



**United Community Action Network  
Douglas and Josephine County**

**2022 Community  
Needs Assessment**

## Purpose and Scope of Needs Assessment

The purpose of this needs assessment is to provide an understanding of the community needs and assets in United Community Action Network's (UCAN) service area: Douglas and Josephine County, Oregon. The assessment begins with a description of UCAN and its programs. The assessment then provides an overview of Douglas and Josephine County, Oregon, and the regions and communities within the counties. The assessment continues by focusing on Douglas County and Josephine County needs and assets. The assessment then turns to an analysis of the causes of poverty. The assessment ends by prioritizing actions to take in the region.

## Approach/General Data Sources

The scope of this assessment is primarily limited to Douglas County and Josephine County. In a few cases, where county communities are located near to major service centers outside the county, information regarding those communities is included. County data is often compared with comparable Oregon data. Much of the assessment's data comes from the United States Census Bureau and state agencies. As available, local community data is included to better understand differences between county communities. Because our local county data derived from the Census has a larger margin of error than statewide data or larger metropolitan counties, wherever possible, estimates are based on five years of data. Because some of this data included in this assessment was collected prior to 2020, it only partially reflects the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

# United Community Action Network: An Overview

UCAN is a 501(c) (3) non-profit that provides comprehensive human services in both Douglas and Josephine Counties. UCAN has provided services for 53 years. UCAN's mission is: *Creating solutions to poverty, improving lives in our community*. UCAN's vision is that every Douglas and Josephine County resident has the resources and opportunities needed to reach their full social, civic, and economic potential, to be secure in their own lives and to be vital participants in their communities. UCAN's board, staff and volunteers embrace the following values when working to create solutions and improve lives:

## Respect, Dignity, Compassion and Equity:

UCAN's board, staff and volunteers embrace these qualities in their interactions with people using UCAN's services, the staff and the community.

## Accountability:

UCAN provides services in a manner that is effective, efficient and meaningful to the community and people's lives. UCAN uses public and private funds in a prudent manner and has fiscal controls that assure superior accountability.

## Making a Positive Difference:

UCAN makes a positive difference in our communities by providing needed, meaningful and quality services.

## Quality and Excellence:

UCAN is committed to performing all its functions to the highest caliber and strives for "best practices" in all aspects of its operations. UCAN is a "learning organization" that values creativity and flexibility, and embraces the concept of continuously improving the quality of its services throughout the agency.

## Partnering:

UCAN is an active partner with the people using UCAN's services, other agencies and the community.

## Courage:

UCAN is willing to take risks, try new things, and encourages staff ideas for new projects.

## Honesty/Integrity:

UCAN is committed to honesty and integrity in all aspects of its operations.

While many of UCAN's programs target low-income individuals, UCAN also has programs that benefit all area residents, strengthening communities throughout the region. UCAN improves the lives of large numbers of residents, provides a wide array of services, and implements solutions rapidly. UCAN currently serves approximately 30% of residents in its service area with a staff of around 200, a cohort of National Service members, and additional dedicated volunteers. UCAN expands its work in the region by partnering with hundreds of local agencies and organizations. UCAN staff represent the agency and the region on many local and statewide boards and coalitions.

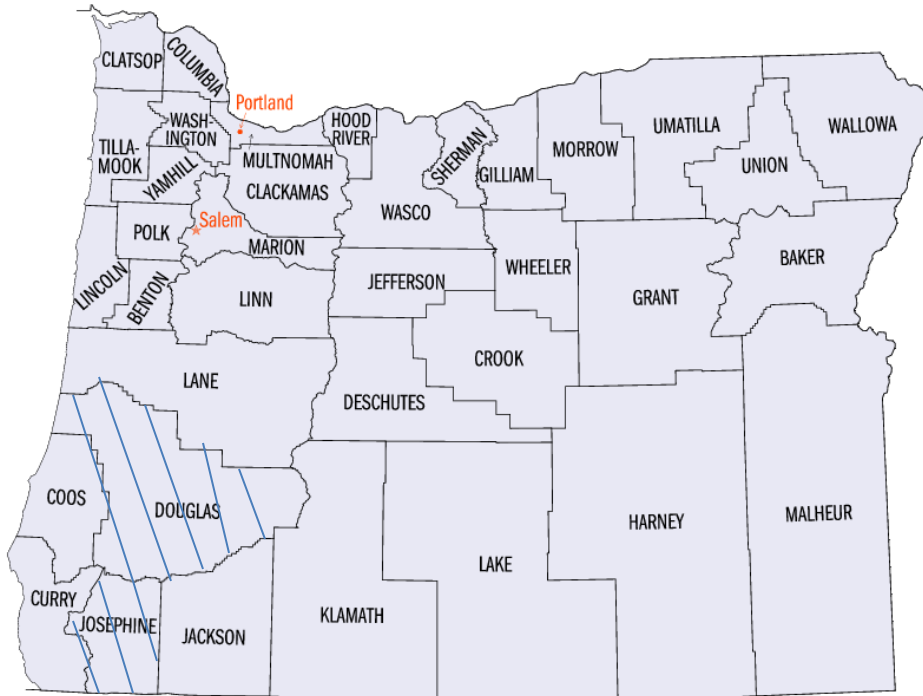
UCAN operates a number of different programs including:

- Head Start and Early Head Start,
- Healthy Families, Healthy Start, Nurse Home Visiting and WIC
- Emergency food distribution,
- Nutrition,
- Affordable housing,
- Housing stabilization services,
- Veteran services,
- Non-emergency medical transportation,
- Money management,
- Medicare education,
- Tax assistance, and
- Utility assistance and weatherization programs.

UCAN maintains regional National Service programs, including AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps Senior Corps. AmeriCorps members serve in Douglas, Josephine, Coos, Curry and Jackson County.

# Oregon/Douglas/Josephine County Overview

## Oregon



(U.S. Census American Community Survey map)

Douglas and Josephine County are located in the southwest portion of Oregon. Oregon is the 9<sup>th</sup> largest state in the United States.<sup>1</sup> The state is split into distinctive portions in the west and east by the Cascade Mountains, which rise to over 11,000 feet in elevation.<sup>2</sup> The Willamette River, the United States 19<sup>th</sup> largest by volume<sup>3</sup>, creates a unique region in the northwestern portion of the state. Most of the original settlers who migrated along the Oregon Trail settled in the Willamette River basin. Over the years, much of Oregon's population has remained concentrated in this valley. Of Oregon's 4,266,620 estimated residents, a little over two-thirds (2,913,530) reside in counties found here (Lane, Linn, Benton, Marion, Yamhill, Clackamas, Washington and Multnomah).<sup>4</sup> The Valley contains Oregon's three largest metropolitan areas, Portland, the state capitol Salem, and Eugene-Springfield. Much of the state's economic activity, its academic research centers (University of Oregon and Oregon State University), and major government offices are headquartered in the Willamette Valley.

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<sup>1</sup> United States Census Bureau.

<sup>2</sup> United States Geological Survey.

<sup>3</sup> United States Geological Survey.

<sup>4</sup> Portland State University, Population Research Center, 7/2021 estimate.

# Douglas County

## General Description



(Douglas County Planning Department)

Douglas County lies just south of the Willamette Valley, and encompasses 5,036 square miles (an area larger than Connecticut)<sup>5</sup>. The County extends from the Cascade Mountains at elevations of over 9,000 feet to sea level at the Pacific Ocean.<sup>6</sup> Most of the County is covered by rugged mountains that are heavily forested. The County encompasses the Umpqua River watershed, much of which flows through dramatic canyons and narrow valleys. Both the County's rugged terrain and federal landholdings limit development. The United States Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management administer more than 50% of the County's land.<sup>7</sup> These lands are not subject to local property taxes, greatly diminishing the local government's tax base.

<sup>5</sup> US Census Bureau.

<sup>6</sup>United States Geological Survey.

<sup>7</sup> Douglas County website: <https://www.co.douglas.or.us/overview.asp>.

Though Douglas County is larger than Connecticut, it only has 111,694 residents.<sup>8</sup> With few residents and a large area, Douglas County's population density is only 22.2 people per square mile.<sup>9</sup> Douglas County experienced a lesser rate of population growth than the state in the past year (0.43% versus 0.54%).<sup>10</sup>

Roseburg, the Douglas County seat, is located approximately 70 miles south of the edge of the greater Eugene area. The next closest major urban area is Medford, a drive of over 1 ½ hours south. Douglas County residents generally conduct their daily activities within the County, rarely traveling to Oregon's metropolitan areas. Residents living near the County borders may travel to Eugene, Grants Pass, and North Bend/Coos Bay to obtain some services.

Many of Douglas County's residents live along the I-5 corridor which bisects the County from north to south. Central Douglas County is the region's most densely populated area, and includes the County's three most populous communities: Roseburg (23,701), Sutherlin (8,909) and Winston (5,700).<sup>11</sup> The most populous communities in southern Douglas County are Myrtle Creek, Riddle, Canyonville and Glendale with a combined population of 7,224.<sup>12</sup> Eastern Douglas County has no incorporated communities, but has a number of residents in unincorporated areas such as Glide. Drain and Yoncalla, with a combined 2,210 residents, are found in north Douglas County.<sup>13</sup> Reedsport is the single incorporated community in western Douglas County, with 4,311 residents.<sup>14</sup> A little over half of Douglas County's population lives in unincorporated areas.<sup>15</sup> Such areas are found adjacent to Roseburg as well as in the more rural portions of the County. The population of Douglas County is stable, and estimates are that it will continue to grow slowly in the near future.

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<sup>8</sup> Portland State University (PSU), Population Research Center, 2021 estimate.

<sup>9</sup> Calculated by dividing PSU 2021 population data into square mileage provided by US Census Bureau.

<sup>10</sup> PSU, Population Research Center, 2020-2021 estimates.

<sup>11</sup> PSU, Population Research Center, 2021 estimate.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Calculated using numbers from PSU, Population Research Center, 2021 estimates.



## Demographics

Like many rural regions in Oregon, the County is not very racially or ethnically diverse.

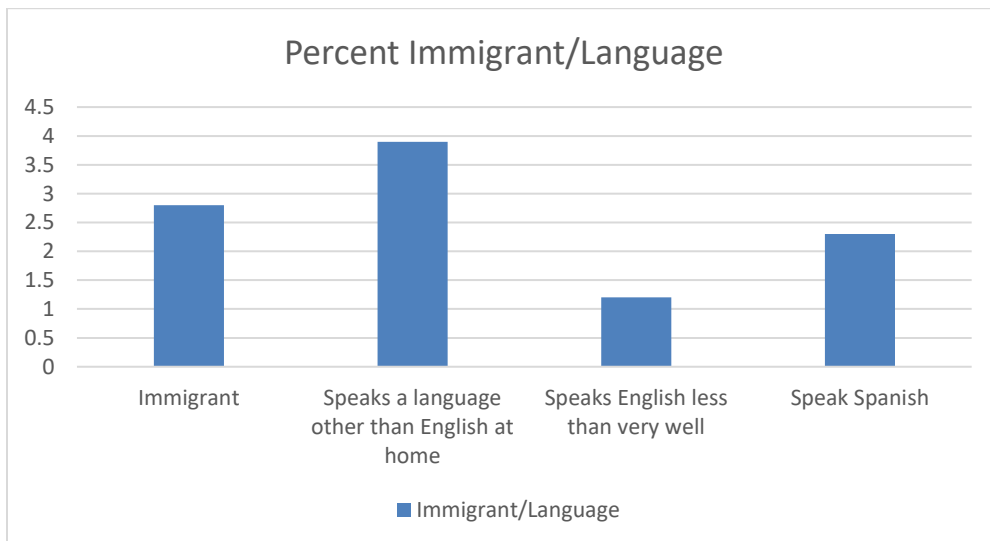
### Racial Diversity<sup>16</sup>

Race	Percentage of Population
<b>White</b>	91.5%
<b>African American</b>	0.5%
<b>Native American</b>	1.3%
<b>Asian</b>	0.8%
<b>Hawaiian/Native Islander</b>	0.1%
<b>Multi-Race</b>	5.1%
<b>Other</b>	0.6%

### Ethnic Diversity<sup>17</sup>

Ethnicity	Percentage of Population
<b>White alone, not Latino or Hispanic</b>	93.8%
<b>Latino</b>	6.2%

Douglas County has few immigrants, few residents speak a language other than English at home, and fewer have difficulty speaking English.<sup>18</sup> The most common language spoken other than English is Spanish.<sup>19</sup>



<sup>16</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2016-2020 Estimate.

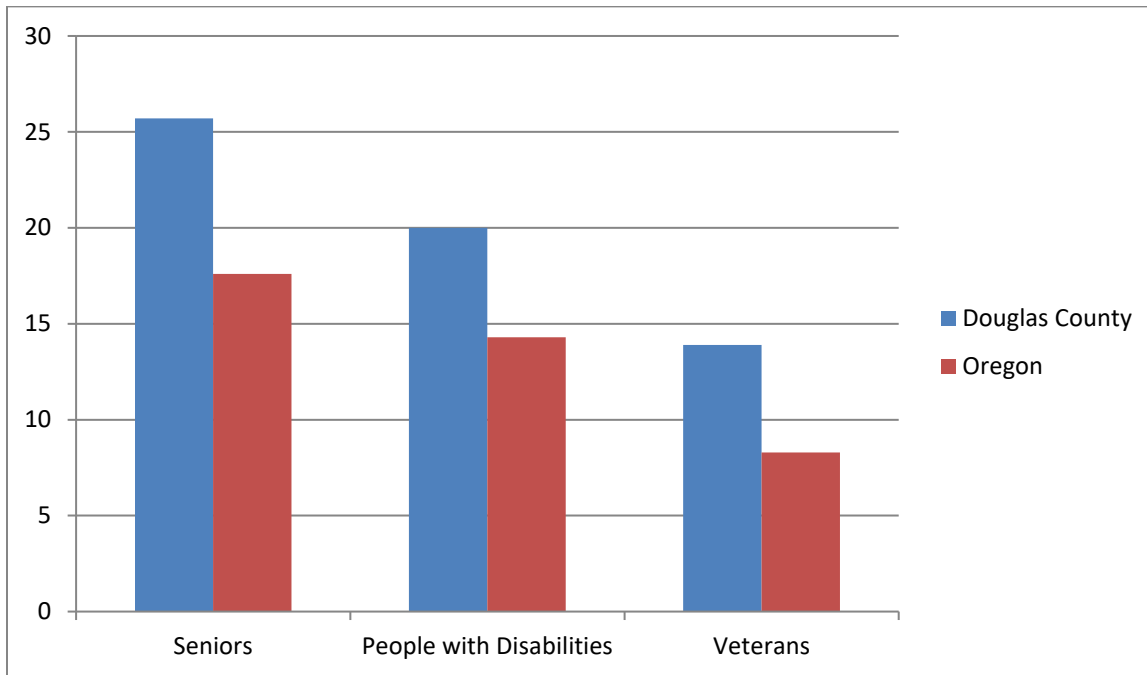
<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

While Douglas County lacks racial/ethnic diversity, its population is overrepresented by three groups that create unique, significant demands on the area’s social service system. The three groups of people are seniors, people with disabilities and veterans. The chart below captures this:

Percentage of Seniors, People with Disabilities and Veterans<sup>20</sup>



Though many of these individuals, particularly veterans, do not face additional life challenges, a number do. The disproportionate numbers of these three populations adds pressure in the region for such services as:

- Healthcare,
- Case management and life skill support,
- Food,
- Affordable housing

But these needs may differ from the general population’s needs for such services. For example, seniors and people with disabilities needing affordable housing are also more likely to require home modifications. Veterans with health needs are more likely to have incidences of brain trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder. The resources available to address these needs may also differ from those available to the general population. Douglas County has medical facilities specifically addressing veterans’ needs, and has

<sup>20</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2016-2020 estimate.

special programs only offered to veterans, seniors and people with disabilities. In general, these special programs do not fully meet the many needs of these populations.

Not only does Douglas County have a disproportionate number of seniors, Douglas County's median age is rising faster than in many parts of the state. The area is experiencing an influx of older residents attracted by low property tax rates. Some of these households, referred to as "equity migrants," are able to use the equity they built up owning property elsewhere to purchase lower priced houses locally. At the same time, the County also has many seniors who formerly worked in the timber industry who lack resources to move out of the area. Overall, the median age of County residents is almost eight years older than residents statewide (47 as opposed to 39.5 years of age).<sup>21</sup>

Despite Douglas County's increasing median age, many families with children make their homes in the County. 24.2% of County households are families with children ages 0-18.<sup>22</sup> 21,044 children ages 0-17 live in the County.<sup>23</sup> The average family size is a little less countywide than statewide, likely reflecting the higher percentage of senior families.<sup>24</sup>

## Economy

Douglas County's economy has long relied on logging and the manufacture of wood products. These industries have regularly witnessed periods of boom and bust. In recent years, however, wood manufacturing jobs have steadily decreased. Areas worst hit by this decline are the more isolated, rural towns. Many of these towns have had difficulty developing jobs in other industries. One highlight for the region is the beginnings of an economy based on the production of wine. The healthcare sector is also growing rapidly.

The County's unemployment rate has improved substantially since the onset of the Pandemic. Nonetheless, the county's rate continues to exceed the rate of unemployment statewide. Median income is far below the state. Many people without college degrees have lost or are at risk of losing higher paying logging and wood product manufacturing jobs. These jobs are generally being replaced by lower paying service sector jobs.

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<sup>21</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2016-2020 estimate.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

## Health

Douglas County has consistently been ranked as one of the least healthy counties in Oregon by County Health Rankings, a program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. For the most recent year's data, the Foundation reports, "Douglas (DO) is ranked among the least healthy counties in Oregon."<sup>25</sup> An area of persistent concern is health behaviors. Access to health care is also a major problem within the County, especially for low-income individuals.

## Education

The County has some of the state's lowest graduation rates. Poor rates of graduation lead to low levels of educational attainment for adults living in the County. The area has a particular shortage of individuals who have baccalaureate and advanced degrees. County communities have difficulty keeping better students from leaving the area. Those who desire a 4-year degree or graduate education must leave the County to obtain their degree (unless they take on-line degree programs). The area's high unemployment and low median wages are disincentives to returning to the area after completion of college.

## Summary

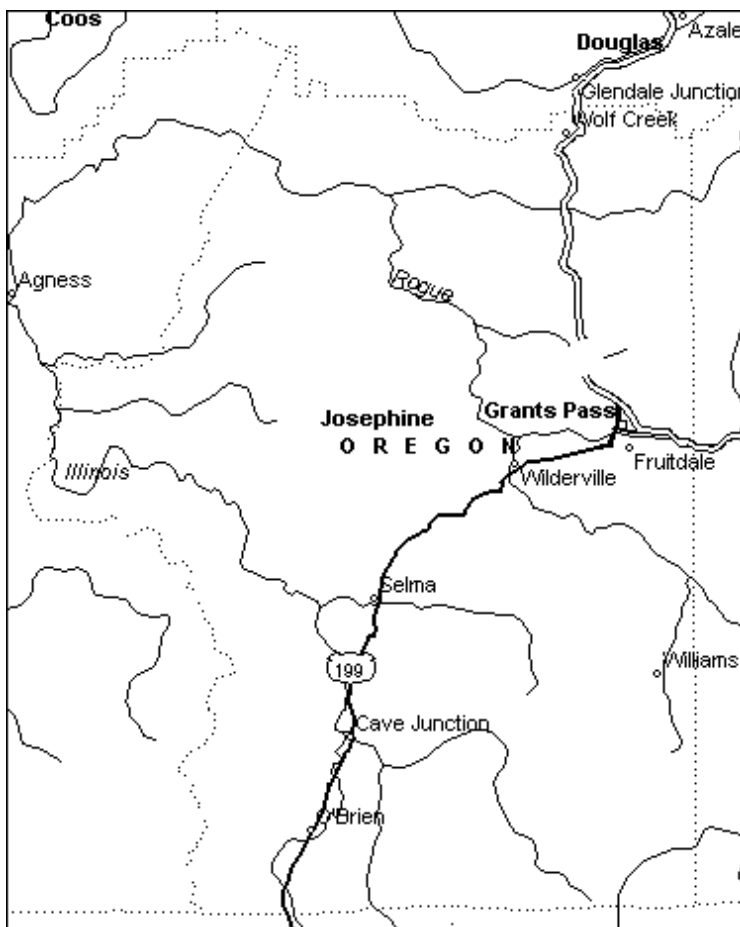
A number of Douglas County residents struggle with various aspects of life, oftentimes as a result of a shortcomings in the local economy. Despite these challenges, the County continues to attract new residents. Families living in the County can enjoy a more laidback lifestyle than those living in bigger cities, and there are many beautiful areas to explore.

