



## **United Community Action Network**

# **2025 Community Needs Assessment**

Approved by the Board of Directors, September 2025

## 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.

# 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 56 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 a significant proportion of low-income residents in its service area with a staff of over 200 individuals. 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.

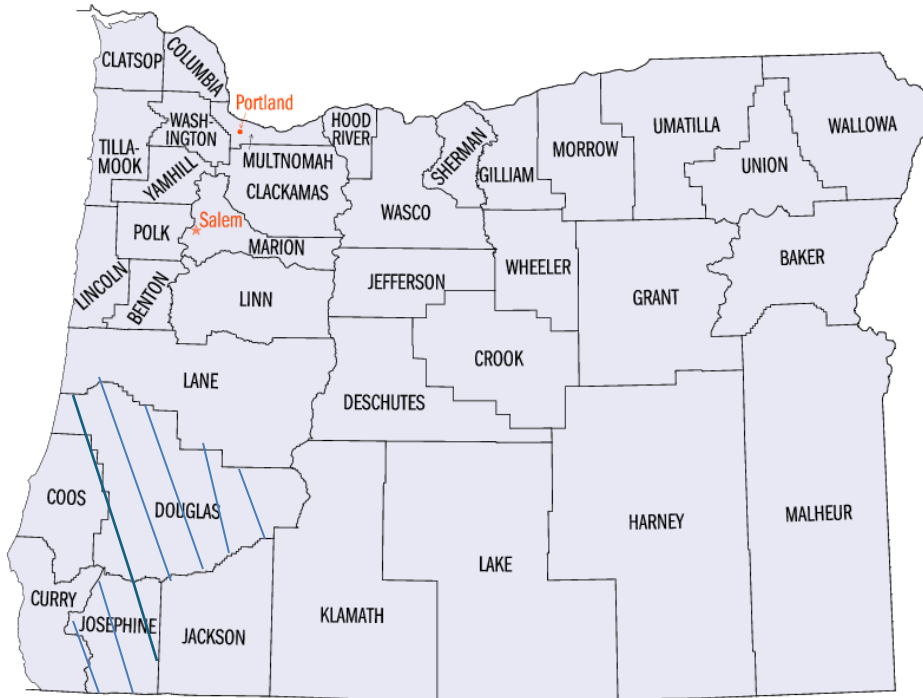
UCAN operates a number of different programs including:

- Head Start and Early Head Start,
- Healthy Families, Family Connects, Healthy Start, Nurse Home Visiting and WIC
- Emergency food distribution,
- Nutrition,
- Affordable housing,
- Housing stabilization services,
- Shelter services,
- Veteran services,
- Money management,
- Utility assistance,
- Home weatherization.

UCAN also has started offering Health Related Social Needs services offered as part of Oregon's Medicaid program. These services include home modification, home remediation, tenancy support, rent and utility assistance.

# 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. Douglas and Josephine County are located south of the Willamette Valley, and are more rural in nature than the counties comprising 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.

# Douglas County

## General Description



(Douglas County Planning Department)

Douglas County encompasses 5,036 square miles (an area larger than Connecticut).<sup>4</sup> The County extends from the Cascade Mountains at elevations of over 9,000 feet to sea level at the Pacific Ocean.<sup>5</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>6</sup> These lands are not subject to local property taxes, greatly diminishing the local government's tax base.

<sup>4</sup> US Census Bureau.

<sup>5</sup>United States Geological Survey.

<sup>6</sup> Douglas County website: <https://www.co.douglas.or.us/overview.asp>.

Though Douglas County is larger than Connecticut, it only has 111,129 residents, a loss of 6 residents from the previous year.<sup>7</sup> With few residents and a large area, Douglas County's population density is only 22.1 people per square mile.<sup>8</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 (23,876), Sutherlin (8,679) and Winston (5,666).<sup>9</sup> The most populous communities in southern Douglas County are Myrtle Creek, Riddle, Canyonville and Glendale with a combined population of 7,243.<sup>10</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 2,266 residents, are found in north Douglas County.<sup>11</sup> Reedsport is the single incorporated community in western Douglas County, with 4,368 residents.<sup>12</sup> A little over half of Douglas County's population lives in unincorporated areas.<sup>13</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>7</sup> Portland State University (PSU), Population Research Center, 2023-4 estimate.

<sup>8</sup> Calculated by dividing PSU 2024 population data into square mileage provided by US Census Bureau.

<sup>9</sup> PSU, Population Research Center, 2024 estimate.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Calculated using numbers from PSU, Population Research Center, 2024 estimates.

## Demographics

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

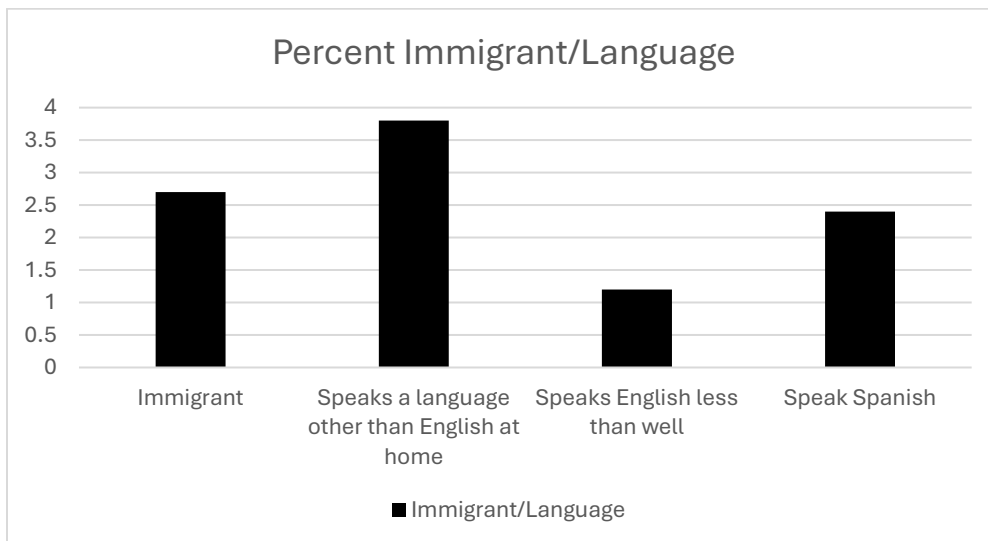
### Racial Diversity<sup>14</sup>

Race	Percentage of Population
<b>White</b>	91.8%
<b>African American</b>	0.6%
<b>Native American</b>	2.2%
<b>Asian</b>	1.3%
<b>Hawaiian/Native Islander</b>	0.2%
<b>Multi-Race</b>	3.9%

### Ethnic Diversity<sup>15</sup>

Ethnicity	Percentage of Population
<b>White alone, not Latino or Hispanic</b>	91.8%
<b>Latino</b>	6.9%

Douglas County has few immigrants, few residents speak a language other than English at home, and fewer have difficulty speaking English.<sup>16</sup> The most common language spoken other than English is Spanish.<sup>17</sup>



<sup>14</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2019-2023 Estimate.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

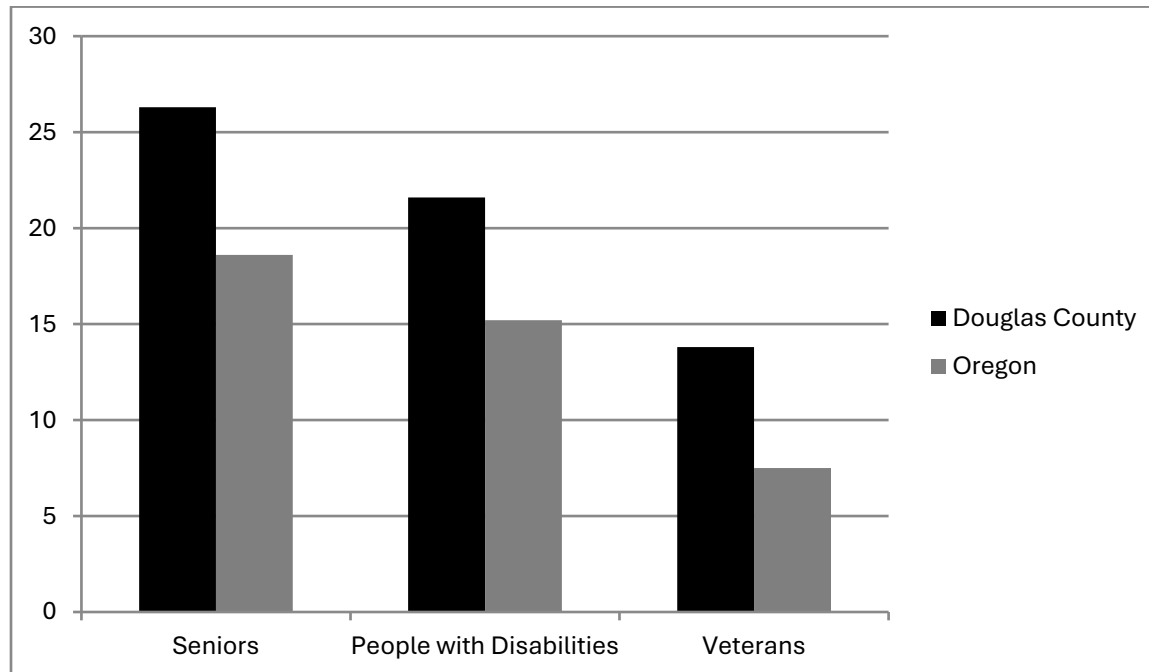
<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</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>18</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 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.

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<sup>18</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2019-2023 estimate.

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 nearly seven years older than residents statewide (46.6 as opposed to 40.1 years of age).<sup>19</sup>

Despite Douglas County's increasing median age, many families with children make their homes in the County. 24% of County households are families with children ages 0-18.<sup>20</sup> 21,415 children ages 0-17 live in the County.<sup>21</sup>

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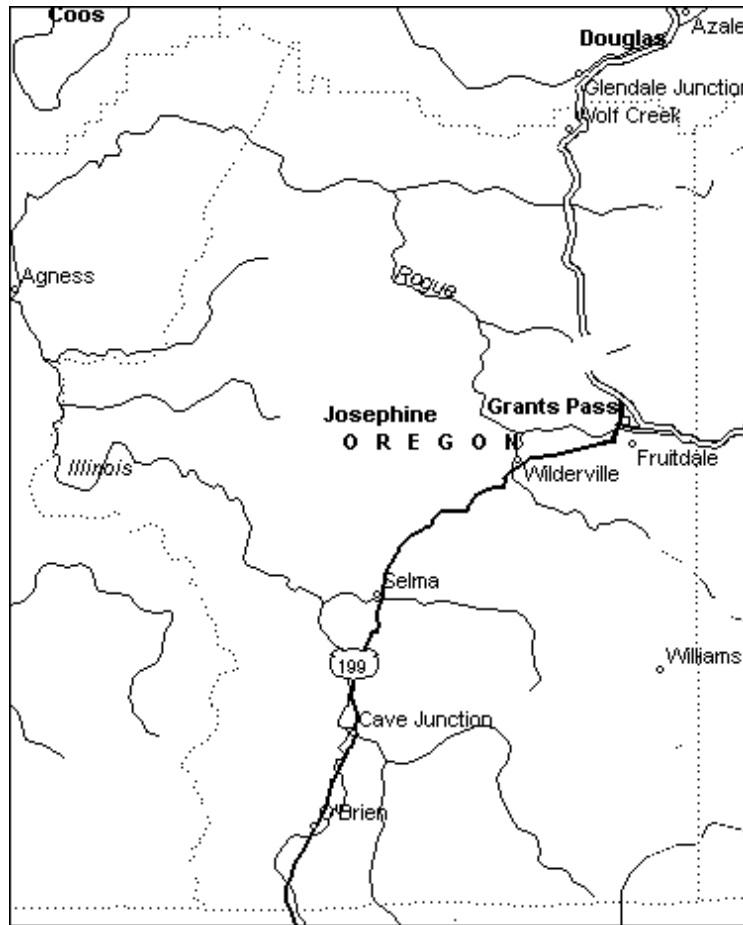
<sup>19</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2019-2023 estimate.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

# Josephine County

## General Description



Josephine County has an area of 1,639 square miles.<sup>22</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>22</sup> US Census.

