

Major findings

According to the US Census, the poverty rate and the number of people in poverty decreased in Linn County between 1989 and 1999.

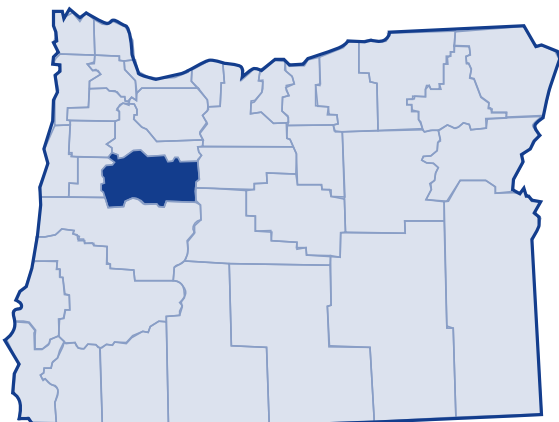
Of Linn County residents in poverty, 40 percent earned 50 percent or less of the poverty threshold. Children experienced the highest rates of poverty in Linn County during the 20 years between 1979 and 1999.

Families with one adult who earned median income in Linn County could not afford basic family expenses.

Unemployment in Linn County exceeded the state average in 2003, reaching 10.9 percent.

Nearly half (48.8 percent) of Linn County residents who rented reported spending 30 percent or more of their income on rent.

In 2003, 27.1 percent of Linn county residents received services from the Department of Human Services.¹



Low-income needs

Community Services Consortium prioritized the needs of the low-income population in Linn County as follows:²

- Assist households to save energy and improve their living conditions through home weatherization, energy education, house diagnostics, and efficiency testing of appliances
- Provide transitional housing and case management services to help households move toward self-sufficiency
- Provide energy conservation education to enable households to reduce their energy burden and increase resources for other needs
- Improve housing conditions for low- and moderate-income families
- Prevent hunger by soliciting, transporting, storing and distributing food
- Provide homeless families with the skills and strategies to obtain and maintain housing.
- Provide youth education and employment and adult and dislocated worker employment and training
- Continue to integrate, improve and evaluate the delivery of services in county
- Provide information and referral services for medical, dental, alcohol and drug treatment, and other basic needs
- Aid in transportation costs such as gas, car repairs, and public transportation
- Provide new affordable housing opportunities, community facilities, and grant management services
- Plan for, allocate, and monitor homeless funding to local service providers

Growth

According to the 2000 Census, Linn County grew 13 percent between 1989 and 1999. The US Census Bureau determined the poverty status of 101,855 county residents and found that 11.4 percent (11,618 people) lived below the poverty threshold. This is a decrease of 4.6 percent in the number of persons living in poverty (12,178 people) since 1989. The overall percent of Linn County's population living in poverty decreased from 1989 to 1999, as did the number of people living in poverty.

20-year trend

In the 20 years after 1979, the poverty rate in Linn County decreased from 12.4 percent of the population to 11.4 percent. The number of persons in poverty rose from 11,034 people to 11,618 people. Linn County's poverty rates remained relatively equal to the state and national poverty rates throughout this period.

Poverty and age

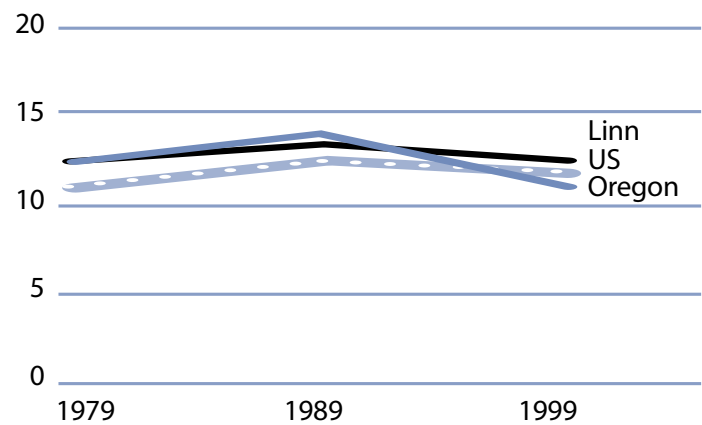
In the 2000 Census, among all age categories examined, children 5 years of age and younger experienced the highest rate of poverty at 18.5 percent. Children under 18 years of age experienced poverty at 15.6 percent. People 65 and older experienced the lowest rate at 7.1 percent. Over the 20-year period from 1979 to 1999, the rate of poverty was consistently highest for children.

