

You are exposed to a pesticide or toxic chemical at work.

If your profile indicates that you are a Migrant or Seasonal Farmworker, move back two spaces.

Agricultural workers are more likely to be exposed to pesticides and toxic chemicals than workers in other industries. 47% of all agricultural in the U.S. are undocumented.²²

You develop a high fever and want to see a healthcare provider. The public transportation system in your community recently shut down due to lack of funds.

If your profile indicates that you live in town, you are able to walk, bike, or drive to the nearest clinic and receive treatment.

Stay where you are.

If your profile indicates that you live outside of town and do not have a car or truck, you must rely on others to give you rides, or risk walking or biking long distances to reach the clinic.

Move back two spaces.

As of 2005, more than 1.6 million rural households did not have cars. In that year public transportation was available in only 60% of rural counties; the Great Plains states had the least rural access to bus services of any region.⁴⁵ A 2014 study found that there is stigma around bicycling in some rural areas, including assumptions that individuals who bike must have lost their driver's licenses.³⁹

An abundant new source of oil is discovered in your community and housing costs are rising quickly.

If your profile indicates that your income is below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level, you can no longer afford to stay in your home. Move back five spaces.

If your profile indicates that your income is above 200% of the Federal Poverty Level, stay where you are.

Seven percent of homeless people live in rural areas. Rapid economic growth in rural areas exacerbates homelessness rates. Homeless individuals are sometimes called the "hidden homeless," as they often live and sleep in locations like campgrounds, cars, abandoned farm buildings, etc. or live in doubled-up or substandard housing. Those who experience rural homelessness report higher rates of alcohol abuse and domestic violence than the urban homeless population.²⁶

The only primary care physician in your community leaves to accept a higher-paying job in the city. A new provider is not hired for more than a year.

Move back two spaces.

Rural counties experience high rates of healthcare workforce shortages. Only 11% of physicians choose to practice in rural areas, which does not meet current demand.¹³ In 2016, the average recruitment length for clinical medical provider positions at community health centers in Region VIII (Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming) was 14 months.¹¹

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The family-owned grocery store in your community that sells fresh produce closes down due to competition with Walmart. There is now no source of fresh fruits and vegetables in your area.

Move back two spaces.

In 2016, 15.0% of rural households experienced food insecurity at least once during the year, as compared to the national average of 12.3%. Over time, food insecurity can negatively affect learning, development, productivity, physical and mental health, and family life.³⁵

Someone in your household regularly smokes cigarettes.

Move back two spaces.

Rural residents are more likely to smoke than their urban counterparts.³⁴

A snowstorm blocks the mountain pass between your community and the nearest health center.

Move back two spaces.

Rural counties have limited transportation options and longer distances between healthcare service delivery points. This limits rural residents' access to quality health care, and contributes to rural-urban gaps in mortality rates and potentially excess deaths.¹⁴

You are diagnosed with diabetes. There are no diabetes self-management education programs in your community, so you struggle to control your blood glucose levels on your own.

Move back three spaces.

In 2016, 62% of rural counties did not have Diabetes Self-Management Education programs. This lack of programming is tied to the shortage of rural health professionals such as dietitians and health educators, as well as lower rates of health insurance coverage.³⁸

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Your state implements a new program to provide free colorectal cancer screenings, and you decide to get screened. Your results show that you have early-stage colorectal cancer.

If your profile indicates that you have health insurance, you are able to afford treatment and your cancer goes into remission.
Stay where you are.

If your profile indicates that you do not have health insurance, you are not able to afford treatment. After three more turns, you pass away and must leave the game.

Rural areas have higher incidence of and death from cancers that can be prevented by screening, including colorectal cancer and cervical cancer.¹⁷

Opioids are introduced in your community.
You become addicted, and no treatment services are available.

Move back five spaces. For the remainder of the game, subtract one from each forward move, and add one to each backward move.

In 2012, rural residents admitted to the hospital were more likely to report primary abuse of non-heroin opioids than urban residents (10.6% vs. 4.0%), and tended to have begun using substances at a younger age (15 to 17 years).⁴³

A close friend commits suicide.

You experience a period of grieving.
Skip your next turn.

