

Curry County

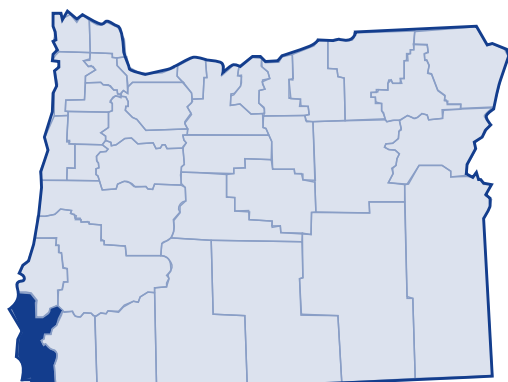
Major findings

From 1979 to 1999, poverty rates in Curry County remained relatively constant. During this time, Curry County's poverty rate was equal to that of the state and nation.

Children experienced the highest rates of poverty during this 20-year period. Poverty did decrease for this group between 1989 and 1999. Families with children had higher rates of poverty than families without children. This is especially true for families headed by single mothers. In Curry County, 40 percent of families headed by single mothers with a child experienced poverty in 1999.

According to the basic family budget for Curry County, only one family type (2 adults with 1 child) could afford the basic family expenses if both adults earned Curry County's median family income.

In 2003, 23.5 percent of Curry County residents received services from the Department of Human Services.¹



Low-income needs

Southwestern Oregon Community Action Committee prioritized the needs of the low-income population in Curry County as follows:²

- **Food, food warehouse**—develop a warehouse in order to take advantage of fresh, frozen and bulk food shipments
- **Affordable housing**—develop additional rental housing units to address the needs of at-risk families, people with disabilities and senior citizens
- **Head Start services**—strengthen South Coast Head Start, a program of SWOCAC, to deliver services to low-income households
- **Emergency medical services**—strengthen and expand support for MedNet (now funded entirely by local Longshoreman's Union payroll deductions) to help uninsured household with medical, dental or prescription costs
- **Energy Assistance**—improve access to the program for low-income households, especially elderly, people with disabilities and families with children younger than 6
- **Services and housing to homeless teens**
- **Emergency food and shelter services**
- **Self-sufficiency programs**—help households achieve housing stability and to follow a plan to increase household self-reliance
- **General homeless programs**—identify additional funding
- **Increased local capacity of service community**
- **Program for seniors**—prepare for the demographic shift, growing elderly population
- **Affordable transportation**—adequate transportation for low-income households
- **Affordable childcare**—affordable child care options for working low-income families

Curry County

Growth

According to the 2000 Census, Curry County grew 9.4 percent from 1989 to 1999. The Census Bureau determined the poverty status of 20,868 county residents and found that 12.2 percent (2,554 people) lived below the poverty threshold. This is an increase of 7.8 percent in the number of persons living in poverty (2,369 people) in 1989. The overall percent of Curry County's population living in poverty decreased from 1989 to 1999, but the number of people living in poverty did not.

20-year trend

In the 20 years after 1979, the poverty rate in Curry County remained constant at 12.2 percent of the population. The number of persons in poverty rose from 2,057 people to 2,554 people. Curry County's poverty rate matched state and national poverty rates throughout this period.

Poverty and age

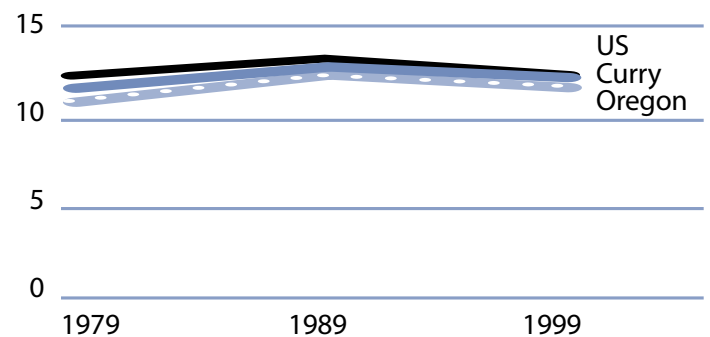
In the 2000 Census, among all age categories examined, children younger than 18 years of age experienced the highest rate of poverty at 13.9 percent. People 65 and older experienced the lowest rate at 10.6 percent. Over the 20-year period from 1979 to 1999, the rate of poverty was consistently highest for children 18 years of age and younger.

