

A Graphic View of Poverty in Oregon

A View of the State of Working Oregon

It is well known that the official definition of poverty, based on a formula developed in the early 1960s, undercounts the number of people struggling to make ends meet.

But even under this inadequate definition, poverty engulfs too many Oregonians and is getting worse.

Poverty Has Been Rising Since Recession Struck



Note: Illustration of the recession is approximate. According to the National Bureau of Economic Research, the recession officially began in December 2007 and ended in June 2009.
Source: OCPP analysis of American Community Survey data

Since the start of the recession, Oregon's poverty rate has risen every year.

In 2007, the year prior to the recession, 12.9 percent of Oregonians lived below the poverty line. By 2011, the poverty rate reached 17.5 percent.

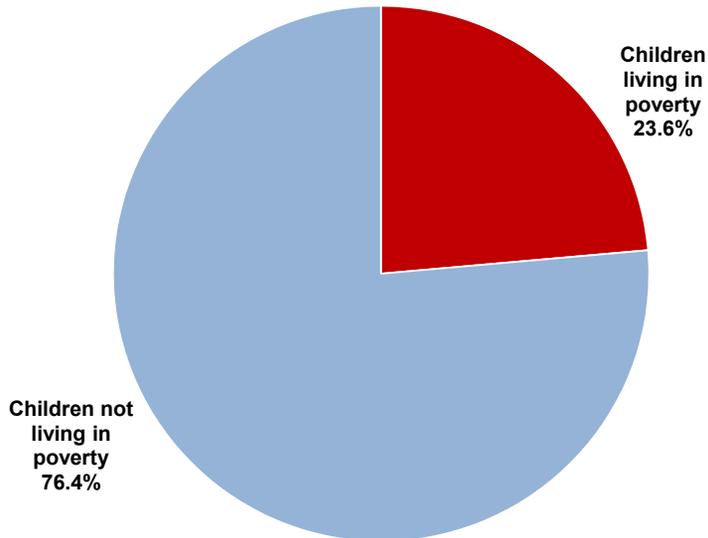
During that period, nearly 190,000 more Oregonians fell below the poverty line. That is like adding a city with a population larger than Salem to the ranks of the poor.

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A View of the State of Working Oregon is a series of occasional OCPP fact sheets published to help explain Oregon's economy from the perspective of working families.

Almost 1 in 4 Oregon Children Live in Poverty

(2011 poverty rate for Oregon population under 18)



In 2011, nearly one in four Oregon children (23.6 percent) lived in poverty.

In 2007, prior to the start of the recession, Oregon's child poverty rate (16.9 percent) trailed the national average.

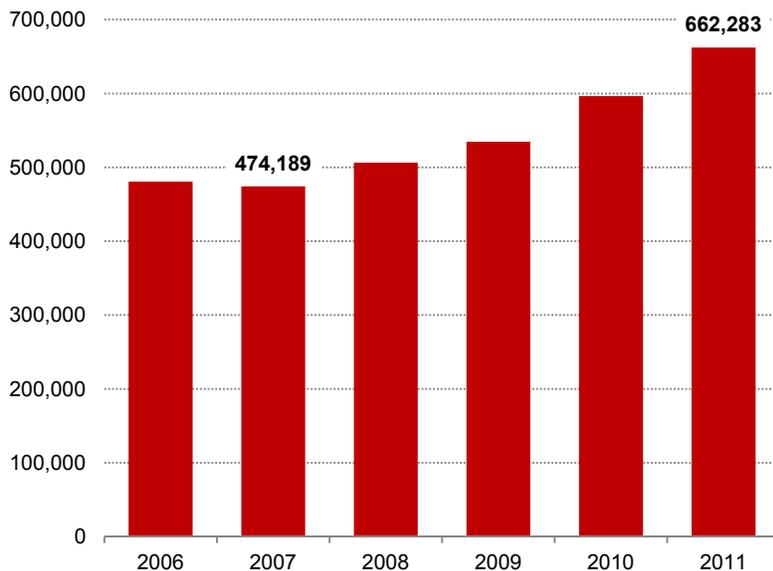
Starting in 2008 and continuing through 2011, Oregon's child poverty rate has been no different than the national average.

Source: OCPP analysis of American Community Survey data

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About 660,000 Oregonians Living in Poverty

(Total number of Oregonians estimated to be in poverty)



In 2011, about 660,000 Oregonians lived below the federal poverty threshold.