Josephine County has a total population of 87,416<sup>23</sup> with 53.3 residents per square mile.<sup>24</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.

Grants Pass has a population of 39,572.<sup>25</sup> Cave Junction, to the southwest on highway 199, is the only other incorporated community in the County, with a population of 2,103.<sup>26</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>23</sup> PSU, Population Research Center, 2024 estimate.

<sup>24</sup> Calculated by dividing PSU 2024 population data into square mileage provided by US Census Bureau.

<sup>25</sup> PSU, Population Research Center, 2024 estimate.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

## Demographics

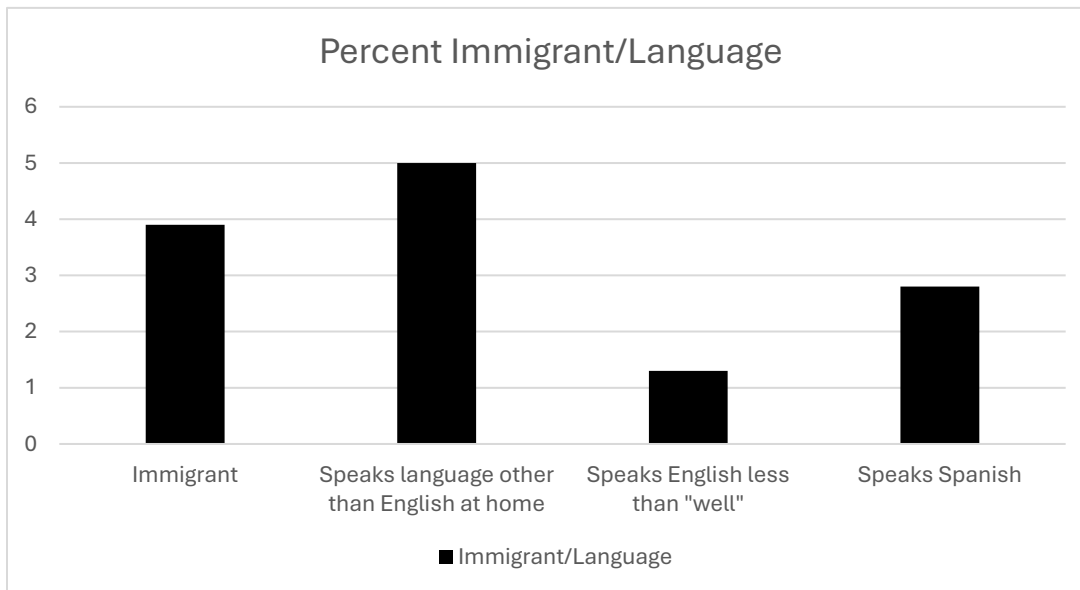
Josephine County has virtually the identical percentage of White residents as the percentage in Douglas County, but the County has a slightly higher percentage of Latino residents than Douglas County.<sup>27</sup>

Race	Percentage of Population
White	87.3%
African American	0.6%
Native American	0.7%
Asian	0.8%
Hawaiian/Native Islander	0.1%
More than one race	10.6%

## Ethnic Diversity<sup>28</sup>

Ethnicity	Percentage of Population
<b>Non-Latino</b>	91.6%
<b>Latino</b>	8.4%

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>29</sup>

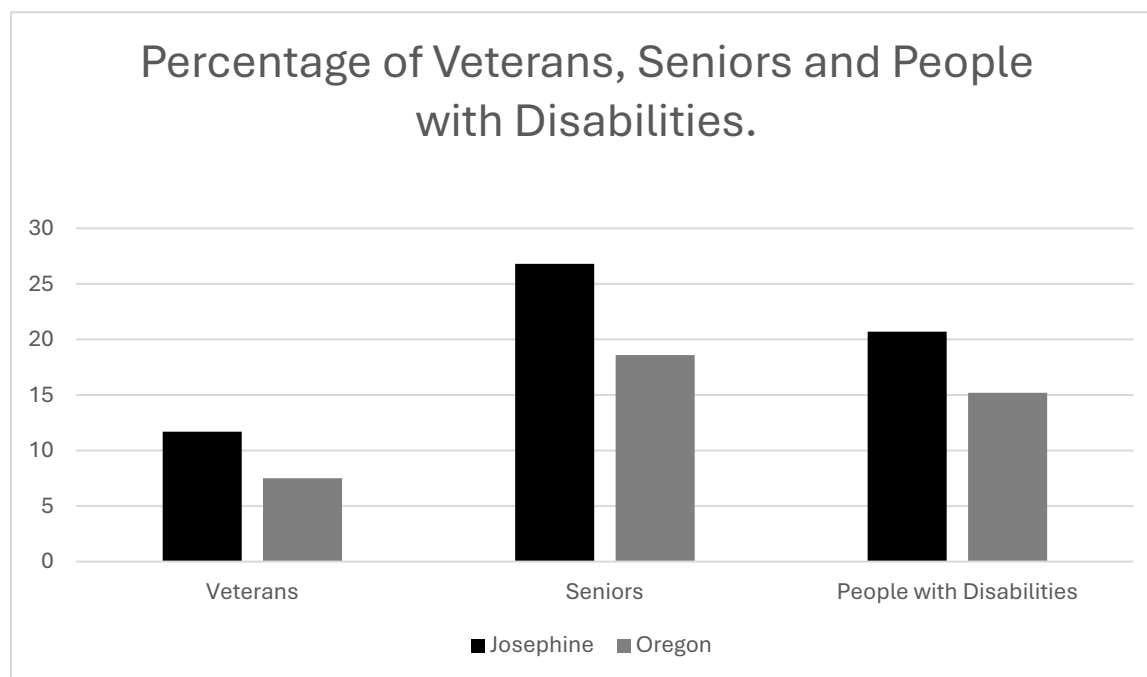


<sup>27</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2019-2023 estimate.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</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>30</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>31</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. There are 9,983 families with children ages 0-17.<sup>32</sup> 16,988 children ages 0-17 live in the County.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2019-2023 estimate.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

# Community Challenges

## General Poverty Information

### Poverty Rates

Until a better measure of poverty is made available, the federal poverty level (FPL) 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%, 125% and 185% of federal poverty levels for Douglas County, Josephine County, and the State of Oregon:<sup>34</sup>

<b>Location</b>	<b>100% Federal Poverty Level</b>	<b>125% Federal Poverty Level</b>	<b>185% Federal Poverty Level</b>
<b>Douglas County, OR</b>	<b>15.6%</b>	<b>20.1%</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>Josephine County, OR</b>	<b>15.8%</b>	<b>21.3%</b>	<b>35.3%</b>
<b>Oregon</b>	<b>11.9%</b>	<b>15.5%</b>	<b>25.1%</b>

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<sup>34</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2019-2023 estimate.

The percentage living at higher percentages of the FPL are included because the FPL severely undercounts the number of people having difficulty meeting their basic needs. Of particular interest in looking at the table is the increased difference in both Counties' poverty rates as compared to Oregon's as the percentage of FPL increases. At 100% FPL, both counties exceed the percentage of the state living in poverty, but not dramatically. But as a higher percentage of the FPL is considered, the economic disparity between those living in the two counties and the state becomes more stark. The reality is that far higher percentages of both counties' residents are struggling to make ends meet than statewide. About one-third are facing significant challenges paying for basics like housing, food, transportation and clothing. Poverty rates do not differ much between males and females, as seen below:<sup>35</sup>

Report Area	Percent Male	Percent Female
Douglas County, OR	15.7%	15.6%
Josephine County, OR	15%	16.6%
Oregon	11%	12.7%

Poverty rates do differ for different types of families having related children.<sup>36</sup> Looking at all families with related children, both counties have poverty rates for married couples exceeding Oregon's rate. Similar to the state, both counties have far higher rates of families led by single women with related children living in poverty than other types of families, with around half of such families living below the federal poverty level.

Report Area	Poverty Rate All Types of Families With a Related Child	Poverty Rate by Families Led by Married Couples With a Related Child	Poverty Rate of Families Led by Females Alone With a Related Child
Douglas County, OR	34.1%	17.2%	48.7%
Josephine County, OR	37.5%	14.8%	47.7%
Oregon	37.5%	11.1%	51.5%

<sup>35</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2019-2023 estimate.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.



With both Counties having so few residents who are Black, Native American/Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander or Some Other Race, the only meaningful estimates of poverty by race (given the margin of error in estimates) are probably that of those identifying as White and those identifying as having multiple races. Statewide and in both Counties, the poverty rates for people identifying as having multiple races is higher than those identifying as White.<sup>37</sup>

Report Area	White	Multiple Race
Douglas County	15%	18.8%
Josephine County	15.2%	18.6%
Oregon	11%	14.7%

The US Census has a relatively small margin of error in estimating percentages living in poverty for Hispanic/Latinos, so comparing those rates with those not identifying as Hispanic/Latino is also meaningful. The table below has poverty rates for those identifying as Hispanic/Latino by county versus those not identifying in this manner.<sup>38</sup>

Report Area	Percent Hispanic / Latino	Percent Not Hispanic / Latino
Douglas County, OR	22%	15.2%
Josephine County, OR	23.8%	11.4%
Oregon	14.9%	11.4%

There is a higher poverty rate for those identifying as Hispanic/Latino than those who do not in all geographic areas, and this difference has been consistent over the years. Josephine County's poverty rate for Hispanics/Latinos is especially noteworthy, as it is over double the poverty rate of people identifying as White.

