

# Marion County

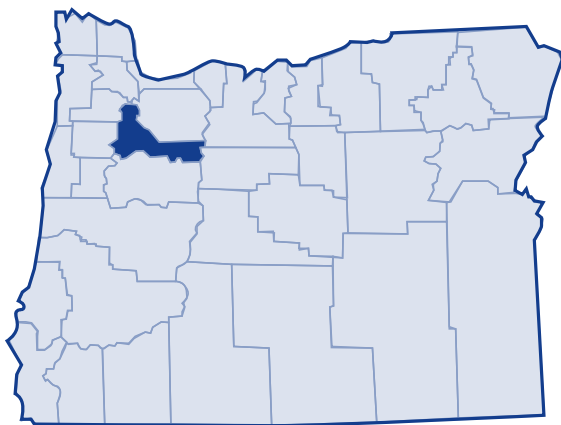
## Major findings

According to the 2000 US Census, the poverty rate in Marion County remained relatively constant between 1989 and 1999. This rate slightly exceeded the state and national average due to increases experienced between 1979 and 1989.

Marion County's children, families with children, and minorities experienced the highest rates of poverty. Between 1979 and 1999, children under 18 experienced the highest rates of poverty. The number of families with children who lived in poverty increased 77 percent. Poverty rates for Black and Pacific Islander reached 30 percent in 1999.

The unemployment rate rose from 5.5 in 2000 to 7.9 in 2003.

In 2003, 28.5 percent of Marion county residents received services from the Department of Human Services.<sup>1</sup>



## Low-income needs

Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency prioritized the needs of the low-income population in Marion County as follows:<sup>2</sup>

- Increase resources to address homeless issues, particularly emergency shelter beds, transitional housing, and case management
- Provide rental assistance to allow homeless families to access permanent housing
- Address food insecurity including as longer-term emergency food assistance
- Increase affordable and low-income housing stock; provide tenant training so homeless families with poor rent histories can access permanent housing, heating assistance, and rental assistance
- Increase the number of shelter beds for runaway and homeless youth, the number of transitional living slots for older homeless youth, mental health and employment services; provide outreach to Salem's disenfranchised street youth
- Improve support for families at risk for child abuse and neglect such as mental health, respite, crisis intervention, and crisis nursery services
- Increase free and low-cost mental health services, including access to medication and medication management
- Increase the number of Head Start slots and establish an Early Head Start program
- Increase the number of free and reduced cost detox and inpatient services
- Increase the number of affordable childcare slots for low-income working parents
- Energy Assistance

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## Growth

According to the 2000 Census, Marion County grew 24.7 percent between 1989 and 1999. The US Census Bureau determined the poverty status of 274,908 county residents and found that 13.5 percent (37,104 people) lived below the poverty threshold. This is an increase of 29.6 percent in the number of persons living in poverty (28,638 people) in 1989. The overall poverty rate in Marion County remained relatively constant from 1989 to 1999.

## 20-year trend

In the 20 years after 1979, the poverty rate in Marion County increased from 10.8 percent of the population to 13.5 percent. The number of persons in poverty rose from 21,178 people to 37,104 people. Marion County's poverty rates were higher than the state and national poverty rates from 1989 to 1999 due to increases between 1979 and 1989.

## Poverty and age

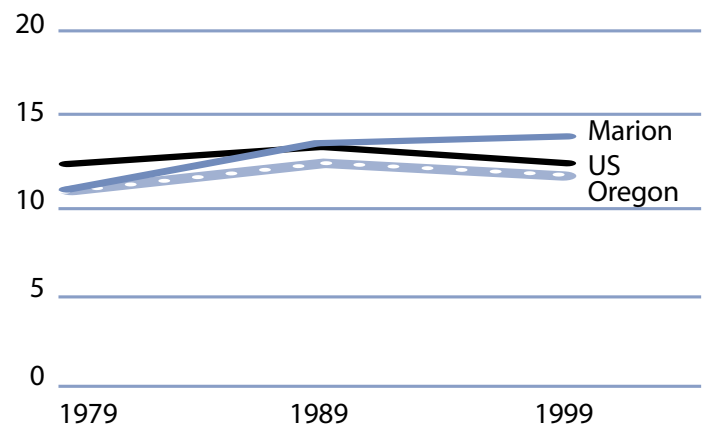
In the 2000 Census, among all age categories examined, children 5 years of age and younger experienced the highest rate of poverty at 22.6 percent. Children younger than 18 years of age experienced poverty at 18.8 percent. People 65 and older experienced the lowest rate: 7.4 percent. Over the 20-year 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                       |
|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Marion County    | 28,638<br>(13.2%)     | 37,104<br>(13.5%)     | 29.6%<br>(rate difference)<br>(0.3%) |
| Oregon Statewide | 344,867<br>(12.4%)    | 388,740<br>(11.6%)    | 12.7%<br>(-0.8%)                     |
| United States    | 31,742,864<br>(13.1%) | 33,899,812<br>(12.4%) | 6.8%<br>(-0.7%)                      |

