

Jefferson County

Major findings

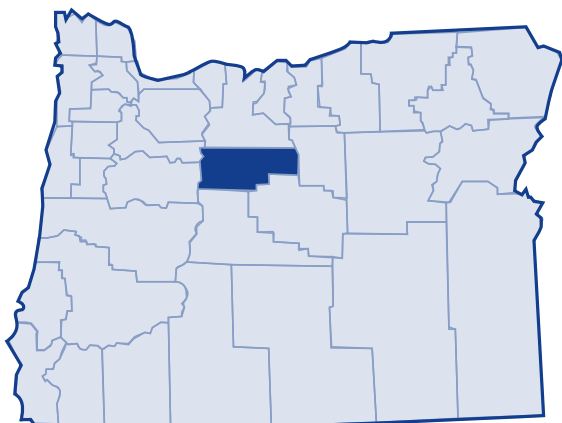
According to the US Census, Jefferson County has experienced rapid growth from 1989 to 1999. During this same period, poverty decreased. Due to sharp increases in poverty from 1979 to 1989, Jefferson County's poverty rates in 1999 remained above those of the state and the nation.

Of those living below the federal poverty threshold, 43 percent earned 50 percent or less of the poverty threshold for their family type. In addition, one-third of Jefferson County residents earned less than 185 percent of the poverty threshold for their family type, and possibly qualified for public assistance programs, such as food stamps.

Children were most likely to be poor. The number of families headed by a single mother increased 182.6 percent between 1979 and 1999.

American Indians faced a disproportionately higher poverty rate compared to other racial and ethnic categories—with 32 percent in poverty in 1999.

Among Oregon counties, Jefferson County residents reported one of the highest rates of public assistance in the 2000 Census. In 2003, 36.9 percent of the county's residents received services from the Department of Human Services.¹



Low-income needs

Central Oregon Community Action Agency Network prioritized the needs of the low-income population in Jefferson County as follows:²

- **Housing**—help paying deposits and first/last months' rent; help addressing housing barriers such as credit problems, past criminal activities, or previous evictions
- **Utilities**—access to utility assistance, especially when rental units are energy inefficient
- **Transportation**—affordable and accessible transportation, including medical transportation; improve the dial-a-ride system and public transportation
- **Employment**—full-time employment with benefits
- **Hunger/Food Stamps**—food pantries, brown bag program, free and reduced lunch, summer feeding programs and especially rural food-assistance programs face particular challenges
- **Health Care**—access to health insurance, health care, prescription medications, and dental care
- **Childcare**—affordable quality childcare
- **Education**—job training and financial assistance for low-income parents seeking to achieve educational goals

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Growth

According to the 2000 Census, Jefferson County grew 39 percent between 1989 and 1999. The US Census Bureau determined the poverty status of 18,753 county residents and found that 14.6 percent (2,747 people) lived below the poverty threshold. This is an increase of 9.7 percent from the number of persons living in poverty (2,503 people) in 1989. The overall percent of Jefferson 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 Jefferson County increased from 13.3 percent of the population to 14.6 percent. The number of persons in poverty rose from 1,530 people to 2,747 people. Jefferson County's poverty rates remained higher than the state and national poverty rates throughout this period.

Poverty and age

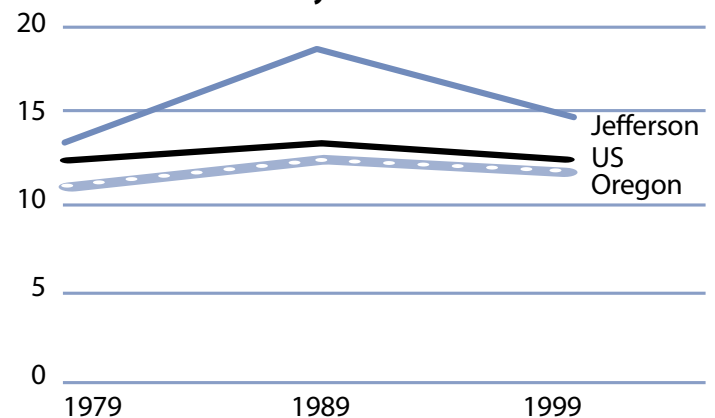
In the 2000 Census, among all age categories examined children 5 years of age and younger experienced the highest rate of poverty at 25.9 percent. Children younger than 18 years of age experienced poverty at 22.3 percent. People 65 and older experienced the lowest rate at 5.9 percent. Over the 20-year period from 1979 to 1999, the rate of poverty was consistently highest for children younger than 18.