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<sup>25</sup><https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/oregon/2022/rankings/douglas/county/outcomes/overall/snapshot>

# Josephine County

## General Description



Josephine County has an area of 1,639 square miles.<sup>26</sup> Though much smaller than Douglas County, it is still larger than Rhode Island. Josephine County encompasses the Rogue River watershed, which like the Umpqua, is comprised of steep canyons and rugged, forest clad mountains. Like Douglas County, federal landholdings limit development and local tax receipts, with United States agencies administering more than 50% of the county's land.

Grants Pass, the Josephine County seat, is located 69 miles south of Roseburg. Drivers heading north from Grants Pass must cross several passes between 1,500 and 2,000 feet. Driving is occasionally treacherous when winter snow storms impact the passes. In contrast, Medford is more easily accessed on I-5 only 30 miles to the south. Grants Pass residents are much more likely to access resources and services in Medford than in Roseburg.

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<sup>26</sup> US Census.

Josephine County has a total population of 88,728,<sup>27</sup> with 54.1 residents per square mile.<sup>28</sup> Many residents live in Grants Pass at the junction of I-5 and US highway 199. The only other population center of note is in the Illinois Valley, traversed by highway 199. Though not nearly as large as Douglas County, residents in more rural areas of Josephine County still have fairly long drives to access services and resources available in Grants Pass, with estimated driving times of:

- 40 minutes from Cave Junction in the southwest,
- 27 minutes from Williams in the southeast,
- 24 minutes from Wolf Creek in far northern Josephine County

Grants Pass has a population of 39,475<sup>29</sup>. Cave Junction, to the southwest on highway 199, is the only other incorporated community in the County, with a population of 2,149<sup>30</sup>. More than half of Josephine County's population live in unincorporated areas. Such areas are found along I-5, highway 199, and in the southeast part of the County.

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<sup>27</sup> PSU, Population Research Center, 2021 estimate.

<sup>28</sup> Calculated by dividing PSU 2021 population data into square mileage provided by US Census Bureau.

<sup>29</sup> PSU, Population Research Center, 2021 estimate.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

## Demographics

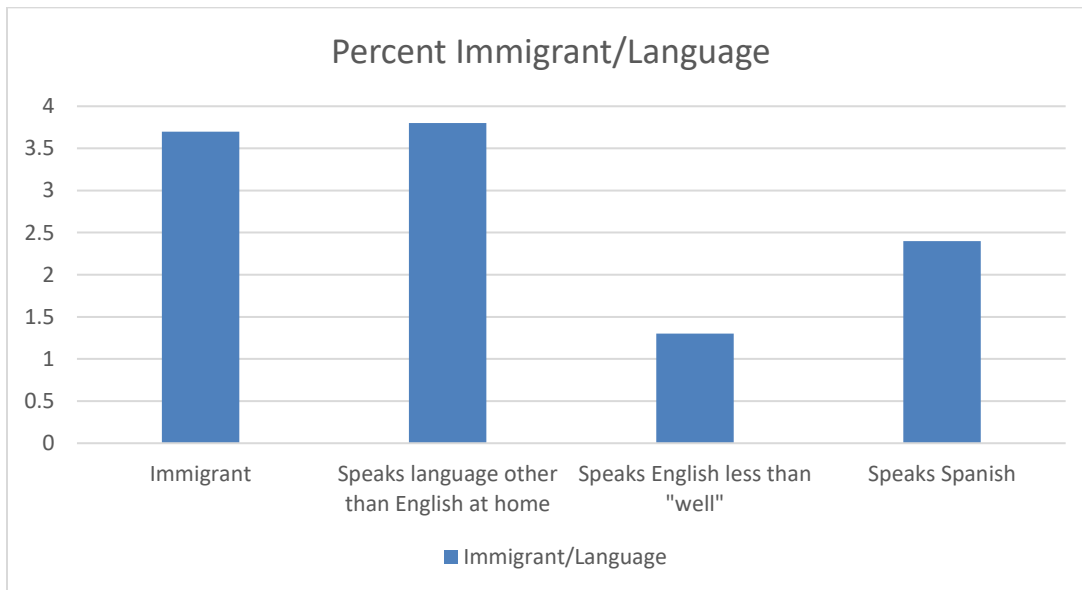
Josephine County has virtually the identical percentage of White residents as the percentage in Douglas County, but the County has a slightly higher percentage of Latino residents than Douglas County.<sup>31</sup>

Race	Percentage of Population
White	91.3%
African American	0.6%
Native American	1.1%
Asian	0.8%
Hawaiian/Native Islander	0.1%
More than one race	5.0%
Other	1.1%

### Ethnic Diversity<sup>32</sup>

Ethnicity	Percentage of Population
<b>Non-Latino</b>	92.4%
<b>Latino</b>	7.6%

As with Douglas County, few residents are foreign born, speak a language other than English at home, have difficulty speaking English, or speak Spanish.<sup>33</sup>

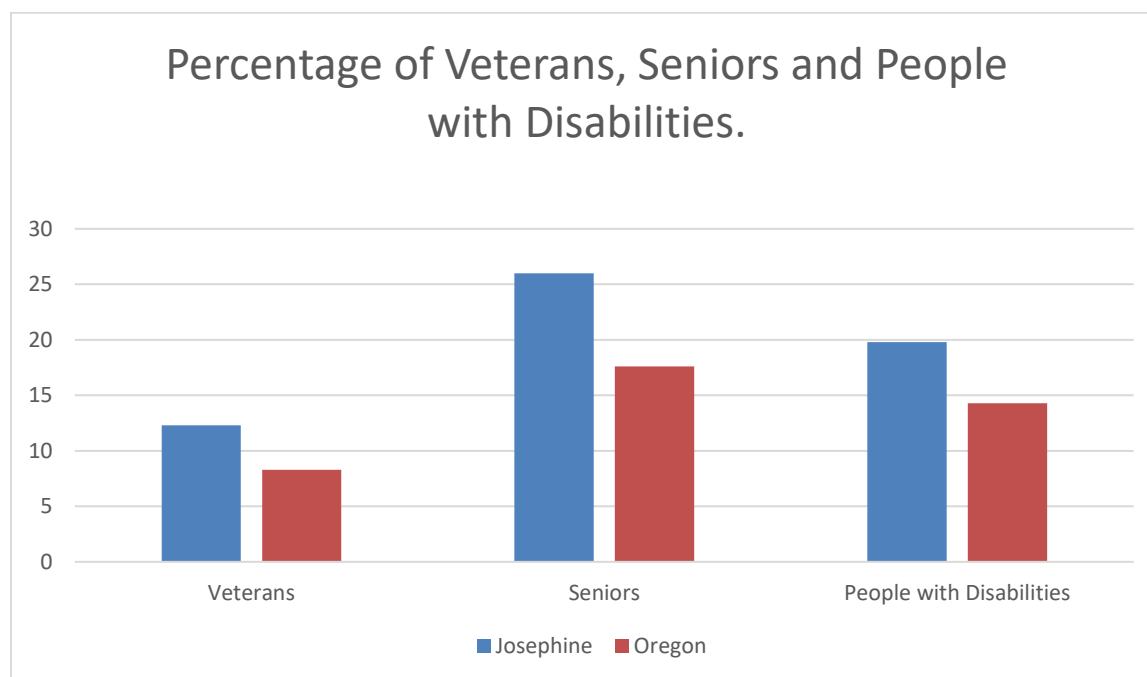


<sup>31</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2016-2020 estimate.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

Like Douglas County, while Josephine County lacks racial/ethnic diversity, its population has relatively high percentages of veterans, seniors and people with disabilities<sup>34</sup>



As mentioned earlier, though many members of these groups, particularly veterans, do not necessarily face additional life challenges, a disproportionate number do, which further strains resources available in the County.

With a climate that is even drier and warmer than Douglas County, Josephine County is seeing an even greater influx of older “equity” migrants. At the same time, the area has a higher percentage of people living in poverty than Douglas County. Many seniors living in poverty do not have funds to move out of the area. Josephine County’s median age of 47.5<sup>35</sup> years of age exceeds that of Douglas County, and far exceeds the statewide median age.

But the County also has many households with children. A little over one-fourth of county households are families with children ages 0-18.<sup>36</sup> 16,698 children ages 0-17 live in the County.<sup>37</sup> Like Douglas County, the average family size in Josephine County is also somewhat less than Oregon’s.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>34</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2016-2020 estimate.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.



## Economy

Josephine County has had a long history of reliance on timber for its economy, and has arguably been hit even harder by the turndown in this industry than most counties. The last mill in the County permanently closed in 2017. An increase in wine production is raising hopes of a new economic base. Tourism plays a large role in local economies, as many visitors enjoy recreational opportunities available along the Rogue River, and others travel on highway 199 headed for California's redwood country. But most jobs associated with tourism pay poorly. Like Douglas County, the County's unemployment rate regularly exceeds the state rate. As with Douglas County, the County's unemployment rate has rebounded significantly from high rates seen at the onset of the Pandemic. Median wages are even lower than Douglas County's. More so than in Douglas County, lower paying service sector jobs are now the norm.

## Health

Like Douglas County, County Health Rankings reports that "Josephine County is ranked among the least healthy counties in Oregon."<sup>39</sup> Not only is the County ranked as one of the worst for health outcomes such as premature death, the County is also ranked as one of the worst for health factors, like obesity.<sup>40</sup> The County currently ranks 32<sup>nd</sup> for Health Outcomes and 32<sup>nd</sup> for Health Factors (out of 36 Oregon counties)<sup>41</sup>. Access to health care is also a major problem within the County, especially for those living outside of Grants Pass.

## Education

The graduation rate is somewhat better in Josephine County than in Douglas County, as is overall educational attainment, but the County still lags in these areas when compared to the overall State. Like Douglas County, the County has a shortage of individuals who have baccalaureate and advanced degrees. County communities have difficulty keeping better students from leaving the area. The closest four-year college is Southern Oregon University in Ashland, about 45 minutes to the south of Grants Pass. The County's higher than average unemployment rate and low median wages are disincentives to returning to the area after completion of college.

## Summary

In spite of its challenges, the number of people living in Josephine County continues to nudge upward. With an even warmer, dryer climate than Douglas County, the area is particularly attractive to retirees. But outside of Grants Pass, rates of poverty are high, and opportunities for economic growth are currently dim.

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<sup>39</sup><https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/oregon/2022/rankings/josephine/county/outcomes/overall/~snapshot>

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

# Community Challenges

## Introduction

As a community action agency, United Community Action Network focuses its work primarily on issues related to poverty. The federal poverty level is still the most common measure used to determine poverty in communities. The government developed the formula to calculate this standard in the 1960s, and based the calculation on the percentage of income roughly needed to meet the cost of food. Since that time, other basic needs costs, such as housing, have risen more rapidly than food, so food costs now make up a much smaller portion of daily expenses. Another major issue with using the federal poverty level as the sole measure of poverty is that the level does not take into account differences in the cost of living in different areas of the country. The median value of housing in Oregon, for example, is \$200,000 above that of Mississippi, and has been rising much more quickly than other areas of the country.<sup>42</sup> A gallon of gas in Oregon currently costs a dollar more than in many other states.<sup>43</sup> Federal poverty rates also fail to include income supplements provided by the government, like TANF (formerly known as welfare). In general, many believe the federal poverty rate significantly undercounts those who cannot meet their basic needs, and alternative approaches are being developed.

One approach is the use of living wage calculations, which take into account geographic differences and a variety of basic needs expenses. A living wage calculator developed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) provides living hourly wages required by families to meet their needs, based on family size.<sup>44</sup> Data from MIT shows how inadequate the federal poverty rate is as a measure of poverty. For example, MIT's living wage calculator indicates that in Douglas and Josephine County, Oregon, a family with one adult and one child would need to earn over \$34/hr. to meet basic needs.<sup>45</sup> Yet a family in this situation making \$8.39 or more would be living above the federal poverty standard, clearly well below what is needed to meet basic needs. One of the major reasons for the large discrepancy between the living wage and the poverty wage in this case is the assumption that such a family would need to pay for child care for their child, a cost not taken into account by the federal poverty measure. Unfortunately, data for the percentages of people living below living wage in a community are not readily available. To best analyze poverty within a community, a recent report suggests looking at poverty multi-dimensionally.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2016-2020 estimate.

<sup>43</sup> <https://gasprices.aaa.com/state-gas-price-averages/>

<sup>44</sup> <http://www.livingwage.mit.edu>

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Torgerson, M. *Measuring Community Action Program Impacts on Multi-Dimensional Poverty*, Oregon State University, March 2017.

This assessment attempts to look at poverty in this way. Dimensions of poverty addressed in the assessment include: General Poverty Information, Housing, Home Comfort, Health, Food/Nutrition, Transportation, Children and Family Well-Being, Education and Economic Well-Being/Jobs.

# General Poverty Information

## Poverty Rates

Until a better measure of poverty is made available, the federal poverty level remains the primary measure of poverty. This portion of the report looks both at poverty levels and the use of income supplements in the region. It examines federal poverty rates by:

- Overall population,
- Gender,
- Household type,
- Race,
- Ethnicity,
- Overall change,
- Seniors

The report analyzes child poverty rates in the section examining child and family well-being.

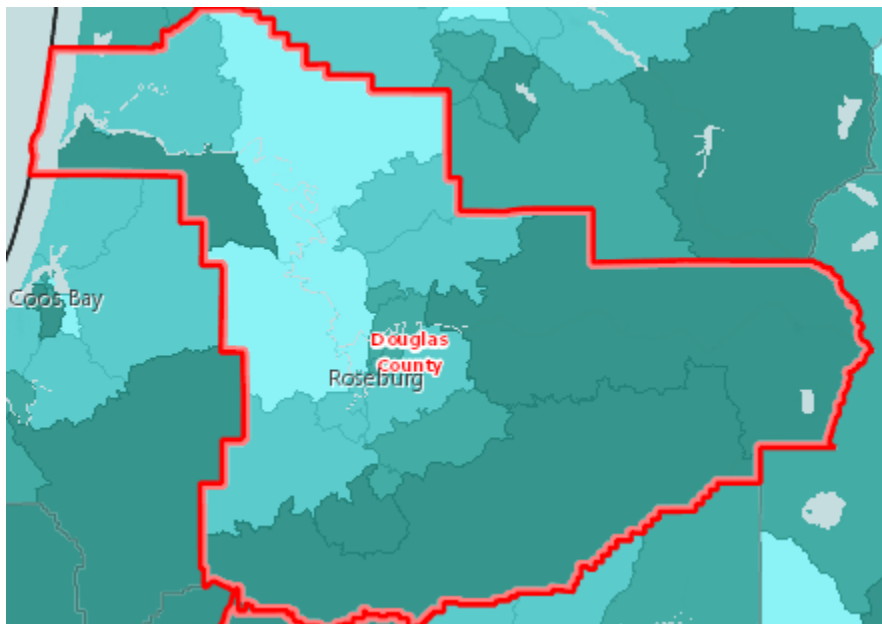
The Census Bureau collects poverty data from both Small Area Income Poverty Estimates and from the American Community Survey five year estimates (ACS). The two sets of figures differ. As the ACS estimate is based on five year's data, it will be used in this report. The table below depicts estimated poverty at 100%, 200% and 300% of federal poverty levels for Douglas County, Josephine County, the State of Oregon and the U.S.<sup>47</sup> The percentage living at higher percentages of the federal poverty level is included because, as has been stated, the federal poverty level severely undercounts the number of people having difficulty meeting their basic needs.

<b>Location</b>	<b>100% Federal Poverty Level</b>	<b>200% Federal Poverty Level</b>	<b>300% Federal Poverty Level</b>
<b>Douglas County, OR</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>36.1%</b>	<b>55.9%</b>
<b>Josephine County, OR</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>41.8%</b>	<b>58.8%</b>
<b>Oregon</b>	<b>12.4%</b>	<b>29.3%</b>	<b>45.8%</b>
<b>United States</b>	<b>12.8%</b>	<b>30.5%</b>	<b>45.8%</b>

<sup>47</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2016-2020 estimate.

Of particular interest in looking at the table on the previous page is the trend seen moving from 100% FPL to 300% FPL. At 100% FPL, both counties exceed the percentage of the state and nation living in poverty, but not dramatically. But as higher percentages of the poverty rate are considered, the disparity between those living in the two counties and the state and nation becomes more stark. The reality is that far higher percentages of both counties' residents are struggling to make ends meet than statewide or nationally. Perhaps nearly half of residents are in this situation.

By examining poverty rates by census tract, one can determine particular County areas with particularly high household poverty rates. Below, household poverty rates are mapped by Douglas County census tract (the County's boundaries are in red).<sup>48</sup> The darker blue areas have higher poverty rates.

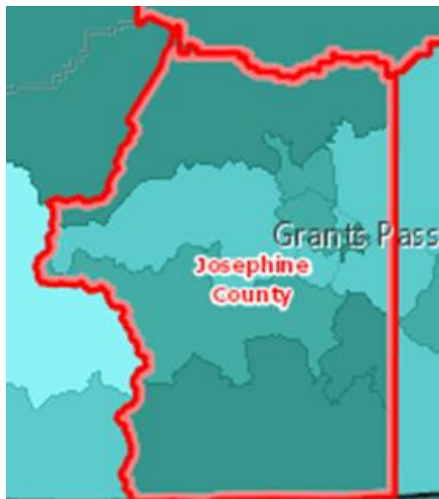


Portions of the County with higher poverty rates (15-20% and over) include all of eastern Douglas County, all of southern Douglas County, the area around Reedsport, and portions of Roseburg.

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<sup>48</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2015-2019 estimate.

The census tract poverty map for Josephine County is:<sup>49</sup>



Poverty over 20% is concentrated in the southern and northern portion of the County, including Cave Junction and other Illinois Valley communities, Applegate Valley communities and Wolf Creek near the border with Douglas County.

Poverty rates differ by gender in the two counties. This can be seen in the table below:<sup>50</sup>

Report Area	Percent Male	Percent Female
Douglas County, OR	12.1%	13.9%
Josephine County, OR	15.9%	16.1%
Oregon	11.4%	13.3%
United States	11.6%	14.0%

In all locations, women are more likely to be living in poverty than men.

<sup>49</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2015-2019 estimate.

<sup>50</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2016-2020 estimate.

Both counties have far more families led by single women living in poverty than other arrangements.<sup>51</sup> In Josephine County approximately one-third of such families live in poverty.

Report Area	Poverty Rate All Types	Percent of Poverty Married Couples	Percent of Poverty Female Householder
Douglas County, OR	13%	5.4%	28.9%
Josephine County, OR	16%	7.9%	33.1%
Oregon	12.4%	5.3%	25.3%
United States	12.8%	5.7%	27.2%

The data below reflect poverty rate by race.<sup>52</sup> This data should be taken with a grain of salt, as the large margins of error for the small numbers of non-White residents leads to some odd numbers, such as the 0% and 69.2% poverty rates for Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders in Josephine County and Douglas County respectively.

