

Klamath County

Major findings

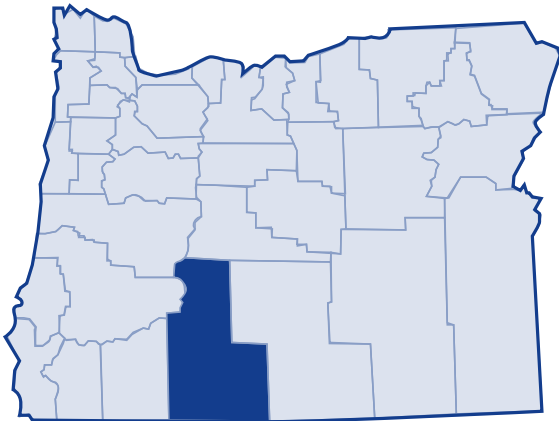
A sharp increase in poverty between 1979 and 1989 put Klamath County poverty rates higher than the state and national average. According to the 2000 Census, county poverty rates remained high through 1999.

In 1999, 40 percent of those who were in poverty in Klamath County earned less than half of the poverty threshold for their family type.

Some groups were more vulnerable to poverty in Klamath County. Families with children, especially families headed by single mothers experienced high poverty rates. Minorities, such as American Indian, Other, and Hispanic Origin have disproportionately high rates of poverty. Poverty among all three of these categories exceeded 32 percent in 1999.

Incomes in Klamath County have not kept pace with those in the rest of the state. In addition, county residents faced high unemployment rates—8.1 in 1999 and 10.2 by 2003.

In 2003, 30.5 percent of Klamath County residents received services from the Department of Human Services.¹



Low-income needs

Klamath and Lake Community Action Agency listed the needs of the low-income population in Klamath County as follows:²

- Increase and improve assistance for households including transitional housing, permanent housing, and emergency shelters for low-income consumers
- Freeing up more resources for existing providers and improving communication and coordination of services within the community
- Increase resources for women in domestic violence situations who do not have children and cannot access mainstream resources to assist them in obtaining housing or jobs
- Assistance with transportation, particularly in rural areas of the county in cooperation with Department of Human Services' and Veterans' transportation programs
- Increase job opportunities for low-income moving off public assistance in collaboration with workforce investment partners and other organizations
- Connect clients facing mental health problems or alcohol and drug dependency with the county mental health departments
- Increase availability of affordable after-school childcare, quality childcare, and latchkey programs
- Ensure clients can access food box programs and congregate meal sites
- Help non-English speaking clients find interpreters
- Improve access to dental services

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Growth

According to the 2000 Census, Klamath County grew 10.5 percent from 1989 to 1999. The US Census Bureau determined the poverty status of 62,693 county residents and found that 16.8 percent (10,515 people) lived below the poverty threshold. This is an increase of 10.8 percent in the number of persons living in poverty (9,494 people) since 1989. The overall percent of Klamath County's population living in poverty remained relatively constant from 1989 to 1999, although the number of people living in poverty increased.

20-year trend

In the 20 years after 1979, the poverty rate in Klamath County increased from 12.6 percent of the population to 16.8 percent. The number of persons in poverty rose from 7,302 people to 10,515 people. Klamath County's poverty rates remained higher than the state and national poverty rates throughout this period.