Poverty in selected communities
Number of persons below poverty level
(poverty rate)

	1989	1999	Percent Change
Curry County	2,369 (12.4%)	2,554 (12.2%)	7.8% (rate difference) (-0.1%)
Oregon Statewide	344,867 (12.4%)	388,740 (11.6%)	12.7% (-0.8%)
United States	31,742,864 (13.1%)	33,899,812 (12.4%)	6.8% (-0.7%)

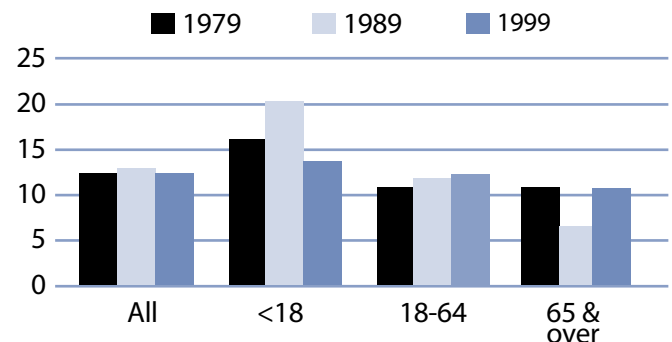
Source: US Census. County numbers have been rounded and, therefore, may not add exactly to totals.

Poverty rates 1979-1999



Source: US Census.

Rate of poverty by age



Source: US Census.

Poverty and Curry County families

In 1999, 601 Curry County families lived in poverty (9.7 percent). Of the families in poverty, 52.9 percent (318 families) had a household member who worked; 6.8 percent (41 families) had a full-time year-round worker.

The poverty rate was higher for families with children. Families with at least one child younger than 18 experienced poverty at a rate of 13.6 percent. Families with a child 5 years and younger experienced poverty at a higher rate—14 percent. The rate for families with children headed by single mothers was 40.9 percent and the rate was even higher with younger children (younger than 5 years) at 54.1 percent.

The poverty rate for married couples with children younger than 18 was lower at 4.6 percent. From 1979 to 1999, the number of female-headed households with children (no husband present) who lived in poverty increased from 112 families in 1979 to 187 families in 1999.

Poverty and race/ethnicity

Among racial/ethnic groups,³ White residents comprised the majority of people in poverty at 94.6 percent. When examining poverty based on race/ethnicity, however, the poverty rate among White was 12.4 percent. American Indian had higher rates of poverty at 14.6. From 1989 to 1999, most racial and ethnic categories experienced improvements in poverty rates. White remained relatively constant during the same time period.

Curry County families in poverty

Number Below Poverty Level (poverty rate)	1979			1989		1999		% Change 1979-99 (rate difference)
	1979	1989	1999	1979	1989	1979	1989	
All Families	475 (9.3%)	513 (8.5%)	601 (9.7%)					26.5% (0.4%)
With Children under 18	283 (13.2)	337 (15.3%)	300 (13.6%)					6.0% (0.4%)
Female-headed with Children under 18	112 (42.3%)	151 (45.8%)	187 (40.9%)					67.0% (-1.4%)

Source: US Census. County numbers have been rounded and, therefore, may not add exactly to totals.

Curry County poverty and race/ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	% Total 1999 Population (population)	% Poverty 1999 Population (poverty population)	Poverty Rate by Race 1999	Poverty Rate by Race 1989
White	93.0% (19,405)	94.6% (2,415)	12.4%	12.2%
Black	0.1% (25)	0.0% (0)	0.0%	100.0%
American Indian	2.4% (501)	2.9% (73)	14.6%	16.9%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.8%/0.0% (166/7)	0.1%/0.0% (2/0)	1.2%/NA	10.7%*
Other	1.0% (216)	0.3% (7)	3.2%	13.5%
2 or More Races	2.6% (548)	2.2% (57)	10.4%	NA
Hispanic Origin	3.4% (705)	1.9% (49)	7.0%	31.5%

* Asian and Pacific Islander were not separate categories in the 1990 Census.

