

# Washington County

## Major findings

According to the US Census, Washington County's population grew 42.9 percent between 1989 and 1999. Both the poverty rate and the number of people in poverty increased during that period. However, the poverty rate in Washington County remained lower than the state and national averages.

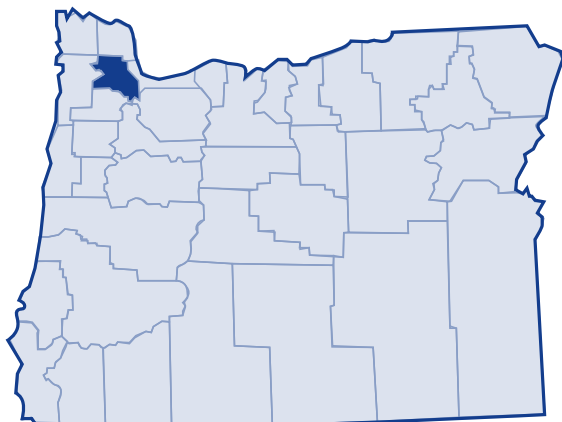
County median household income rose from \$35,554 in 1989 to \$52,122 in 1999. Unemployment rates remained below the state average in 2003.

In 1999, poverty affected Washington County's children, families and minorities more than other groups. The number of all families, including those with children, who lived in poverty increased between 1989 and 1999.

Families with one adult who earned median income Washington County could not afford the basic family budget.

In 1999, 43 percent of Washington County residents in poverty actually earned 50 percent or less of the poverty threshold.

In 2003, 14.6 percent of Washington county residents received services from the Department of Human Services.<sup>1</sup>



## Low-income needs

Community Action, Inc, the community action agency for Washington County prioritized the needs of the low-income population in the county as follows:<sup>2</sup>

- Providing low-income families access to quality child care, early childhood development and support services such as affordable child care; assistance finding quality child care, parenting support and comprehensive school readiness (Head Start, Early Head Start).
- Making comprehensive Information and Referral services available to all low-income county residents. Maintain a centralized database of resources available in the community. Promote networking and collaboration among service providers to reduce duplication and improve services.
- Promoting housing stability for homeless, formerly homeless or at-risk households. Providing emergency shelter and support services for homeless families.
- Helping low-income households stay warm and housed through emergency assistance with rent, utility bills, or other basic needs.
- Ensuring healthy births for low-income pregnant women by improving access to prenatal care; linking mothers to needed social services; and providing ongoing education and support throughout pregnancy. Providing ongoing parenting support for high-risk families.
- Improving warmth and safety, and reducing energy cost burden for low-income residents by providing comprehensive weatherization, energy education and energy conservation services.

# Washington County

## Growth

According to the 2000 Census, Washington County grew 42.9 percent from 1989 to 1999. The US Census Bureau determined the poverty status of 441,331 county residents and found that 7.4 percent (32,575 people) lived below the poverty threshold. This is an increase of 61.3 percent in the number of persons living in poverty (20,198 people) in 1989. The overall percent of Washington County's population living in poverty slightly increased 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 Washington County increased from 6.1 percent of the population to 7.4 percent. The number of persons in poverty rose from 14,757 to 32,575 people. Washington County's poverty rates remained substantially lower than the state and national poverty rates throughout this period.

## Poverty and age

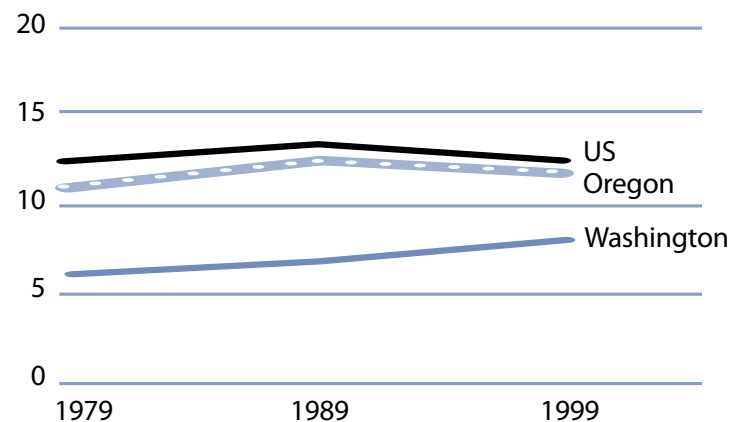
In the 2000 Census, among all age categories examined, children 5 years of age and younger experienced the highest rate of poverty at 9.8 percent. Children younger than 18 years of age experienced poverty at 8.8 percent. People 65 and older experienced the lowest rate at 5.3 percent. Over the 20-year 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)
Washington County	20,198 (6.6%)	32,575 (7.4%)	61.3% (0.8%)
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%)

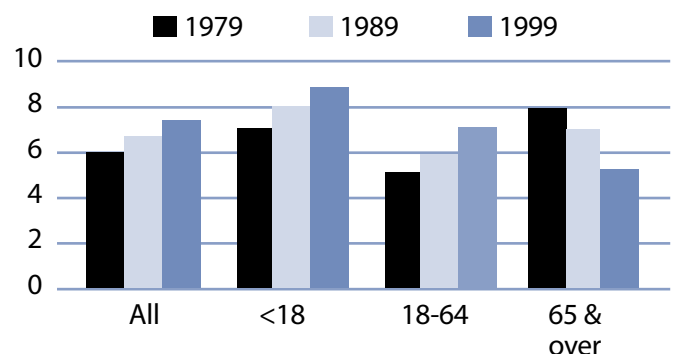
Source: US Census. County numbers have been rounded and, therefore, may not add exactly to totals.

