

Major findings

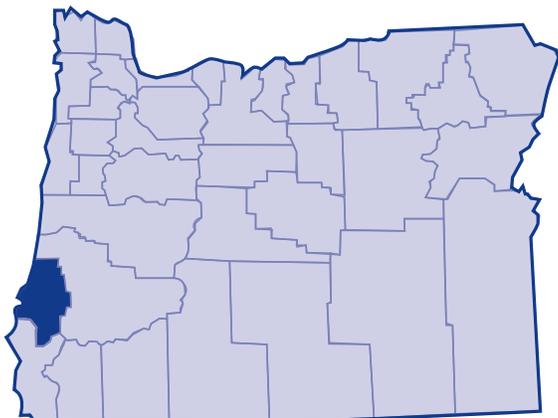
According to the US Census, the poverty rate and the number of those in poverty decreased slightly in Coos County from 1989 to 1999. However, the rate of poverty for Coos County remained slightly higher than the state and national averages due to increases experienced between 1979 to 1989.

Of those Coos County residents in poverty, 40 percent earned 50 percent of the poverty threshold or less.

Children, families, and minorities experienced the highest rates of poverty in 1999. Children 5 years of age and younger experienced the highest rates of poverty of all age groups. More than 20 percent of families with children under 5 lived in poverty. Poverty affected 60.1 percent of families headed by single mothers with a child 5 years or younger.

Most racial minority categories experienced poverty rates at 20 percent or higher.

In 2003, 29.3 percent of Coos County residents received services from the Department of Human Services.¹



Low-income needs

Southwestern Oregon Community Action Committee prioritized the needs of the low-income population in Coos County as follows²:

- **Food, food warehouse**-develop a warehouse in order to take advantage of fresh, frozen and bulk food shipments
- **Affordable housing**-develop additional rental housing units to address the needs of at-risk families, people with disabilities and senior citizens
- **Head Start services**- strengthen South Coast Head Start, a program of SWOCAC, to deliver services to low-income households
- **Emergency medical services**-strengthen and expand support for MedNet (now funded entirely by local Longshoreman's Union payroll deductions) to help uninsured household with medical, dental or prescription costs
- **Energy Assistance**-improve access to the program for low-income households, especially elderly, people with disabilities and families with children younger than 6
- **Services and housing** to homeless teens
- **Emergency food and shelter services**
- **Self-sufficiency programs**-help households achieve housing stability and to follow a plan to increase household self-reliance
- **General homeless programs**-identify additional funding
- **Increased local capacity of service community**
- **Program for seniors**-prepare for the demographic shift, growing elderly population
- **Affordable transportation**-adequate transportation for low-income households
- **Affordable childcare**-affordable child care options for working low-income families

Coos County

Growth

According to the 2000 Census, Coos County grew 4.2 percent from 1989 to 1999. The Census Bureau determined the poverty status of 61,534 county residents and found that 15 percent (9,257 people) lived below the poverty threshold. This is a decrease of 5 percent in the number of persons living in poverty (9,741 people) in 1989. The overall percent of Coos 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 Coos County increased from 10.5 percent of the population to 15.0 percent. The number of persons in poverty rose from 6,613 people to 9,257 people. Although lower than state and national averages in 1979, Coos County experienced higher poverty rates than the state and nation between 1989 and 1999.

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 percent. Children under 18 years of age experienced poverty at 20.5 percent. People 65 and older experienced the lowest rate at 9.4 percent. Over the 20-year period from 1979 to 1999, the rate of poverty improved for people 65 and older.

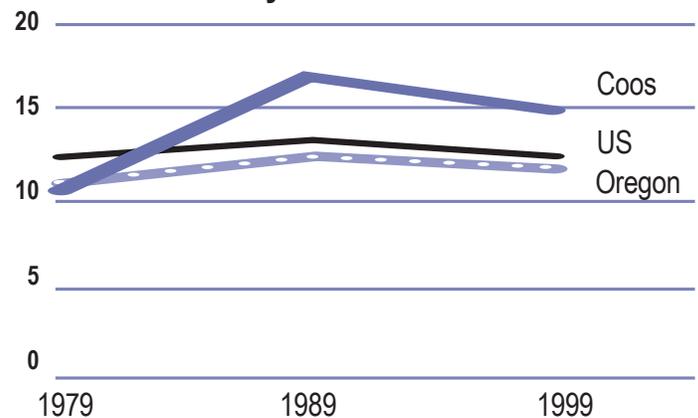
Poverty in Selected Communities

Number of persons below poverty level
(poverty rate)

	1989	1999	Percent Change (rate difference)
Coos County	9,741 (16.5%)	9,257 (15.0%)	-5.0% (-1.4%)
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%)

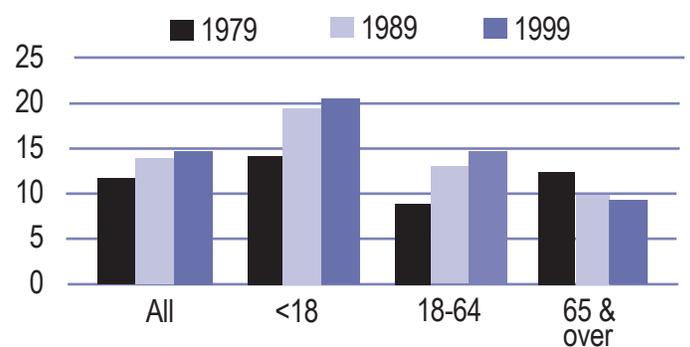
Source: U.S. Census. County numbers have been rounded and, therefore, may not add exactly to totals.

