

Sherman County

Major findings

According to the US Census, the poverty rate and the number of those in poverty increased in Sherman County between 1989 and 1999. Poverty in Sherman County remained slightly higher than state and national averages during this period.

Of Sherman County residents in poverty, 48 percent earned 50 percent or less of the poverty threshold.

Families headed by a single mother living in poverty rose from six families (30 percent poverty rate) in 1979 to 23 families (51.1 percent poverty rate) in 1999.

Minorities experienced high poverty rates. Those who chose "Other" as a racial category faced a 73 percent poverty rate. More than 39 percent of Sherman County's residents lived in poverty.

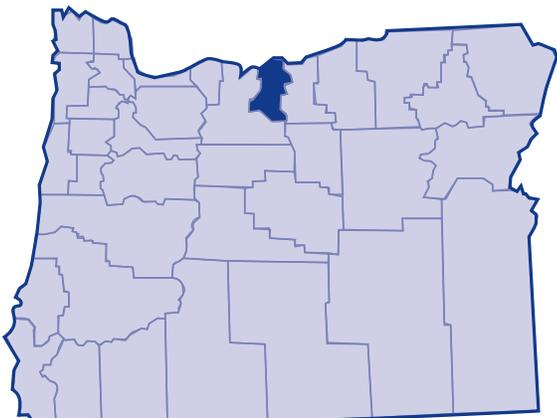
The unemployment rate for Sherman County reached 11.9 by 2003.

In 2003, 19.5 percent of Sherman county residents received services from the Department of Human Services.¹

Low-income needs

Mid-Columbia Community Action Council prioritized the needs of the low-income population in Sherman County as follows²:

- Employment and jobs
- Rent/mortgage assistance
- Case Management or follow up for recipients of assistance programs
- Transitional housing including services for those with mental health issues and those who have been recently released from prison or drug/alcohol treatment centers
- Utility assistance
- Quality child care centers
- Public transportation available to everyone with cost based on a sliding scale (buses, medical vans, etc.)
- Renter education for low income tenants with poor rental history
- Safe homes for victims of domestic violence



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Growth

According to the 2000 Census, Sherman County grew 0.8 percent between 1989 and 1999. The US Census Bureau determined the poverty status of 1,922 county residents and found that 14.6 percent (280 people) lived below the poverty threshold. This is an increase of 47.4 percent in the number of persons living in poverty (190 people) in 1989. The overall percent of Sherman County's population living in poverty 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 Sherman County remained relatively constant from 14.4 percent of the population to 14.6 percent. The number of persons in poverty fell from 312 people to 280 people. Sherman County's poverty rates were higher than the state and national poverty rates in 1979 and 1999. The county's poverty rate fell between 1979 and 1989, but the rate returned to 1979 levels by 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 20.4 percent. Children younger than 18 years of age experienced poverty at 18.8 percent. People 65 and older experienced the lowest rate at 7.7 percent. Over the 20-year period from 1979 to 1999, the rate of poverty improved for people 65 and older.

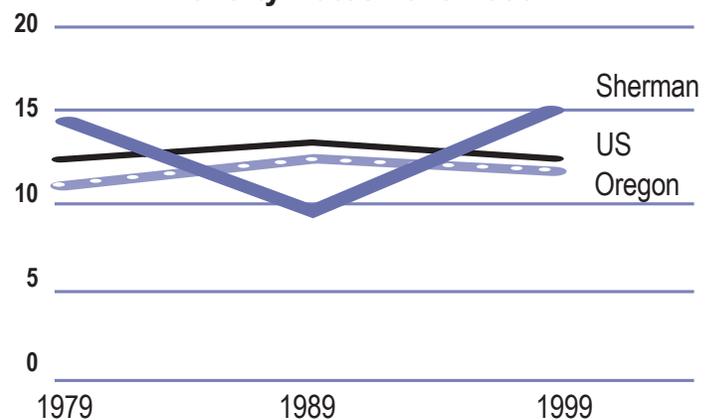
Poverty in Selected Communities

Number of persons below poverty level (poverty rate)

	1989	1999	Percent Change (rate difference)
Sherman County	190 (9.9%)	280 (14.6%)	47.4% (4.7%)
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%)

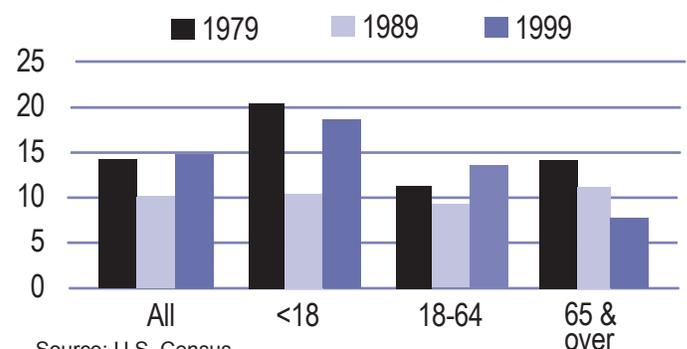
Source: U.S. Census. County numbers have been rounded and, therefore, may not add exactly to totals.