**Poverty rates 1979-1999**



Source: US Census.

**Rate of poverty by age**



Source: US Census.

# Washington County

## Poverty and Washington County families

In 1999, 5,637 Washington County families lived in poverty (4.9 percent). Of the families in poverty, 70.9 percent (3,997 families) had a worker and 19.7 percent (1,110 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 7.4 percent. Families with a child 5 years and younger experienced poverty at a higher rate of 10.2 percent. The rate for families with children headed by single mothers was 20.9 percent and the rate was even higher for single mothers with younger children (less than 5 years) at 31.7 percent.

The poverty rate for married couples with children younger than 18 was lower at 4.3 percent. From 1979 to 1999, the number families with children who lived in poverty increased from 2,263 families in 1979 to 4,713 families in 1999.

## Poverty and race/ethnicity

Among racial/ethnic groups,<sup>3</sup> White residents comprised the majority of people in poverty at 65.7 percent. When examining poverty based on race/ethnicity, however, the poverty rate among White was 5.9 percent. Pacific Islander, Other and Hispanic Origin experienced disproportionately higher rates of poverty. The poverty rate among all three of these categories exceeded 20 percent.

## Washington County families in poverty

Number Below Poverty Level (poverty rate)				% Change
	1979	1989	1999	1979-99 (rate difference)
All Families	2,851 (4.4%)	3,992 (4.8%)	5,637 (4.9%)	97.7% (0.5%)
With Children under 18	2,263 (6.1%)	3,094 (7.0%)	4,713 (7.4%)	108.3% (1.3%)
Female-headed with Children under 18	1,213 (22.5%)	1,687 (24.8%)	2,054 (20.9%)	69.3% (-1.6%)

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

## Washington 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	95.2% (362,169)	65.7% (21,390)	5.9%	5.8%
Black	0.1% (4,423)	1.5% (474)	10.7%	8.6%
American Indian	0.5% (2,862)	1.0% (318)	11.1%	11.3%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.0%/0.0% (29,712/1,392)	7.7%/0.9% (2,502/298)	8.4%/21.4%	8.8%*
Other	1.8% (26,248)	19.0% (6,179)	23.5%	28.9%
2 or More Races	3.3% (14,525)	7.6% (1,414)	36.8%	NA
Hispanic Origin	3.4% (48,963)	31.0% (10,098)	20.6%	25.6%

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

# Washington County

From 1989 to 1999, Other and Hispanic Origin experienced improvements in poverty rates.

## County income

On a per capita basis, Washington County's personal income was \$31,578 in 2002, about 110 percent of the state average of \$28,792, and 102 percent of the national average, \$30,906. Per capita income in Washington County fell 2 percent between 2001 and 2002. The 10-year trend, from 1992 to 2002, for per capita income shows average annual growth of 3.7 percent. Average earnings per job for 2001 were \$41,290 in the county compared to \$33,063 for the state.<sup>4</sup>

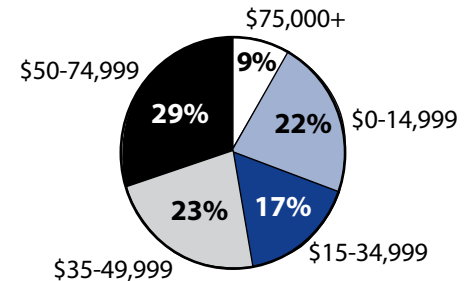
## Poverty thresholds

Segmenting census data by income reveals more detail about the people experiencing poverty in Washington County. The 2000 Census showed that 14,100 people or 43.3 percent of those living below the federal poverty threshold earned 50 percent or less than 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, 18.8 percent of Washington County's population, or 82,759 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, 3,822 households or 2.3 percent of all households in Washington County reported public assistance income. The average amount of public assistance income for 1999 was \$2,947. The 20-year trend showed an increase in households that reported receiving public assistance income (3,714 households in 1979) but a decrease in the overall percent of households (4.1 percent in 1979).

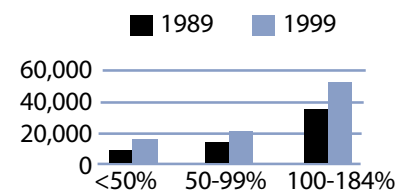
## 1999 household income distribution—Washington County



Source: US Census.

