Denver Metro-Area School Districts

[Previous CSI research](#) has estimated Denver metro-area school districts spend \$14,100 per student on instruction and support. Estimates from January 2024 noted that 6,000 migrant students had been absorbed into Denver metro-area school district, which equates to about \$84.6 million in additional costs for the school-year. The total count will have been higher as of March 18.