Report Area	White	Black or African American	Native American / Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	Some Other Race	Multiple Race
Douglas County	12.6%	17.3%	18.2%	6.1%	69.2%	12.9%	18.8%
Josephine County	15.8%	23.1%	19.3%	11.1%	0%	17.2%	18.2%

Given the small numbers of most racial groups, perhaps the sole meaningful disparity shown in this table is between those identifying as White and those as multiple race. In both counties, the percentage of multiple race individuals living in poverty appears to exceed that of White residents.

The US Census has a smaller margin of error in estimating percentages living in poverty for Latinos, because there are more Latinos than all residents who are members of non-

<sup>51</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2016-2020 estimate.

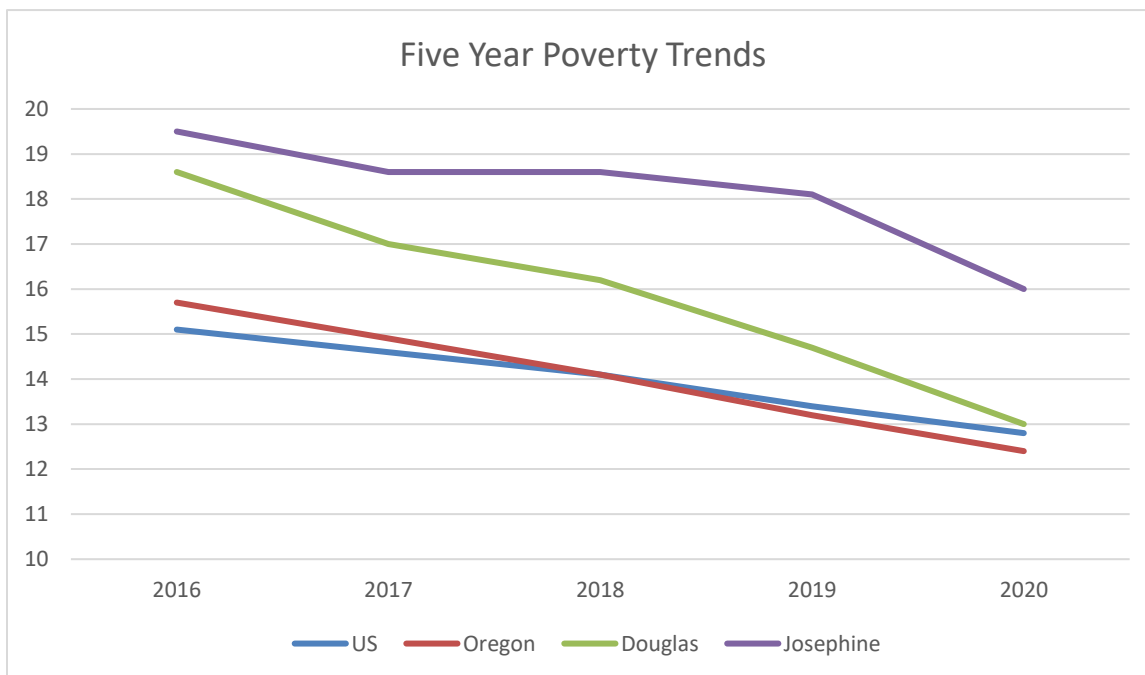
<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

White races combined. The table below has poverty rates for those identifying as Hispanic/Latino by county versus those not identifying in this manner.<sup>53</sup>

Report Area	Percent Hispanic / Latino	Percent Not Hispanic / Latino
Douglas County, OR	23.9%	12%
Josephine County, OR	21.1%	15.6%

It appears that the Hispanic/Latino population in the two county region experiences poverty at significantly higher rates than those who do not identify as being part of this ethnic group.

Poverty rates for all geographies been dropping over the past five years.<sup>54</sup> This is the first year that data covers time during a part of the Pandemic. For the five-year period including 2020, rates have continued to fall. Measures taken by federal and local governments may well have blunted the Pandemic’s impact on poverty. It is especially interesting to see that Douglas County’s poverty rate has fallen to rates similar to state and national rates for the first time in quite a while.



<sup>53</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2016-2020 estimate.

<sup>54</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, five-year estimates, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020.



Seniors in both counties have relatively lower poverty rates than other individuals.<sup>55</sup>

<b>Region</b>	<b>Overall Poverty Rate</b>	<b>Senior Poverty Rate</b>
<b>Douglas County, OR</b>	13%	7.8%
<b>Josephine County, OR</b>	16%	8.9%

These figures suggest that seniors are generally doing better financially than other age groups in the region. Both Counties are popular places for both in-state and out-of-state retirees, in part because taxes are very low in the area. So there has been an influx of relatively well-off seniors locally. Nonetheless, both Counties have substantial numbers of seniors who have lost jobs as the timber industry contracts, have not been able to regain living wage employment, and have not been able to relocate. This is a particular problem in smaller communities where timber mills have shut down.

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<sup>55</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2016-2020 estimate.

## Income Supports

Some lower-income residents of Douglas and Josephine County receive supplements to their income. Common income supplements include Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC). In addition, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits are considered to be income supplements, as they serve as cash for the purchase of food. This next portion of this section examines the use of these supports and the financial benefits accruing to the region.

In December 2020, Douglas County and Josephine County had 3,649 and 2,881 individuals respectively receiving SSI.<sup>56</sup> Most of these individuals were either blind or disabled. The total amount of money coming into the region from SSI payments was approximately \$4,000,000.<sup>57</sup> During 2020, Douglas County and Josephine County saw substantial decreases in TANF cases.<sup>58</sup> The Roseburg DHS reported a drop of 757 TANF cases, and the Grants Pass and Cave Junction DHS offices reported a drop of 929 cases.<sup>59</sup> This may be due to increased unemployment benefits and stimulus payments made during the Pandemic. In general, the Josephine County offices together have more TANF cases than the Douglas County office.

During 2020, with December data not yet in, an average of 24,675 individuals/month benefited from SNAP benefits in Douglas County.<sup>60</sup> The average total monthly dollar of benefits from 2020 was about \$4,175,000 for the County.<sup>61</sup> With December data still to come, an average of 17,840 residents/month in Josephine County received SNAP benefits in 2020.<sup>62</sup> The average monthly benefit to Josephine County in 2020 was just over \$3 million.<sup>63</sup> Not surprisingly, the onset of the Pandemic saw a significant increase in SNAP participation in both counties, with DHS paying out an additional \$1.7 million to Douglas County residents and \$1.3 million to Josephine County residents in April 2020.<sup>64</sup> While county data is not available for 2021, statewide data indicates a sharp increase in per household benefit related to pandemic measures from \$133 to \$218.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> United States Social Security Administration, 2020.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Oregon Department of Human Services, TANF Flash Figures, December 2020.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Oregon Department of Human Services, SNAP County Tables, 2020.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

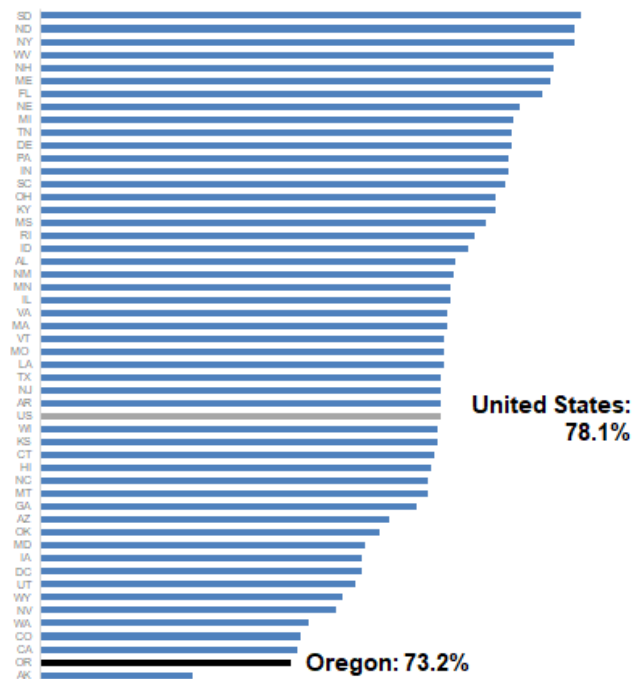
<sup>65</sup> Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Oregon SNAP Fact Sheet, April 2022.

Earned Income and Child Tax Credits are powerful tools improving the lives of low-income individuals and families.<sup>66</sup> “A substantial body of research shows that “the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child Tax Credit (CTC), which go to millions of low-income working families each year, provide work, income, educational, and health benefits to its recipients and their children.”<sup>67</sup> Moreover, income from these credits benefits virtually every life stage.<sup>68</sup> These tax credits lift millions of people out of poverty.<sup>69</sup>

Both the federal government and the State of Oregon offer EITC, and the federal government offers the CTC. Yet the Oregon Center for Public Policy notes in an article published in 2022 that: “Oregon families are among the least likely to benefit from the Earned Income Tax Credit.”<sup>70</sup> In 2018, Oregon had the second worst participation rate in EITC as seen below.<sup>71</sup>

### Oregon second worst in EITC participation

Share of eligible population claiming Earned Income Tax Credit



Source: Internal Revenue Service data for tax year 2018.

<sup>66</sup> EITC and Child Tax Credit Promote Work, Reduce Poverty, and Support Children’s Development, Research Finds, Chuck Marr, Chye-Ching Huang, Arloc Sherman, and Brandon Debot, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 2015.

<sup>67</sup> <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/take-action-to-improve-health/what-works-for-health/strategies/earned-income-tax-credit-eitc>

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

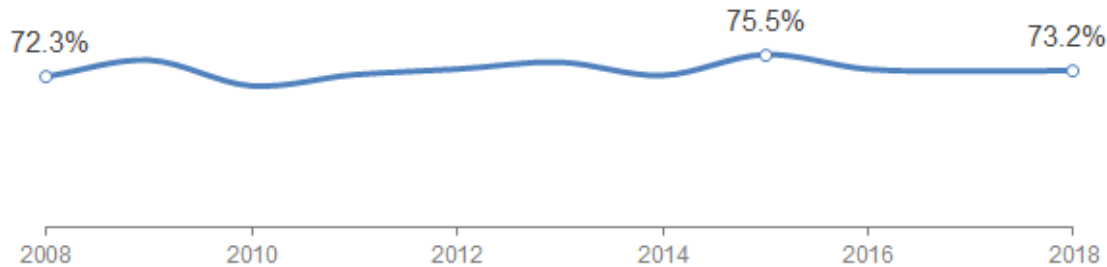
<sup>70</sup> <https://www.ocpp.org/2022/01/27/oregon-bottom-use-eitc/>

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

Oregon has never ranked better than 44<sup>th</sup> for EITC participation rates, with rates typically hovering in the low to mid 70's.<sup>72</sup>

## Oregon has long performed poorly in access to the EITC

Share of eligible Oregon households claiming the federal Earned Income Tax Credit



Source: OCPP analysis of Internal Revenue Service data.

In 2018, Oregonians failed to file for an estimated \$93 million in federal and state EITC dollars alone.<sup>73</sup> Based on the proportion of the state's EITC that goes to the region, that means the region is losing an estimated \$10,000,000 or so from EITC alone that would pull people out of poverty and directly benefit local communities (calculated by multiplying the total EITC obtained by .75 (average participation rate) and then subtracting the EITC obtained from this total). Turning to the CTC, in past years, lowest income families benefited little as this credit only reduced their tax liability which was already very low. But last year, the federal government changed the program, allowing even those with no income to earn the full amount of the credit by providing monthly checks. The changes lifted perhaps half of families out of poverty, but was only temporary, expiring at year's end.<sup>74</sup>

## Summary

Josephine County and Douglas County have poverty rates in excess of Oregon's and the United States' rates, though Douglas County's rate is nearing state and national rates. Approximately 28,000 residents live below the federal poverty level in the region.<sup>75</sup> Data on those living at 200% and 300% of the federal poverty level indicates that a disproportionate number of local residents continue to lack adequate income to make ends meet. Women are more likely to live in poverty, particularly those that are

<sup>72</sup> <https://www.ocpp.org/2022/01/27/oregon-bottom-use-eitc/>

<sup>73</sup> Reforms Could Help Oregon Families Missing Out on Millions in Tax Credits, Janet Bauer, Oregon Capital Chronicle, April 20, 2022.

<sup>74</sup> Mothers need a stronger Child Tax Credit, Juan Carlos Ordonez, Oregon Center for Public Policy, May 3, 2022.

<sup>75</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2016-2020 estimate.

single and heads of households. Poverty rates trended lower in both counties in the past few years; more recent data is needed to see how the Pandemic, and now inflation, are impacting these rates. Low numbers of non-White populations make it difficult to determine accurate poverty rates by race, but it seems likely that those identifying as Hispanic/Latino have higher rates of poverty than those who do not. Seniors have much lower poverty rates than the overall percentage, but seniors living in distressed communities are more likely to live in poverty. Income supports play an important role in bringing in tens of millions of dollars to support local distressed communities, but it is likely that local residents and communities are failing to benefit from millions of available dollars of EITC income support.

# Housing

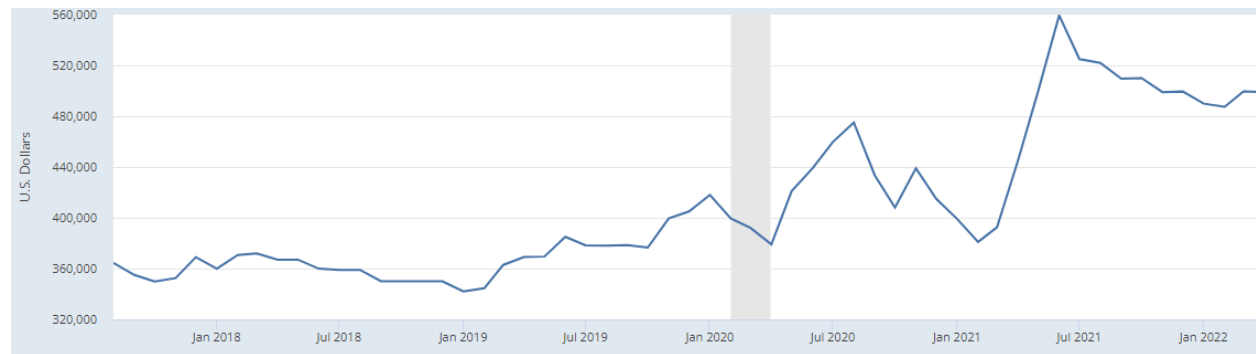
Low-income residents are primarily limited to renting their place of residence, unless they own manufactured homes or small, old homes in poor condition. The following section examines both local homeownership as well as renting challenges.

## Homeownership

As of April 2022, data from the St. Louis Fed indicated that the median listing price for Douglas County homes was nearing \$400,000.<sup>76</sup> Prices have increased dramatically recently.<sup>77</sup> The chart below shows this rise in listing prices.



Prices are trending similarly in Josephine County, but median listing prices have skyrocketed to around \$500,000 there.<sup>78</sup>



Needless to say, the bulk of housing in both Counties is out of reach for low-income individuals with poor credit, little money for down payments and little for monthly mortgage payments. Even in 2020, when the respective median housing prices in Douglas and Josephine County were \$210,000 and \$281,500, few low-income residents

<sup>76</sup> St. Louis Fed, FRED data, <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/>

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

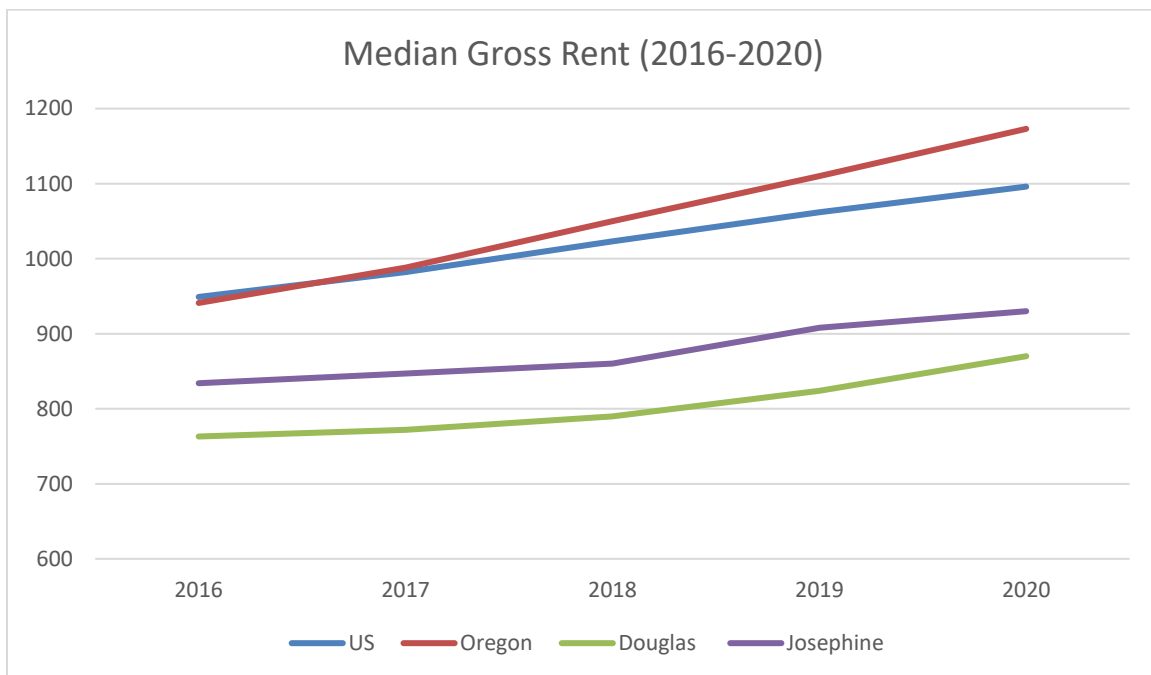
<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

could find affordable housing.<sup>79</sup> That year, Douglas County had fewer than 5,000 units with monthly mortgages below \$1,000 and Josephine County had approximately 2,700.<sup>80</sup>

Manufactured homes are perhaps the only significant source of affordable housing which low-income residents own in the two counties. Douglas County has 7,487 owner-occupied manufactured homes and Josephine County has 4,783 of such units.<sup>81</sup> As such homes have a much higher median value in Josephine County, not all of their stock may be affordable to low-income residents. Douglas County's stock had a median value of \$89,200 in 2020; Josephine County's median value was \$170,000 that year.<sup>82</sup>

## Renting

As with much of the United States, and almost all of Oregon, the cost to rent has steadily increased in the past five years in Douglas and Josephine County.<sup>83</sup>



While both counties have lower median gross rents than the state or national rents, they have seen increases from 2016-2020, with the largest increases coming in the last few years. During much of this time, wages, particularly those of low-income workers, have stayed relatively flat.

<sup>79</sup> US, American Community Survey, 2016-2020 estimate.