In the past eight years, poverty rates have generally been higher in Josephine than in Douglas County.<sup>39</sup> Poverty rates for both counties dropped between 2016-2020.<sup>40</sup> But that trend has reversed in Douglas County, with increases each year between 2020 and

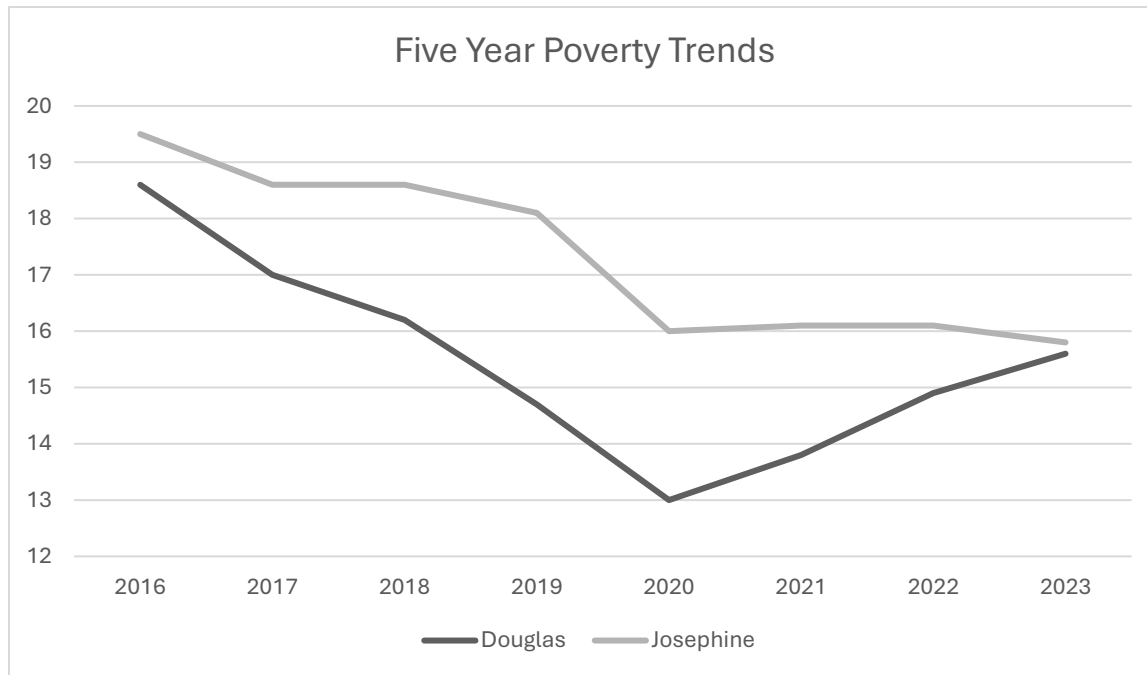
<sup>37</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2019-2023 estimate.

<sup>38</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2019-2023 estimate.

<sup>39</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, five-year estimates, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023

<sup>40</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, five-year estimates, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020.

2023.<sup>41</sup> The poverty rate in Douglas County has increased by 2.6% during this time, and is now comparable to Josephine County's rate.



Seniors in both counties have relatively lower poverty rates than other individuals.<sup>42</sup>

Region	Overall Poverty Rate	Senior Poverty Rate
Douglas County, OR	15.6%	10.1%
Josephine County, OR	15.8%	11.2%
Oregon	11.9%	10.4%

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, as taxes are very low in the area and the climate is warmer and drier than the Willamette Valley. Though there are many relatively well-off seniors locally, substantial numbers of local seniors lost jobs during the timber industry's contraction, 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.

<sup>41</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, five-year estimates, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023.

<sup>42</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2019-2023 estimate.

## Income Supports

Some lower-income residents in the region 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 2023, Douglas County and Josephine County had 3,492 and 2,548 individuals respectively receiving SSI.<sup>43</sup> Most of these individuals were either blind or disabled. The total amount of money coming into the region from SSI payments was a little over \$4 million.<sup>44</sup> Families also are potentially eligible to receive TANF funds to support their income. In 2023, 1,936 households and 1,632 households respectively in Douglas and Josephine County received such assistance.<sup>45</sup> Each county experienced an increase in households receiving such assistance from the prior year.<sup>46</sup>

As of December 2022, 28,573 and 24,973 individuals received SNAP benefits in Douglas and Josephine County respectively.<sup>47</sup> The number of SNAP recipients in both counties increased by over 5,000 since 2019.<sup>48</sup> In both cases, the number of recipients neared record levels set between 2011-2012.<sup>49</sup>

Earned Income Credits are a powerful tool improving the lives of low-income individuals and families.<sup>50</sup> “A substantial body of research shows that “the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), which goes to millions of low-income working families each year, provide work, income, educational, and health benefits to its recipients and their children.”<sup>51</sup> Moreover, income from this credit benefits virtually every life stage.<sup>52</sup> This tax credit lifts millions of people out of poverty.<sup>53</sup>

In tax year 2022, Oregon resident participation in EITC increased substantially from the from 2020 (from 67.9% to 78.4%). Nonetheless, Oregon had the 7<sup>th</sup> lowest participation rate of any state. Though more money is flowing into the State through this single source, benefitting individuals and distressed communities, this is an area where

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<sup>43</sup> United States Social Security Administration, 2021.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2019-2023 estimate.

<sup>46</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2018-2022 estimate.

<sup>47</sup> US Census, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, 2022.

<sup>48</sup> US Census, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, 2019.

<sup>49</sup> US Census, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, 2011, 2012.

<sup>50</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>51</sup> <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/take-action-to-improve-health/what-works-for-health/strategies/earned-income-tax-credit-eitc>

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

increased participation would further improve the outlook for low-income individuals and distressed communities in our region. While EITC participation rates are not available at the county level, given the high rate of poverty in UCAN's service area, it is likely that this change in local taxpayer behavior would have a positive impact on the local economy.

## Summary

Josephine County and Douglas County have poverty rates in excess of Oregon's rate. After a long period in which local rates declined, rates are nosing up again. 30,997 residents live below the federal poverty level in the region.<sup>54</sup> Data on those living at up to 185% 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 single with children. Low numbers of non-White populations make it difficult to determine accurate poverty rates by race or ethnicity, but those identifying as either being multi-racial and 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. Local participation in EITC has improved substantially, but has room for continued improvement.

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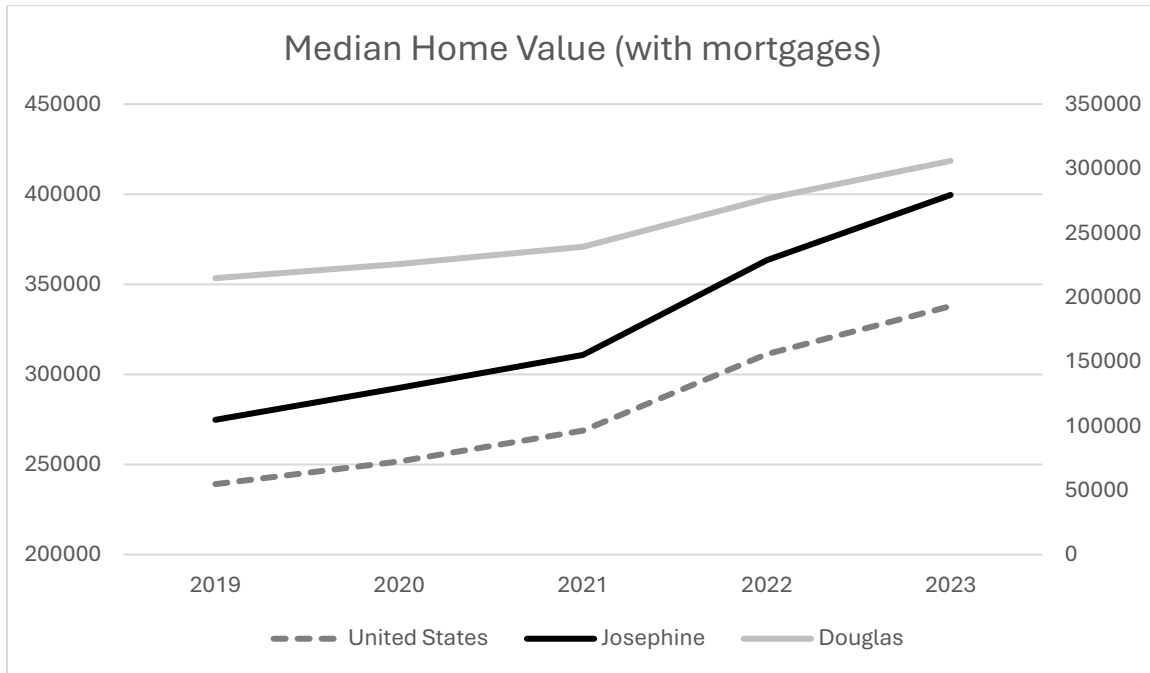
<sup>54</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2019-2023 estimate.

## Housing

The following section examines challenges with finding affordable housing in the region, as housing costs have increasingly left lower income residents unable to pay their bills.

### Homeownership

The median cost of housing (owned with a mortgage) has increased rapidly in the United States, Oregon, and in the two County region in recent years.<sup>55</sup>



Josephine County's homes now have a median value in excess of those nationwide. Both Josephine and Douglas County have had substantial increases in these values during this five-year period (45% and 42%). In recent years, fewer low-income residents could find housing with mortgages below \$1,000/month. In 2023, Douglas County had only had 3,034 units with monthly mortgages below \$1,000 and Josephine County had approximately 1,687.<sup>56</sup>

Manufactured homes are perhaps the only significant source of affordable housing which low-income residents own in the two counties.

<sup>55</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 five-year estimates.

<sup>56</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2019-2023 five-year estimate.

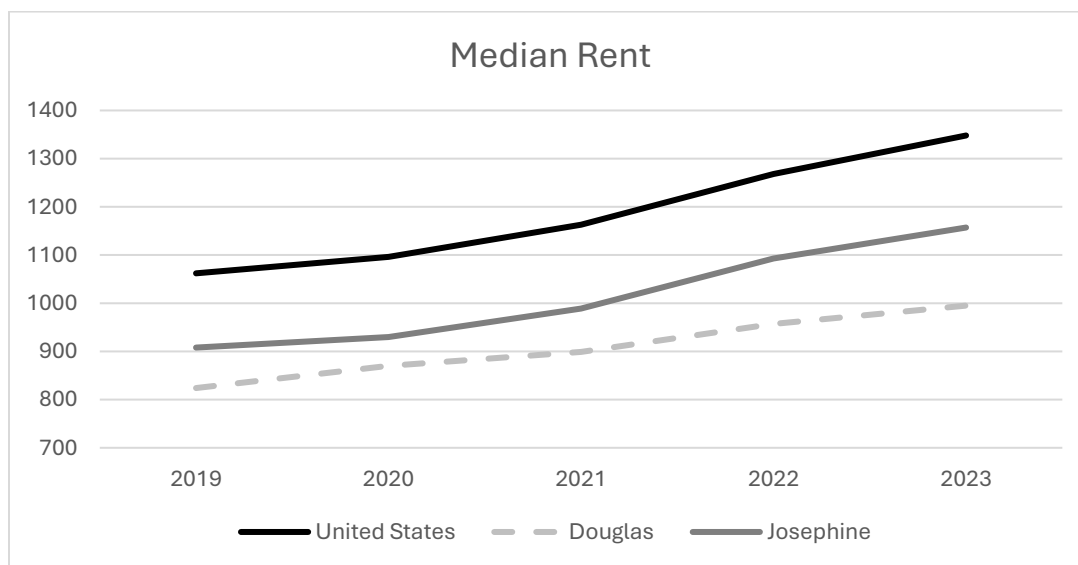
A substantial portion of the two Counties' housing stock is in the form of mobile homes:<sup>57</sup>

County	Total Mobile Homes	% of All Owner Owned Units	% of All Rental Units
Douglas	8,923	21.4%	13.2%
Josephine	6,142	19%	12.5%
United States		5.9%	4.1%

As can be seen, the percentage of units owned or rented in the region that are manufactured homes far exceeds the respective percentages nationwide. 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 \$104,900 in 2023; Josephine County's median value was \$203,200 in that year.<sup>58</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>59</sup>