Poverty and age

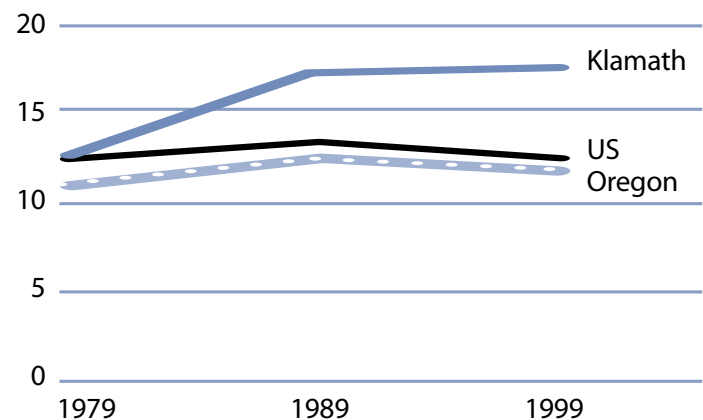
In the 2000 Census, among all age categories examined, children 5 years of age and younger experienced the highest rate of poverty at 26.9 percent. Children younger than 18 years of age experienced poverty at 22.8 percent. People 65 and older experienced the lowest rate: 7.7 percent. Over the 20-year period from 1979 to 1999, the rate of poverty improved for people 65 and older.

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

| | 1989 | 1999 | Percent Change (rate difference) |
|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Klamath County | 9,494 (16.7%) | 10,515 (16.8%) | 10.8% (0.0%) |
| 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%) |

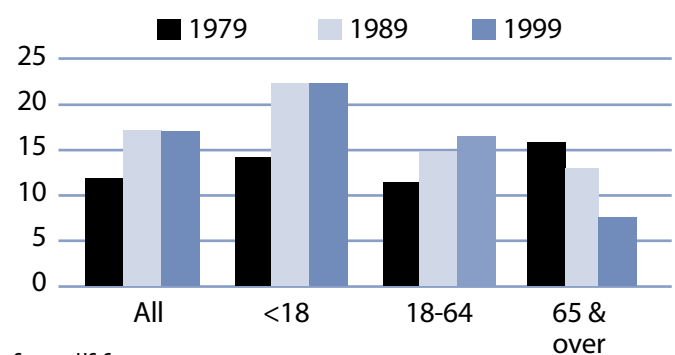
Source: US Census. Calculations may not add due to rounding.

Poverty rates 1979-1999



Source: US Census.

Rate of poverty by age



Source: US Census.

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Poverty and Klamath County families

In 1999, 2,094 Klamath County families lived in poverty (12 percent). Of the families in poverty, 61.9 percent (1,297 families) had a householder who worked and 14.6 percent (305 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 19.9 percent. Families with a child 5 years and younger experienced poverty at the higher rate of 25.9 percent. The rate for families with children headed by single mothers was 42.4 percent and was even higher with younger children (less than 5 years) at 55.1 percent.

The poverty rate for married couples with children younger than 18 was lower at 11.7 percent. From 1979 to 1999, families with children younger than 18 who lived in poverty increased from 12.8 percent to 19.9 percent.

Poverty and race/ethnicity

Among racial/ethnic groups,³ White residents comprised the majority of people in poverty at 76.7 percent. When examining poverty based on race/ethnicity, however, the poverty rate among White was 14.7 percent. American Indian, Other and Hispanic Origin experienced disproportionately higher rates of poverty. Poverty exceeded 32 percent for all three categories.

Between 1989 and 1999, most categories experienced improvements in poverty rates. American Indian remained at 39 percent.

Klamath County families in poverty

| Number Below Poverty Level (poverty rate) | Number Below Poverty Level | | | % Change |
|---|----------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| | 1979 | 1989 | 1999 | 1979-99 (rate difference) |
| All Families | 1,623 (10.0%) | 1,952 (12.3%) | 2,094 (12.0%) | 29.0% (2.0%) |
| With Children under 18 | 1,132 (12.8%) | 1,515 (19.5%) | 1,665 (19.9%) | 47.1% (7.1%) |
| Female-headed with Children under 18 | 573 (47.9%) | 703 (51.2%) | 772 (42.4%) | 34.7% (-5.5%) |

Source: US Census. Calculations may not add due to rounding.