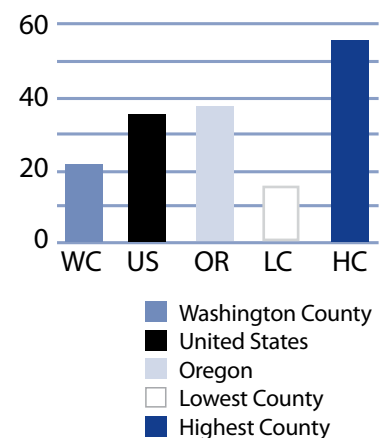
Note: The median household income in Washington County was \$52,122 in 1999 compared to \$35,554 in 1989 (46.6 percent increase).

## Number of persons in poverty Threshold percentiles



Source: US Census.

## Public assistance in Oregon Rate per thousand population



Source: US Census.

# Washington County

## Basic family budget

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

Using this budget, families with one adult earning Washington County's median income could not 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 Washington County could afford 37.3 to 40.2 percent of this basic family budget.

## Wages

According to the Oregon Employment Department, the average weekly wage in Washington County is \$753.80. The wholesale trade industry had the highest weekly average of \$1,198.82 and the retail trade industry had the lowest weekly average of \$392.65.

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

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

## Washington 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	\$645	\$897	\$645	\$897
Food	\$230	\$489	\$388	\$647
Child Care	\$413	\$897	\$413	\$897
Transportation	\$158	\$158	\$222	\$222
Health Care	\$245	\$245	\$293	\$293
Other Necessities	\$271	\$430	\$320	\$479
Taxes	\$438	\$671	\$497	\$735
<b>Basic Family Budget Needed/Monthly</b>	<b>\$2,400</b>	<b>\$3,787</b>	<b>\$2,778</b>	<b>\$4,170</b>
Basic Family Budget Total/Annual	\$28,798	\$45,439	\$33,337	\$50,040
Median Annual Income (Census 2000)	\$28,323	\$28,323	\$68,678	\$68,678
Median Family Income as % of Basic Budget	98.4%	62.3%	206.0%	137.2%

## Poverty and Washington County's basic 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	39.9%	37.3%	40.2%	39.7%

## Washington County wages and the basic budget

	1 Worker 1 Adult/ 1 Child	1 Worker 1 Adult/ 3 Children	2 Workers 2 Adults/ 1 Child	2 Workers 2 Adults/ 3 Children
Average Monthly Wage (AMW)*	\$3,241	\$3,241	\$6,482	\$6,482
Self Sufficiency Wage (SSW)**	\$2,400	\$3,787	\$2,778	\$4,170
Difference (SSW-AMW)	\$841	-\$546	\$3,704	\$2,312
Wage as % of Self Sufficiency	135.0%	85.6%	233.3%	155.4%

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

# Washington County

Washington County Poverty Measures	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003
Population	311,554 <sup>1</sup>	4,45,342 <sup>2</sup>	462,543	471,962	479,496
% of People Living Below Poverty Level	6.6% <sup>1</sup>	7.4% <sup>2</sup>	NA	NA	NA
Median Income	\$35,554 <sup>1</sup>	\$52,122 <sup>2</sup>	NA	NA	NA
Unemployment Rate	3.1	3.1	5.1	6.7	7.3
8th Grade Drug Use	13.4% <sup>3</sup>	10.5%	NA	17.1%	NA
HS Dropout	7.3% <sup>4</sup>	5.9%	4.6%	4.1%	NA
Teen Pregnancy per 1,000 Ages 10-17	15.9	13.1	12.2	10.3	NA
Prenatal Care	87.7%	89.6%	89.1%	88.9%	NA
Child Care Available per 100 Children Under 13	19.1	21.2	18.6	17.7	NA
Homeownership Rate	60.8% <sup>1</sup>	60.6% <sup>2</sup>	NA	NA	NA
% Renters with 30% or More Rental Burden	35.3% <sup>1</sup>	39.8% <sup>2</sup>	NA	NA	NA
Washington County Services	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
One Night Shelter Counts	293	287	278	181	504
# of New Units Created with OHCS Funding	211	493	440	534	308
OHCS Funding for Subsidized Housing	\$2.0 m	\$11.0 m	\$17.8 m	\$28.3 m	\$15.6 m
# Home Loans for Low-Income Households	83	75	56	48	68
\$ Home Loans for Low-Income Households	\$9.1 m	\$7.9 m	\$6.6 m	\$6.0 m	\$9.4 m
# Households Receiving Energy Assistance	NA	4,360	5,543	6,556	6,555
% of Population Enrolled in the Oregon Health Plan	NA	NA	NA	11.2%	9.9%
# Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	15,153	15,853	18,699	20,562	23,230
% Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	21.3%	21.7%	24.8%	26.7%	30.1%
% of Population Receiving Food Stamps	NA	NA	NA	7.9%	7.9%
% of Population Receiving TANF	NA	NA	NA	1.5%	1.4%
% of Population Receiving DHS Services	NA	NA	14.1%	16.6%	14.6%

<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> Community Action (CAO), Inc., Community Service 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.