Who Knows About the Cheaper Option — and Who Does Not

Awareness of low-cost alternatives tracks income almost perfectly. The people who need them most know least.

5 income bands compared	**54.0** lowest-income band did not know about credit-union loans, %	**28.0** highest-income band, same question, %
23.0 lowest-income band had used a cheaper option, %		

The numbers

Household income bands, averaged across states with at least 20 respondents.

Household income	Respondents	Credit-union loan (PAL), %	Extended payment plan, %	Earned-wage access, %	Used an alternative before, %
<25k	3368	54.0	46.8	41.4	23.0
25-49k	4391	56.5	49.6	43.9	25.3
50-74k	2372	48.4	43.1	38.6	21.2
75-99k	1169	25.4	23.2	20.3	12.0
100k+	747	28.0	23.8	20.8	13.3

How we counted

- Income is self-reported annual household income.
- The question asked what borrowers wish they had known before taking the loan.

Data updated 2026-07-31. Full dataset in CSV at https://paykedge.com/research/alternatives-by-income/data.csv

How to cite

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