Klamath 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 | 87.3% (54,759) | 76.7% (8,070) | 14.7% | 15.0% |
| Black | 0.5% (288) | 0.5% (50) | 17.4% | 36.7% |
| American Indian | 4.2% (2,617) | 9.9% (1,044) | 39.9% | 39.3% |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 0.7%/0.2% (426/109) | 0.4%/0.0% (46/3) | 10.8%/2.8% | 25.9%* |
| Other | 3.6% (2,244) | 7.8% (825) | 36.8% | 44.0% |
| 2 or More Races | 3.6% (2,250) | 4.5% (477) | 21.2% | NA |
| Hispanic Origin | 7.7% (4,802) | 14.8% (1,557) | 32.4% | 34.7% |

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

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County income

On a per capita basis, Klamath County's personal income was \$23,002 in 2002, about 80 percent of the state average of \$28,792, and 74 percent of the national average, \$30,906. Per capita income in Klamath County rose 5.3 percent between 2001 and 2002. The 10-year trend, from 1992 to 2002, in per capita income shows average annual growth of 3.9 percent. Average earnings per job for 2001 were \$27,290 in Klamath County compared to \$33,063 for the state.⁴

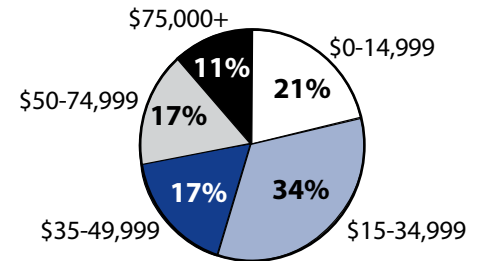
Poverty thresholds

Segmenting census data by income reveals more detail about the people experiencing poverty in Klamath County. The 2000 Census showed that 4,272 people (40.6 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, 37.2 percent of Klamath County's population, or 23,347 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, 1,177 households or 4.7 percent of all households in Klamath County reported public assistance income. The average amount of public assistance income for 1999 was \$2,579. The 20-year trend showed a decrease in households that reported receiving public assistance income, from 1,297 households or 5.9 percent of all households in 1979.

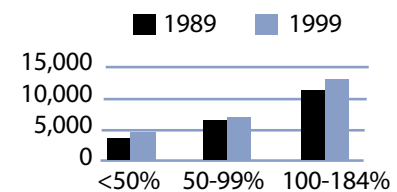
1999 household income distribution—Klamath County



Source: US Census.

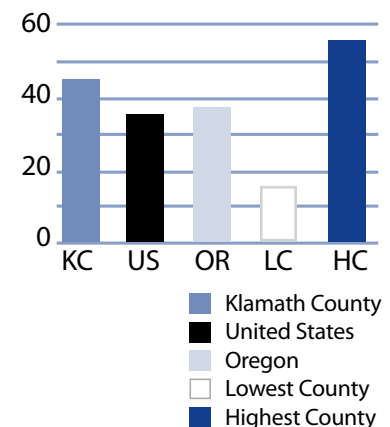
Note: The median household income in Klamath County was \$31,537 in 1999 compared to \$23,054 in 1989 (36.8 percent increase).

Number of persons in poverty Threshold percentiles



Source: US Census.

Public assistance in Oregon Rate per thousand population



Source: US Census.

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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 Klamath County and the corresponding income those families would need to meet their expenses.

Families with one adult who earned median family income in Klamath County could not afford this basic family budget.

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

What the poverty threshold buys

Families living at the poverty level in Klamath County could afford 44.1 to 48.4 percent of this basic family budget.

Wages

According to the Oregon Employment Department, the average weekly wage in Klamath County is \$471.93. The federal government had the highest weekly average of \$729.48 and the mining industry had the lowest weekly average of \$225.05.

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

Families with three children and one adult who earned average wages in Klamath County could not afford the basic expenses.