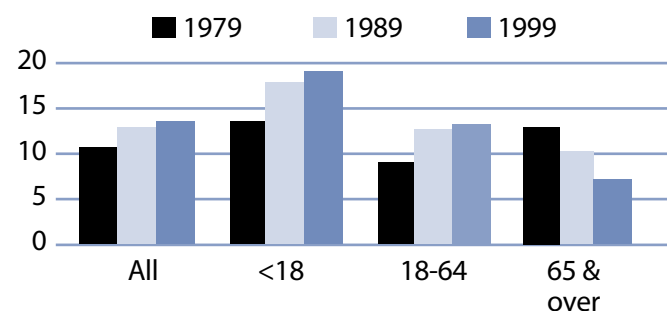
Source: US Census. County numbers have been rounded and, therefore, may not add exactly to totals.

**Poverty rates 1979-1999**



Source: US Census.

**Rate of poverty by age**



Source: US Census.

# Marion County

## Poverty and Marion County families

In 1999, 6,841 Marion County families lived in poverty (9.6 percent). Of the families in poverty, 64.7 percent (4,425 families) had a worker and 15.5 percent (1,060 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 15.1 percent. Families with a child younger than 5 years old experienced poverty at a higher rate of 21 percent. The rate for families with children headed by single mothers was 37.4 percent and was even higher with younger children (less than 5 years) at 50.6 percent.

The poverty rate for married couples with children younger than 18 was lower at 7.9 percent. From 1979 to 1999, the number of families with children who lived in poverty increased from 3,233 families to 5,724 families.

## Poverty and race/ethnicity

Among racial/ethnic groups,<sup>3</sup> White residents comprised the majority of people in poverty at 68.3 percent. When examining poverty based on race/ethnicity, however, the poverty rate among White was 11.3 percent. Black and Pacific Islander experienced disproportionately higher rates of poverty. The poverty rate among Black was 31.1 percent and 29.6 for Pacific Islander. From 1989 to 1999, poverty improved for American Indian, Other and Hispanic Origin. White and Black remained relatively constant.

## Marion 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                              | 4,382 (8.1%)  | 5,521 (9.4%)  | 6,841 (9.6%)  |      |      |      |      | 56.1% (1.5%)                       |
| With Children under 18                    | 3,233 (11.4%) | 4,386 (14.7%) | 5,724 (15.1%) |      |      |      |      | 77.0% (3.7%)                       |
| Female-headed with Children under 18      | 1,731 (35.0%) | 2,415 (40.6%) | 2,985 (37.4%) |      |      |      |      | 72.4% (2.4%)                       |

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

## Marion 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                  | 81.9% (225,052)                      | 68.3% (25,333)                                 | 11.3%                     | 11.8%                     |
| Black                  | 0.7% (2,016)                         | 1.7% (627)                                     | 31.1%                     | 31.6%                     |
| American Indian        | 1.2% (3,418)                         | 1.8% (661)                                     | 19.3%                     | 27.5%                     |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 1.6%/0.3% (4,497/757)                | 1.5%/0.6% (568/224)                            | 12.6%/29.6%               | 18.4%*                    |
| Other                  | 10.8% (29,726)                       | 21.5% (7,971)                                  | 26.8%                     | 32.9%                     |
| 2 or More Races        | 3.4% (9,442)                         | 4.6% (1,720)                                   | 18.2%                     | NA                        |
| Hispanic Origin        | 17.5% (48,023)                       | 34.5% (12,803)                                 | 26.7%                     | 32.1%                     |

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

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## County income

On a per capita basis, Marion County's personal income was \$25,208 in 2002, about 88 percent of the state average of \$28,792, and 82 percent of the national average, \$30,906. Per capita income in Marion County rose 1.6 percent between 2001 and 2002. The 10-year trend, from 1992 to 2002, of per capita income shows average annual growth of 3.2 percent. Average earnings per job for 2001 were \$29,694 in Marion County compared to \$33,063 for the state.<sup>4</sup>