Poverty Rates 1979-1999



Source: U.S. Census.

Rate of Poverty by Age



Source: U.S. Census.

Poverty and Coos County Families

In 1999, 1,948 Coos County families lived in poverty (11.1 percent). Of the families in poverty, 56 percent (1,091 families) had a household member who worked and 9.9 percent (192 families) had a full-time year-round worker.

The poverty rate was higher among families with children. Families with at least one child younger than 18 experienced poverty at a rate of 17.8 percent. Families with children 5 years and younger experienced poverty at a higher rate—24.1 percent. The rate for families with children headed by single mothers was 38.7 percent and was even higher with younger children (younger than 5 years) at 52.3 percent.

The poverty rate for married couples with children younger than 18 was lower at 8.5 percent. Between 1979 and 1999, the rate of poverty for families with children increased from 11.9 percent in 1979 to 17.8 percent in 1999.

Poverty and Race/Ethnicity

Among racial/ethnic groups³, White residents comprised the majority of people in poverty at 88.1 percent. When examining poverty based on race/ethnicity, however, the poverty rate among White was 14.5 percent. Pacific Islander, Black and American Indian experienced disproportionately higher rates of poverty. The poverty rate among Pacific Islander was 39.4 percent, while Black had a 28.6 percent rate and American Indian had a 24.8 percent rate. From 1989 to 1999, poverty rates increased for Black, Asian, Pacific Islander, and Other.

Coos County Families in Poverty

Number below Poverty Level (Poverty Rate)	Poverty Level			% Change '79-'99 (rate difference)
	1979	1989	1999	
All Families	1,463 (8.2%)	2,080 (12.1%)	1,948 (11.1%)	33.2% (2.9%)
With Children under 18	1,108 (11.9%)	1,583 (20.2%)	1,361 (17.8%)	22.8% (5.9%)
Female-headed with children under 18	514 (41.2%)	805 (52.3%)	676 (38.7%)	31.5% (-2.5%)

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

Coos County and Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	% Total 1999 Population (population)	% Poverty 1999 Population (poverty population)	Poverty Rate 1999	Poverty Rate by Race 1989
White	91.5% (56,304)	88.1% (8,151)	14.5%	16.3%
Black	0.2% (98)	0.3% (28)	28.6%	15.0%
American Indian	2.6% (1,602)	4.3% (397)	24.8%	25.1%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.5%/0.1% (337/66)	0.6%/0.3% (57/26)	16.9%/39.4%	12.9%*
Other	1.2% (745)	1.2% (108)	14.5%	12.7%
2 or More Races	3.9% (2,382)	5.3% (490)	20.6%	NA
Hispanic Origin	3.2% (1,965)	4.6% (423)	21.5%	22.5%

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

County Income

On a per capita basis, Coos County's personal income was \$23,937 in 2002, about 83 percent of the state average of \$28,792, and 77 percent of the national average of \$30,906. Per capita income in Coos County rose 5 percent between 2001 and 2002. The 10-year trend, from 1992 to 2002, of per capita income shows average annual growth of 4 percent. Average earnings per job for 2001 were \$26,626 in Coos County compared to \$33,063 for the state.⁴

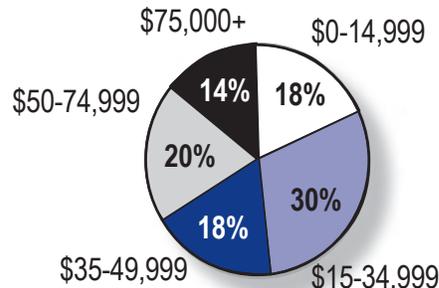
Poverty Thresholds

Segmenting census data by income reveals more detail about the people experiencing poverty in Coos County. The 2000 Census showed that 3,775 people or 40.8 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, 35.4 percent of Coos County's population, or 21,767 people earned below 185 percent of the poverty threshold.

Public Assistance

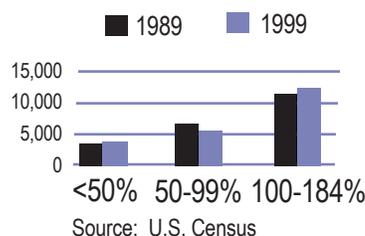
Participation in public assistance programs serves as an indirect measure-or indicator-of the extent of poverty and the measures taken to serve the public. According to the 2000 Census, 1,388 households or 5.3 percent of all households in Coos County reported public assistance income. The average amount of public assistance income for 1999 was \$2,590. The 20-year trend showed a decrease in households who received public assistance income, from 1,712 households or 7.2 percent of all households in 1979.