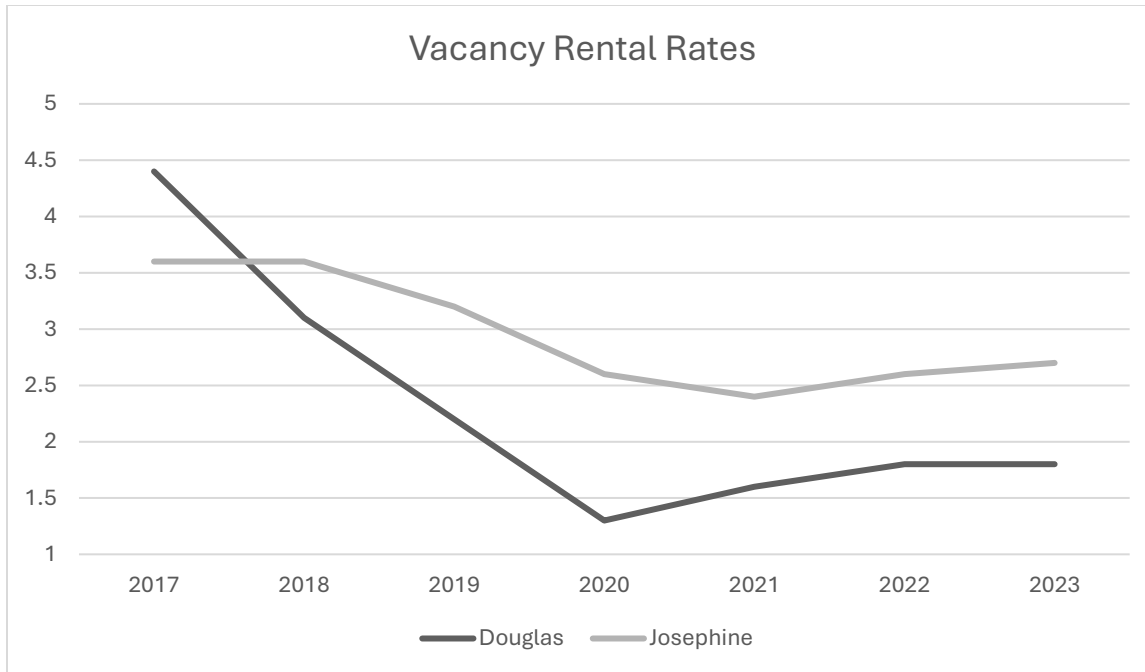
While both counties have lower median gross rents than national rents, they have seen increases from 2019-2023, with the largest increases coming in the last few years. As the cost of renting has risen, the availability of rentals has decreased. The next chart

<sup>57</sup> US, American Community Survey, 2019-2023 five year estimate.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, five-year estimates, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023.

show how vacancy rates for rentals has generally decreased in recent years.<sup>60</sup> Though census data shows both Josephine and Douglas County having a slight increase in vacancy rates between 2020-2023, the current low rates show that it is difficult to find rentals in either County.



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 (Oregon's statewide rate for 2023 was 4.6%).<sup>61</sup> This can largely be explained by the fact that development of housing has slowed considerably in the two counties, with very few new units coming on the market now. Douglas County's most recent count of housing units showed an actual loss of 12 housing units between 2019 and 2023.<sup>62</sup> Josephine County added a mere 269 units during this time.<sup>63</sup> Given these trends, rents are likely to have continued spiraling up between 2023 and the present.

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.

<sup>60</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, five-year estimates, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023

<sup>61</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, five-year estimate 2019-2023

<sup>62</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, five-year estimates, 2019, 2023

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

The following table indicates the proportion of all households in the two county region who are burdened and severely burdened by their rent payments.<sup>64</sup>

Location	Burdened Renters	Severely Burdened
Douglas	45.3%	23.9%
Josephine	57%	27.9%

In Douglas and Josephine County, it is likely that about a quarter of renting households are cutting back on paying for other basic needs to meet their housing costs (and are high risk of eviction). A much larger percentage of all local householders are paying too much for housing. Nearly six in ten Josephine County renters are 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 2,031 units of housing in their 2022 affordable housing directory.<sup>65</sup> The directory indicates Josephine County has 828 of such units.<sup>66</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 5,393 households in Douglas County and almost 6,050 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.

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<sup>64</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, five year estimate 2019-2023

<sup>65</sup> OHCS, Oregon Affordable Housing Inventory, March 18, 2022.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.



## Homelessness

It is extremely difficult to find accurate counts of homelessness in the United States. ABC News offered a detailed account of the problems inherent in the official Point-In-Time Count which HUD requires be conducted annually.<sup>67</sup> Some of the issues shared in the story include:

- The PIT count occurs on a single day in the middle of Winter when homeless people are most likely to have sought shelter to stay off the streets,
- Methods and resources to perform counts vary from community to community,
- Many rely on volunteers to perform the count,

The article specifically noted that “people experiencing homelessness in rural areas are also more vulnerable to undercounts, because they can be more difficult to find.”<sup>68</sup> Given the expanse and rural nature of UCAN’s service area, it is likely that local PIT counts are significantly undercounting homelessness. UCAN staff report that in the most recent PIT, far fewer resources were available in Douglas County than Josephine County to perform the count. This may explain why the more populated Douglas County’s PIT Count in 2024 was 334, as opposed to the 554 individuals counted in Josephine County.<sup>69</sup> On the other hand, reasons exist that would support a larger count in Josephine County. As seen above, housing is much more expensive in Josephine than in Douglas County. The poverty rate in Josephine County is also a bit higher than that of Douglas County.

Though homeless children are counted in the PIT, the Department of Education has a separate count based on a somewhat different definition of homelessness and a different means for estimating numbers. An article in The Oregonian reports that the statewide count of homeless students in Oregon is ten times higher as calculated using the Department of Education’s approach as opposed to HUD’s PIT count.<sup>70</sup> For school year 2023-2024, Douglas County schools reported that 3.82% or 511 students were homeless at some point in the school year. Josephine County reported that 6.48% or 643 students were homeless during that school year.<sup>71</sup> Josephine County’s rate was the 4<sup>th</sup> highest in the state, and Douglas County’s was the 14<sup>th</sup> highest. Given that Oregon had the 7<sup>th</sup> highest rate of student homelessness that year, the data above indicates a serious homeless problem among school age children locally. Moreover, despite the lack of accurate data on overall homelessness in the region, the fact that Governor Kotek announced that the state has a homeless and housing crisis in 2023 indicates that homelessness throughout Oregon is a serious problem.

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<sup>67</sup> ‘You can’t be accurate’: Annual Count of US Homeless Population Misses Large Numbers of People, Experts Warn, ABC News, February 3, 2024.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Spurbeck, F. H., Greene, J., and Zapata, M. (2025). 2024 Oregon Statewide Homelessness Estimates. Portland State University Homelessness Research & Action Collaborative.

<sup>70</sup> With Two Different Ways to Count Them, it’s Unclear How Many Oregon Children are Homeless, The Oregonian, August 4, 2025.

<sup>71</sup> Oregon Department of Education, Houseless Student Data, 2023-2024.

## Summary

Affordable housing in the region remains a critical need, regardless of whether it is officially recognized as such by the state. Availability of housing units remains stubbornly low; prices are rapidly increasing. As rents continue to rise, low-income renters are continuing to cut back on meeting other basic needs to stay housed. Homelessness is itself a local crisis, but the impact on those living without homes, and on the communities they live in is different. While the lack of affordable housing can impact the health of those paying too much in rent, those living without homes, especially those living on the streets, often end up with multiple chronic health problems and have life expectancies far shorter than their housed neighbors. High housing prices may impact local economies by making it more difficult for such communities to attract workers. High numbers of chronically homeless individuals cost distressed communities significant amounts of resources. Such communities' emergency health and public safety systems are frequently involved in addressing issues related to chronic homelessness. Homelessness also impacts businesses in locations where the homeless frequent, as shoppers may avoid such areas. This tends to be a particular problem in downtown urban areas, like Roseburg's and Grant Pass'. Perhaps most concerning, homeless children are far more likely to have poor lifelong health, educational and economic outcomes than those who are housed. When looking for root causes of local poverty, housing and homelessness certainly rank near the top.

## Adequate Housing

A person can have housing, but lack adequate housing. This is the case for those who lack full plumbing, lack kitchen facilities, and lack telephone service. Fewer than 1% of housing units lack full plumbing in either County.<sup>72</sup> Slightly higher percentages of homes (2.8% and 2.5%) lack kitchen facilities in Josephine and Douglas County respectively.<sup>73</sup> Douglas County has a higher percentage of homes lacking telephone service (2.1%) than Josephine County (1.5%). 8.7% of households in Douglas County lack Internet access of any kind and 8.5% of Josephine County households lack such access.<sup>74</sup> But of households with annual incomes of less than \$20,000, 18% and 21.9% lack Internet access in Douglas and Josephine County respectively.<sup>75</sup> Internet access has improved substantially in the past three years in the region. 28.5% of housing units in Douglas County were constructed 65 or more years ago; 18.6% of housing units in Josephine County are similarly old.<sup>76</sup> A number of these homes may require frequent repairs and maintenance.

The LEAD (Low-Income Energy Affordability Data) tool, put out by the US Department of Energy, provides information on home energy affordability.<sup>77</sup> Households spending at least 6% of their income on energy costs are categorized as having a high burden. Douglas County's households living at 0-100% and 100-150% of the federal poverty level all live at high levels of energy burden (spending between 7-12% of their income on home energy).<sup>78</sup> The same is true of Josephine County, except that the rate of energy burden there ranges from 7-14%.<sup>79</sup> The total number of low-income households with these high levels of energy burden in the region is 18,703.<sup>80</sup>

Data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shows that the need for energy to maintain home comfort is shifting from a need for heating to a need for cooling regionally. In the past five years, Douglas County has experienced its highest, third highest, sixth highest, seventh highest and tenth highest need for cooling.<sup>81</sup> Josephine County has experienced a similar spike in the need for cooling.<sup>82</sup> Unfortunately, most of the energy assistance offered in the region is made available for colder months, so local residents often have major challenges addressing summer heat.

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<sup>72</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2019-2023 estimate.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> <http://www.energy.gov/scep/slcs/lead-tool>

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> National Centers for Environmental Information, Climate at a Glance County Time Series.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

## Summary

Census data does not generally indicate a serious problem in terms of sub-standard housing or overcrowded housing in the region. A substantial number of low-income residents do lack Internet service, which has become critical for many jobs and educational opportunities. A large percentage of household units are old, which may indicate that these units have issues typically associated with aging housing. Many owners of manufactured homes live in substandard homes. Low-income residents are paying too much to cover home energy costs. Households are seeing a greater need for air conditioning with each passing year.

## Health

Local organizations publish periodic community health assessments (CHAs) 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 CCO in Douglas (Umpqua Health) published its assessment in 2023.<sup>83</sup> Josephine County's CCO, AllCare, joined with other CCOs serving Josephine and Jackson County to publish as single assessment that same year.<sup>84</sup> It is becoming increasingly understood that Social Determinants of Health have a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of individuals. These determinants include education access and quality, economic stability, social and community context, health care access and quality and neighborhood and built environment. Both CHAs have extensive analyses of these factors, which in many cases overlap factors examined in this needs assessment. Both CHAs publish comprehensive data regarding community health issues, ranging from incidence of chronic disease to maternal issues to oral health.

Given these existing assessments, this community needs assessment simply summarizes high level measures of health and wellness. County Health Rankings, compiled by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, provides excellent snapshots of these measures for both counties.<sup>85</sup> In comparison with state and national data, both Douglas and Josephine County lag badly in the most critical measurements of health.