The rate of suicide in rural counties is consistently higher than in urban counties; in 2015, the age-adjusted suicide rate in rural counties was 17.7 deaths per 100,000, as compared to 12.5 deaths per 100,000 in urban counties.²⁴

Due to reduced funding and planning for the U.S. Census, your community is not accurately surveyed.
As a result, several community resources that you rely on – such as your local library, schools, day care centers, bridges, and roads – experience reductions in funding and must either cut their services or shut down.

Move back two spaces.

Rural residents are more likely than urban residents to live in areas that are difficult to survey in the U.S. Census due to dispersed housing and other distance-related factors. A growing reliance on Internet-based census data collection also poses a challenge for rural areas, which tend to have less Internet access than urban areas. Census-derived data are used to distribute more than \$600 billion per year to states and localities.³¹

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The specialist you see at your local hospital has relocated and will not be replaced due to funding constraints. You must now drive more than two hours to another hospital each month to receive the specialty care you need.

If your player profile indicates that you have a vehicle, move back two spaces. If you do not have a vehicle, move back three spaces.

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The internet in your local health center is unreliable, limiting your access to telehealth appointments, online enabling services systems, and other technology-based assistance.

Move back two spaces.

Telehealth helps to expand access to and improve the quality of rural healthcare by reducing the travel for patients and enhancing monitoring, timeliness, and communication with healthcare systems. However, many rural communities lack the broadband infrastructure to attain internet connection speeds that allow for effective telehealth exchanges. Other barriers to telehealth include reimbursement and physician licensure policy issues at both state and federal levels.³⁷

Your healthcare provider codes your visit incorrectly, and you are overbilled for the services you received.

Move back two spaces.

A study by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) found that 42% of Medicare claims for Evaluation and Management services in 2010 were incorrectly coded, and 19% lacked documentation.⁴⁶

The federal government fails to pass legislation to continue funding the Community Health Center Program. Your local health center must cut staff and reduce its hours of operations until the funding cliff is resolved by Congress.

Move back two spaces.

Federal funding makes up approximately 70% of health center funding. At the beginning of the health center funding crisis in October 2017, health centers reported plans to institute hiring freezes, lay off staff, cancel or delay facility renovations or expansions, reduce operating hours, cancel or delay performance improvements, tap into reserves, and/or cut services.²⁷

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The only behavioral health provider in your community retires. A new provider is not hired for six months.

Move back three spaces.

In 2017, the average recruitment length for behavioral health provider positions at community health centers in Region VIII (Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming) was 7.3 months.¹¹

The only dental provider in your community switches careers. A new provider is not hired for nine months.

Move back three spaces.

In 2017, the average recruitment length for dental provider positions at community health centers in Region VIII (Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming) was 7.8 months.¹¹

There is a propane shortage during the winter and you cannot heat your house.

Move back two spaces.

Around 83% of households with propane heating are rural and tend to be located beyond the reach of natural gas distribution.⁴⁷

You live in a predominantly white community where many residents are biased toward those of different races or ethnicities.

If your profile indicates that you are a person of color, move back three spaces.

The 2010 census showed minorities accounting for 82.7% of the increase in nonmetropolitan populations, even though they represented just 21% of the rural population. The health status of rural minorities is not only worse than rural whites, but rural minorities are also poorer than their urban counterparts.⁸

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Your close friend dies of a drug overdose.

If your profile indicates that you have health insurance, your primary care provider refers you to visit a behavioral health professional who helps you process this experience – move back two spaces.

If you do not have health insurance, you struggle to cope with your grief on your own – move back three spaces.

Rural residents are less likely to have insurance that covers mental health services, and are also less likely to recognize mental illness. Stigma around mental illnesses and a lack of mental health providers also limit access to mental health services in rural areas.³⁶

Your provider stops accepting patients on Medicaid and Medicare.

If your profile indicates that you have Medicaid or Medicare, move back two spaces.

If your profile indicates that you have private insurance or no insurance, stay where you are.

Rural individuals are less likely than their urban counterparts to have access to healthcare coverage through their employer; in 2012-2013, only 51% of rural residents were enrolled in employer-sponsored coverage, compared to 57% of the urban population.³⁰

You did not receive your influenza immunization this year.

Move back two spaces.