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County income

On a per capita basis, Curry County's personal income was \$24,679 in 2002, about 86 percent of the state average of \$28,792, and 80 percent of the national average, \$30,906. Per capita income in Curry County rose 2.9 percent between 2001 and 2002. The 10-year trend, from 1992 to 2002, of per capita income shows average annual growth of 3.7 percent. In 2001, Curry County's average earnings per job were \$23,511 compared to \$33,063 for the state.⁴

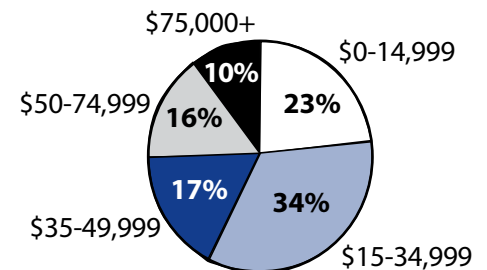
Poverty thresholds

Segmenting census data by income reveals more detail about the people experiencing poverty in Curry County. The 2000 Census showed that 895 people or 35 percent of those living below the federal poverty threshold actually earned 50 percent or less of the poverty threshold. Other segments of the population earned equal to or above the poverty level but still needed assistance. In Oregon, 185 percent of the poverty level is the income guideline used for federal food programs such as food stamps, child nutrition, and the Women, Infants, and Children program. In 1999, 33.6 percent of Curry County's population, or 7,019 people earned below 185 percent of the poverty threshold.

Public assistance

Participation in public assistance programs serves as an indirect measure—or indicator—of the extent of poverty and the measures taken to serve the public. According to the 2000 Census, 362 households or 3.8 percent of all households in Curry County reported public assistance income. The average amount of public assistance income for 1999 was \$3,111. The 20-year trend showed a decrease in households who received public assistance income, from 400 households or 5.9 percent of all households in 1979.

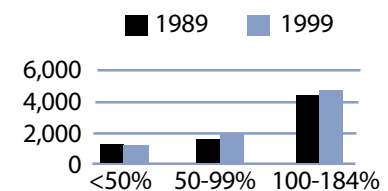
1999 household income distribution—Curry County



Source: US Census.

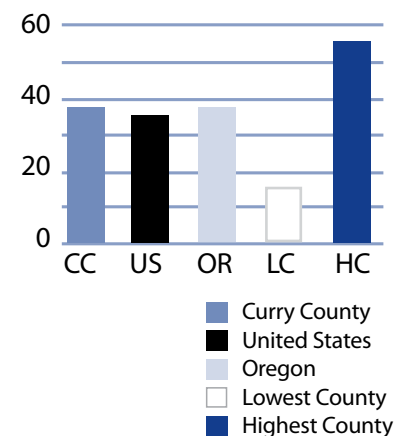
Note: The median household income in Curry County was \$30,117 in 1999 compared to \$22,579 in 1989 (33.4 percent increase).

Number of persons in poverty Threshold percentiles



Source: US Census.

Public assistance in Oregon Rate per thousand population



Source: US Census.

Basic family budget

According to U.S. Department of Agriculture statistics released in October 1999, about 12.6 percent of Oregonian households had difficulty meeting their basic need for food. This chart outlines typical expenses for four family types in Curry County and the corresponding income those families would need to meet expenses.

Using this budget, only one family type (two adults with one child) could afford the basic family expenses if both adults earned Curry County's median family income.

To learn more about this basic family budget, see Methodology and Data References section.

What the poverty threshold buys

Families at the poverty level in Curry County could afford 41.4 to 43.1 percent of this basic family budget.

Wages

According to the Oregon Employment Department, the average weekly wage in Curry County is \$413.25. The federal government had the highest weekly average of \$664.49 and the services industry had the lowest weekly average of \$295.26.

This chart illustrates a family's ability to be self-sufficient based on earnings of average wages for Curry County. The two-worker scenario relies on both workers earning average wages.

Only families with two full-time workers earning Curry County's average wage and that had one child could afford the basic family budget.