Region	Longevity	Poor Physical Health Days	Poor Mental Health Days	Poor/Fair Health
Douglas County	74.5 years	4.7	6.5	20%
Josphine County	74.6 years	4.6	6.3	20%
Oregon	78 years	3.9	5.7	17%
United States	77 years	3.9	5.1	17%

Poor physical and mental health days are the number of average days per month residents report feeling this way. Poor/fair health percentages are the percentages of residents who feel that way out of the total region's population. The data above show that local residents have a higher number of both poor physical and mental health days than those living in Oregon or nationally, and a higher percentage of residents in

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<sup>83</sup> Umpqua Health Alliance, Douglas County Oregon, 2023 Community Health Assessment

<sup>84</sup> All in for Health, Jackson and Josephine Counties, 2023 Community Health Assessment

<sup>85</sup> <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/>

poor/fair health than the state or national average. But perhaps most concerning, local residents on average, live 2.5 to 3.5 years less than residents throughout Oregon or nationally.

The table below summarizes some of the health related factors that might contribute the most to this concerning data:

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Douglas County</b>	<b>Josephine County</b>	<b>Oregon</b>	<b>United States</b>
<b>Ratio of Residents to Primary Care Physicians</b>	<b>1560:1</b>	<b>1360:1</b>	1060:1	1330:1
<b>Ratio of Residents to Mental Health Providers</b>	<b>240:1</b>	100:1	140:1	300:1
<b>Flu Vaccinations</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>35%</b>	41%	48%
<b>Suicides</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>33</b>	19	14
<b>Teen Births</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	11	16
<b>Adult Smoking</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>	13	13
<b>Drug Overdose Deaths</b>	29	<b>37</b>	26	31
<b>Motor Vehicle Crash Deaths</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>23</b>	12	12
<b>Firearm Fatalities</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>29</b>	14	13

Taken together, the data above show that lack of available health and mental health care as well as behaviors associated with poor health outcomes are serious issues for both counties. Together with other Social Determinants of Health covered elsewhere in this assessment, it is not surprising that local residents have poorer health and live shorter lives than those living elsewhere statewide and nationally.

## Summary

The cost of doctor visits, procedures, tests and prescriptions can push middle class individuals into poverty. 40% of Americans report that they have some form of medical debt.<sup>86</sup> People with medical debt are much more likely to have other forms of financial distress than those without medical debt. The region's poor health outcomes impact local businesses, which must deal with disproportionate work absences and higher premiums to cover employee health benefits. The region's high rates of medical conditions and illnesses force local individuals to pay more out-of-pocket for healthcare than many places elsewhere in Oregon. As local low-income individuals are more likely to suffer from poor health, health care costs disproportionately impact them. These issues are compounded in many cases locally by lower use of preventative services and by higher rates of behaviors contributing to poor health.

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<sup>86</sup> Health Care Costs and Affordability, May 28, 2024, published by KFF: <https://www.kff.org/health-costs/health-policy-101-health-care-costs-and-affordability/?entry=table-of-contents-introduction>

## 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>87</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>88</sup>

Feeding America maintains data estimating the percentage of children and the overall population of counties that are food insecure. Most recent data shows food insecurity rate of 16.8% in both Douglas and Josephine County.<sup>89</sup> Rates have increased dramatically in the past couple of years. A similar increase in food insecurity has occurred for local children. Around 1 in 4 children in both Counties were found to suffer from food insecurity in 2023.<sup>90</sup> Overall, Douglas County had approximately 18,820 food insecure individuals, including 5,290 children.<sup>91</sup> Josephine County had approximately 14,800 food insecure individuals, including 4,180 children.<sup>92</sup> Given that the cost of food continues to rise after sharply increasing in previous years, one would expect food insecurity rates to have continued their upward trend. Child food insecurity is especially concerning, because food insecure children are more likely to be hospitalized and face higher risks of health conditions, repeat a grade in elementary school, experience developmental impairments in areas like language and motor skills, and have more social and behavioral problems.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service.

<sup>88</sup> <https://hungerandhealth.feedingamerica.org/understand-food-insecurity/>

<sup>89</sup> Feeding America, Map the Meal Gap, 2023.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/child-hunger-facts>



Oregon offers several programs that help address food insecurity. One serving school children is the free/reduced lunch program. Another serving young children and certain mothers is WIC. The table below show participation in these programs.<sup>94</sup>

<b>Program Participation</b>	<b>Douglas</b>	<b>Josephine</b>
<b>Free and Reduced Meals</b>	65.7% (2022-2023)	60% (2022-2023)
<b>WIC Overall Participation</b>	4,259 individuals	3,722 individuals
<b>% of Pregnant Women Served in WIC</b>	41%	43%
<b>% of WIC moms breastfeeding exclusively for six months</b>	38%	46%

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,
- Whether people living in the census tract have low access to supermarkets or large grocery stores where healthy food are available.

USDA's most recent designation of tracts with food deserts was in 2019. Based on its designations, over 40% and 50% of Douglas and Josephine County residents live in such deserts.<sup>95</sup>

## Nutrition

People in the United States dealing with food insecurity rarely appear to lack food. 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. Data that provides an insight into the nutrition students are availing themselves of in Douglas and Josephine County is found in the 2024 Oregon Student Health Survey.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>94</sup> National Center for Education Statistics, NCES - Common Core of Data. 2022-2023; Oregon 2024 WIC Data Sheets.

<sup>95</sup> 2023 Umpqua Health Alliance and All in for Health Community Health Assessments.

<sup>96</sup> 2024 Oregon Student Health Surveys, Douglas and Josephine County.

The percentages of students reporting having less than one serving per day of fruits and vegetables, and the percentages of students having soda at least one time per day are shown in the table below.

Region	Total percentage of students have less than one serving of fruits and vegetables daily	Total percentage of students having soda at least one time per daily
Douglas	26.1%	12.3%
Josephine	27.2%	12.3%

Given that the recommended number of servings of fruits and vegetables for students is five daily, over one quarter of all students in the region are far from meeting this key nutritional target. Those students drinking at least one soda per day are further increasing their risk of type 2 diabetes, heart disease, other chronic diseases, and, ultimately, are more likely to die prematurely.<sup>97</sup> Since these conditions increase the likelihood of poverty, and are a drag on the economies of local communities, poor nutrition is related to both as well.

## Summary

Both food insecurity and poor nutrition are problems for many local residents. 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. Additionally, poor nutrition leads to chronic conditions that themselves impact individual and community economic well-being. 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 many local children and women.

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<sup>97</sup> The Nutrition Source, Harvard School of Public Health, <https://nutritionsource.hsph.harvard.edu/healthy-drinks/sugary-drinks/#:~:text=If%20you%20were%20to%20drink,Body%20weight%20and%20obesity>

## Transportation

Lack of reliable transportation can curtail individuals' abilities to hold jobs, access educational opportunities, and obtain needed benefits and services. In Douglas and Josephine County, a small number of households lack any vehicle (2,244 and 2,085 respectively).<sup>98</sup> For those who work who lack vehicles, most carpool, a lesser number bike, walk or take a motorcycle, and the least number take the bus.

Low-income residents who do have cars often face other challenges with transportation. Many lack the resources to cover the expenses of repairs. This is becoming a more pressing issue, as the average age of all light vehicles (cars and light trucks), continues to increase, recently hitting a record high of about 12.8 years.<sup>99</sup> While newer cars have been built to last longer, those owning older cars face high costs of maintenance. Used car prices reached record levels during the pandemic and have remained there. In the second quarter of 2025, the average sales price of three-year-old vehicles was \$31,126. This was near the all-time record of \$31,628 set in 2022 and a 5.2% increase compared to the same time in 2024.<sup>100</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 have fallen from recent records, but the cost of gas is currently still \$3.83/gallon in Douglas County and \$4.13/gallon in Josephine County.<sup>101</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>98</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, five-year estimate, 2019-2023.

<sup>99</sup> Todd Campau. Average of Vehicles in the US Rises to 12.8 Years in 2025. S&P Global Mobility. <https://www.spglobal.com/automotive-insights/en/blogs/2025/05/average-age-of-vehicle-in-us>.

<sup>100</sup> Shannon Bradley, Today's Car Market: Are Car Prices Going Up or Down?, Nerd Wallet, August 25, 2025, <https://www.nerdwallet.com/article/cars/car-market-prices>

<sup>101</sup> Prices from AAA, August 25, 2025.

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

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

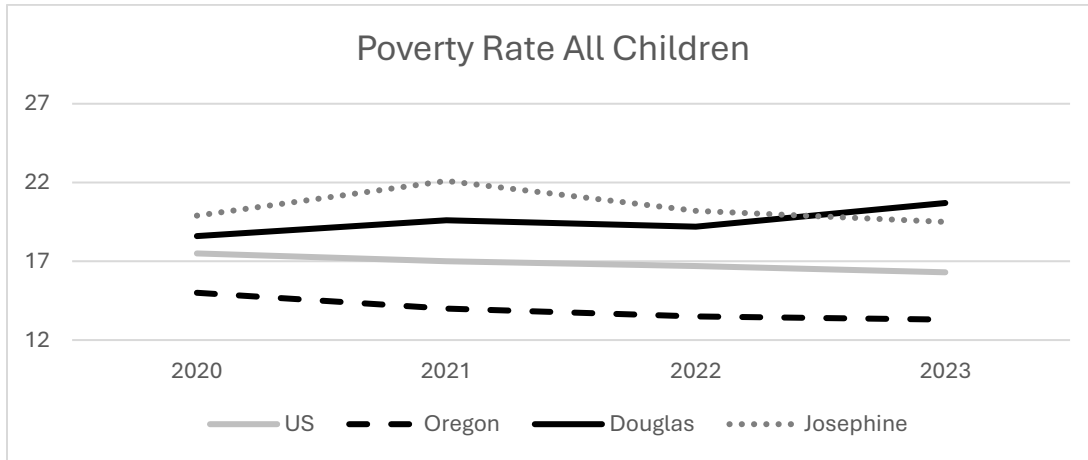
Commuters driving from Cave Junction to Grants Pass have a 38-minute drive. Some Grants Pass residents work in Medford, Oregon, which is a 35-minute drive. Given potential driving distances, and the fact that most residents drive alone to work, anyone who has difficulty affording personal transportation (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

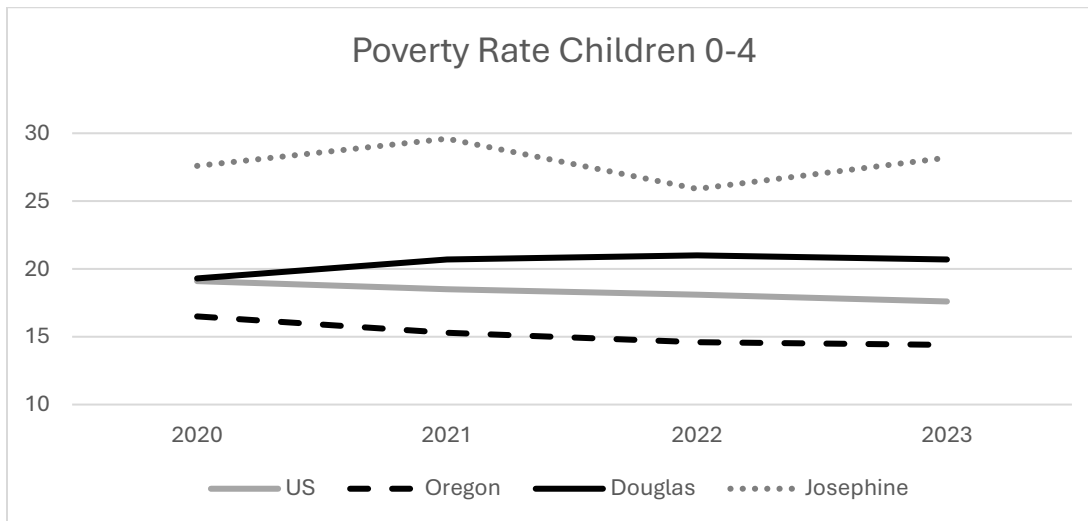
Many local residents lack adequate access to transportation in the region, though the only definitive data available addressing this issue is number of vehicles per household. Commuter services are available in both Counties, but the percentage of residents taking advantage of such services is very small.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