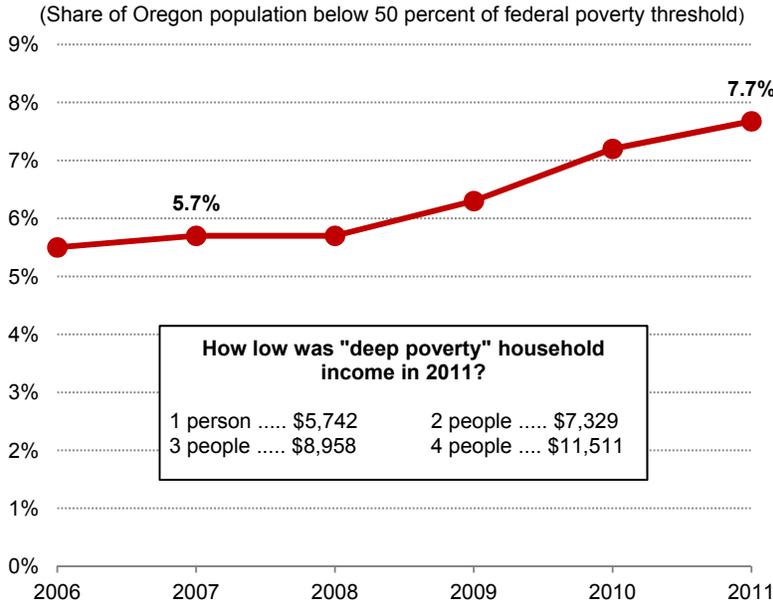
To put that total in perspective, the number of officially poor Oregonians is more than *twice* the population of Oregon's second and third largest cities, Eugene and Salem, combined (313,186).

If poverty were a city in Oregon, it would be the state's second biggest city.

Source: OCPP analysis of American Community Survey data

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Share of Oregonians in "Deep Poverty" Increases



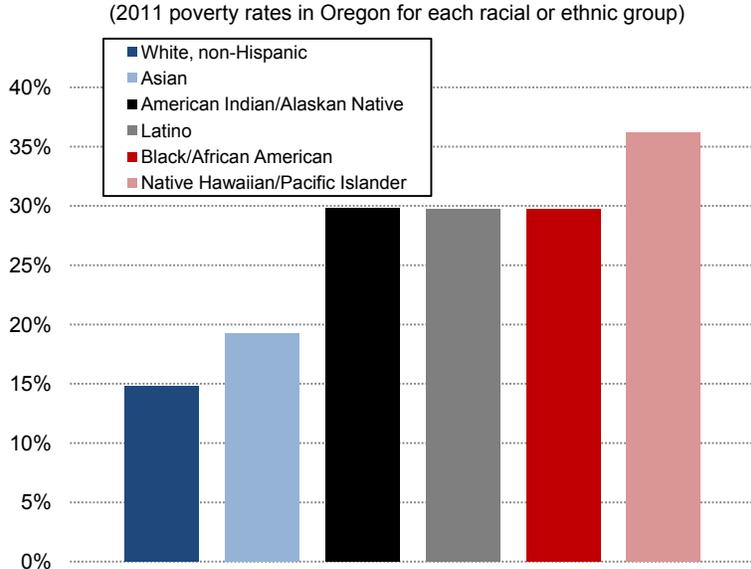
“Deep poverty” — households with income at less than half of the federal poverty threshold — is also on the rise. In 2007, 5.7 percent of Oregonians lived in deep poverty. By 2011, that share had grown to 7.7 percent.

How deep is deep poverty? A family of three would have had to earn less than \$8,958 in 2011 to meet the definition of living in deep poverty.

Source: OCPP analysis of American Community Survey data

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Minority Groups Face Higher Poverty Rates



Note: Differences between the poverty rate for non-Hispanic whites and the rates for all other groups are statistically significant at a 90% confidence level.
Source: OCPP analysis of American Community Survey data

As bad as poverty is for Oregon as a whole, it’s worse for Oregonians of color.

In 2011, the poverty rate for non-Hispanic whites in Oregon was 14.8 percent. By contrast, it was 19.2 percent for Asians, 29.8 percent for Native Americans, 29.8 percent for Latinos, 29.7 percent for African Americans and 36.2 percent for Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islanders.

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