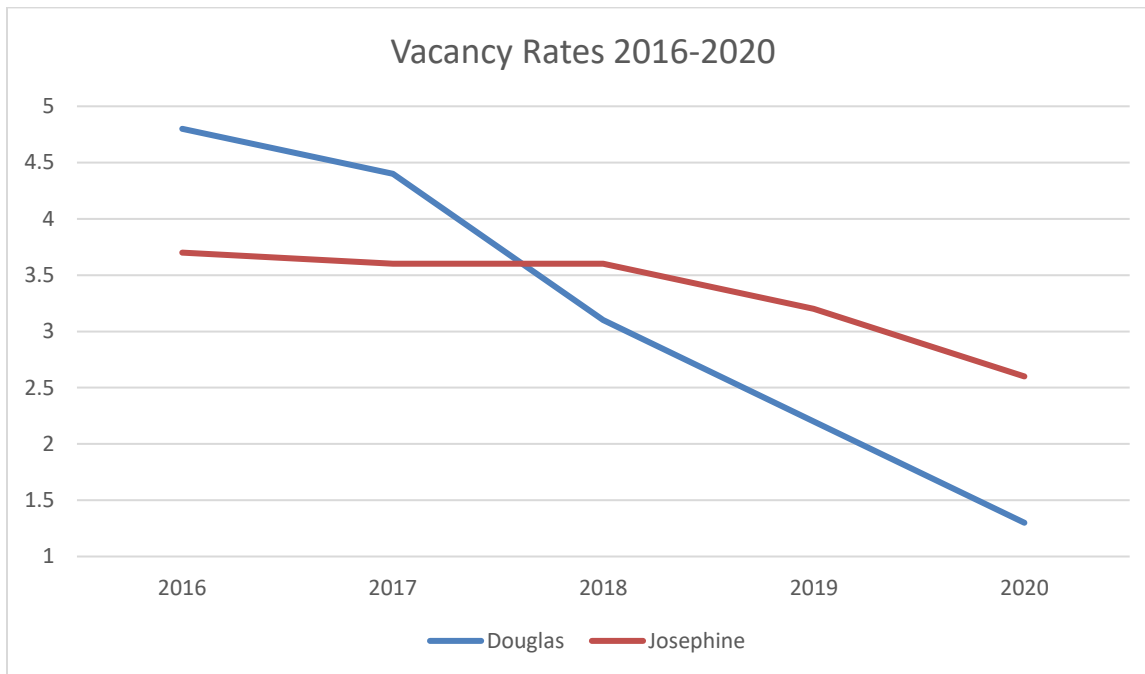
<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, five-year estimates, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020.

As the cost of renting has risen, the availability of rentals has decreased. The next chart show how vacancy rates for rentals have decreased in recent years.<sup>84</sup>



In the past, the market for rentals statewide was tighter than in the two counties. This has now changed, with the local markets much tighter than in the state. This can largely be explained by the fact that development of apartments has slowed considerably in the two counties, with very few new complexes coming on the market now. With these trends, rents are likely to have continued spiraling up between 2020 and 2022.

To better understand how housing costs are affecting residents, particularly low-income residents, it is useful to examine how much of residents' paychecks are being spent on rent. Individuals paying more than 30% of their gross household income on housing are categorized as burdened, and those paying more than 50% of their income are considered to be severely rent-burdened. Both are spending too much of their income on housing, and severely burdened residents are especially likely to cut back on purchases of food, medicines, etc. in order to cover their rent payments.

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<sup>84</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, five-year estimate, 2016-2020



The following table indicates the proportion of all households in the two county region who are burdened and severely burdened by their home payments (either mortgage or rent). The table also shows the percentage of renters alone who are burdened by their rent payment (data for severely burdened renters alone is not available).

<b>Location</b>	<b>Burdened Household<sup>85</sup></b>	<b>Severely Burdened Household<sup>86</sup></b>	<b>Burdened Renters<sup>87</sup></b>
<b>Douglas</b>	30.4%	13%	46.4%
<b>Josephine</b>	40%	18%	60.2%

This data shows that more than one in ten residents in each County are likely cutting back on other basic needs expenses, like food, to pay for their housing. A much larger percentage of all local householders are paying too much for housing. And when looking at renters, that percentage soars, with almost half of Douglas County renters and 6 in 10 Josephine County renters challenged to cover their rent payments.

Affordable housing can address this crisis, but both Douglas and Josephine County have an inadequate stock of such housing. Subsidized housing can provide rentals at anywhere from 30% to about 60% of fair market rent amounts. In Douglas County, the Oregon Housing and Community Services Department lists 2031 units of housing in their current affordable housing directory.<sup>88</sup> The directory indicates Josephine County has 828 of such units.<sup>89</sup> All of these units have strict income requirements, some are available only to special populations (like people with serious mental illnesses), and some are only available for two year leases (transitional properties). Given the fact that over 5,750 households in Douglas County and almost 6,500 households in Josephine County are rent-burdened, this stock is nowhere near what is needed to address local needs. In addition to the lack of affordable housing stock, other renters who can afford local rents may not be able to rent because of criminal histories, low credit scores or histories of eviction.

## Homelessness

Each January, counties undertake a Point-In-Time (PIT) count of homeless residents. The report undercounts the number of homeless individuals, as many homeless people leave the area during this time of year. The Pandemic has interfered with recent PIT counts, so most recent data dates back to 2020. The 2020 PIT data show that prior to the Pandemic, homeless rates were already extremely high for the region. Based on numbers from the count taken in January, 2020, Douglas County had a rate of 76

<sup>85</sup> St. Louis Fed, FRED Economic Data, 2020.

<sup>86</sup> County Health Rankings, 2020 Data.

<sup>87</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, five year estimate 2016-2020.

<sup>88</sup> OHCS, Oregon Affordable Housing Inventory, March 18, 2022.

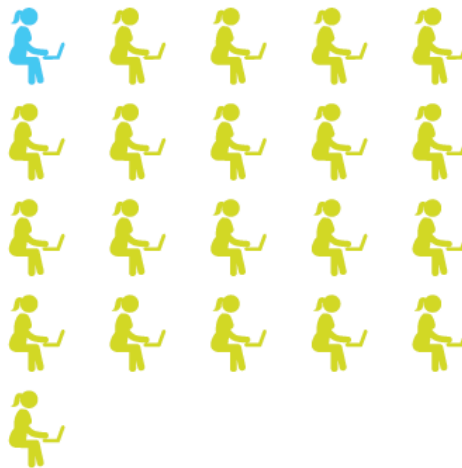
<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

homeless individuals per 10,000 residents and Josephine County had a rate of 98.8 per 10,000.<sup>90</sup> Both counties not only exceeded the state rate of 34.7 per 10,000, they exceeded all 50 state rates for that year.<sup>91</sup> Homelessness may seem to be primarily an urban problem, but these numbers belie that assumption.

Of the 845 homeless individuals counted in Douglas County in 2020, 588 lacked shelter.<sup>92</sup> Of the 870 homeless individuals in Josephine County, 246 lacked shelter.<sup>93</sup> Perhaps of greatest concern, Douglas and Josephine County had 183 and 289 homeless children respectively.<sup>94</sup> This follows the 2019 count, in which Josephine County had the highest count of homeless adults with children and homeless children living alone of any Oregon county.<sup>95</sup> Homelessness is especially difficult for school children, whose lack of housing greatly diminishes their chance to have successful educational outcomes.

The Oregon Housing Alliance infographics below demonstrate the severity of this problem in both counties. In Douglas County:<sup>96</sup>

**1 in 21 students**  
experienced homelessness  
in 2019-20



<sup>90</sup> Calculated using PIT counts for both counties for 2020 and each county's 2020 population estimate from the US census.

<sup>91</sup> The 2020 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress.

<sup>92</sup> PIT Count, Douglas County, 2020.

<sup>93</sup> PIT Count, Josephine County, 2020.

<sup>94</sup> PIT Counts, Douglas and Josephine County, 2020.

<sup>95</sup> <https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/oregon.housing.and.community.services/viz/2019Point-in-TimeDashboard/Story1>

<sup>96</sup> [http://www.oregonhousingalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Douglas\\_County\\_2020.pdf](http://www.oregonhousingalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Douglas_County_2020.pdf) and [http://www.oregonhousingalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Josephine\\_County\\_2020.pdf](http://www.oregonhousingalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Josephine_County_2020.pdf)

In Josephine County, the situation for children is much worse with:

# 1 in every 12 students

experienced homelessness in  
2019-20



Only Lincoln County had a higher proportion of students who were homeless in 2019-2020 than Josephine County's proportion, and Josephine County had the highest number of students experiencing homelessness of any non-metropolitan county in the state. While data are lagging, it is clear that homelessness has been exacerbated by a combination of soaring costs of housing and the Pandemic.

## Summary

All of Oregon is experiencing a housing crisis. Vacancy rates are very low, and prices are rapidly increasing. Homelessness is a particularly concerning issue in both Counties. Rents have been rising regularly, and low-income renters can ill afford to pay increased rents. Costs of housing in the region far exceed what most low-income residents earn so many such residents are forced to skip meals, put off doctor's appointments and forgo filling prescriptions to pay for housing. Those who are chronically homeless, living on the streets for long periods of time, often end up with multiple chronic health problems. Not only do the chronically homeless often die young, they are frequently involved with emergency health and public safety systems, costing distressed communities significant amounts of resources. Homeless students are far more likely to have poor lifelong health, educational and economic outcomes. When looking for root causes of local poverty, the cost of housing certainly ranks near the top.

## Home Comfort

As alluded to in the previous section, a person can have housing, but lack adequate housing. Factors related to home adequacy include:

1. Overcrowding,
2. Lack of kitchen or plumbing facilities,
3. Presence of toxic mold or other dangerous substances,
4. Leaks,
5. Lack of or poor heating/cooling systems,
6. Broken items like windows, doors, etc.
7. Lack of accessibility.

This section of the assessment will cover home comfort data that is available related to adequacy of housing.

Fewer than 1% of housing units lack full plumbing in the two Counties.<sup>97</sup> Douglas County has a similar percentage of housing units lacking complete kitchens, but a little over 2% of Josephine County's housing units (approximately 778) lack them.<sup>98</sup> Fewer than 3% of housing units in Douglas County have more than one occupant per room, but in Josephine County, almost 5% housing units are potentially overcrowded.<sup>99</sup> Lack of access to technology has created major barriers for some low-income households during the Pandemic. In Douglas County and Josephine County, just over 10% and 8% of households respectively lack computers.<sup>100</sup> A little over 15% of households in both counties lack Internet access of any kind, but over 1/3 of households with annual incomes of less than \$20,000 lack access.<sup>101</sup> In Douglas County, an estimated 910 units have no telephone access; in Josephine, an estimated 400 do.<sup>102</sup> Over 10% of housing in both Counties were constructed over 70 years ago.<sup>103</sup> 20.5% and 16.5% of Douglas County and Josephine housing respectively is manufactured.<sup>104</sup> Manufactured homes built prior to 1976 were subject to no building standards. The government updated building standards for such homes in 1996. Many such homes in the two Counties were not constructed to meet any standards. Moreover, even homes built to early construction standards may fail to meet newer standards. So it is very likely that many local residents are living in sub-standard manufactured home stock in both Counties.

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<sup>97</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2016-2020 estimate.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

Fisher, Sheehan and Colton Public Finance and General Economics Consultants have developed a model to determine the affordability gap for home energy.<sup>105</sup> This number, determined for each US county, is the gap between "affordable" home energy bills and "actual" home energy bills. The "affordable burden" for home energy bills is set at 6% of gross household income. The table below shows the number of households in 2020 who were energy burdened at income levels between different percentages of the federal poverty level (FPL).<sup>106</sup>

<b>County</b>	<b>Below 50% FPL</b>	<b>50-99% FPL</b>	<b>100- 124% FPL</b>	<b>125- 149% FPL</b>	<b>150- 184% FPL</b>	<b>185- 199% FPL</b>
<b>Douglas</b>	3,020	3,675	2,,577	2,767	3,647	1,728
<b>Josephine</b>	3,341	3,233	2,551	2,689	2,703	1,315

Of households living below 200% of the federal poverty level in 2019, 17,828 were energy burdened in Douglas County, and 15,832 were energy burdened in Josephine County. Based on the number of households in these two counties in the 2019 5-year American Community Survey, these households alone represented 2/3 of Douglas County households, and over 40% of Josephine County households.<sup>107</sup> The energy burden is most acute for those with lower incomes. Those living at 50% of less of the federal poverty level in the two counties are spending in excess of 20% of their income to stay warm.<sup>108</sup> Those between 50-99% of the poverty level are spending over 10% of their income.<sup>109</sup> With a high percentage of these same households paying 50% of their income on housing alone, it becomes even more evident that housing and related costs alone take a huge chunk out of the income of low-income households.

## Summary

Few residents in either Douglas or Josephine County have residences lacking kitchens or plumbing or those that are overcrowded. A substantial number do lack Internet service and computers, which have been critical for connection during the Pandemic. Many owners of manufactured homes live in substandard homes, and it is likely that a decent portion of renters and homeowners living in older housing also live with health and safety issues. A large percentage of residents pay far too much for utilities.

<sup>105</sup> [http://www.homeenergyaffordabilitygap.com/01\\_whatIsHEAG2.html](http://www.homeenergyaffordabilitygap.com/01_whatIsHEAG2.html)

<sup>106</sup> [http://www.homeenergyaffordabilitygap.com/03a\\_affordabilityData.html](http://www.homeenergyaffordabilitygap.com/03a_affordabilityData.html)

<sup>107</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2015-2019 estimate.

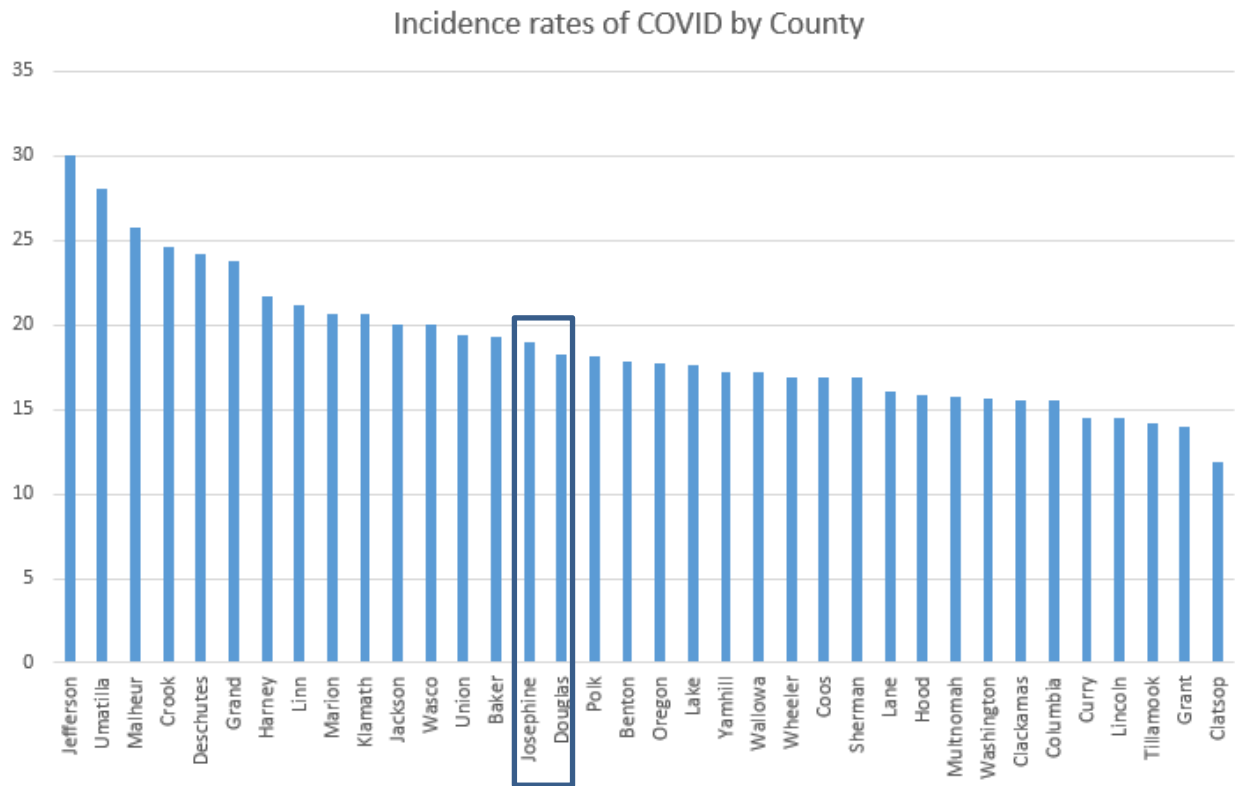
<sup>108</sup> [http://www.homeenergyaffordabilitygap.com/03a\\_affordabilityData.html](http://www.homeenergyaffordabilitygap.com/03a_affordabilityData.html)

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

# Health

## COVID-19

Any discussion of health in 2022 needs to start with the current Pandemic. The pandemic has waxed and waned since first hitting the region in March 2020. It has still not subsided, though as of March 24, 2022, the CDC reported that the community level of the virus in both counties was low.<sup>110</sup> Last year's needs assessment reported that as of late spring, 2021, while the number of cases and deaths from COVID were decreasing substantially in Oregon, Josephine County was only seeing a slight decrease and Douglas County was seeing a spike of cases. Now over two years into the pandemic, it is clear that both counties have struggled more so than many of the state's counties with the pandemic. Both counties have had incidence rates worse than a little over half of the state's counties.<sup>111</sup>

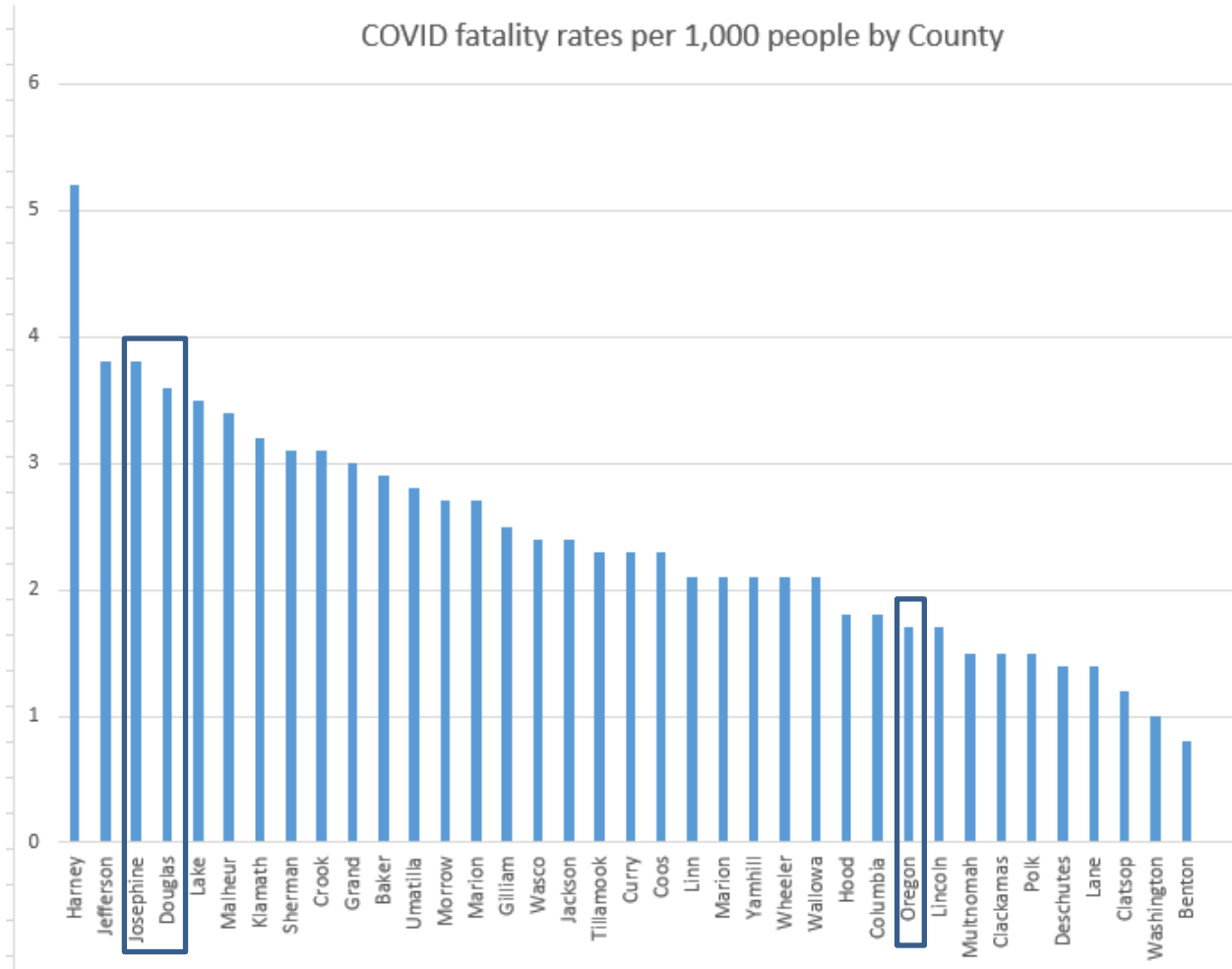


But while incidence has been just a bit worse than the average for Oregon, fatalities have had devastating local impact. This can be seen both by examining the rate of people living in each county who have died from COVID and the percentage of those contracting COVID who have had fatal cases.