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

	1989	1999	Percent Change
Jefferson County	2,503 (18.6%)	2,747 (14.6%)	9.7% (rate difference) (-4.0%)
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%)

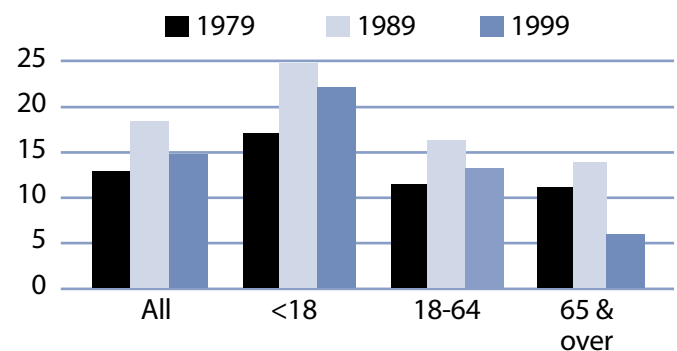
Source: US Census. County numbers have been rounded and, therefore, may not add exactly to totals.

Poverty rates 1979-1999



Source: US Census.

Rate of poverty by age



Source: US Census.

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Poverty and Jefferson County families

In 1999, 541 Jefferson County families lived in poverty (10.4 percent). Of the families in poverty, 71.0 percent (384 families) had a worker and 15.2 percent (82 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 17.4 percent. Families with a child 5 years and younger experienced poverty at a higher rate of 25.6 percent. The rate for families with children headed by single mothers was 47.3 percent and was even higher with younger children (less than 5 years) at 67 percent.

The poverty rate for married couples with children younger than 18 was lower at 9.1 percent. From 1979 to 1999, the number of female-headed households with children (no husband present) who lived in poverty increased from 92 families in 1979 to 260 families in 1999.

Poverty and race/ethnicity

Among racial/ethnic groups,³ White residents comprised the majority of people in poverty at 46.3 percent. When examining poverty based on race/ethnicity, however, the poverty rate among White was 9.8 percent. American Indian experienced disproportionately higher rates of poverty. The poverty rate among American Indian was 32 percent.

Jefferson County families in poverty

Number Below Poverty Level (poverty rate)				% Change
	1979	1989	1999	1979-99 (rate difference)
All Families	316 (10.1%)	490 (13.3%)	541 (10.4%)	71.2% (-0.3%)
With Children under 18	249 (13.9%)	401 (19.9%)	469 (17.4%)	88.4% (3.5%)
Female-headed with Children under 18	92 (32.6%)	176 (47.8%)	260 (47.3%)	182.6% (14.7%)

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

Jefferson 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	68.9% (12,920)	46.3% (1,272)	9.8%	14.1%
Black	0.1% (12)	0.0% (0)	0.0%	36.8%
American Indian	15.0% (2,820)	32.8% (901)	32.0%	30.5%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.6%/0.1% (105/16)	0.0%/0.0% (0/0)	10.0%/0.0%	12.7%*
Other	12.1% (2,266)	16.0% (439)	19.4%	39.5%
2 or More Races	3.3% (614)	4.9% (135)	22.0%	NA
Hispanic Origin	17.7% (3,321)	26.2% (719)	21.7%	37.7%

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

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From 1989 to 1999, most racial and ethnic categories experienced improvements in poverty rates, except American Indian.

County income

On a per capita basis, Jefferson County's personal income was \$20,510 in 2002, about 71 percent of the state average of \$28,792, and 66 percent of the national average, \$30,906. Per capita income in Jefferson County rose 3.1 percent between 2001 and 2002. The 10-year trend, from 1992 to 2002, in per capita income shows average annual growth of 2.3 percent. Average earnings per job for 2001 were \$25,501 in Jefferson County compared to \$33,063 for the state.⁴

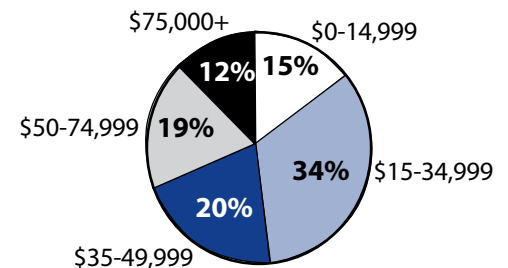
Poverty thresholds

Segmenting census data by income reveals more detail about the people experiencing poverty in Jefferson County. The 2000 Census showed that 1,205 people or 43.9 percent of those living below the federal poverty threshold were actually earning 50 percent less income than the poverty threshold. Another segment of the population may earn equal to or above the poverty level but still need assistance due to inadequate incomes for their needs. 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, 33.7 percent of Jefferson County's population, or 6,329 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, 370 households or 5.5 percent of all households in Jefferson County reported public assistance income. The average amount of public assistance income for 1999 was \$2,754. The 20-year trend showed an increase in households that reported receiving public assistance income, from 173 households or 4.3 percent of all households in 1979.