## Children and Family Well-Being

This section of the assessment examines indicators of general child and family well-being. 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>102</sup>



The next chart shows the five year rates for children ages 0-4:<sup>103</sup>



As these charts show, from 2020-2024, both counties had child poverty rates in excess of the national rate, and considerably above the state rate. The same is true of poverty rates for children ages newborn through 4 years old, but Josephine County's rates are substantially higher than both national and state rates in this case. The poverty rates for younger children have consistently been higher than that of all children, while childhood poverty rates in general have been higher than poverty rates for adults. Most recent

<sup>102</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, five-year estimates, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

census data show 4,314 children in Douglas County living in poverty, of which 1,090 are under age five.<sup>104</sup> In Josephine County, 3,203 children are living in poverty, of which 1,146 are under age five.<sup>105</sup>

## 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 2023:<sup>106</sup>

Indicator	Douglas	Josephine	Oregon
<b>Founded incidence of child abuse</b>	323	217	N/A
<b>Victim rate per 1,000</b>	21	19.7	13
<b>Children in foster care per 1,000</b>	8.8	6.8	5.4
<b>Median months in foster care</b>	22.4	26.6	23.4
<b>Closed homes/new certifications</b>	87 closed/50 new	40 closed/31 new	N/A

Both Counties' children face high rates of child abuse and foster care compared to statewide rates, and rates increased for both in 2023. Douglas County continues to struggle more with these issues than Josephine County. Both counties have higher rates of children in foster care than the statewide rate. Both counties also saw more certified foster care homes close in 2023 than open, perhaps leaving fewer options for placement of children needing care.

## Issues with Family Strength

The primary indicators for issues regarding family strength examined here are domestic violence, pregnancies for unmarried mothers and divorce. Oregon now reports crimes with domestic violence involved on its Oregon Uniform Crime Reporting Data dashboard.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>104</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, five-year estimate 2019-2023.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Oregon Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Data Book, 2023.

<sup>107</sup> <https://www.oregon.gov/osp/pages/uniform-crime-reporting-data.aspx>

The table below shows the number of distinct domestic violence victims in crimes reported for counties with comparable numbers of people as the region's two counties: <sup>108</sup>

County	Population	Number of Victims
Umatilla	80,401	172
Josephine	88,695	121
Polk	90,593	209
Benton	95,954	49
Yamhill	108,993	300
Douglas	111,716	71
Linn	131,194	182

These numbers would seem to indicate that for the most recent year through July 31, 2025, both counties had relatively low numbers of crimes involving domestic violence as compared to other counties with similar populations.

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 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, 44.6% and 47.5% of births in 2024 were to unmarried women.<sup>109</sup> These percentages were significantly higher than the state rate (37.1%).<sup>110</sup> Teenage pregnancy rates in both counties was also high, with 1% of births in 2024 in Douglas and Josephine County to mothers age 17 and under (in excess of the state rate of 0.7%).<sup>111</sup>

<sup>108</sup> <https://www.oregon.gov/osp/pages/uniform-crime-reporting-data.aspx>

<sup>109</sup> Oregon Health Authority, 2024 Birth Data, <https://visual-data.dhsosha.state.or.us/t/OHA/views/Oregonyear-to-datepreliminarybirthdashboard/Preliminarybirths?%3AisGuestRedirectFromVizportal=y&%3Aembed=y>.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

Divorce rates in Douglas and Josephine County also exceed those statewide and nationally.<sup>112</sup>

	United States	Oregon	Douglas County	Josephine County
<b>Divorce Rate</b>	10.7%	12.7%	14.3%	15.1%

## Childcare

The availability of childcare impacts both general family well-being and the ability of parents to work. The table that follows depicts the number of providers of childcare and available slots for childcare for different ages of children.<sup>113</sup>

Age Range	Douglas County Providers	Douglas County Slots	Josephine County Providers	Josephine County Slots
<b>0-2</b>	67	596	42	433
<b>3-5</b>	87	1,290	64	1,030
<b>6-12</b>	54	463	32	871

Since 2020, Douglas County has seen a drop in the number of providers and slots for each age group. Josephine County has seen an increase for providers and slots for children ages 0-2 and 3-5, but a drop in providers for older aged children. The next table shows the percentage of children of various ages in each County and statewide that have access to available care:<sup>114</sup>

Age Range	Douglas County %	Josephine County %	Oregon %
<b>0-2</b>	22%	20%	24%
<b>3-5</b>	44%	45%	51%
<b>6-12</b>	6%	14%	13%
<b>Any Age</b>	17%	22%	24%

As with many of the topics covered in this assessment, childcare for children of any age is less available locally than it is statewide. Few families with children ages 0-2 and 6-12 had available care.

<sup>112</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, five-year estimate 2019-2023.

<sup>113</sup> 2024 Estimated Supply of Child Care and Early Education Programs in Oregon, Oregon Child Care Research Partnership at Oregon State University.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.



Child care deserts are defined as a community with more than three children for every regulated child care slot.<sup>115</sup> Extreme deserts are defined as having ten or more children for every regulated child care slot.<sup>116</sup> In Douglas County only 12% of children age newborn-2 have access to a regulated childcare slot (barely exceeding the percentage under which the County would be designated as a severe childcare desert).<sup>117</sup> 20% of such children have access in Josephine County (with the County designated a childcare desert for that age group).<sup>118</sup> For children ages 3-5, Douglas County has the fifth lowest percentage of children accessing childcare slots of all Oregon counties, with 31% having such access. Josephine County has a greater percentage of slots for children ages 3-5, at 39%, leaving it just above the level considered to be a childcare desert.<sup>119</sup> More rural parts of each county have few if any providers of care.<sup>120</sup> 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>121</sup>

The median price for child care for toddlers in Douglas and Josephine County was \$12,276 and \$12,996 respectively in 2025.<sup>122</sup> Parents earning minimum wage needed to spend over 40% of their annual wage for one child's care in each of the two counties.<sup>123</sup> Given that many families with minimum wage earners were already paying ½ of their take home pay for rent, these families could not afford to pay a significant portion for child care as well.

## 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, and foster care are high, in some cases, among the state's higher rates. Childcare, which could alleviate some of this stress, remains unavailable for many of those with the least resources. Relatively high rates of child poverty in both counties, and even higher rates for children ages 0-4, are very concerning. These children are likely to lack resources needed to support their well-being.

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<sup>115</sup> Megan Pratt and Michaela Sektnan. Oregon's Child Care Deserts 2024: Mapping Supply by Age Group and Percentage of Publicly Funded Slots. Oregon State University, College of Public Health and Human Sciences. July 2025.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> <https://januaryadvisors.shinyapps.io/oregon-ece-app/>

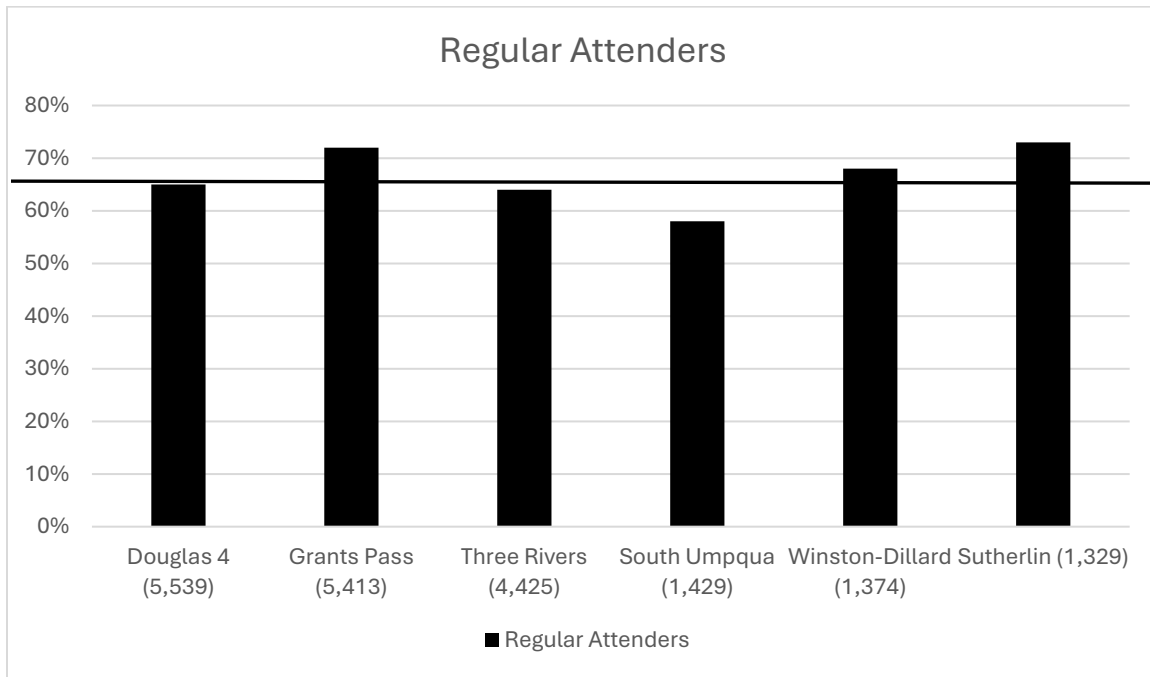
<sup>122</sup> Douglas and Josephine County Early Care and Education Profiles, Oregon State University, 2020.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