Klamath 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 | \$348 | \$780 | \$348 | \$780 |
| Transportation | \$197 | \$197 | \$277 | \$277 |
| Health Care | \$245 | \$245 | \$293 | \$293 |
| Other Necessities | \$219 | \$355 | \$268 | \$404 |
| Taxes | \$262 | \$478 | \$398 | \$549 |
| Basic Family Budget Needed/Monthly | \$1,978 | \$3,201 | \$2,449 | \$3,607 |
| Basic Family Budget Total/Annual | \$23,734 | \$38,413 | \$29,390 | \$43,282 |
| Median Family Income (Census 2000) | \$18,433 | \$18,433 | \$44,636 | \$44,636 |
| Median Family Income as % of Basic Budget | 77.7% | 48.0% | 151.9% | 102.5% |

Poverty and Klamath 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 | 48.4% | 44.1% | 45.6% | 45.9% |

Klamath County wages and the basic budget

| | 1 Worker 1 Child | 1 Worker 3 Children | 2 Workers 1 Child | 2 Workers 3 Children |
|--|---------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Average Monthly Wage (AMW)* | \$2,029 | \$2,029 | \$4,059 | \$4,059 |
| Self Sufficiency Wage (SSW)** | \$1,978 | \$3,201 | \$2,449 | \$3,607 |
| Difference (SSW-AMW) | \$51 | -\$1,172 | \$1,610 | \$452 |
| Wage as % of Self Sufficiency | 102.6% | 63.4% | 165.7% | 112.5% |
| * Source: 1999 Oregon Covered Employment and Payrolls. | | | | |
| ** Based on Basic Family Budget for Klamath County. | | | | |

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| Klamath County Poverty Measures | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------|---------|-----------|
| | 1995 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 |
| Population | 57,702 ¹ | 63,775 ² | 64,212 | 64,307 | 64,769 |
| % of People Living Below Poverty Level | 16.7% ¹ | 16.8% ² | NA | NA | NA |
| Median Income | \$23,054 ¹ | \$31,537 ² | NA | NA | NA |
| Unemployment Rate | 7.4 | 8.1 | 9.4 | 9.3 | 10.2 |
| 8th Grade Drug Use | 21.5% ³ | 7.9% | NA | 12.1% | NA |
| HS Dropout | 7.8% ⁴ | 5.7% | 3.6% | 3.5% | NA |
| Teen Pregnancy per 1,000 Ages 10-17 | 21.7 | 15.6 | 17.7 | 12.1 | NA |
| Prenatal Care | 68.7% | 73.5% | 76.2% | 78.0% | NA |
| Child Care Available per 100 Children Under 13 | 20 | 23.7 | 19.8 | 16.7 | NA |
| Homeownership Rate | 65.2% ¹ | 68.0% ² | NA | NA | NA |
| % Renters with 30% or More Rental Burden | 42.9% ¹ | 48.6% ² | NA | NA | NA |
| Klamath County Services | | | | | |
| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 |
| One Night Shelter Count | 461 | 183 | 1,026 | 352 | 350 |
| # of New Units Created with OHCS Funding | 0 | 8 | 0 | 64 | 7 |
| OHCS Funding for Subsidized Housing | \$25,000 | \$175,000 | \$100,000 | \$1.6 m | \$121,500 |
| # Home Loans for Low-Income Households | 58 | 61 | 46 | 45 | 46 |
| \$ Home Loans for Low-Income Households | \$3.4 m | \$3.5 m | \$3.1 m | \$3.2 m | \$3.3 m |
| # Households Receiving Energy Assistance | NA | 2,620 | 2,814 | 3,144 | 3,008 |
| Oregon Health Plan Enrollees | NA | NA | NA | 24.4% | 21.5% |
| # Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch | 5,594 | 5,223 | 5,266 | 5,951 | 5,800 |
| % Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch | 50.2% | 47.3% | 48.6% | 55.6% | 55.0% |
| % of Population Receiving Food Stamps | NA | NA | NA | 20.2% | 19.5% |
| % of Population Receiving TANF | NA | NA | NA | 2.3% | 1.8% |
| % of Population Receiving DHS Services | NA | NA | 33.2% | 33.0% | 30.5% |
| 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 Klamath and Lake Community Action Agency 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.