<sup>110</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county.html>

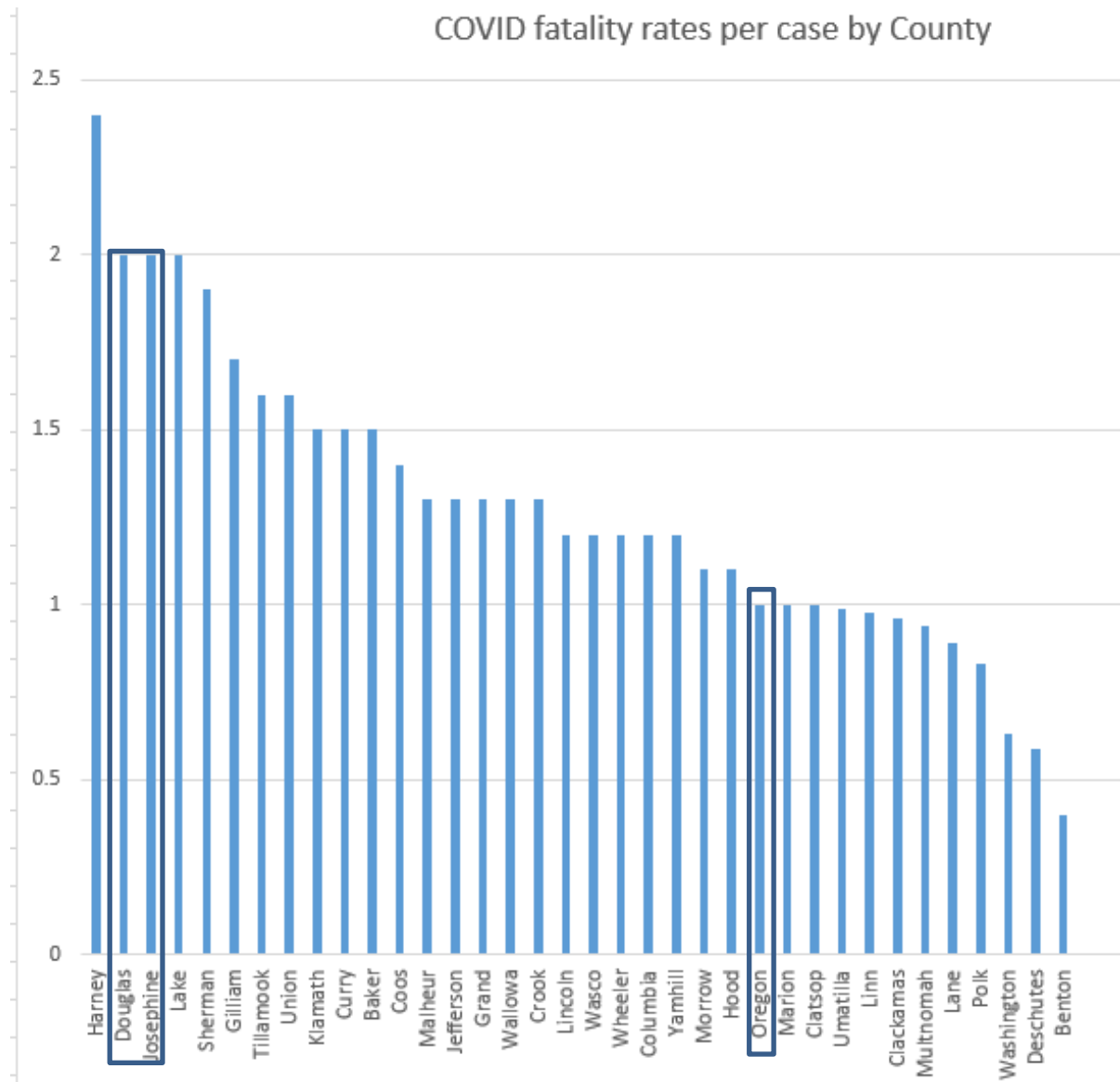
<sup>111</sup> Calculated by dividing the total number of cases reported by Johns Hopkins University by county as of May 27, 2022 by the county certified population estimate reported by the Portland State University Population Center for July 1, 2021.

The rate of people dying from COVID in Douglas and Josephine counties is shown below<sup>112</sup>



<sup>112</sup> Calculated by dividing the total number of COVID deaths reported by Johns Hopkins University by county as of May 27, 2022 by the county certified population estimate reported by the Portland State University Population Center for July 1, 2021.

This chart shows fatality rates from those infected by COVID.<sup>113</sup>



The reasons for such high morbidity from COVID in the region are probably complex, but it is possible that low vaccination rates are a major contributor to local rates of COVID deaths. The Oregon Health Authority maintains data on zip codes with the highest numbers of people yet to obtain a single vaccination.

<sup>113</sup> Calculated by dividing the number of COVID cases reported by Johns Hopkins University by county as of May 27, 2022 by the number of fatalities from COVID reported on that date.



The table below shows that several of these zip codes are located in Douglas and Josephine County, including some with the highest numbers of people yet to receive their first vaccination.<sup>114</sup>

Showing people remaining to receive their first dose and % one dose. ZIP codes are sorted and ranked with the most people remaining at the top. Select a ZIP code to highlight the map.

Rank	County	ZCTA	People Remaining	% One Dose
1	Josephine	97527	9,611	53.4%
2	Jackson	97501	9,131	60.1%
3	Douglas	97471	8,295	53.3%
4	Josephine	97526	8,223	57.1%
5	Marion	97301	7,863	66.0%
6	Klamath	97603	7,634	54.0%
7	Malheur	97914	6,583	46.1%
8	Lane	97478	6,279	64.3%
9	Linn	97355	6,150	59.7%
10	Jackson	97502	5,896	59.7%
11	Linn	97322	5,477	65.1%
12	Jackson	97504	5,460	68.6%
13	Klamath	97601	5,232	57.0%
14	Umatilla	97838	5,192	60.1%
15	Umatilla	97862	5,133	37.0%
16	Clackamas	97045	5,093	70.9%
17	Coos	97420	5,054	61.9%
18	Marion	97305	4,862	68.9%
19	Linn	97386	4,693	48.1%
20	Crook	97754	4,683	56.9%
21	Marion	97317	4,600	61.9%
22	Douglas	97470	4,559	57.0%
23	Multnomah	97080	4,487	69.9%
24	Marion	97303	4,313	69.5%
25	Umatilla	97801	4,285	59.2%
26	Multnomah	97236	4,239	69.6%
27	Jackson	97503	4,191	47.3%
28	Union	97850	4,104	56.3%
29	Jackson	97524	4,082	52.7%
30	Clackamas	97038	3,757	56.0%
31	Douglas	97457	3,646	44.6%

<sup>114</sup> <https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/oregon.health.authority.covid.19/viz/OregonCOVID-19VaccineEffortMetrics/StatewideProgress>

These zip codes listed above alone contain over 34,000 of residents who have yet to receive any vaccination. As newer variants of COVID already require regular boosters, it may be difficult for these individuals to catch up on vaccinations needed to ward off the worst COVID symptoms.

## Community Health Needs Assessments

Turning to general health issues, several different organizations help to publish health needs assessments for both counties in our region. These include Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs), which are coordinated network of care providers offering services covered by the state's Medicaid program, hospitals, and local public health agencies. The CCOs in Douglas (Umpqua Health) and Josephine County (AllCare) and public health departments in the two Counties worked together to publish their assessments in 2019.<sup>115</sup> Mercy Medical Center in Douglas County and Asante Three Rivers Medical Center in Josephine County also published health assessments that year.<sup>116</sup> Those preparing these assessments have not revised them since then, perhaps as they have needed to use all their resources to address the Pandemic.

UCAN's 2021 needs assessment examines some overall indicators of the health of residents in the region. Information about nutritional health and health issues related to poor nutrition is found in the assessment's section addressing food and nutrition issues.

## General Health

As mentioned earlier, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has a program, County Health Rankings, which evaluates and ranks each county's health based on a range of factors. Douglas and Josephine County consistently rank very poorly among all Oregon counties in the Rankings. In the 2022 rankings, out of 35 counties ranked, Douglas and Josephine County rank 30<sup>th</sup> and 32<sup>nd</sup> for all measures combined.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> [https://douglaspublichealthnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Douglas-CHA-2018\\_Optimized.pdf](https://douglaspublichealthnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Douglas-CHA-2018_Optimized.pdf), <http://jeffersonregionalhealthalliance.org/CHA/>

<sup>116</sup> [https://www.chimercyhealth.com/assets/dc\\_community-benefit-report-final2019.pdf](https://www.chimercyhealth.com/assets/dc_community-benefit-report-final2019.pdf), <https://www.asante.org/app/files/public/34855668-9851-4814-b2a5-c7b034dac80f/atrmc-chna-cha-2019-final.pdf>

<sup>117</sup> County Health Rankings, 2022.

The table below shows rankings reflecting areas of particular concern in one or both Counties.<sup>118</sup>

<b>Metric (year(s) of measure)</b>	<b>Douglas</b>	<b>Josephine</b>
General Health Behaviors <sup>119</sup>	32 <sup>nd</sup> worst	34 <sup>th</sup> worst
Overall Physical Environment <sup>120</sup>	29 <sup>th</sup> worst	34 <sup>th</sup> worst
Premature Death (2018-2020)	6 <sup>th</sup> most days lost in a typical life.	5 <sup>th</sup> most days lost in a typical life.
Poor Mental Health Days (2019)	Tied with four other counties for highest number of days.	Tied with one other county for second highest number of days.
Adult Smoking (2019)	Tied with five other counties for second highest percentage.	Highest percentage in the state.

Other measures in which one of the two counties rank poorly include:

- Adult obesity (2019)-Douglas County is tied with three other counties for the second highest percentage
- Percentage of driving deaths with alcohol involvement (2016-2020)-Josephine county has the second highest percentage
- Percentage of households with at least one of four housing problems (2014-2018)-Josephine County has the highest percentage

Contributing to the poor health measures listed above are the lack of medical, dental and mental health professionals in the region. The US Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) regularly maintains data on Medically Underserved Areas (MUAs) (areas having too few primary care providers) and Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs) (areas with shortages of primary medical care, dental or mental health providers). HRSA currently designates both the Grants Pass and Cave Junction regions of Josephine County as MUAs, and Douglas County as an MUA for low-income populations.<sup>121</sup> HRSA currently designates Douglas County as designated mental health HPSAs.<sup>122</sup>

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Focuses on a number of behaviors impacting health, including smoking, drinking, obesity, physical activity, and teen pregnancy.

<sup>120</sup> Looks at such factors as housing, transportation, and air quality.

<sup>121</sup> <https://data.hrsa.gov/tools/shortage-area>

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

## Summary

Poverty is both a cause of and result of poor health. As explained by the American Academy of Family Physicians, poverty causes poor health<sup>123</sup>:

[B]y limiting access to proper nutrition and healthy foods; shelter; safe neighborhoods to learn, live, and work; clean air and water; utilities; and other elements that define an individual's standard of living. Individuals who live in low-income or high-poverty neighborhoods are likely to experience poor health due to a combination of these factors. Poverty affects individuals insidiously in other ways that we are just beginning to understand. Poor nutrition, toxic exposures (e.g., lead), and elevated levels of the stress hormone cortisol are factors associated with poverty that may have lasting effects on children beginning before birth and continuing after birth.

At the same time, high costs of medical care can leave both immediate and extended families impoverished. Taken together, the cost of doctor visits, procedures, tests and prescriptions can push middle class individuals into poverty (a 2018 US Census Report states that “medical expenses were the largest contributor to increasing the number of individuals in poverty”) and often deepens the level of poverty experienced by those already living in poverty.<sup>124</sup>

The Pandemic has had a major economic impact on households in general as well as on entire communities.<sup>125</sup> Workplaces with high levels of infection have seen productivity cut significantly, as many workers have been forced to quarantine. Some types of businesses, like those in the hospitality sector, have suffered greatly because of requirements to stay shut.<sup>126</sup> And when residents are paying more for medical care, they have less they can spend on other community goods and services.

Measures that improve the health and well-being of local residents would go a long way to addressing local poverty. Most cost-effective would be “upstream” measures, those that prevent illness from occurring in the first place. These measures are not limited to preventative healthcare treatment. As former Governor Kitzhaber (a native of Douglas County) used to point out, the cheapest “treatment” for someone living with a well-managed congestive heart condition may be the simple purchase of a \$200 room air conditioner. This may all they need to avoid going into congestive heart failure on a hot summer day.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> <https://www.aafp.org/about/policies/all/poverty-health.html>

<sup>124</sup> The Supplemental Poverty Measure: 2018, Current Population Reports, 2019; Kaiser Family Foundation, Americans' Challenges with Health Care Costs, Audrey Kearney, Liz Hamel, Mellisha Stokes, and Mollyann Brodie, December 14, 2021.

<sup>125</sup> COVID-19 Pandemic Pinches Finances of America's Lower- and Middle-Income Families, Rakesh Kochhar and Stella Sechopoulos, Pew Research Center, April 20, 2022.

<sup>126</sup> COVID-19 Economic Crisis: By State, Michael Ettlinger, University of New Hampshire, Carsey School of Public Policy, October 22, 2021.

<sup>127</sup> Is the Future of American Health Care in Oregon?, Ezra Klein, Washington Post, May 20, 2013.

## Food and Nutrition

The availability of adequate food meeting the nutritional needs of residents also impacts local resident health and poverty. In this section of the assessment, not only is local food security examined, but also indicators of nutrition, such as the prevalence of breast feeding, use of WIC vouchers, and diet-related health conditions.

### Food Insecurity

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines food security as “access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life.”<sup>128</sup> Feeding America has an excellent definition to distinguish the terms “hunger” and “food insecurity:”

*It is important to know that hunger and food insecurity are closely related, but distinct, concepts. Hunger refers to a personal, physical sensation of discomfort, while food insecurity refers to a lack of available financial resources for food at the level of the household.* <sup>129</sup>

Feeding America maintains data estimating the percentage of children and the overall population of counties that are food insecure. Prior to the COVID pandemic, Douglas and Josephine County had overall rates of food insecurity of 14% and 15%.<sup>130</sup> At that time, Josephine County had the fifth highest rate of food insecurity of any Oregon county. The proportion of children who are food insecure in both Counties was a little over 1 in 5.<sup>131</sup> Overall, Douglas County had approximately 15,000 food insecure individuals, including 4,400 children.<sup>132</sup> Josephine County had approximately 13,000 food insecure individuals, including over 3,500 children.<sup>133</sup> As Feeding America typically takes two years to report on food insecurity data, they have yet to report on the impact of the Pandemic on these rates. However, by May 2020, Partners for a Hunger Free Oregon reported that rates in Oregon had doubled – nearly one million Oregonians struggled with food insecurity, compared to half a million in 2019.<sup>134</sup> Student food insecurity is especially concerning, because food insecure children “are more likely to have poor health, behavior problems, poorer developmental outcomes, be less ready to learn in school” among other negative outcomes.<sup>135</sup> Indeed, “child food insecurity can compromise a child’s health through their life.”<sup>136</sup> Poverty goes hand-in-hand with poor educational outcomes.

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<sup>128</sup> United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service.

<sup>129</sup> <https://hungerandhealth.feedingamerica.org/understand-food-insecurity/>

<sup>130</sup> Feeding America, Map the Meal Gap, 2019.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> As noted by Oregon Health Authority in their 2020 Oregon Student Health Survey reports.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

The following table shows the percentage of children in 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades reporting that they did not eat enough because they lacked money to do so, and also shows the percentage of children in those grade on free and reduced lunches.<sup>137</sup>

Region	8 <sup>th</sup> graders not eating enough	11 <sup>th</sup> graders not eating enough	8 <sup>th</sup> graders on free/reduced lunch	11 <sup>th</sup> graders on free/reduced lunch
Douglas	13.8	12.5	45.9	48.1
Josephine	8.1	9.8	58.1	49.2
Oregon	7.9	9.0	33.3	29.9

Both counties have higher percentages of students reporting not having enough to eat than the percentage of students statewide, while at the same time having higher percentages of children on free/reduced lunch programs. In addition to free/reduced lunch programs, WIC provides major nutritional supports to local residents. The table below provides information about how families with young children and pregnant women receive nutritional supports through this program locally.<sup>138</sup>

Program Participation	Douglas	Josephine
WIC Overall Participation	4,319 individuals	3,195 individuals
% of Pregnant Women Served in WIC	44%	33%
% of WIC moms breastfeeding exclusively for six months	33%	35%

The lack of money to purchase food is not the only reason that residents are food insecure. Many local residents live in areas designated by the USDA as being food deserts. The USDA determines areas that are food deserts by looking at:

- Whether a census tract is by definition low-income,
- The distance at least 33% of people are from the nearest supermarket, supercenter, or large grocery store (distances used differ based on whether the tract examined is deemed urban or rural)<sup>139</sup>

For 2019, the USDA designated several census tracts within both counties as being food deserts. Communities within these tracts include: Sutherlin, NE and SE Roseburg,

<sup>137</sup> 2020 Oregon Student Health Surveys, Douglas and Josephine County.

<sup>138</sup> 2021, County WIC Data Sheets.

<sup>139</sup> United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service.

Green, Winston, Dillard, Riddle, Myrtle Creek, Tri-City, Days Creek, Tiller, Glendale, Glide, SW Grants Pass, Cave Junction, Williams and Merlin.<sup>140</sup>

## Nutrition

People in the United States dealing with food insecurity rarely appear to be starving. It is much more likely that such people are obese, as they can only afford foods that are high in fats, sugars, salts and preservatives. The table below compares the percentage of obese students for 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade in the region and state.<sup>141</sup>

Region	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade % Obese	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade % Obese	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade % Obese
Douglas	19.1	10.4	25.4
Josephine	12.6	16	15.9
Oregon	13.2	13.5	15.3

While most of the two counties' grade cohorts have somewhat higher percentages of obese children than comparable state rates, of greatest concern is two cohorts in Douglas County. Almost one in five sixth graders are obese according to their self-reported height and weight. Over 1 in 4 11<sup>th</sup> graders are obese. As these children are on the cusp of adulthood, one might expect that this trend of high obesity later in life in Douglas County would continue.

Poor nutrition and obesity are related to a number of chronic health conditions. The most recent data for these conditions is provided by the Oregon Health Authority for the period 2014-2017<sup>142</sup>

Disease	Douglas County	Josephine County	Oregon
Stroke	3.9%-5 <sup>th</sup> worst in state	3.8%-6 <sup>th</sup> worst in state	2.7%
Chronic Heart Disease	3.6%-slightly worse than average	4.7%-tied for 4 <sup>th</sup> worst in state	3.4%
Diabetes	11.4%-6 <sup>th</sup> worst in state	8.1%-18 <sup>th</sup> worst in state	8.6%
2 or More Chronic Diseases	61.2%-3 <sup>rd</sup> worst in state	56.7%-9 <sup>th</sup> worst in state	53.5%

As stated earlier, the high incidence of both these chronic conditions is both a result of and cause of poverty. And like other health issues, these conditions both cause individual household poverty, and are a drag on the economies of local communities.