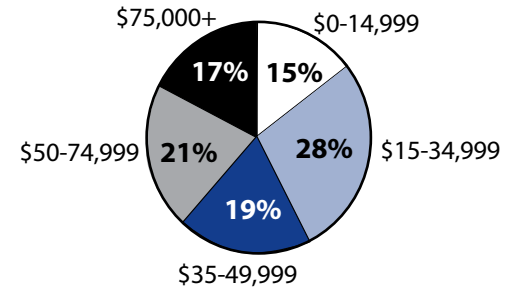
## Poverty thresholds

Segmenting census data by income reveals more detail about the people experiencing poverty in Marion County. The 2000 Census showed that 15,434 people or 41.6 percent of those living below the poverty threshold earned 50 percent or less income of the 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, 30.6 percent of Marion County's population, or 84,087 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, 4,414 households or 4.3 percent of all households in Marion County reported public assistance income. The average amount of public assistance income for 1999 was \$2,965. The 20-year trend showed a decrease in households that reported receiving public assistance income, from 5,235 households or 7.0 percent of all households in 1979.

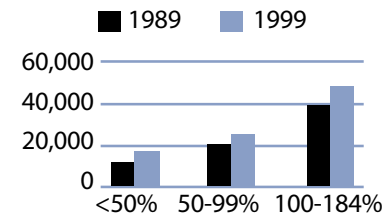
**1999 household income distribution—Marion County**



Source: US Census.

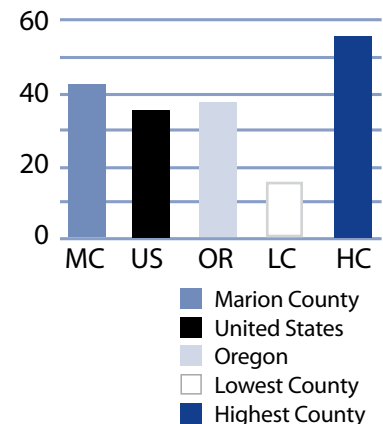
Note: The median household income in Marion County was \$40,314 in 1999 compared to \$26,876 in 1989 (50.0 percent increase).

**Number of persons in poverty Threshold percentiles**



Source: US Census.

**Public assistance in Oregon Rate per thousand population**



Source: US Census.

# Marion County

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

Families with one adult earning Marion 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 Marion County could afford 40.2 to 42.8 percent of this basic family budget.

## Wages

According to the Oregon Employment Department, the average weekly wage in Marion County is \$525.41. The mining industry had the highest weekly average of \$834.71 and agriculture, forestry and fishing had the lowest weekly average of \$327.32.

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

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

## Marion County's basic family budget

| Basic Family Budget/Monthly               | 1 Adult/<br>1 Child | 1 Adult/<br>3 Children | 2 Adults/<br>1 Child | 2 Adults/<br>3 Children |
|---|---------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Housing                                   | \$568               | \$782                  | \$568                | \$782                   |
| Food                                      | \$230               | \$489                  | \$388                | \$647                   |
| Child Care                                | \$402               | \$874                  | \$402                | \$874                   |
| Transportation                            | \$158               | \$158                  | \$222                | \$222                   |
| Health Care                               | \$245               | \$245                  | \$293                | \$293                   |
| Other Necessities                         | \$247               | \$394                  | \$296                | \$443                   |
| Taxes                                     | \$385               | \$573                  | \$450                | \$660                   |
| <b>Basic Family Budget Needed/Monthly</b> | <b>\$2,235</b>      | <b>\$3,515</b>         | <b>\$2,619</b>       | <b>\$3,921</b>          |
| Basic Family Budget Total/Annual          | \$26,825            | \$42,180               | \$31,428             | \$47,048                |
| Median Annual Income (Census 2000)        | \$21,848            | \$21,848               | \$51,486             | \$51,486                |
| Median Family Income as % of Basic Budget | 81.4%               | 51.8%                  | 163.8%               | 109.4%                  |

## Poverty and Marion County's basic family budget

| Basic Family Budget/Monthly | 1 Adult/<br>1 Child | 1 Adult/<br>3 Children | 2 Adults/<br>1 Child | 2 Adults/<br>3 Children |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Poverty Threshold           | \$11,483            | \$16,954               | \$13,410             | \$19,882                |
| % of Basic Budget           | 42.8%               | 40.2%                  | 42.7%                | 42.3%                   |

