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New report with county data shows pandemic-era impacts

Data show statewide decreases in life expectancy and mitigating effect of federal stimulus on child poverty rates

ROSEBURG, Ore. — Today’s release of [Oregon by the Numbers 2024](#) provides fuller insight into Covid-19’s toll on the lives and livelihoods of Oregonians. While life expectancy decreased statewide, child tax credits and other stimulus measures appear to have supported declines in child poverty rates. Each year, The Ford Family Foundation and Oregon State University (OSU) Extension Service compile and translate the most current data for all 36 counties in ways that community decision makers can easily use.

“As the most recent data is from 2022, we continue to see trends reflecting our state’s experience of the pandemic,” said Dr. Kasi Allen, the director of learning and knowledge management for the Foundation. “Beyond the loss of too many lives, there is an academic trend that is deeply troubling for the future of Oregon. The majority of our students are not reaching grade-level benchmarks in third grade reading and fifth grade math. It is incumbent on all of us—not just teachers—to support the kids in our lives so that they can be the readers and problem solvers we need them to be.”

Job growth rebounded dramatically in urban Oregon and with net migration continuing to rise—especially in rural recreation destinations across the state—the report shows upward pressure on rent costs in every county except Harney. Despite marginal increases in the number of child care slots available statewide, Oregon remains a child care desert, with all counties offering far below the ratio of 1 slot for every 3 children under the age of 13.



While there are no changes to the data measures in the 2024 edition, the production team changed the Developed and Cultivated Land measure to Developed Land alone and also revisited how we define rural population by county.

The 2024 edition also shares findings from a national research project conducted by PACE, or Philanthropy for Active Civic Engagement, called the Civic Language Perceptions Project. The data focuses on how civic language and words like “democracy,” “freedom” and “service” unite, divide and motivate voters in the United States—with a special feature on words that resonated most with rural residents.

“Both *Oregon by the Numbers* and the research from PACE help us see better together than we can apart,” said Kara Inae Carlisle, president and CEO of The Ford Family Foundation. “This data helps us understand where we’ve made progress and where we need to galvanize. It is critical all of Oregon see all of Oregon so that we can take action for our children and communities.”

Oregon by the Numbers contains county-level profiles and in-depth reports on the various measures—each with rankings that allow readers to see how their county compares with the rest of the state—and is primed to support community action.

In even years, the report is printed and automatically mailed to all Oregon U.S. and state elected representatives, county commissioners, college presidents, local libraries and other public-serving individuals and entities. Printed copies are available for free (while supplies last) to residents of Oregon and Siskiyou County, Calif., and anyone can [download the complete findings here](#).

About The Ford Family Foundation

The Ford Family Foundation believes in the power of rural communities. It is a private, nonprofit foundation proudly headquartered in Roseburg, Oregon, serving rural Oregon and Siskiyou County, California. Its investments through grants, scholarships and community building create the conditions so that children have the family, educational and community supports they need to succeed in life. www.tfff.org

General media inquiries

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