<sup>140</sup> <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/go-to-the-atlas/>

<sup>141</sup> 2020 Oregon Student Health Surveys, Douglas and Josephine County.

<sup>142</sup> <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/DISEASES/CONDITIONS/CHRONICDISEASE/DATAREPORTS/Pages/Adult-Prevalence.aspx>

## Summary

Both food insecurity and poor nutrition are problems for many local residents. Free and reduced lunch programs and WIC are undoubtedly playing an important role in ensuring that the extent of these problems are lessened by providing supplemental food to meet the nutritional needs of countless local children and pregnant women. Children experiencing hunger and poor nutrition are likely to have issues with their development throughout their childhood years, and with their health throughout their lives. As reported by Feeding America, local economies suffer when local children experience hunger.<sup>143</sup> Workers who experienced hunger as children are not as well prepared physically, mentally, emotionally or socially to perform effectively in the contemporary workforce. These individuals create a workforce pool that is less competitive, with lower levels of educational and technical skills, and seriously constrained human capital.

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<sup>143</sup> Child Food Insecurity: The Economic Impact on our Nation, John Cook, Karen Jeng, 2009.



## Transportation

Lack of reliable transportation can curtail individuals' abilities to hold jobs, access educational opportunities, and obtain needed benefits and services. Most recent data from the US Department of Transportation indicates that the number of residents working from home is 2,225 and 1,550 respectively. So most local residents continue to need to go to the workplace to work. In Douglas and Josephine County, 2,531 and 1,935 households respectively lack any vehicles.<sup>144</sup> For households lacking vehicles, most residents have to walk, while some bike or use motorcycles to get around. Public transit and taxis rarely help these residents access needed services or employment.

Low-income residents who do have cars often face other challenges with transportation. Many lack the resources to cover the expenses of repairs. This may be a more pressing issue presently, as the average age of all light vehicles (cars and light trucks) recently hit a record high of 12.2 years, up from 11.1 ten years ago.<sup>145</sup> Such vehicles are expected to hit a new high by year's end, and supply chain issues remain.<sup>146</sup> While newer cars have been built to last longer, those owning older cars face high costs of maintenance. At the same time, used cars are selling for 40.5% more than they were a year ago.<sup>147</sup> So those lacking cars are currently hard pressed to purchase one.

Beyond the costs of repairs and maintenance, many low-income residents lack resources to maintain necessary car insurance. For some, even the cost of basics like gas can be a hardship. Gas prices are currently near record highs, with the cost averaging \$5.20/gallon in Douglas County and \$5.36/gallon in Josephine County.<sup>148</sup> Drivers who have their licenses suspended or revoked are often put at risk of losing their jobs. A lack of reliable transportation is particularly a problem for those living in the more rural parts of Douglas and Josephine County. Given the size of both Douglas and Josephine County, residents living outside of Central Douglas County and the Grants Pass area face potentially long commutes to work.

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<sup>144</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, five-year estimate, 2016-2020.

<sup>145</sup> Average Age of Vehicles in the US Increases to 12.2 years, according to S&P Global Mobility, May 23, 2022.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> The average age of a car in the US is up to 12.2 years, a new record. How old is yours?, Jayme Deerwester, USA Today, May 24, 2022.

<sup>148</sup> Prices from AAA, June 1, 2022.

The table below provides some average commute times between communities in Douglas County and Roseburg:

<b>Home Community</b>	<b>Commute Time to Roseburg</b>
<b>Drain</b>	37 minutes
<b>Yoncalla</b>	31 minutes
<b>Oakland</b>	20 minutes
<b>Canyonville</b>	28 minutes
<b>Glendale</b>	50 minutes

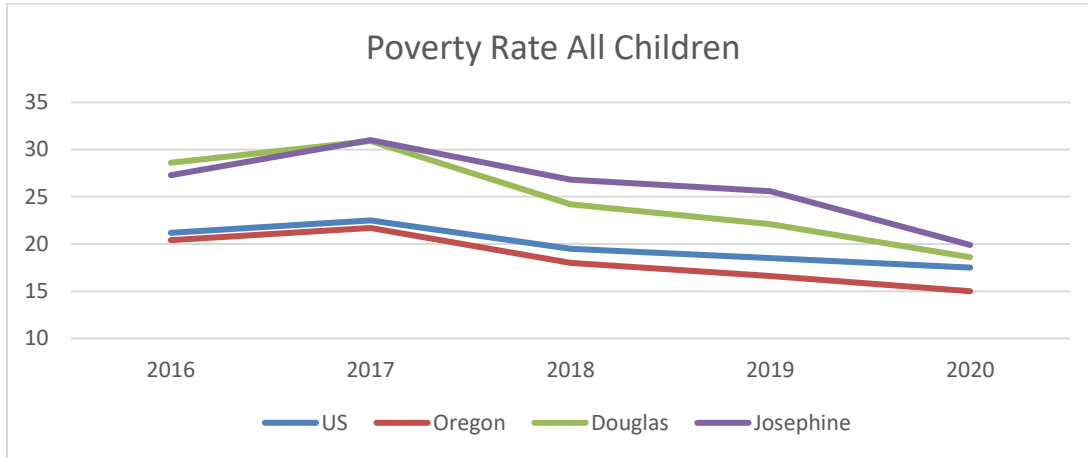
Commuters driving from Cave Junction to Grants Pass have a 38-minute drive. Some Grants Pass residents work in Medford, Oregon, which is a 35-minute drive. Given potential driving distances, and the fact that most residents drive alone to work, anyone who has difficulty affording personal transportation (cannot pay for gas, maintenance, insurance, or a vehicle), or who has a suspended or revoked license faces a substantial barrier to services and employment if living outside of Roseburg or Grants Pass.

### Summary

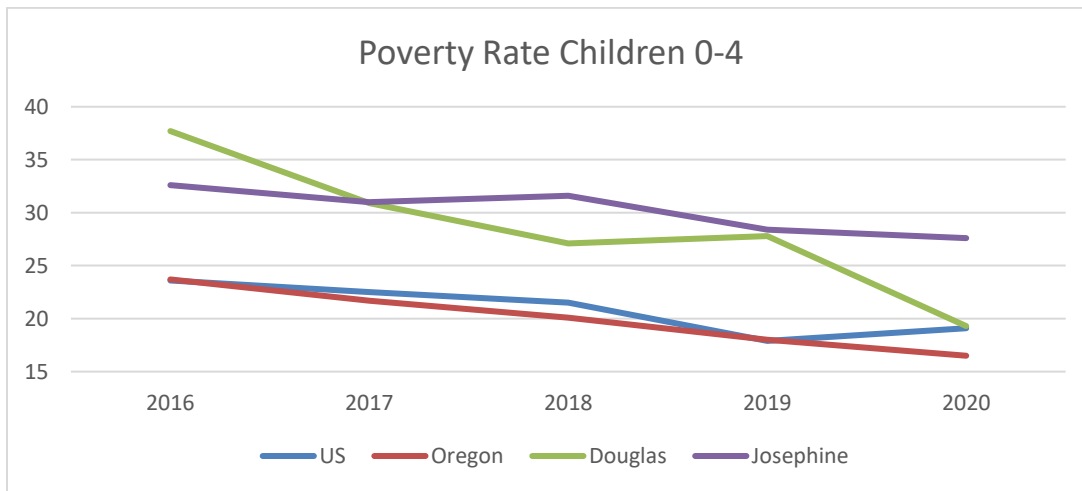
Many local residents lack adequate access to transportation in the region, though the only definitive data available addressing this issue is number of vehicles per household. Commuter services are available in both Counties, but the percentage of residents taking advantage of such services is very small. Car costs, whether for used vehicles, maintenance or simply for gas are all near or at record levels.

## Children and Family Well-Being

This section of the assessment examines indicators of general child and family well-being. Indicators of health, particularly those regarding perinatal health and nutrition have been addressed in earlier sections. Areas examined here are related to child welfare, family strength, child care and overall child well-being. The chart below shows the poverty rate for all children in the United States, Oregon, Douglas and Josephine County in the past five years:<sup>149</sup>



The next chart shows the five year rates for children ages 0-4:



As these charts show, over the past five years, poverty rates for all children and younger children have generally been declining. Both Douglas and Josephine County have generally had much higher rates of child poverty and poverty among young children than state and national rates. Rates of poverty for youngest children living in the two counties have typically been far in excess of state and national rates (as high as over 35%). But according to the most recent census figures, Douglas County's rates of

<sup>149</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, five-year estimates, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020.

poverty rate for children age 0-4 dropped dramatically in the 2020 five year estimate. The number of children age 0-4 in Douglas County living in poverty dropped from 1,510 to 1,068 between these two years. It is hard to account for why such a drop would have occurred, particularly since Josephine County did not see a similar drop. The US Census reports that the percentages have a margin of error of up to 5.4%, so perhaps the numbers simply reflect a statistical anomaly rather than a precipitous drop in rates.

## Child Welfare

The Oregon Department of Human Services maintains data related to child welfare by Oregon county. The tables below summarize key indicators of child welfare for Douglas and Josephine County for the year 2019:<sup>150</sup>

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Douglas</b>	<b>Josephine</b>	<b>Oregon</b>
<b>Founded incidence of child abuse<sup>151</sup></b>	739	528	N/A
<b>Victim rate per 1,000</b>	<b>25.8-6<sup>th</sup> highest county rate</b>	<b>24.4-7<sup>th</sup> highest rate</b>	13.4
<b>Children in foster care per 1,000</b>	<b>16.4-3<sup>rd</sup> highest county rate</b>	11.1-8 <sup>th</sup> highest rate	7.3
<b>Median months in foster care</b>	21.7	18.5	20.9
<b>Children served in home per 1,000</b>	<b>4.5-highest county rate</b>	1.3	1.5
<b>Closed homes/new certifications</b>	108 closed/82 new	49 closed/63 new	N/A

Our Children Oregon maintains some additional data regarding child foster care:<sup>152</sup>

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Douglas County</b>	<b>Josephine County</b>	<b>Oregon</b>
<b>Percentage of children exiting foster care</b>	4.8%-8 <sup>th</sup> worst county rate	4.0%-7 <sup>th</sup> worst county rate	6.8%
<b>Foster care stability 6+ placements</b>	<b>19.7%-2<sup>nd</sup> worst level in the state</b>	10.3%	14.4%

<sup>150</sup> Oregon Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Data Book, 2020.

<sup>151</sup> Unclear if the incident count is unduplicated or not.

<sup>152</sup> Our Children Oregon, 2020 Oregon Kids Count Data Cards

Both Counties' children face high rates of child abuse and foster care. Those in foster care are exiting out at low rates. These indicators continue to show a crisis in abuse and foster care in Douglas County. This is an on-going crisis, as the County rate has for several years ranked among the highest in the state.<sup>153</sup> It is especially concerning that such a high percentage of children in Douglas County's foster system are moving between homes more than six times. One hopes that since this data lags a year behind child poverty data, the crisis has alleviated some with improved financial conditions of families with very young children.

### Issues with Family Strength

The primary indicators for issues regarding family strength examined here are domestic violence, pregnancies for unmarried mothers and divorce. Oregon's Department of Human Services puts out data regarding domestic violence and calls to domestic violence service providers. Most recent data are for 2018. Data are combined for some counties, so comparisons between counties are not possible. 2018 domestic violence indicators include:<sup>154</sup>

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Douglas</b>	<b>Josephine</b>
<b>Calls for domestic violence</b>	4,160	3,702
<b>Calls for stalking</b>	60	58
<b>Calls for sexual assault</b>	162	216
<b>Other calls</b>	445	429
<b>Adults sheltered</b>	124	106
<b>Children sheltered</b>	77	44

Of particular concern is that both Counties had more calls for domestic violence than either Clackamas County (population over 400,000) or Washington County (population over 600,000).<sup>155</sup> Both also had far more adults and children in shelters than Washington County (Clackamas County shelters were closed for part of the year for renovations, so accurate data is lacking). These indicators suggest that domestic violence is a major problem in both Counties.

Pregnancies by unmarried mothers are a potential area of concern in the region, especially because the poverty rate is so much higher for households headed by women. Some of these pregnancies may be to older single women with substantial resources who simply have decided that they would like to have a child without

<sup>153</sup> Oregon Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Data Book, 2019.

<sup>154</sup> Oregon Department of Human Services, Striving to Meet the Need, 2018.

<sup>155</sup> Oregon Department of Human Services, Striving to Meet the Need, 2018.

marrying. Others may be to couples who have chosen not to marry, but have resources and/or have made a significant commitment to raising the children together. But far more of these pregnancies are among young women who lack resources and a partner, leaving the family at-risk for poor outcomes. In Douglas and Josephine County, 48.1% and 48.8% of births in 2020 were to unmarried women.<sup>156</sup> These percentages were significantly higher than the state rate (36.7%).<sup>157</sup> Teenage pregnancy rates in both counties was also high, with rates of 26.3 and 25.2 per thousand teens in Douglas and Josephine County respectively (far in excess of the state rate of 18.1).<sup>158</sup> The percentage of those ages 15+ who are divorced or separated in Douglas and Josephine County are 15.8% and 15.6% respectively.<sup>159</sup>

## Childcare

The availability of childcare impacts both general family well-being and the ability of parents to work. The Pandemic has significantly reduced the availability of childcare in the region. Numbers are not available at this time to reflect this impact. The data that follows is from March 1, 2020, just before the onset of the Pandemic, when childcare availability and affordability were already major problems for families with young children in the area. The table below shows the number of providers and the number of slots for children in various age ranges for that year.<sup>160</sup>

Age Range	Douglas County Providers	Douglas County Slots	Josephine County Providers	Josephine County Slots
0-2	66	629	39	347
3-5	95	1365	57	848
6-12	56	651	38	1072

The next table shows the percentage of children of various ages in each County and statewide that have access to available care<sup>161</sup>:

Age Range	Douglas County %	Josephine County %	Oregon %
0-2	19%	14%	15%
3-5	42%	34%	42%
6-12	8%	18%	17%
Any Age	18%	20%	23%

<sup>156</sup> Oregon Health Authority, Vital Statistics, Vol. 1, 2020.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Our Children Oregon, 2020 Oregon KIDS COUNT Data Cards.

<sup>159</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2016-2020 5-year estimate.

<sup>160</sup> 2020 Estimated Supply of Child Care and Early Education Programs in Oregon, Oregon Child Care Research Partnership at Oregon State University.

<sup>161</sup> 2020 Estimated Supply of Child Care and Early Education Programs in Oregon, Oregon Child Care Research Partnership at Oregon State University.

As with many of the topics covered in this assessment, childcare is less available locally than it is statewide. Few families with children ages 0-2 and 6-12 had available care prior to the pandemic, and this situation has likely become much worse during the Pandemic.

Other factors further complicate some families search for care. More rural parts of each county have few if any providers of care. Oregon State University’s interactive childcare map shows that communities outside the I-5 corridor in Douglas County, and those outside of Grants Pass and Cave Junction in Josephine County have few if any childcare providers.<sup>162</sup> The percentage of children ages 3-4 enrolled in school is shown below for the nation, Oregon and the two counties.<sup>163</sup>

<b>Region</b>	<b>Percent of 3-4 year old enrolled in school (public or private)</b>
<b>United States</b>	47.3%
<b>Oregon</b>	44.4%
<b>Douglas County</b>	53.4%
<b>Josephine County</b>	40.6%

This is a rare instance where children in Douglas County are doing better than statewide or nationally, with over half enrolled in pre-schools. About 4 in 10 Josephine County children are enrolled. The median price for child care for toddlers in Douglas and Josephine County was \$7,560 and \$9,420 respectively in 2020.<sup>164</sup> Parents earning minimum wage needed to spend at or over approximately 1/3 of their annual wage for one child’s care in the two counties.<sup>165</sup> Given that many families with minimum wage earners were already paying ½ of their take home pay for rent in the two counties, these families could not afford to pay a significant portion for child care as well.

### Long-Term Well-Being of Children

Recently, researchers have determined that certain potentially traumatic events experienced by children, termed Adverse Childhood Experiences (or ACEs), can lead to long-term negative consequences.<sup>166</sup> The more ACEs a child experiences, the greater the negative consequences.<sup>167</sup> Examples of ACEs include experiencing violence, abuse or neglect, witnessing violence, having parents with behavioral health issues, having parents divorce or separate, or having household members in jail. The more ACEs a child experiences, the more likely they are to later experience chronic health problems, mental illness, and substance use problems.<sup>168</sup> Children experiencing high numbers of ACEs are also more likely to have poor educational outcomes, perform

<sup>162</sup> <http://geo.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=5242e1c28751484fa5887c4767bf6a79>

<sup>163</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2016-2020 5-year estimate.

<sup>164</sup> Douglas and Josephine County Early Care and Education Profiles, Oregon State University, 2020.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4090696/>

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> United States Centers for Disease Control.

worse at work, and have lower earning potential.<sup>169</sup> In 2020, the Oregon Health Authority published the results of student wellness surveys for each Oregon county. Students in 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade responded to a large number of survey questions, including a set related to adverse childhood experiences. These experiences included whether the student had: had experienced the death of someone close to them, whether they lived with a problem drinker or a drug user, whether they lived with someone who was mentally ill, whether they had a household member go to jail or be deported, whether they felt they had to wear dirty clothing or lacked sufficient food, and whether they felt they had nobody to protect them. Results of these surveys indicate that children growing up in Douglas and Josephine County experience ACEs at worrisome levels. The figures in the chart below show the percentage of respondents impacted by these experiences in 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades in the two counties and statewide.<sup>170</sup>

Adverse Childhood Experience Percentages by Grade

	6 <sup>th</sup> grade			8 <sup>th</sup> grade			11 <sup>th</sup> grade		
	Do	Jo	OR	Do	Jo	OR	Do	Jo	OR
Have you ever had to wear dirty clothes?	21.0	34.1	26.1	36.4	26.1	22.7	30.5	28.4	25.0
Have you experienced not having enough to eat?	17.3	17.0	16.0	17.5	15.9	12.7	18.8	19.0	16.6
Have you ever had a household member who was mentally ill or depressed?	32.3	30.6	27.3	63.7	43.6	37.8	56.9	47.1	51.0
Have you ever lived with someone who had a problem with drinking or using drugs?	26.1	27.8	18.7	49.7	34.5	25.7	38.0	38.4	32.4
Have you ever had a household member go to jail or be deported?	20.0	23.0	18.2	30.1	22.2	20.0	27.2	24.1	19.0
Have you ever experienced the death of a very close friend or family member?	69.8	64.0	57.5	72.3	66.9	59.5	66.4	64.6	58.5
Have you ever felt that you had no one to protect you?	19.2	23.8	23	26.6	20.6	20.5	32.3	28.3	24.3

For each grade in both counties, for almost all adverse childhood experiences, children locally are experiencing the associated ACE at levels higher than those statewide. Of note, the incidence of ACEs across the board for Douglas County increases substantially between grade 6 and grade 8, and stays remarkably high through grade 11. The incident of ACEs in Josephine County children increases substantially between grades 8 and 11. In general, significantly higher percentages of local children have had the experience of a household member living with either a mental illness or a substance abuse issue than those statewide (the only exception being Josephine County 11<sup>th</sup> graders having had household members with a mental illness). This data suggests that children in the region are at high need for provision of protective factors that can help blunt the impact of such experiences.