Curry County's basic family budget

Basic Family Budget/Monthly	1 Adult/ 1 Child	1 Adult/ 3 Children	2 Adults/ 1 Child	2 Adults/ 3 Children
Housing	\$561	\$718	\$561	\$718
Food	\$230	\$489	\$388	\$647
Child Care	\$384	\$847	\$384	\$847
Transportation	\$197	\$197	\$277	\$277
Health Care	\$245	\$245	\$293	\$293
Other Necessities	\$245	\$374	\$294	\$423
Taxes	\$393	\$542	\$462	\$636
Basic Family Budget Needed/Monthly	\$2,255	\$3,412	\$2,659	\$3,841
Basic Family Budget Total/Annual	\$27,060	\$40,943	\$31,910	\$46,089
Median Annual Income (Census 2000)	\$17,934	\$17,934	\$42,772	\$42,772
Median Family Income as % of Basic Budget	66.3%	43.8%	134.0%	92.8%

Poverty and Curry County's basic family budget

Basic Family Budget/Monthly	1 Adult/ 1 Child	1 Adult/ 3 Children	2 Adults/ 1 Child	2 Adults/ 3 Children
Poverty Threshold	\$11,483	\$16,954	\$13,410	\$19,882
% of Basic Budget	42.4%	41.4%	42.0%	43.1%

Curry County wages and the basic budget

	1 Worker	1 Worker	2 Workers	2 Workers
Average Monthly Wage (AMW)*	\$1,777	\$1,777	\$3,554	\$3,554
	1 Adult/ 1 Child	1 Adult/ 3 Children	2 Adults/ 1 Child	2 Adults/ 3 Children
Self Sufficiency Wage (SSW)**	\$2,255	\$3,412	\$2,659	\$3,841
Difference (SSW-AMW)	-\$478	-\$1,635	\$895	-\$287
Wage as % of Self Sufficiency	78.8%	52.1%	133.7%	92.5%

* Source: 1999 Oregon Covered Employment and Payrolls.
** Based on Basic Family Budget for Curry County.

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Curry County Poverty Measures	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003
Population	19,327 ¹	21,137 ²	21,127	21,480	21,813
% of People Living Below Poverty Level	12.4% ¹	12.2% ²	NA	NA	NA
Median Income	\$22,579 ¹	\$30,117 ²	NA	NA	NA
Unemployment Rate	7.5%	6.3%	6.0%	6.7%	7.3%
8th Grade Drug Use	13.5% ³	18.3%	NA	24.2%	NA
HS Dropout	5.6% ⁴	5.6%	4.5%	3.2%	NA
Teen Pregnancy per 1,000 Ages 10-17	14.7	11.2	10.9	8.9	NA
Prenatal Care	71.1%	69.3%	71.6%	74.7%	NA
Child Care Available per 100 Children Under 13	0	9.3	13.7	13.2	NA
Homeownership Rate	72.5% ¹	73.0% ²	NA	NA	NA
% Renters with 30% or More Rental Burden	39.1% ¹	47.5% ²	NA	NA	NA
Curry County Services	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
One Night Shelter Count	5	49	10	0	19
# of New Units Created with OHCS Funding	0	24	0	0	0
OHCS Funding for Subsidized Housing	\$0	\$1.1 m	\$0	\$0	\$0
# Home Loans for Low-Income Households	1	0	0	2	0
\$ Home Loans for Low-Income Households	\$80,650	\$0	\$0	\$163,336	\$0
# Households Receiving Energy Assistance	NA	507	452	596	588
% of Population Enrolled in the Oregon Health Plan	NA	NA	NA	19.3%	15.1%
# Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	1,405	1,344	1,317	1,545	1,671
% Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	44.0%	43.8%	42.9%	51.6%	56.7%
% of Population Receiving Food Stamps	NA	NA	NA	15.8%	13.4%
% of Population Receiving TANF	NA	NA	NA	2.7%	2.3%
% of Population Receiving DHS Services	NA	NA	27.6%	26.9%	23.5%

¹ 1990 Census data, year is 1989

² 2000 Census data, year is 1999

³ 1998

⁴ 1996

NA=Not Available

Endnotes

¹ Oregon Department of Human Services Integrated Client Database.

² Southwestern Oregon CAC's Community Services Block Grant Work Plan for 2003-05.

³ Please see Methodology and Data References section for information on Census Race/Ethnicity Categories.

⁴ Bureau of Economic Analysis: Regional Economic Accounts.