Vaccination rates can vary significantly in rural areas. For example, in 2006 69% of rural white adults received their flu vaccine, but only 57% of Hispanic adults and 43% of African American adults in rural areas were vaccinated.⁴⁰

The water in your community does not meet federal standards for contamination levels.

Move back two spaces.

Between 2010 and 2015, 10.0% of rural community water systems reported at least one annual mean concentration greater than the maximum contaminant level, as compared to 5.4% of non-rural systems. Water contaminants are associated with a range of acute and chronic adverse effects, such as gastrointestinal illness, reproductive disorders, and cancer.⁴²

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You drink soda regularly, and experience many dental caries.

If your profile indicates that you have dental insurance, you are able to afford fillings – stay where you are.

If your profile does not indicate that you have dental insurance, you cannot afford fillings – move back two spaces.

Rural adults are more likely than non-rural adults to have untreated dental decay (32.6% vs. 25.7%), and rural children are less likely to receive preventative dental care than urban children (27.5% vs. 29.3%). Factors contributing to dental health disparities in rural areas include lack of providers, transportation barriers, and lower rates of dental insurance.³³

You are involved in a serious car accident, and are not wearing a seatbelt.

Roll one die. If you roll a one or two, the ambulance is delayed and you do not reach the hospital in time to save your life – you pass away.

If you roll a three or four, you reach the hospital alive but are permanently disabled by your injuries – move back four spaces, and skip your next turn.

If you roll a five or six, you are brought to a hospital by emergency helicopter and survive without permanent disability, but must undergo extensive rehabilitation therapy for six months – move back three spaces.

Due to long distances, emergency medical service (EMS) providers who operate ambulances take longer to reach injured patients in rural areas and to bring them to treatment facilities.¹³ Rural residents are less likely to wear seatbelts and are more likely to die in car crashes.⁶

You experience difficulty with your vision, and realize that you probably need glasses.

If your profile indicates that you have vision insurance, you are able to visit the optometrist and receive your glasses at no cost. Move forward two spaces.

If your profile does not indicate that you have vision insurance but you are above 200% of the Federal Poverty Level, you receive glasses but must pay for them yourself. Stay where you are.

If your profile indicates that you are below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level, you cannot afford glasses. Move back two spaces.

From 1999 to 2008, individuals below the federal poverty level were more likely to report being unable to afford glasses when needed, compared to individuals at the highest income level.⁵⁰

The cost of gas rises.

If your profile indicates that you own a vehicle, move back one space. If you do not own a vehicle, stay where you are.

The average price of gas in 2017 was \$2.42 a gallon, compared to \$2.14 in 2016.⁴¹

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The main breadwinner in your family loses their job.

Move back five spaces.

In 2017 rural employment had still not returned to pre-recession levels and job growth in rural areas (0.8%) was less than half of the urban job growth rate (1.9%).⁴⁴

Your state cuts funding for your local schools. Classrooms become more crowded, and extracurricular activities – including in-school gym classes and after-school sports teams – are cancelled.

If your profile indicates that you are an adult without children, stay where you are.

If you are an adult with at least one child, move back one space.

If you are a child, move back two spaces.

Only 4.4% of public and private elementary schools and 10.5% of middle and junior high schools required daily physical education for all students in 2006.¹⁶

Your former partner just informed you that they have been diagnosed with HIV. You know you should get tested, but you keep putting it off because you're scared of the results.

If your profile indicates that you are a straight male or female, move back two spaces.

If your profile indicates that you are LGBTQ, move back three spaces.

More than 1.1 million people in the U.S. are living with HIV today, but one in seven of them do not know it. While the estimated number of annual HIV infections in the U.S. declined 18% between 2008-2014, gay and bisexual men were the only group that did not experience an overall decline in annual HIV infections.¹⁹

You are experiencing intimate partner violence. Your healthcare provider recognizes the signs, but is unable to connect you with effective assistance services.

Move back four spaces.

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is prevalent in communities across the country and affects women and men of all ages. More than one in three women in the U.S. will experience IPV, which includes rape, physical assault, stalking, emotional manipulation, or a combination of these behaviors, during their lifetimes. Rural women, who tend to experience higher rates of isolation, poverty, and limited access to human services, are almost twice as likely to be turned away from IPV services as urban women due to lack of capacity.²³

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