## Marion County wages and the basic budget

|                               | 1 Worker            | 1 Worker               | 2 Workers            | 2 Workers               |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Average Monthly Wage (AMW)*   | \$2,259             | \$2,259                | \$4,518              | \$4,518                 |
|                               | 1 Adult/<br>1 Child | 1 Adult/<br>3 Children | 2 Adults/<br>1 Child | 2 Adults/<br>3 Children |
| Self Sufficiency Wage (SSW)** | \$2,235             | \$3,515                | \$2,619              | \$3,921                 |
| Difference (SSW-AMW)          | \$24                | -\$1,256               | \$1,899              | \$597                   |
| Wage as % of Self Sufficiency | 101.1%              | 64.3%                  | 172.5%               | 115.2%                  |

\* Source: 1999 Oregon Covered Employment and Payrolls.

\*\* Based on Basic Family Budget for Marion County.

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| Marion County Poverty Measures                     | 1995                  | 2000                  | 2001      | 2002    | 2003    |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------|---------|---------|
| Population   | 228,483 <sup>1</sup>  | 284,834 <sup>2</sup>  | 288,690   | 293,463 | 296,995 |
| % of People Living Below Poverty Level             | 13.2% <sup>1</sup>    | 13.5% <sup>2</sup>    | NA        | NA      | NA      |
| Median Income                                      | \$26,876 <sup>1</sup> | \$40,314 <sup>2</sup> | NA        | NA      | NA      |
| Unemployment Rate                                  | 4.8                   | 5.5                   | 6.4       | 7.1     | 7.9     |
| 8th Grade Drug Use                                 | 18.0% <sup>3</sup>    | 21.1%                 | NA        | 20.5%   | NA      |
| HS Dropout   | 9.5% <sup>4</sup>     | 8.3%                  | 6.9%      | 6.5%    | NA      |
| Teen Pregnancy per 1,000 Ages 10-17                | 25.3                  | 17.6                  | 16.5      | 15.6    | NA      |
| Prenatal Care                                      | 76.4%                 | 74.3%                 | 73.0%     | 73.7%   | NA      |
| Child Care Available per 100 Children Under 13     | 23.6                  | 23.2                  | 19.6      | 20.6    | NA      |
| Homeownership Rate                                 | 62.9% <sup>1</sup>    | 62.9% <sup>2</sup>    | NA        | NA      | NA      |
| % Renters with 30% or More Rental Burden           | 40.8% <sup>1</sup>    | 43.1% <sup>2</sup>    | NA        | NA      | NA      |
| Marion County Services                             | 1999                  | 2000                  | 2001      | 2002    | 2003    |
| One Night Shelter Count                            | 894                   | 836                   | 476       | 413     | 671     |
| # of New Units Created with OHCS Funding           | 226                   | 132                   | 17        | 226     | 92      |
| OHCS Funding for Subsidized Housing                | \$3.8 m               | \$6.6 m               | \$895,965 | \$1.1 m | \$3.5 m |
| # Home Loans for Low-Income Households             | 139                   | 104                   | 96        | 78      | 87      |
| \$ Home Loans for Low-Income Households            | \$12.1 m              | \$9.1 m               | \$8.9 m   | \$7.5 m | \$9.0 m |
| # Households Receiving Energy Assistance           | NA                    | 5,778                 | 5,807     | 6,516   | 5,429   |
| % of Population Enrolled in the Oregon Health Plan | NA                    | NA                    | NA        | 22.1%   | 19.2%   |
| # Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch         | 22,322                | 22,501                | 23,946    | 26,528  | 27,001  |
| % Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch         | 43.6%                 | 43.1%                 | 44.6%     | 48.4%   | 48.5%   |
| % of Population Receiving Food Stamps              | NA                    | NA                    | NA        | 17.2%   | 16.5%   |
| % of Population Receiving TANF                     | NA                    | NA                    | NA        | 3.6%    | 3.2%    |
| % of Population Receiving DHS Services             | NA                    | NA                    | 28.7%     | 30.3%   | 28.5%   |

<sup>1</sup> 1990 Census data, year is 1989  
<sup>2</sup> 2000 Census data, year is 1999  
<sup>3</sup> 1998  
<sup>4</sup> 1996  
 NA=Not Available

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Oregon Department of Human Services Integrated Client Database.
- <sup>2</sup> Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency Community Services Block Grant Work Plan for 2003-05.

- <sup>3</sup> Please see Methodology and Data References section for information on Census Race/Ethnicity Categories.
- <sup>4</sup> Bureau of Economic Analysis: Regional Economic Accounts.