<sup>169</sup> United States Center for Disease Control.

<sup>170</sup> Oregon Health Authority, 2020 Student Wellness Survey, Douglas and Josephine County reports.



## Summary

The stress low-income families live with is having significant negative consequences for both parents and children in the region. Many indicators of stress, such as rates of divorce, child abuse, foster care, and domestic violence are high, in some cases, among the state's highest rates. Childcare, which could alleviate some of this stress, remains unavailable for many of those with the least resources. Data on ACEs indicates that children from this region are among those most at-risk statewide for poor health, behavioral health, educational and economic lifelong outcomes.

While data is not yet available, indications are that the Pandemic has likely had a profound, negative impact on family health. In a report published by the US Chamber of Commerce Foundation in December 2020, the Foundation reports that nearly half of childcare providers closed their facilities during the initial COVID-19 shutdowns.<sup>171</sup> The report further found that those that had reopened were generally operating at decreased capacity, with enrollment down by 67%. Many are concerned that the Pandemic has contributed to an increase in child abuse. On March 29, 2021, the Associated Press reported on the loss of the ability for people to report cases of abuse during the Pandemic.<sup>172</sup> In the AP's analysis, it found more than 400,000 fewer child welfare concerns reported during the Pandemic and 200,000 fewer child abuse and neglect investigations and assessments compared with the same time period of 2019. Their reporters noted:

*With many children out of the public eye, the U.S. system of relying on teachers, police and doctors to report potential abuse and neglect to Child Protective Services — known by various names across states — has been failing. School personnel are the top reporters of child abuse; they're the most important eyes and ears for child welfare agencies across states.*

The AP specifically found that child abuse and neglect reports from school sources fell sharply during the first year of the Pandemic as the U.S. pivoted to online learning — by 59%. The extent of the harm done by the Pandemic to family and child well-being is still not clear, but what is known is that many of the region's families were already struggling prior to Oregon's statewide shutdown.

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<sup>171</sup> PIECING TOGETHER SOLUTIONS: The Importance of Childcare to U.S. Families and Businesses-Working parents, employers, and childcare providers need long-term, cross-sector solutions to recover from COVID-19. US Chamber of Commerce Foundation, December 2020.

<sup>172</sup> Pandemic Masks Ongoing Child Abuse Crisis as Cases Plummet, Sally Ho and Camille Fassett, AP, March 29, 2021.

# Education

## School Outcomes

The pandemic has interfered with the State’s collection of outcome data for the past two years. In 2019-2020, schools did not offer state testing on student achievement. In 2020-2021, schools did offer some testing, but many students did not participate due to the continuing impact of the Pandemic. Prior to these two years, school outcomes based on state testing was not particularly good throughout the two counties. But without recent data, a measurement of continuing outcomes will have to wait.

ODE maintains four and five year cohort graduation data by county. This assessment examines the five-year rate, as it may serve to better reflect the success schools have had with certain groups of students, such as students with disabilities, English learners, and students whose education was interrupted. Graduation directly correlates with improved economic opportunity, with those graduating earning more than those who do not and being employed at higher rates than those that do not.<sup>173</sup> For school year 2020-2021, the five year cohort graduation rate for Douglas County schools was the third lowest statewide at 71.52%.<sup>174</sup> While data was missing for Black and Asian students, Latino and American Indian students graduated at slightly higher rates in the five year cohort than White students.<sup>175</sup> Those within the County with the lowest graduation rates were students who with disabilities and homeless students, with both graduating at rates below 60%.<sup>176</sup> Josephine County schools performed better in this area, but still underperformed compared to schools statewide, with a cohort graduation rate 7<sup>th</sup> lowest in the state.<sup>177</sup> Only homeless students graduated at far worse rates than the overall County rate.<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> Trends in High School Dropout and Completion Rates in the United States: 2018, US Department of Education, National Center on Educational Statistics, December, 2018.

<sup>174</sup> Oregon Department of Education, cohort graduation rates by county, 2020-2021.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

The State maintains data on the rates of students going on to post-secondary school by district. The chart provides the percentages of students who enrolled in a community college or four-year school within 16 months of graduation from school in 2017-2018:<sup>179</sup>

<b>School District</b>	<b>% Continuing to Post-Secondary School</b>
<b>Camas Valley</b>	50%
<b>Douglas County SD 15 (Days Creek)</b>	59%
<b>Douglas County SD 4 (Roseburg)</b>	60%
<b>Elkton</b>	<b>65%</b>
<b>Glendale</b>	46%
<b>Glide</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>North Douglas SD 22 (Drain)</b>	<b>78%</b>
<b>Oakland</b>	60%
<b>Reedsport</b>	<b>62%</b>
<b>Riddle</b>	<b>75%</b>
<b>South Umpqua</b>	51%
<b>Sutherlin</b>	<b>63%</b>
<b>Winston/Dillard</b>	44%
<b>Yoncalla</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>Grants Pass SD 7</b>	54%
<b>Three Rivers/Josephine County SD (3 High Schools)</b>	56%, 54%, 50%

The statewide average for continuing school after high school is 62%. Not only did ½ of Douglas County’s high schools exceed or equal this rate, all but one of the County’s high schools improved from their rates published in the Oregon Department of Education’s 2018-2019 school district scorecards. In contrast, while two of Josephine County’s high school improved their rates from the earlier scorecard, all had rates below the state rate. Looking at this data together with 5-year cohort graduation rates, it appears that while a substantially lower percentage of students are graduating from Douglas County schools than those in Josephine County or statewide, a number of Douglas County high schools are having a better time getting their students to go on to college. This includes Sutherlin HS, which is one of Douglas County’s largest high schools. But many of the largest high schools in both Counties, particularly those in South Douglas County and Grants Pass are not having nearly the same rate of students going on to college.

<sup>179</sup> Oregon Department of Education, School Report Cards, 2020-2021.

## Educational Attainment

Not long ago, residents living in the region could obtain relatively high-paying jobs without much formal education. That is no longer the case. But educational attainment levels continue to lag in the region. The table below depicts this problem:<sup>180</sup>

<b>Report Area</b>	<b>Percent No High School Diploma</b>	<b>Percent High School Only</b>	<b>Percent Some College</b>	<b>Percent Associates Degree</b>	<b>Percent Bachelor's Degree</b>	<b>Percent Graduate or Professional Degree</b>
<b>Douglas County, OR</b>	9.4%	<b>32.5%</b>	<b>29.1%</b>	10.5%	<b>12%</b>	<b>6.4%</b>
<b>Josephine County, OR</b>	9.2%	<b>30.2%</b>	<b>32.8%</b>	9.7%	<b>11.8%</b>	<b>6.3%</b>
<b>Oregon</b>	8.8%	22.7%	25%	9%	21.3%	13.1%
<b>United States</b>	11.5%	26.7%	20.3%	8.6%	20.2%	12.7%

The majority of local residents lack degrees beyond a high school diploma, with many spending some time in college but failing to obtain degrees. At the same time, the percentage of residents with 4-year college degrees or higher is much lower than that of residents statewide and nationally.

### Summary

As it has been two full academic years since Oregon was able to meaningfully assess student performance at schools, it is not clear how well students are learning at local schools. What is clear is that too many students in the region are failing to graduate within 5 years of initially enrolling at their schools. On the bright side, schools in Douglas County are sending a much higher percentage of their students on to college than previously reported. But South Douglas County and Grants Pass area schools are not doing as well in this area. Whatever the graduation rates and rates of students going on to attend college, it appears that many who do succeed in schools locally leave the region. The percentages of local residents with college degrees remains stubbornly low.

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<sup>180</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, five-year estimate, 2016-2020.

# Economic Well-Being/Jobs

## Economic Well-Being

The most basic measure of economic well-being is annual income. The government measures both per capita and median income. Per capita income is simply the income of an area divided by the total number of residents. Because this average is impacted by extreme values of income, it is not the best measure to use in areas with smaller populations like Douglas/Josephine County. The median income identifies the income at the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile of all incomes, and so is not impacted by income extremes. This assessment uses median income as a basic measure of economic well-being. The table below includes median incomes for the two counties, the state and the nation:

<b>Region</b>	<b>Median Income</b>
<b>Douglas County</b>	\$50,031
<b>Josephine County</b>	\$47,733
<b>Oregon</b>	\$65,667
<b>United States</b>	\$64,994

In 2020, Josephine County had the seventh lowest median household income statewide and Douglas County's median income was the 10<sup>th</sup> lowest.<sup>181</sup> Oregon's median income was \$62,818 and the nation's was \$62,843.<sup>182</sup> This disparity between the region's median income and state and national median income has been consistent. The good news for workers locally and state and nationwide is that wages have been increasing since the onset of the pandemic. As of the end of 2021, Oregonians had already seen wage increases of 17% from the start of the pandemic.<sup>183</sup> But inflation has recently hit levels not seen since the 1981, with the June rate at 9.1%.<sup>184</sup> So those on fixed incomes, and those living in poverty are having an even harder time covering their expenses.

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<sup>181</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, five-year estimate, 2016-2020.

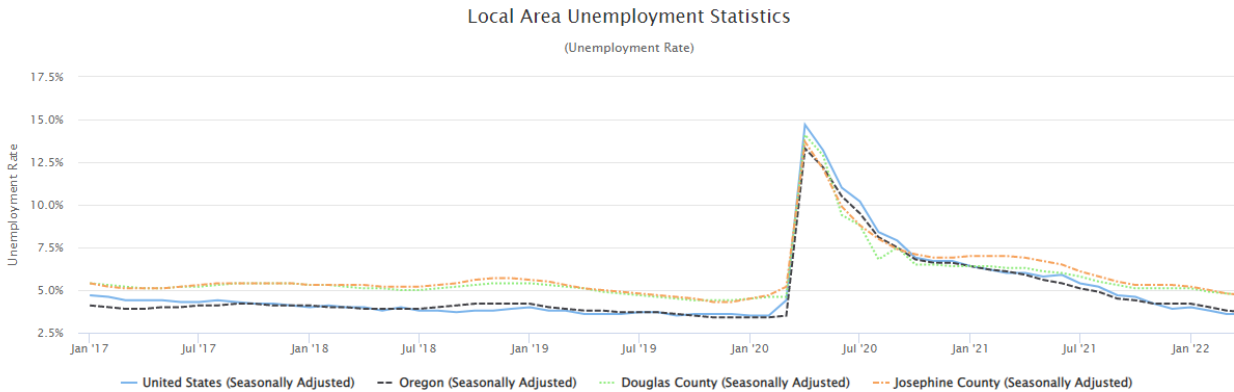
<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

<sup>183</sup> Oregon Office of Economic Analysis, Labor Demand in Oregon, posted by Josh Leshner, January 21, 2022.

<sup>184</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics, US Department of Labor, June 10, 2022 Press Release.

## Employment

Douglas and Josephine County's economies have substantially recovered from the onset of the Pandemic. The following graph and charts provide a snapshot of changes over the past five years, as well as over the past year, ending May 2021.<sup>185</sup>



With a few exceptions, Douglas and Josephine County unemployment rates have remained above national and statewide rates throughout the past five years.<sup>186</sup> Recovery from the worst of the Pandemic's economic shock started earlier in both counties, but beginning in 2021, the region again began to lag behind the state and the nation in terms of unemployment.<sup>187</sup>

### 5-Year % Unemployment as of May Each Year

Location	April 2018	April 2019	April 2020	April 2021	April 2022
<b>Douglas</b>	5.1	5.1	14.1	6.3	4.7
<b>Josephine</b>	5.3	5.1	13.7	6.9	4.7
<b>Oregon</b>	3.9	3.8	13.3	5.9	3.7
<b>US</b>	4.0	3.6	14.7	6.0	3.6

### Monthly % Unemployment for the Past Year

Location	5/21	6/21	7/21	8/21	9/21	10/21	11/21	12/21	1/22	2/22	3/22	4/22
<b>Douglas</b>	6.1	6.0	5.8	5.5	5.3	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	4.9	4.8	4.7
<b>Josephine</b>	6.7	6.5	6.1	5.8	5.5	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.2	5.0	4.8	4.7
<b>Oregon</b>	5.6	5.4	5.1	4.9	4.5	4.4	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.0	3.8	3.7
<b>US</b>	5.8	5.9	5.4	5.2	4.7	4.6	4.2	3.9	4.0	3.8	3.6	3.6

<sup>185</sup> Oregon Employment Department Quality Info.org

<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid.

As of April, 2022, Josephine County had recovered the number of jobs it had prior to the Pandemic while Douglas County still had 380 fewer jobs than pre-pandemic.<sup>188</sup>

## Summary

The good news is jobs are mostly back to pre-pandemic levels in the region. Though local data is not available, wages statewide have been improving, and it is likely the same is true locally. But median wages remain much lower locally than statewide or nationally. And inflation is cutting deeply into wage gains. For residents who were previously struggling to get by, the situation is becoming dire, as basics such as food and gas prices are soaring.

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<sup>188</sup> Oregon Employment Department Quality Info.org

## Community Resources

Both Douglas and Josephine County have many resources available to address area needs. Resources are sometimes available only to a specified portion of the community (e.g., those earning less than the federal poverty level, children only), and are sometimes limited (potentially having long waiting lists). During the Pandemic, some have been completely closed and many have had limited services, but Oregon is reopening, so many will be able to resume normal service soon. The table below provides the name of Douglas County service providers, their location(s) when fully open, and the service they offer:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Type of Service</b>
<b>Adapt Integrated Health Care</b>	Roseburg, Reedsport	Behavioral Health Addiction
<b>HIV Alliance</b>	Roseburg	HIV and addiction services
<b>Options</b>	Roseburg	Behavioral Health and Family Strengthening
<b>South Lane Mental Health</b>	Cottage Grove (serves N. Douglas County)	Behavioral Health
<b>South River Community Health Center</b>	Roseburg, Winston	Healthcare
<b>AVIVA</b>	Glide, Myrtle Creek, Roseburg, Sutherlin, Drain	Healthcare, Dental, Behavioral
<b>Cow Creek Health and Wellness Clinics</b>	Roseburg, Canyonville	Healthcare
<b>Mercy Foundation</b>	Countywide	Youth Dental, Health Ed.
<b>Lions Club</b>	Countywide	Vision, Hearing Aids
<b>UCC Woolley Center</b>	Roseburg	GED Prep, Basic Ed, ESL
<b>Boys and Girls Club of the Umpqua Valley</b>	Roseburg	Youth Development
<b>School District Offices</b>	Reedsport, Elkton, Drain, Yoncalla, Oakland, Sutherlin, Roseburg, Glide, Winston, Camas Valley, Riddle, Myrtle Creek, Glendale, Days Creek	Education and Related Services
<b>Douglas Educational Service District</b>	Roseburg	Education Support Services
<b>OSU Extension</b>	Roseburg	Adult Education, Youth Programs
<b>Phoenix Charter School</b>	Roseburg	Youth Education
<b>South Coast Education Service District</b>	Reedsport	Education Support Services



<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Type of Service</b>
<b>Family Relief Nursery</b>	Drain	Family Strengthening
<b>Peace at Home</b>	Roseburg	Domestic Violence
<b>Douglas C.A.R.E.S</b>	Roseburg	Child Abuse
<b>Family Development Center</b>	Roseburg and Countywide	Family Strengthening
<b>Take Root</b>	Countywide	Family Strengthening
<b>UCAN Head Start/Early Head Start</b>	Sutherlin, Winchester, Roseburg, Green, Winston, Myrtle Creek, Glendale	Early Child Education, Family Strengthening
<b>Preschool Promise</b>	Myrtle Creek, Drain, Yoncalla, Winston, Sutherlin, Elkton	Early Child Education
<b>UCAN Healthy Start</b>	Selected Douglas County Zip Codes	Family Strengthening
<b>UCAN Nurse Home Visiting</b>	Countywide	Family Strengthening, Health
<b>UCAN Healthy Families</b>	Countywide	Family Strengthening
<b>UCAN WIC</b>	Drain, Canyonville, Glendale, Myrtle Creek, Sutherlin, Reedsport, Glide, and Roseburg	Nutrition
<b>Umpqua Health-New Day and New Beginnings</b>	Roseburg	Family Strengthening
<b>Umpqua Community College</b>	Winchester	Post-Secondary Education
<b>YMCA</b>	Roseburg	Fitness, Health
<b>Habitat for Humanity</b>	Roseburg	Housing
<b>UCAN Affordable Housing</b>	Canyonville, Winston, Roseburg, Sutherlin, Drain	Housing
<b>UCAN Housing/Homeless Services</b>	Douglas County	Homelessness and Homeless Prevention Services
<b>HADCO</b>	Douglas County	Housing
<b>NeighborWorks Umpqua</b>	Douglas County	Housing, Financial Assist., Tax Assistance
<b>UCAN SeniorCorps</b>	Douglas County	Medicare Education/Enrollment Assistance; Tax Assistance

<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Type of Service</b>
<b>Roseburg Dream Center</b>	Roseburg	Homeless Services, Basic Needs
<b>Onward Roseburg</b>	Roseburg	Homeless Services
<b>Housing First Umpqua</b>	Roseburg	Homeless Services
<b>Roseburg Rescue Mission</b>	Roseburg	Homeless Services
<b>Glide Helping Hands</b>	Glide	Food, Clothing, Firewood
<b>Glide Revitalization</b>	Glide	Services for Wildfire Victims
<b>Salvation Army</b>	Roseburg	Basic Needs
<b>Samaritan Inn</b>	Roseburg	Homeless Services
<b>Saint Vincent DePaul</b>	Roseburg, Myrtle Creek, Sutherlin	Basic Needs
<b>UCAN Energy Assistance/Weatherization</b>	Douglas County	Energy and Water/Sewer Assistance, Housing Rehab
<b>UTrans</b>	Douglas County	Public Transit
<b>DHS</b>	Roseburg, Reedsport	Child Welfare
<b>DHS</b>	Roseburg, Canyonville	Income Support
<b>Advantage Dental</b>	Canyonville, Winston, Sutherlin, Roseburg	Dental
<b>VA</b>	Roseburg	Veterans Healthcare and additional Veteran Service
<b>Veteran's Service Office</b>	Roseburg	Veterans Benefits
<b>Lower Umpqua Hospital</b>	Reedsport	Healthcare
<b>Mercy Medical Center</b>	Roseburg	Healthcare
<b>Umpqua Health</b>	Douglas County	Healthcare/Behavioral Health
<b>CASA of Douglas County</b>	Douglas County	Child Abuse
<b>Legal Aid Services of Oregon</b>	Roseburg	Legal
<b>Oregon Law Center-Coos Bay</b>	Serves western Douglas County	Legal
<b>Common Ground Mediation</b>	Douglas County	Legal
<b>Oregon Department of Justice</b>	Roseburg	Child Support
<b>UCAN Money Management Program</b>	Douglas County	Financial

<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Type of Service</b>
<b>DHS</b>	Roseburg	Disability, Senior Services
<b>Mentor Oregon</b>	Roseburg	Disability-Related
<b>Umpqua Valley disAbilities Network</b>	Roseburg	Disability Services, Adult Literacy
<b>Sunrise Enterprises</b>	Roseburg	Disability Day Services and Job Services
<b>Community Living Case Management</b>	Douglas County	Intellectual Disability
<b>Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation Office</b>	Roseburg	Disability and Job Services
<b>Douglas County Senior Services</b>	Roseburg	Seniors
<b>Oregon WorkSource Office</b>	Roseburg	Employment
<b>Community Kitchens</b>	Roseburg, Drain, Sutherlin	Food
<b>Food Pantries</b>	Reedsport, Yoncalla, Drain, Sutherlin, Roseburg, Glide, Winston, Riddle, Myrtle Creek, Glendale	Food
<b>UCAN Mobile Outpost</b>	Days Creek, Tiller, Elkton, Diamond Lake, Camas Valley	Food
<b>Feeding Umpqua-UCAN</b>	Countywide	Nutrition Ed
<b>Umpqua Community Veg Education Program</b>	Countywide	Nutrition Ed