# Education

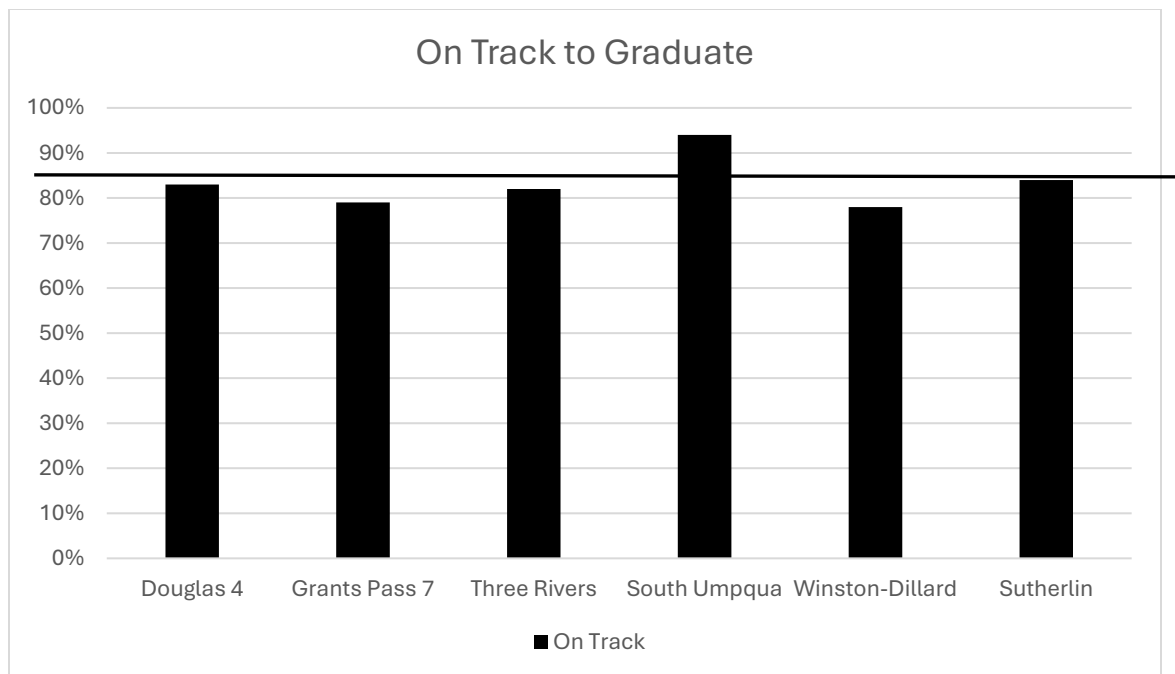
## School Outcomes

As the Oregon Department of Education allows parents of students to opt out of taking state tests of language arts and mathematics, the results of those that do take the tests has become less meaningful. Schools do report on other data that applies to all students, and that offer evidence of school success. These measures include “Regular Attenders” ( students who attended 90% or more of assigned class days, “On Track to Graduate” (students earning one-quarter of credit needed to graduate by end of 9<sup>th</sup> grade) and “On-Time Graduation” (students earning a diploma in 4 years). The following tables show the six largest of the region’s district’s data for these three measures of progress, as compared to the Oregon average (shown with dark line across chart). The first chart also shows the regular attenders for each district.

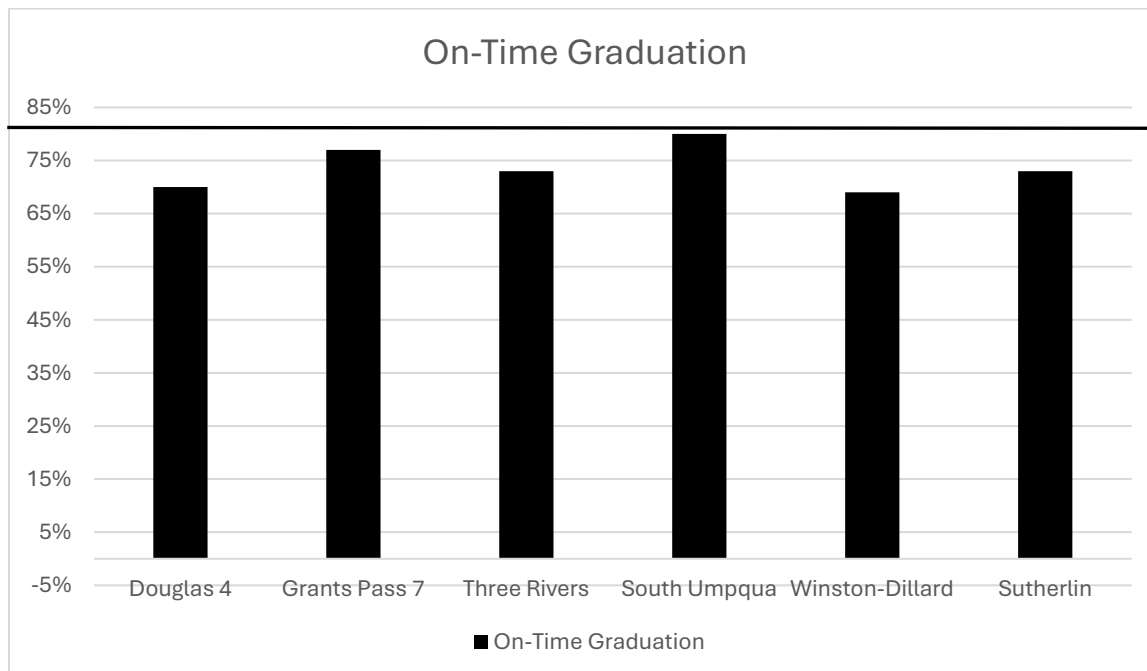


Several of these school districts have seen substantial improvement in their percentage of regular attenders in recent years, and only South Umpqua School District remains significantly below the state average of 66%.<sup>124</sup>

<sup>124</sup> ODE School Report Cards, 2023-2024.



While ODE reports that only students attending South Umpqua High School are on track to graduate at a percentage exceeding the state percentage, most districts are close to the state average. Moreover, all districts saw some improvement in this percentage in the last few years.<sup>125</sup>



<sup>125</sup> ODE, School Report Cards, 2023-2024

ODE reports that none of the large local school district are meeting the state's percentage of students who are graduating on time, with Three Rivers having seen a decline in recent years, but South Umpqua having shown improvement in this metric.<sup>126</sup>

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>127</sup> For school year 2023-2024, the five year cohort graduation rate for Douglas County schools was 75.6%.<sup>128</sup> Josephine County schools performed better in this area, but still underperformed compared to schools statewide, with a cohort graduation rate of 78%.<sup>129</sup> Turning to dropout rates, Douglas County had the 4<sup>th</sup> highest rate (4.9%) in the state and Josephine County had the 5<sup>th</sup> highest rate (4%).<sup>130</sup>

The State maintains data on the rates of students going on to post-secondary school by district. The chart below provides the percentages of students who enrolled in post-secondary school within a set time frame after graduation from school in 2021-2022 from the two counties' largest school districts:<sup>131</sup>

<b>School District</b>	<b>% Continuing to Post-Secondary School</b>
<b>Douglas SD 4 (Roseburg)</b>	50.3%
<b>South Umpqua</b>	44.3%
<b>Sutherlin</b>	44.2%
<b>Winston/Dillard</b>	24%
<b>Grants Pass SD 7</b>	43.3%
<b>Three Rivers/Josephine County SD (3 High Schools)</b>	39.5%

The statewide average for continuing school after high school is 53%. Winston-Dillard really struggled, with less than 1/4 of its graduating seniors going on to post-secondary school. Moreover, rates of continuing dropped for most schools in the past two years.

<sup>126</sup> ODE School Report Cards, 2023-2024

<sup>127</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>128</sup> Oregon Department of Education, cohort graduation rates by county, 2023-2024.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Oregon Department of Education, drop out/push out rates by county, 2023-2024

<sup>131</sup> Oregon Department of Education, School Report Cards, 2023-2024.

Drop off in community college enrollment has been especially pronounced, which is most concerning as many graduates who are from low-income families have historically attended community college.<sup>132</sup> Reasons for this trend include: 1) students are concerned about college costs, 2) they have questions about the value of postsecondary education, and 3) many are worried about disrupting their livelihoods to attend college.<sup>133</sup>

## 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>134</sup>

Report Area	Percent No High School Diploma	Percent High School Only	Percent Some College	Percent Associates Degree	Percent Bachelor's Degree	Percent Graduate or Professional Degree
Douglas County, OR	8.4%	31.9%	29.8%	10.9%	12.1%	6.9%
Josephine County, OR	9.8%	31.4%	29.5%	9.7%	12.4%	7.4%
Oregon	8.3%	22.4%	29.8%	10.9%	22.3%	13.9%

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.

## Summary

Too many students in the region are failing to graduate within 5 years of initially enrolling at their schools, and of those who graduate, too few are seeking post-secondary education opportunities. Given this, one would expect that the percentage of those statewide with college degrees will continue to outpace the local region's percentage.

<sup>132</sup> Allan Golston, President of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Blog Post, September 28, 2022.

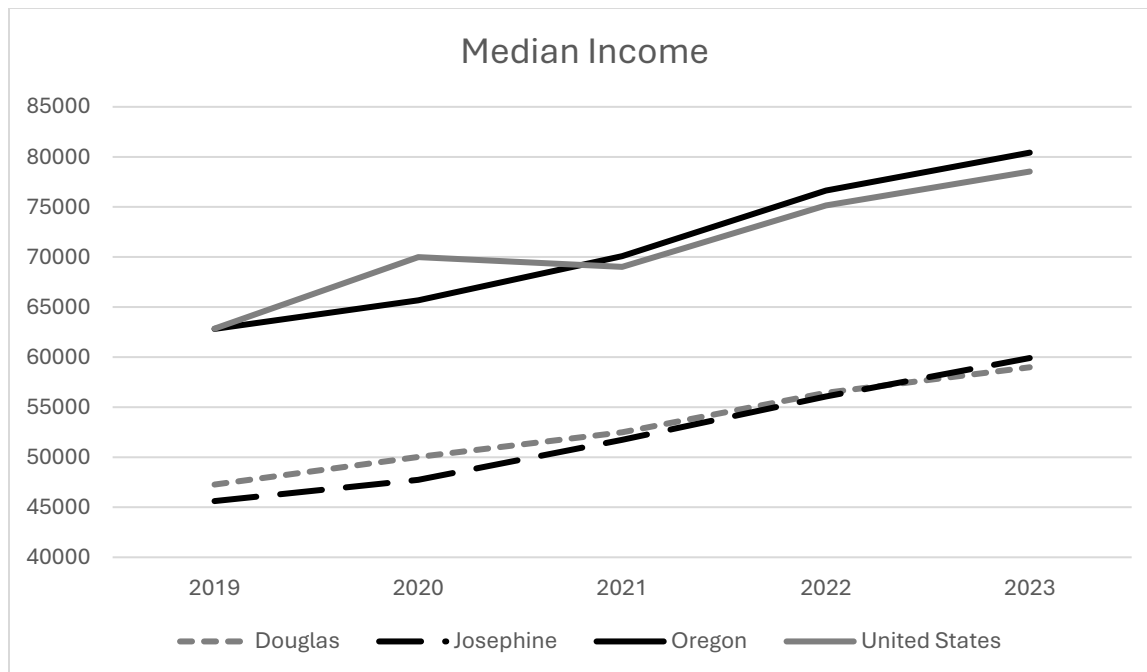
<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, five-year estimate, 2019-2023.

# 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 graph below shows median incomes for the two counties, the state and the nation over the past five years:<sup>135</sup>



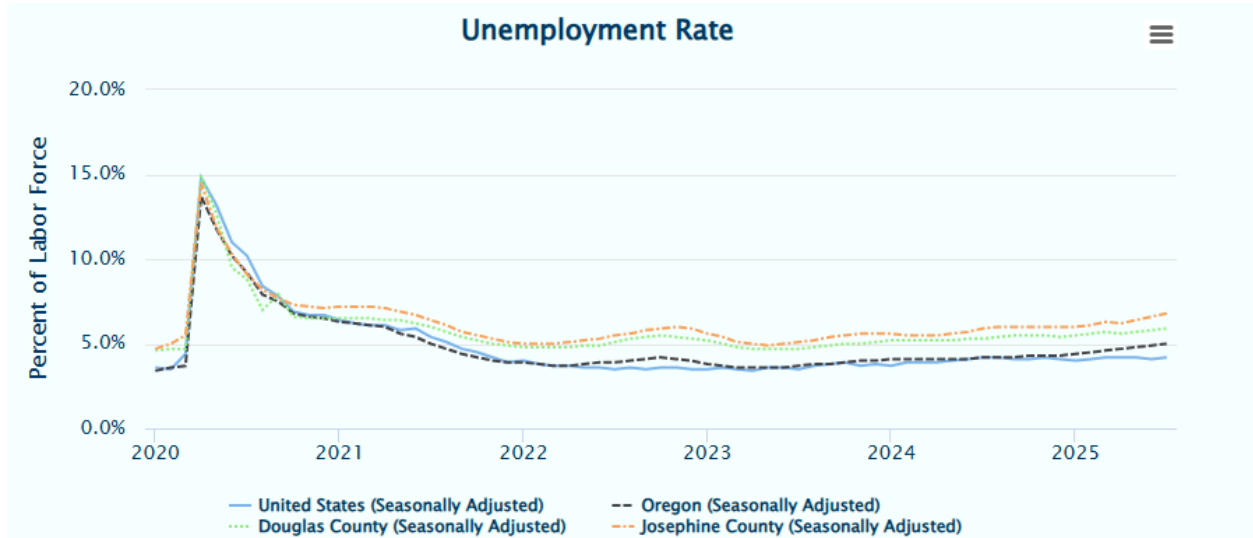
The disparity between the region's relatively low median income and state and national median incomes has been consistent. The good news for workers locally is that median incomes have increased by around 25% during this five-year period. But cumulative inflation for this period is 19.2%.<sup>136</sup> So while those in the workforce have generally been in a better economic position during this timeframe, those on fixed incomes, and those earning minimum wage are having an even harder time covering their expenses.