Poverty Rates 1979-1999



Source: U.S. Census.

Rate of Poverty by Age



Source: U.S. Census.

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Poverty and Sherman County Families

In 1999, 68 Sherman County families lived in poverty (12.3 percent). Of the families in poverty, 54.4 percent (37 families) had a worker and 26.5 percent (18 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 17.6 percent. Families with a child 5 years and younger experienced poverty at a higher rate of 18.5 percent. The rate for families with children headed by single mothers was 51.1 percent and was even higher with younger children (less than 5 years) at 60 percent.

The poverty rate for married couples with children under 18 was lower at 9.1 percent. From 1979 to 1999, the number of female-headed households with children (no husband present) who lived in poverty increased from 6 families in 1979 to 23 families in 1999.

Poverty and Race/Ethnicity

Among racial/ethnic groups³, White residents comprised the majority of people in poverty at 85.7 percent. When examining poverty based on race/ethnicity, however, the poverty rate among White was 13.5 percent. Other and Hispanic Origin experienced disproportionately higher rates of poverty. The poverty rate among Other was 73.1 percent, while Hispanic Origin had a 39.3 percent rate. From 1989 to 1999, no category experienced improvements in poverty rates.

Sherman County Families in Poverty

Number below Poverty Level (Poverty Rate)	Year			% Change '79-'99 (rate difference)
	1979	1989	1999	
All Families	71 (11.1%)	43 (7.6%)	68 (12.3%)	-4.2% (1.2%)
With Children under 18	51 (16.4%)	32 (11.4%)	46 (17.6%)	-9.8% (1.2%)
Female-headed with children under 18	6 (30.0%)	22 (59.5%)	23 (51.1%)	283.3% (21.1%)

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

Sherman County 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	92.5% (1,777)	85.7% (240)	13.5%	9.6%
Black	0.6% (12)	0.0% (0)	0.0%	NA
American Indian	2.1% (41)	8.9% (8)	19.5%	6.7%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.7%/0.0% (14/0)	1.1%/0.0% (3/0)	21.4%/NA	0.0%*
Other	1.4% (26)	6.8% (19)	73.1%	72.7%
2 or More Races	2.7% (52)	3.6% (10)	19.2%	NA
Hispanic Origin	4.6% (89)	12.5% (35)	39.3%	37.0%

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

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County Income

On a per capita basis, Sherman County's personal income was \$17,647 in 2002, about 61 percent of the state average of \$28,792, and 57 percent of the national average, \$30,906. Per capita income in Sherman County rose 27.2 percent between 2001 and 2002. The 10-year trend, from 1992 to 2002, in per capita income shows average annual growth of 0.2 percent. Average earnings per job for 2001 were \$23,497 in Sherman County compared to \$33,063 for the state.⁴

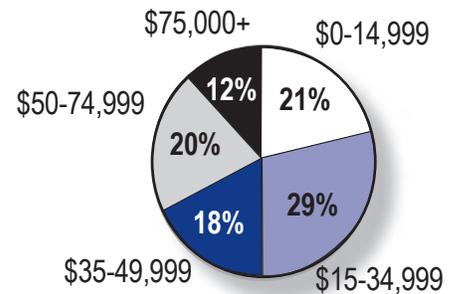
Poverty Thresholds

Segmenting census data by income reveals more detail about the people experiencing poverty in Sherman County. The 2000 Census showed that 136 people or 48.6 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, 30.2 percent of Sherman County's population, or 581 people earned below 185 percent of the poverty threshold.

Public Assistance

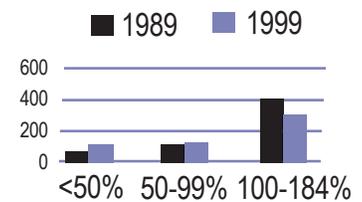
Participation in public assistance programs serves as an indirect measure-or indicator-of the extent of poverty and the measures taken to serve the public. According to the 2000 Census, 12 households or 1.5 percent of all households in Sherman County reported public assistance income. The average amount of public assistance income for 1999 was \$2,542. The 20-year trend showed a decrease in households that reported receiving public assistance income, from 34 households or 4.1 percent of all households in 1979.