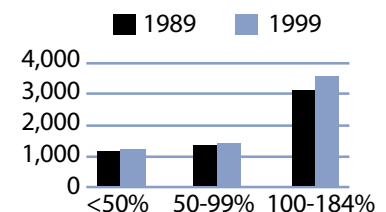
1999 household income distribution—Jefferson County



Source: US Census.

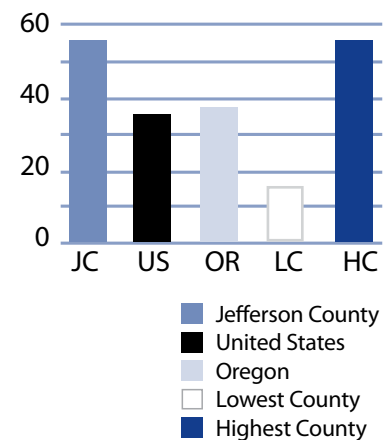
Note: The median household income in Jefferson County was \$35,853 in 1999 compared to \$23,532 in 1989 (52.4 percent increase).

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

One adult who worked at median family income could not afford this basic family budget for either family size.

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 Jefferson County could afford 43.9 to 48.1 percent of this basic family budget.

Wages

According to the Oregon Employment Department, the average weekly wage in Jefferson County is \$474.47. The federal government had the highest weekly average of \$682.12 and retail trade industry had the lowest weekly average of \$279.10.

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

An adult who worked full-time at Jefferson County's average wage could not afford the basic family budget for a family of four.

Jefferson 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	\$477	\$657	\$477	\$657
Food	\$230	\$489	\$388	\$647
Child Care	\$354	\$792	\$354	\$792
Transportation	\$197	\$197	\$277	\$277
Health Care	\$245	\$245	\$293	\$293
Other Necessities	\$219	\$355	\$268	\$404
Taxes	\$268	\$483	\$401	\$554
Basic Family Budget Needed/Monthly	\$1,990	\$3,218	\$2,458	\$3,624
Basic Family Budget Total/Annual	\$23,874	\$38,611	\$29,494	\$43,490
Median Family Income (Census 2000)	\$19,165	\$19,165	\$44,028	\$44,028
Median Family Income as % of Basic Budget	80.3%	49.6%	149.3%	101.2%

Poverty and Jefferson 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	48.1%	43.9%	45.5%	45.7%

Jefferson County wages and the basic budget

	1 Worker	1 Worker	2 Workers	2 Workers
Average Monthly Wage (AMW)*	\$2,040	\$2,040	\$4,080	\$4,080
	1 Adult/ 1 Child	1 Adult/ 3 Children	2 Adults/ 1 Child	2 Adults/ 3 Children
Self Sufficiency Wage (SSW)**	\$1,990	\$3,218	\$2,458	\$3,624
Difference (SSW-AMW)	\$50	-\$1,178	\$1,622	\$456
Wage as % of Self Sufficiency	102.5%	63.4%	166.0%	112.6%

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

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Jefferson County Poverty Measures	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003
Population	13,676 ¹	19,009 ²	19,459	19,592	19,667
% of People Living Below Poverty Level	18.6% ¹	14.6% ²	NA	NA	NA
Median Income	\$23,532 ¹	\$35,853 ²	NA	NA	NA
Unemployment Rate	6.0	5.7	7.9	7.6	7.9
8th Grade Drug Use	16.8% ³	16.6%	NA	27.8%	NA
HS Dropout	9.8% ⁴	6.5%	5.7%	4.1%	NA
Teen Pregnancy per 1,000 Ages 10-17	34.5	26.7	21.7	15.9	NA
Prenatal Care	69.6%	67.3%	64.4%	68.5%	NA
Child Care Available per 100 Children Under 13	21.3	21.4	17.4	18.6	NA
Homeownership Rate	64.9% ¹	71.3% ²	NA	NA	NA
% Renters with 30% or More Rental Burden	38.8% ¹	38.9% ²	NA	NA	NA
Jefferson County Services	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
One Night Shelter Count	60	24	124	43	41
# of New Units Created with OHCS Funding	0	0	0	0	40
OHCS Funding for Subsidized Housing	\$85,000	\$0	\$0	\$366,011	\$50,000
# Home Loans for Low-Income Households	6	6	2	5	2
\$ Home Loans for Low-Income Households	\$346,970	\$461,895	\$161,588	\$429,380	\$187,946
# Households Receiving Energy Assistance	NA	656	586	777	631
% of Population Enrolled in the Oregon Health Plan	NA	NA	NA	27.1%	24.6%
# Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	1,797	2,293	2,394	2,459	2,544
% Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	49.7%	61.7%	65.0%	65.0%	68.4%
% of Population Receiving Food Stamps	NA	NA	NA	22.4%	22.6%
% of Population Receiving TANF	NA	NA	NA	4.6%	4.1%
% of Population Receiving DHS Services	NA	NA	35.6%	35.7%	36.9%

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 Central Oregon Community Action Agency Network 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.