1999 Household Income Distribution-Coos County



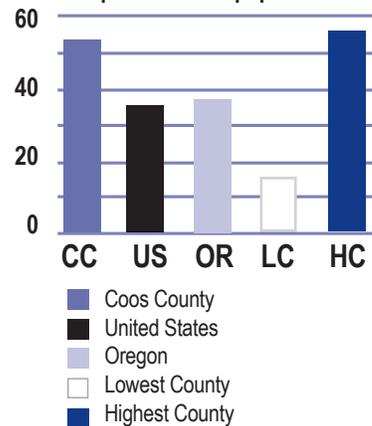
Source: U.S. Census Note: The median household income in Coos County was \$31,542 in 1999 compared to \$22,146 in 1989 (42.4 percent increase).

Number of Persons in Poverty Threshold Percentiles



Source: U.S. Census

Public Assistance in Oregon Rate per thousand population



Source: U.S. Census.

Basic Family Budget

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

Using this budget, families with one adult who earned median family income in Coos County 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 Coos County could afford 42.9 to 46.7 percent of this basic family budget.

Wages

According to the Oregon Employment Department, the average weekly wage in Coos County was \$469.06. The federal government had the highest weekly average of \$791.2 and retail trade had the lowest weekly average of \$312.08.

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

Using the basic family budget, an adult with three children and who worked full-time at Coos County's average wage could not afford the basic family budget.

Coos 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	\$503	\$701	\$503	\$701
Food	\$230	\$489	\$388	\$647
Child Care	\$351	\$787	\$351	\$787
Transportation	\$197	\$197	\$277	\$277
Health Care	\$245	\$245	\$293	\$293
Other Necessities	\$227	\$369	\$276	\$418
Taxes	\$296	\$506	\$415	\$578
Basic Family Budget Needed/Monthly	\$2,049	\$3,294	\$2,503	\$3,701
Basic Family Budget Total/Annual	\$24,593	\$39,533	\$30,035	\$44,410
Median Family Income (Census 2000)	\$17,852	\$17,852	\$44,670	\$44,670
Median Family Income as % of Basic Budget	72.6%	45.2%	148.7%	100.6%

Poverty and Coos 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	46.7%	42.9%	44.6%	44.8%

Coos 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)*	\$2,017	\$2,017	\$4,034	\$4,034
Self Sufficiency Wage (SSW)**	\$2,049	\$3,294	\$2,503	\$3,701
Difference (SSW-AMW)	-\$32	-\$1,277	\$1,531	\$333
Wage as % of Self Sufficiency	98.4%	61.2%	161.2%	109.0%

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

Coos County

Poverty Measures	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003
Population	60,273 ¹	62,779 ²	62,377	62,618	63,019
% of People living below poverty level	16.5% ¹	15.0% ²	NA	NA	NA
Median Income	\$22,146 ¹	\$31,542 ²	NA	NA	NA
Unemployment Rate	7.4	7.4	8.3	8.6	8.8
8th Grade Drug Use	21.0% ³	12.4%	NA	25.5%	NA
HS Dropout	5.9% ⁴	4.5%	3.4%	3.9%	NA
Teen Pregnancy per 1,000 ages 10-17	15.8	13.2	10.3	10.2	NA
Prenatal Care	70.7%	70.9%	74.2%	77.0%	NA
Child Care available per 100 children under 13	0	13.3	14.1	13.8	NA
Homeownership Rate	66.5% ¹	68.1% ²	NA	NA	NA
% Renters with 30% or more rental burden	43.8% ¹	49.0% ²	NA	NA	NA
Coos County Services	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
One Night Shelter Count	104	12	111	0	169
# of New Units created with OHCS Funding	66	16	8	4	4
OHCS Funding for Subsidized Housing	\$1.3 m	\$1.3 m	\$614,136	\$403,648	\$59,200
# Home Loans for Low-Income Households	34	43	25	13	11
\$ Home Loans for Low-Income Households	\$2.4 m	\$3.0 m	\$1.8 m	\$1.0 m	\$883,838
# Households Receiving Energy Assistance	NA	2,361	1,964	1,937	1,656
% of Population enrolled in the Oregon Health Plan	NA	NA	NA	22.5%	
# Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	4,203	4,109	4,260	4,128	4,244
% Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	42.9%	43.7%	46.7%	46.4%	48.4%
% of Population Receiving Food Stamps	NA	NA	NA	21.1%	
% of Population Receiving TANF	NA	NA	NA	3.4%	
% of Population Receiving DHS Services	NA	NA	33.0%	32.2%	
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 Humans Services Integrated Client Database.

² Southwestern Oregon CAC (SWOCAC) 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.