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

	1989	1999	Percent Change
Linn County	12,178 (13.5%)	11,618 (11.4%)	-4.6% (-2.1%)
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%)

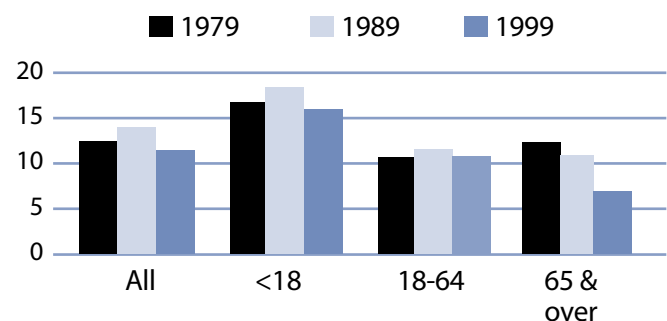
Source: US Census. County numbers have been rounded and, therefore, may not add exactly to totals.

Poverty rates 1979-1999



Source: US Census.

Rate of poverty by age



Source: US Census.

Poverty and Linn County families

In 1999, 2,533 Linn County families lived in poverty (8.9 percent). Of the families in poverty, 51 percent (1,292 families) had a worker and 10.4 percent (263 families) had a full-time year-round worker.

The poverty rate was higher for families with children. Families with at least one child under 18 experienced poverty at a rate of 13.6 percent. Families with a child 5 years and younger experienced poverty at a higher rate of 16.6 percent. The rate for families with children headed by single mothers was 40.5 percent and was even higher with younger children (less than 5 years) at 53 percent.

The poverty rate for married couples with children under 18 was lower at 6.2 percent. From 1979 to 1999, the number of female-headed households with children (no husband present) who lived in poverty increased from 998 families in 1979 to 1,087 families in 1999.

Poverty and race/ethnicity

Among racial/ethnic groups,³ White residents comprised the majority of people in poverty at 88.2 percent. When examining poverty based on race/ethnicity, however, the poverty rate among White was 10.8 percent. Other and Hispanic Origin experienced disproportionately higher rates of poverty. The poverty rate among Other was 30.4 percent, while Hispanic

Linn County families in poverty

Number Below Poverty Level (poverty rate)				% Change
	1979	1989	1999	1979-99 (rate difference)
All Families	2,533 (10.2%)	2,597 (10.1%)	2,533 (8.9%)	0% (-1.3%)
With Children under 18	1,952 (14.5%)	2,000 (16.0%)	1,870 (13.6%)	-4.2 (-0.9%)
Female-headed with Children under 18	998 (47.3%)	1,142 (49.6%)	1,087 (40.5%)	8.9% (-6.8%)

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

Linn 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% (94,741)	88.2% (10,243)	10.8%	13.3%
Black	0.2% (237)	0.4% (45)	19.0%	40.4%
American Indian	1.3% (1,359)	2.3% (273)	20.1%	21.8%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.8%/0.2% (780/160)	0.6%/0.0% (70/4)	9.0%/2.5%	10.2%*
Other	1.8% (1,868)	4.9% (567)	30.4%	23.7%
2 or More Races	2.7% (2,710)	3.6% (416)	23.1%	NA
Hispanic Origin	4.1% (4,181)	9.5% (1,104)	26.4%	22.1%

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

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Origin had a 26.4 percent rate. From 1989 to 1999, most categories experienced improvements in poverty rates. Poverty increased for Other and Hispanic Origin.

County income

On a per capita basis, Linn County's personal income was \$24,067 in 2002, about 84 percent of the state average of \$28,792, and 78 percent of the national average, \$30,906. Per capita income in Linn County rose 2.3 percent between 2001 and 2002. The 10-year trend, from 1992 to 2002, of per capita income shows average annual growth of 3.8 percent. Average earnings per job for 2001 were \$29,760 in Linn County compared to \$33,063 for the state.⁴

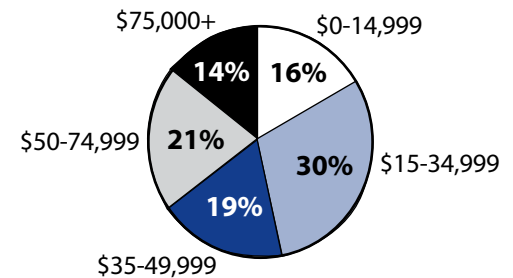
Poverty thresholds

Segmenting census data by income reveals more detail about the people experiencing poverty in Linn County. The 2000 Census showed that 4,968 people or 42.8 percent of those living below the federal poverty threshold were actually earning 50 percent or less than the poverty threshold. Other segments of the population earned equal to or more than 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, 28.5 percent of Linn County's population, or 28,978 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, 1,533 households or 3.9 percent of all households in Linn County reported public assistance income. The average amount of public assistance income for 1999 was \$3,520. The 20-year trend showed a decrease in households that reported receiving public assistance income, from 2,637 households or 8.1 percent of all households in 1979.

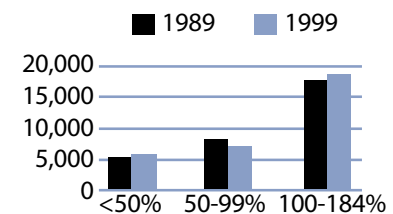
1999 household income distribution—Linn County



Source: US Census.