The following table contains a listing of Josephine County service providers:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Type of Service</b>
<b>Josephine County Health Department</b>	Grants Pass, Cave Junction	WIC, Immunization, Clinic
<b>Women's Crisis Support Team</b>	Grants Pass	Domestic Violence
<b>DHS</b>	Grants Pass, Cave Creek	Financial
<b>DHS</b>	Grants Pass	Child Welfare
<b>DHS</b>	Grants Pass	Disability-Related, Seniors
<b>DHS</b>	Grants Pass	Vocational Rehab
<b>Southern Oregon Head Start</b>	Grants Pass, Cave Junction, Merlin	Early Childhood Education, Family Strengthening
<b>Preschool Promise</b>	Grants Pass, Cave Junction	Early Childhood Education
<b>Saint Vincent DePaul</b>	Grants Pass	Basic Needs
<b>Salvation Army</b>	Grants Pass	Basic Needs
<b>RVCOG Senior and Disabilities Services</b>	Eagle Point	Disability-Related, Seniors
<b>Siskiyou Community Health Center</b>	Grants Pass, Cave Junction	Healthcare, Dental
<b>Planned Parenthood</b>	Grants Pass	Family Planning
<b>JCT</b>	Josephine County	Public Transit
<b>Options of Southern Oregon</b>	Grants Pass, Cave Junction	Mental Health
<b>Hearts With a Mission</b>	Grants Pass	Homeless Youth, Family Strengthening
<b>Maslow Project</b>	Countywide	Homeless Youth, Basic Needs
<b>Literacy Council of Josephine County</b>	Grants Pass	Adult Basic Education
<b>Oregon Law Center</b>	Grants Pass	Legal
<b>Oregon WorkSource Office</b>	Grants Pass	Employment
<b>OSU County Extension</b>	Grants Pass	Adult Education, Youth Activities
<b>Josephine County Food Bank</b>	Grants Pass	Nutrition

<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Type of Service</b>
<b>Josephine County Kitchens</b>	Grants Pass	Food
<b>Josephine County Pantries</b>	Grants Pass, Cave Junction, Selma, Williams, Wolf Creek	Food
<b>Illinois Valley Family Coalition</b>	Cave Junction	General Support
<b>Illinois Valley Safe House Alliance</b>	Cave Junction	Domestic Violence
<b>Gospel Rescue Mission</b>	Grants Pass	Homeless Services
<b>Josephine Housing and Community Development Council</b>	Grants Pass	Affordable Housing, Rent Assistance
<b>Family Solutions</b>	Grants Pass	Child Mental Health, Family Strengthening
<b>Boys and Girls Club of Rogue Valley</b>	Grants Pass, Cave Junction	Youth Development
<b>Choices Counseling Center</b>	Grants Pass	Substance Abuse, Behavioral Health
<b>Resolve</b>	Medford	Conflict Resolution
<b>Adapt Integrated Health Services</b>	Grants Pass	Substance Abuse
<b>HIV Alliance</b>	Medford	HIV and addiction services
<b>UCAN Housing and Homeless</b>	Grants Pass	Homeless/Housing Services
<b>UCAN Energy Assistance/Weatherization</b>	Grants Pass	Energy, Water and Sewage Bill Assistance/Home Rehab
<b>School Districts</b>	Grants Pass	Education
<b>Southern Oregon Education Service District</b>	Medford (covers Josephine County)	Education-Related
<b>Rogue Community College</b>	Grants Pass, Kerby	Post-Secondary Education, Adult Basic Ed, GED Prep, ESL
<b>Women's Health Center of Southern Oregon</b>	Grants Pass	Healthcare
<b>Family Nurturing Center</b>	Grants Pass	Family Strengthening
<b>OnTrack</b>	Grants Pass, Cave Junction	Substance Abuse
<b>CASA of Josephine County</b>	Grants Pass	Child Abuse
<b>Healthy U</b>	Cave Junction	Mental Health
<b>Kairos</b>	Grants Pass	Youth Mental Health

<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Type of Service</b>
<b>Habitat for Humanity</b>	Grants Pass	Housing
<b>Asante Three Rivers Medical Center</b>	Grants Pass	Healthcare
<b>Healthcare Coalition of Southern Oregon Healthy Start</b>	Josephine County	Family Strengthening
<b>Siskiyou Community Health Center-Healthy Families/Maternity Case Management</b>	Josephine County	Family Strengthening, Healthcare
<b>Consumer Credit Counseling Of Southern Oregon</b>	Medford	Financial

# Causes of Poverty

This section of the assessment analyzes the causes of poverty. This analysis is somewhat challenging, because many dimensions of poverty, like lack of educational attainment, can be both a cause and a result of poverty.

## Economy

The Pandemic caused a major spike in unemployment, but jobs have been returning. Wages have been rising recently as well. From December 2020-December 2021, wages increased in Douglas and Josephine County by 4.6% and 3.9% respectively.<sup>189</sup> At the same time, wages increased statewide by 6.1%.<sup>190</sup> Normally all of this would be wonderful news for the region, but with inflation running at its highest level in 40 years (9.1%), wage increases are not keeping up with the cost of living.<sup>191</sup> Of particular concern are skyrocketing energy costs. All energy costs combined have risen by 41.2% in the past year, comprised of increases in the cost of fuel oil, engine fuel, electricity and piped gas (for heating) of 70.4%, 60.2%, 13.7% and 38.4%.<sup>192</sup> The impact of these particular increases will be analyzed below.

## Education

Regional measures of education suggest a two-fold problem likely increasing poverty levels. At the level of K-12 education, too many children are dropping out of the region's schools, especially in Douglas County. Those failing to complete high school are not likely to obtain living wage work. Educational attainment levels for those who have completed school are also problematic in the region. Low numbers of residents with high levels of education makes it more difficult for the region to attract employers, such as technology firms, with high-wage jobs. The many residents who have not completed any type of post-secondary degree will continue to struggle to find living wage employment. But a shift in how work is being done may change the mix of educational attainment levels in the near future. Pre-pandemic, businesses expected that in five years 38% of their remote workforce would be fully remote, while today they expect 58% to be fully remote in five years.<sup>193</sup> If this trend holds true, many of those high school graduates who have been leaving the area to seek college degrees may be more likely to return to live near family and friends, working remotely for companies located in larger cities. Though an increase in the proportion of individuals with higher levels of education may not directly lift others out of poverty, more dollars entering the region could lead to improved schools, as tax bases improve. And if more people are

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<sup>189</sup> US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020-2021, Percent Change in Wages.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer prices up 9.1 percent over the year ended June 2022, largest increase in 40 years, July 18, 2022.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> UpWork, Future Workforce Report 2021: How Remote Work is Changing Businesses Forever. Dr. Adam Ozimek.

able to spend more money locally, local businesses may be able to pay more to those with lower levels of educational attainment.

## Children and Family Well-Being

A number of regional indicators of children and family well-being are likely connected to high, local poverty rates. The high rates of child abuse, foster care placement, and domestic abuse in the region, as well as other situations faced by youth, have resulted in high levels of adverse childhood experiences. The significantly high rates of birth to unmarried women in the region is also likely a contributor to high local poverty rates. Households headed by women alone have much higher rates of poverty than others locally. The lack of available childcare slots in both Counties makes it more difficult for parents to work. The lack of affordable childcare increases the number of parents who are unable to obtain care. For those who do obtain care, they have fewer available resources to meet other needs.

## Transportation

Given the size of the region, and its low population density, transportation issues greatly contribute to poverty. This is more often the case for those living in communities furthest from the population centers found in central Douglas County and in Grants Pass. In the past year alone, Roseburg's News-Review reports gas prices surging from \$3.40/gallon to \$5.50/gallon.<sup>194</sup> The large spike in gas prices is burdening low-income families throughout the region, especially those who must travel long distances to get to work. As an example, a resident of Canyonville who commutes to Roseburg daily drives 54 miles a day for work alone. If their car gets 27 mpg, they are using 10 gallons of gas a week just to get to work. Not taking into account any other driving needs, this individual is now paying over \$20 more per week than the previous year for gas. Many local individuals drive cars that have much poorer gas mileage, and drive more than the distance used in this example weekly. It is easy to see how for those just making ends meet, increases in gas prices alone may be pushing them into poverty, even if their wages have increased a little this past year.

## Food and Nutrition

Lack of food might be a causal agent in terms of poverty in the following manner. Hungry children are more likely to do poorly in school, and are less likely to move on to post-secondary education. Lack of post-secondary education makes it more likely that such children will be unable to obtain living wage jobs in the future. Hungry adults also are likely to have difficulty focusing on their work, which would impair their ability to maximize their earning potential. Regarding nutrition, the expenses associated with nutrition-related health disorders leaves malnourished residents with less money to

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<sup>194</sup> News Review, Escalating gas prices put major dent in summer travel plans, Donovan Brink and Tiffany Coleman, June 18, 2022.



address other needs. To the extent that hospitals and other medical providers must absorb such health costs, local communities are left more distressed.

## Health

The region's poor health contributes to poverty in a number of ways. Residents experiencing poor health generally have to spend more money to address their health issues, leaving them with less to spend on other needs. Adults with poor health miss more days of work, as do those with children with health problems. Adults experiencing regular health issues may lose their jobs if they miss too many days. Those experiencing more serious health issues may drop out of the workforce, unable to continue working. Children living with parents experiencing poor health, especially poor mental health, experience adverse childhood impacts, which can lead to poorer educational and economic outcomes.

## Home Comfort

The high percentage of local residents that are energy-burdened indicates that many residents are spending too much of their income on keeping their homes warm in the winter. This is another area where recent inflation is likely pushing some residents into poverty. Across the board, costs of energy for homes are rising very fast. Many local residents use natural gas to heat their homes, which as mentioned has seen a major price increase. Others use propane or fuel oil which have also jumped in price. Though those living near poverty levels are less likely to have air conditioning, some do, and rising temperatures are combining with higher costs of electricity to further drain household resources. In cases where households do not have air conditioning, higher summer temperatures can contribute to poor health, poor sleep and other conditions impairing people's ability to work.

## Housing

While increased fuel prices are a major cause of local poverty, the cost of housing is not far behind in importance. Rents in Douglas County have increased 5.3% in the past two years.<sup>195</sup> The increase in Josephine County has not been as steep, with rents only rising 2.9%, but that is in part because the average rent there is much higher, at \$1,354/mo. (over \$500/mo. more than in Douglas County).<sup>196</sup> The disproportionate cost of housing in Josephine County is a major driver of poverty locally. Though the number of residents who are homeless is relatively low, those who lack homes are far less likely to escape poverty. Homeless adults do not have a place to perform basic hygienic activities. They cannot cleanup for job interviews. If they have jobs, they are less able to prepare for work. Homeless children face substantial hurdles in terms of school success, and again are much more susceptible to adverse childhood experiences. Residents who are

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<sup>195</sup> Washington Post, Rents are rising everywhere. See how much prices are up in your area. Abha Bhattarai, Chris Alcantara and Andrew Van Dam. April 21, 2022.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

chronically homeless and living on the streets have much shorter life-spans than others, and contribute significantly to communities' costs to provide healthcare, emergency services and public safety.

## Income Supports

The availability, of lack thereof, of income supports such as TANF and EITC, can make the difference between whether a family lives in poverty or not. During the Pandemic, record levels of income supports were made available, particularly unemployment payments. For a short period of time, new child tax credits had a major impact on reducing childhood poverty. It is estimated that the credits lifted an estimated 3.6 million children nationally out of poverty.<sup>197</sup> But Congress failed to renew the credit, and many of these children are living in poverty again.<sup>198</sup>

## Seniors/People with Disabilities

Those over the age of 65 and people with disabilities typically face different circumstances than others living in poverty. These individuals often can no longer work, or are limited to working fewer hours or for lower wages than others. While others living in poverty often move out of poverty in a matter of a few months, seniors and people with disabilities are much less likely to do so. Ameliorating regional poverty will likely require multiple strategies, as the region has a much higher percentage of seniors and people with disabilities than found statewide.

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<sup>197</sup> Brookings Institute, The impacts of the 2021 expanded child tax credit on family employment, nutrition, and financial well-being, Leah Hamilton, Stephen Roll, Mathieu Despard, Elaine Maag, Yung Chun, Laura Brugger, and Michal Grinstein-Weiss, April 13, 2022.

<sup>198</sup> The New Yorker, The Devastating Effects of Losing the Child Tax Credit, Isaac Chotiner, March 4, 2022.

## Racial/Ethnic Factors

Much has been written in the past several years about structural factors that have left many people who are members of the BIPOC community living in poverty. Such historical practices as red-lining<sup>199</sup> have made it difficult for such individuals to accumulate wealth. The Pandemic brought a new focus on differences in which members of this community are impacted. Rates of infection and poorer outcomes from infection have been much higher in Oregon's BIPOC communities.<sup>200</sup> Local data, though having large margins of error, seems to support the notion that those residents who are part of the BIPOC populace are much more likely to live in poverty than white residents. With a larger portion of the local population than other BIPOC communities, there is higher confidence that data reflecting higher poverty rates among Latinos reflects real inequities. Even if the percentage of residents who struggle with English is only about 1.5%, this would leave nearly 3,000 residents with language barriers to obtaining services. This barrier likely is contributing to poverty among these thousands of residents.

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<sup>199</sup> Redlining was a former practice that forced housing segregation throughout the US. Though no longer a federal or local policy, many argue that this single practice alone is a cause of wealth inequality today between BIPOC communities and white communities. See, Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*, 2018, Liveright Publishing Corporation.

<sup>200</sup> Was Oregon's COVID-19 pivot enough to address racial inequities?, Oregon Public Broadcasting, March 18, 2021, Jes Burns.

## Top Needs/Top Gaps

Factors impacting poverty have changed significantly since the publication of last year's needs assessment. Jobs are comparatively plentiful in the region. Wages are comparatively high. Poverty rates have been dropping.

But Josephine County continues to have a very high poverty rate in general. Families headed by single women continue to have much higher poverty rates than others in both counties. Similarly, child poverty rates remain higher than the general poverty rates in both counties.

The most concerning economic factor now is inflation. While efforts are being made nationally to reduce inflation, as of the writing of this assessment, the current rate of inflation is the highest in 40 years. Inflation is cutting deeply into any gains in wages, and for those on fixed incomes, inflation is creating a worsening burden. There are major concerns that efforts to reduce inflation will send the economy into a recession later this year, and expectations are that even if a recession is avoided, unemployment will rise and items typically bought on credit will become more expensive.

On top of this, COVID is not under control yet. The newest variant, omicron BA.5, while not appearing to be as lethal as previous variants, is very contagious. This variant also seems to be causing reinfections even in people who have had COVID, and cases even when people have received boosters. Oregon recently again recommended that residents mask when indoors away from their homes. While nobody is expecting anything like the shutdown that occurred in March 2020, it appears newer strains will continue to negatively impact residents' well-being. As parts of the region have some of the highest number of unvaccinated individuals, the door remains open for more disruption than necessary.

In the meantime, the data now available for the first year of COVID continues to show some very concerning challenges for the region. It has become increasingly difficult to find any housing, let alone affordable housing. The same is true for childcare. Regional rates of homelessness are higher than not only the statewide rate, but the rate of any state in the nation. Both Douglas and Josephine County continue to be rated among the worst of all Oregon counties for health outcomes. This means more people who miss days of work, cannot work, or are paying too much for health care costs. Local schools continue to have high drop-out rates, and the region continues to have disproportionate numbers of residents lacking college degrees.

Given what is known at this time, the following is a list of some areas to focus on in the next year:

## **Family Strengthening**

The region has consistently struggled with a combination of family violence indicators, whether they be incidence of child abuse, foster care use, or the need for domestic violence services. Most recent ACEs data, along with the understanding of the long-term economic, health and well-being impacts associated with ACEs, continues to substantiate the need to improve family well-being. Improving family and child well-being can do much to address area poverty. Healthier families not only means there is a better chance household heads stay together, it also means that children are more likely to obtain better paying work later in life.

### **Maximize Availability of Rental Assistance**

UCAN cannot stop costs of housing from rising dramatically in the region. But UCAN can address residents struggles to pay rent through rent assistance. The State of Oregon provides UCAN with a set amount of rental assistance annually. It is important that UCAN continue to make this assistance available as efficiently as possible. This past year, UCAN was able to ensure that 5,152 individuals avoided eviction. While UCAN will have less rental assistance to provide this year, efficient use of available funds will meet an important need again.

### **Maximize Availability of Energy Assistance**

The cost of energy residents need for their homes has gone through the proverbial roof. Again, UCAN cannot directly decrease costs, but UCAN can ensure that it provides the maximum amount of energy assistance to local residents. Continuing to improve the efficiency with which this program operates will maximize available assistance.

### **Maximize Availability of Emergency Food**

Especially for local resident living on fixed incomes and for those who work less than full-time, inflation takes a bite out of the resources needed to pay for food. UCAN, as operator of the Feeding Umpqua (Douglas County) Food Bank, can work to maximize the amount of food that is distributed throughout Douglas County's network of pantries and kitchens.

### **Adequate Supply of Affordable Childcare**

As with most of Oregon's counties, Douglas and Josephine County do not have near enough childcare to meet needs, and the childcare that has been available has often not been affordable to low-income families. The Pandemic clearly exacerbated this problem. Even with many childcare centers reopened, some closed permanently, and

many are running at reduced capacity. UCAN can work to increase the availability of Head Start programming in Douglas County, and support other community efforts to increase the availability of care for children.

## **Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services for Latinos**

Several thousands of residents speak Spanish at home, and do not communicate well in English. Many Latinos face additional barriers to adequate services, whether due to program restrictions related to citizenship status, implicit bias, fear Latinos may have in seeking services, etc. The Latino population in the two-county region served by UCAN is growing quickly, but most local providers lack bilingual, bicultural staff to meet this community's needs. The Pandemic has made it abundantly clear that it is imperative that UCAN continue to develop strategies for improved outreach and service delivery to Latinos.

## **Shelters/Warming and Cooling Centers**

The region's high rate of homelessness is extremely concerning. Few shelters are available in either county. On days in which weather can be particularly dangerous for those living on the streets, warming and cooling shelters can play an invaluable role in preventing health emergencies. UCAN is starting up operations of the first 24-hour shelter for homeless residents in Roseburg. UCAN is also working to support other agencies who do so in Josephine County. UCAN is also supporting the development of warming and cooling centers. The most important work UCAN can do in conjunction with these efforts is to help those seeking these resources find permanent housing solutions.

## **All Services in More Remote County Locations**

The region needs more outreach and mobile service provision to those living in higher poverty, remote county regions. A few years ago, UCAN began offering a mobile food pantry, servicing some of Douglas County's most remote areas, including Days Creek, Camas Valley and Diamond Lake. The program has been very successful, but many challenges exist to maintaining such services long-term. It is important for UCAN to continue to explore other ways it can make delivery of services easier to those in remote areas.

## **Maximize Service in Josephine County**

Given that at this point, poverty levels for Josephine County are quite a bit higher than Douglas County, UCAN should work to maximize services it can provide in Josephine County. UCAN should also continue supporting partnerships in the County. The much higher cost of housing in the County suggests that anything UCAN can do to address housing stability issues should be a priority for the upcoming year.

## **Additional EITC**

Current high rates of employment locally suggest that support in getting more low-income workers to obtain EITC credits would be extremely beneficial in a time of high inflation. As has been seen, the State has struggled to maximize the number of those who obtain the credits for which they qualify. UCAN can help get more folks the funds from the US government by getting more local residents to take part in local tax assistance programs.