<sup>135</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, five-year estimates, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023.

<sup>136</sup> <https://www.usinflationcalculator.com/>

## 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 and a half years, as well as over the past year, ending July 2025.<sup>137</sup>



With a few exceptions, Douglas and Josephine County unemployment rates have remained above national and statewide rates throughout the past five years.<sup>138</sup>

### Monthly % Unemployment for the Past Year

Location	8/24	9/24	10/24	11/24	12/24	1/25	2/25	3/25	4/25	5/25	6/25	7/25
<b>US</b>	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.2
<b>Oregon</b>	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.7	4.8	4.8	4.8	5.0
<b>Douglas</b>	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.5	5.6	5.6	5.7	5.7	5.8	5.9
<b>Josephine</b>	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.1	6.3	6.2	6.4	6.6	6.8

This past year, unemployment has stayed relatively level in the US, but rates are rising statewide and regionally.<sup>139</sup> Douglas and Josephine County currently have over 5,000 individuals that are unemployed.<sup>140</sup>

<sup>137</sup> Oregon Employment Department Quality Info.org

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

## Summary

After a full recovery from loss of jobs that occurred during the Pandemic, unemployment is again growing in the region and state. At the same time, median income remains much lower locally than statewide or nationally. And while the inflation rate has improved in recent years, the current rate of 2.7% is still cutting into income gains. For residents who were previously struggling to get by, the situation is challenging, as prices for basics such as food and housing, which rose substantially a few years ago, continue to rise.



## 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). The table below provides the name of Douglas County service providers and the service they offer:

Name	Type of Service
Adapt Integrated Health Care	Behavioral Health, Addiction
HIV Alliance	HIV and addiction services
Options Counseling and Family Services	Behavioral Health and Family Strengthening
South River Community Health Center	Healthcare
AVIVA	Healthcare, Dental, Behavioral
Cow Creek Health and Wellness Clinics	Healthcare
Mercy Foundation	Youth Dental, Health Education
Lions Club	Vision, Hearing Aids
UCC Woolley Center	GED Prep, Basic Ed, ESL
Boys and Girls Club of the Umpqua Valley	Youth Development
School District Offices	Education and Related Services
Douglas Educational Service District	Education Support Services
OSU Extension	Adult Education, Youth Programs
South Coast Education Service District	Education Support Services
Family Relief Nursery	Family Strengthening
Peace at Home	Domestic Violence
Douglas C.A.R.E.S	Child Abuse
Family Development Center	Family Strengthening
UCAN Head Start/Early Head Start	Early Child Education, Family Strengthening
Preschool Promise	Early Child Education
UCAN Healthy Start	Family Strengthening
UCAN Nurse Home Visiting	Family Strengthening, Health
UCAN Healthy Families	Family Strengthening
UCAN WIC	Nutrition
UCAN Family Connects	Family Strengthening
Umpqua Health-New Day	Family Strengthening
Umpqua Community College	Post-Secondary Education
YMCA	Fitness, Health

<b>Name</b>	<b>Type of Service</b>
Habitat for Humanity	Housing
UCAN Affordable Housing	Housing
UCAN Housing/Homeless Services	Homelessness and Homeless Prevention Services
HADCO	Housing
NeighborWorks Umpqua	Housing, Financial Assist., Tax Assistance
Roseburg Dream Center	Homeless Services, Basic Needs
Housing First Umpqua	Homeless Services
Roseburg Rescue Mission	Shelter, Homeless Services
UCAN Gary Leif Navigation Center	Shelter, Homeless Services
Glide Revitalization	Services for Wildfire Victims
Salvation Army	Basic Needs
Samaritan Inn	Homeless Services, Shelter
Saint Vincent DePaul	Basic Needs
FARA	Youth Support, Basic Needs, Women's Support
UCAN Utility Assistance/Weatherization	Utility Assistance, Housing Rehab
UTrans	Public Transit
DHS	Child/Family/Senior/Disabled Services
VA	Veterans Healthcare/Veteran Services
Veteran's Service Office	Veterans Benefits
Lower Umpqua Hospital	Healthcare
Mercy Medical Center	Healthcare
Umpqua Health Newton Creek	Healthcare/Behavioral Health
CASA of Douglas County	Child Abuse
Legal Aid Services of Oregon	Legal
Oregon Department of Justice	Child Support
UCAN Money Management Program	Financial
Umpqua Valley disAbilities Network	Disability Services, Adult Literacy
Sunrise Enterprises	Disability Services
Community Living Case Management	Disability Services
Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation Office	Disability Services
Douglas County Senior Services	Senior Services
Oregon WorkSource Office	Employment
Community Kitchens	Food
Food Pantries	Food
UCAN Mobile Outpost	Food
UCAN Food Bank	Nutrition Ed
Umpqua Community Veg Education Program	Nutrition Ed

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

<b>Name</b>	<b>Type of Service</b>
Josephine County Health Department	WIC, Immunization, Clinic
Women's Crisis Support Team	Domestic Violence
DHS	Financial, Child Welfare, Disability, Seniors, Vocational Rehab
Southern Oregon Head Start	Early Childhood Education, Family Strengthening
Saint Vincent DePaul	Basic Needs
Salvation Army	Basic Needs
RVCOG Senior and Disabilities Services	Disability, Seniors
Siskiyou Community Health Center	Healthcare, Dental, Behavioral Health, Early Childhood Support
Planned Parenthood	Family Planning, HIV, Mental Health, STD Testing
JCT	Public Transit
Options of Southern Oregon	Mental Health, Addiction Treatment
Hearts With a Mission	Homeless Youth, Family Strengthening, Seniors, Foster Youth
Maslow Project	Basic Needs For Homeless Youth and Parents of School Age Children
Literacy Council of Josephine County	Adult Basic Education, ESL, Literacy
Oregon Law Center	Legal
Oregon WorkSource Office	Employment
OSU County Extension	Adult Education, Youth Activities
Josephine County Food Bank	Nutrition
Josephine County Kitchens	Food
Josephine County Pantries	Food
Illinois Valley Family Coalition	Basic Needs, Community Services
Illinois Valley Safe House Alliance	Domestic Violence
Illinois Valley Living Solutions	Homeless Services
Gospel Rescue Mission	Homeless Services
MINT	Homeless Services
Josephine Housing and Community Development Council	Affordable Housing, Rent Assistance
Family Solutions	Child Mental Health, Family Strengthening
Boys and Girls Club of Rogue Valley	Youth Development
Resolve	Conflict Resolution
Adapt Integrated Health Services	Substance Abuse, Behavioral Health
HIV Alliance	HIV and addiction services
UCAN Housing and Homeless	Homeless/Housing Services

<b>Name</b>	<b>Type of Service</b>
UCAN Utility Assistance/Weatherization	Utility Assistance/Home Rehab
School Districts	Education
Southern Oregon Education Service District	Education-Related
Rogue Community College	Post-Secondary Education, Adult Basic Ed, GED Prep, ESL
Women's Health Center of Southern Oregon	Healthcare
Family Nurturing Center	Family Strengthening
OnTrack	Substance Abuse
CASA of Josephine County	Child Abuse
Healthy U	Children/Parent Services
Kairos	Youth Mental Health
Habitat for Humanity	Housing
Asante Three Rivers Medical Center	Healthcare
Consumer Credit Counseling Of Southern Oregon	Financial

## Top Needs/Top Gaps

In looking at UCAN's last official Community Needs Assessment prepared in 2022, one major change has occurred. At that time, inflation was at levels not seen for many decades. Inflation rates have come down substantially since that time. However, inflation still continues to increase prices. So the cost of everything, from food to utilities to housing has continued to increase. In some cases, as with housing and utilities, costs have increased at rates in excess of overall inflation.<sup>141</sup>

Many of the areas identified as "top needs" in 2022 remain the same. Housing and utility costs are further out of reach of low-income households. Far too many households, particularly those with children are now living without adequate shelter. Though the region has seen an increase in the number of available childcare slots, both counties remain childcare deserts, and more rural portions of both counties have severe shortages of available childcare. Locally high rates of child abuse and children in foster care continue to indicate the need for additional family strengthening services.

Presently, Oregon overall economy is experiencing a slow but steady increase in the rate of unemployment. Economic growth in the State is slowing. The State's Chief Economist is currently predicting a 25% chance of the State's entering a recession in the near future.<sup>142</sup> This state of the economy does not bode well for low-income residents.

The region does have many service providers that can address these needs. But recent and upcoming changes in federal funding raise doubts concerning the ability of these providers to maintain current service levels, let alone increase them to address the most pressing needs. With major cuts already announced for Medicaid and food stamp benefits, the State's Chief Financial Officer estimates that together with other cuts already announced by the federal government, the State is facing a loss of \$15 billion in funding over time.<sup>143</sup> Economists predict that in the next two years alone, the State will lose almost \$900 million in revenues.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> Oregon Department of Energy, Electricity Rate Increase Drivers, <https://energyinfo.oregon.gov/electricity-rate-increase-drivers>; Oregon Housing and Community Services Department, State of the State's Housing Report, <https://www.oregon.gov/ohcs/about-us/pages/state-of-the-state-housing.aspx>

<sup>142</sup> Alex Baumhardt, Oregon Economy Slows, Will Take \$888 Million Revenue Hit in Next Two Years From Trump Budget, Oregon Capital Chronicle, August 27, 2025.

<sup>143</sup> Shaanth Nanguneri, Oregon Plans for More SNAP Error Oversight After New Federal Aid Restrictions, Oregon Capital Chronicle, August 11, 2025.

<sup>144</sup> Alex Baumhardt, Oregon Economy Slows, Will Take \$888 Million Revenue Hit in Next Two Years From Trump Budget, Oregon Capital Chronicle, August 27, 2025.

Many are now saying that the State will face a major decision in the upcoming year. With far less federal funding, the State could increase taxes. Or, it will need to cut funding for services.<sup>145</sup> The decision the State makes will ultimately determine how effectively local providers are able to address the needs noted above.

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<sup>145</sup> Dirk VanderHart, Federal Tax Cuts Could Blow a \$373 Million Hole in Oregon's New Budget, Economists Say, Oregon Public Broadcasting, August 27, 2025.