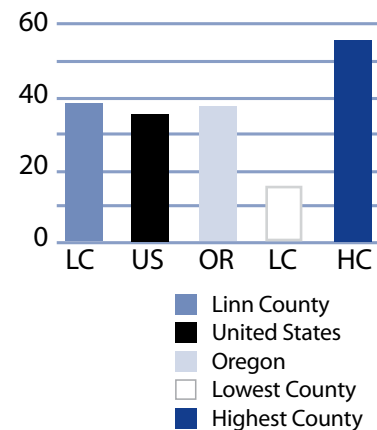
Note: The median household income in Linn County was \$37,518 in 1999 compared to \$25,209 in 1989 (48.8 percent increase).

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

Families with one adult earning Linn County's median income cannot afford the basic family budget.

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 Linn County could afford 40 percent to 42.1 percent of this basic family budget.

Wages

According to the Oregon Employment Department, the average weekly wage in Linn County is \$534.53. The manufacturing industry had the highest weekly average of \$734.58 and non-classifiable had the lowest weekly average of \$298.14.

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

An adult who has three children and who worked full-time at Linn County's average wage could not afford the basic family budget.

Linn 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	\$575	\$790	\$575	\$790
Food	\$230	\$489	\$388	\$647
Child Care	\$379	\$836	\$379	\$836
Transportation	\$197	\$197	\$277	\$277
Health Care	\$245	\$245	\$293	\$293
Other Necessities	\$250	\$396	\$299	\$445
Taxes	\$399	\$578	\$467	\$672
Basic Family Budget Needed/Monthly	\$2,275	\$3,531	\$2,678	\$3,960
Basic Family Budget Total/Annual	\$27,294	\$42,375	\$32,142	\$47,519
Median Annual Income (Census 2000)	\$20,907	\$20,907	\$50,611	\$50,611
Median Family Income as % of Basic Budget	76.6%	49.3%	157.5%	106.5%

Poverty and Linn 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	42.1%	40.0%	41.7%	41.8%

Linn County wages and the basic budget

	1 Worker	1 Worker	2 Workers	2 Workers
	1 Adult/ 1 Child	1 Adult/ 3 Children	2 Adults/ 1 Child	2 Adults/ 3 Children
Average Monthly Wage (AMW)*	\$2,298	\$2,298	\$4,596	\$4,596
Self Sufficiency Wage (SSW)**	\$2,275	\$3,531	\$2,678	\$3,960
Difference (SSW-AMW)	\$23	-\$1,233	\$1,918	\$636
Wage as % of Self Sufficiency	101.0%	65.1%	171.6%	116.1%

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

Linn County

Linn County Poverty Measures	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003
Population	91,227 ¹	103,069 ²	103,786	104,898	106,121
% of People Living Below Poverty Level	13.5% ¹	11.4% ²	NA	NA	NA
Median Income	\$25,209 ¹	\$37,518 ²	NA	NA	NA
Unemployment Rate	6.1	7.1	8.3	9.7	10.9
8th Grade Drug Use	26.5% ³	14.8%	NA	27.1%	NA
HS Dropout	8.6% ⁴	6.3%	5.9%	6.1%	NA
Teen Pregnancy per 1,000 Ages 10-17	17.8	15.2	13.2	12.3	NA
Prenatal Care	75.9%	80.5%	80.1%	79.8%	NA
Child Care Available per 100 Children Under 13	19	16.3	15.8	14.9	NA
Homeownership Rate	65.6% ¹	67.9% ²	NA	NA	NA
% Renters with 30% or More Rental Burden	40.2% ¹	48.8% ²	NA	NA	NA
Linn County Services	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
One Night Shelter Count	112	80	146	131	150
# of New Units Created with OHCS Funding	10	12	68	59	74
OHCS Funding for Subsidized Housing	\$624,061	\$1.3 m	\$4.8 m	\$2.3 m	\$3.8 m
# Home Loans for Low-Income Households	34	17	6	3	7
\$ Home Loans for Low-Income Households	\$2.8 m	\$1.5 m	\$490,543	\$269,260	\$565,630
# Households Receiving Energy Assistance	NA	3,723	1,439	1,385	3,652
% of Population Enrolled in the Oregon Health Plan	NA	NA	NA	21.9%	16.9%
# Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	6,613	6,527	6,761	7,709	8,180
% Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	36.8%	36.7%	38.0%	43.0%	45.4%
% of Population Receiving Food Stamps	NA	NA	NA	20.5%	17.8%
% of Population Receiving TANF	NA	NA	NA	4.2%	3.1%
% of Population Receiving DHS Services	NA	NA	29.7%	30.8%	27.1%

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 Community Services Consortium'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.