1999 Household Income Distribution-Sherman County



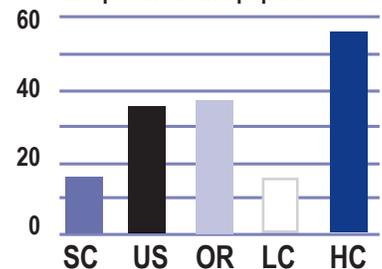
Source: U.S. Census Note: The median household income in Sherman County was \$35,142 in 1999 compared to \$25,030 in 1989 (40.4 percent increase).

Number of Persons in Poverty Threshold Percentiles



Source: U.S. Census

Public Assistance in Oregon Rate per thousand population



Legend:
 ■ Sherman County
 ■ United States
 ■ Oregon
 □ Lowest County
 ■ Highest County

Source: U.S. 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. The following chart outlines typical expenses for four family types in Sherman County and the corresponding income those families would need to meet their expenses.

Families with one adult earning Sherman County's median family income could not afford the basic family budget.

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

Sherman 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	\$377	\$837	\$377	\$837
Transportation	\$197	\$197	\$277	\$277
Health Care	\$245	\$245	\$293	\$293
Other Necessities	\$219	\$355	\$268	\$404
Taxes	\$291	\$503	\$411	\$574
Basic Family Budget Needed/Monthly	\$2,036	\$3,283	2,491	\$3,689
Basic Family Budget Total/Annual	\$24,427	\$39,396	\$29,897	\$44,263
Median Family Income (Census 2000)	\$15,693	\$15,693	\$49,107	\$49,107
Median Family Income as % of Basic Budget	64.2%	39.8%	164.3%	110.9%

What the Poverty Threshold Buys

Families at the poverty level in Sherman County could afford 43 to 47 percent of this basic family budget.

Wages

According to the Oregon Employment Department, the average weekly wage in Sherman County is \$404.32. The federal government had the highest weekly average of \$957.86 and the services industry had the lowest weekly average of \$203.22.

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

The only family that could afford basic expenses was one in which two adults worked full-time at Sherman County's average wage and only had one child.

Poverty and Sherman 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	47.0%	43.0%	44.9%	44.9%

Sherman 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)*	\$1,739	\$1,739	\$3,478	\$3,478
Self Sufficiency Wage (SSW)**	\$2,036	\$3,283	\$2,491	\$3,689
Difference (SSW-AMW)	-\$297	-\$1,544	\$986	-\$212
Wage as % of Self Sufficiency	85.4%	53.0%	139.6%	94.3%

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

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Poverty Measures	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003
Population	1,918 ¹	1,934 ²	1,862	1,788	1,754
% of People living below poverty level	9.9% ¹	14.6% ²	NA	NA	NA
Median Income	\$25,030 ¹	\$35,142 ²	NA	NA	NA
Unemployment Rate	7.1	5.9	11.6	10.7	11.9
8th Grade Drug Use	17.8% ³	14.0%	NA	17.6%	NA
HS Dropout	1.6% ⁴	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	NA
Teen Pregnancy per 1,000 ages 10-17	9.3	0.0	7.7	0.0	NA
Prenatal Care	72.2%	100.0%	NA%	66.7%	NA
Child Care available per 100 children under 13	0.0	9.6	11.0	15.1	NA
Homeownership Rate	66.1% ¹	70.5% ²	NA	NA	NA
% Renters with 30% or more rental burden	52.2% ¹	54.0% ²	NA	NA	NA
Sherman County Services	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
One Night Shelter Count	0	6	0	0	1
# of New Units created with OHCS Funding	0	0	0	0	12
OHCS Funding for Subsidized Housing	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$873,242
# Home Loans for Low-Income Households	1	0	0	0	0
\$ Home Loans for Low-Income Households	\$70,789	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
# Households Receiving Energy Assistance	NA	72	57	58	48
% of Population enrolled in the Oregon Health Plan	NA	NA	NA	20.0%	
# Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	107	108	126	136	118
% Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	28.2%	29.7%	36.6%	40.4%	40.0%
% of Population Receiving Food Stamps	NA	NA	NA	13.8%	
% of Population Receiving TANF	NA	NA	NA	2.1%	
% of Population Receiving DHS Services	NA	NA	23.0%	25.9%	
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 Mid-Columbia Community Action Council Community Service 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.