

Homelessness in Rural Polk County Local Data, Updated 9/4/23

Note: "Rural Polk County" refers to the area west of Highway 51. This includes the communities of Dallas, Falls City, Grand Ronde, Independence, Monmouth and Willamina.

Rents are high; vacancies are low

- \$23.94 is the hourly wage a worker would need to make in order to afford a two-bedroom apartment in Polk County at the fair market rent of \$1,245. At minimum wage, an individual would need 1.7 full time jobs to afford an apartment.
(National Low Income Housing Coalition's 2023 report: https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/oor/Oregon_2023_OOR.pdf)
- \$1,394 is the average monthly rent for a 2-bedroom unit available for rent in rural Polk County, in July-Aug of 2023.
(West Valley Housing Authority)
- 30.9% of Dallas rental households are "severely rent burdened" (2022), meaning they are paying more than 50% of their household income on rent + utilities. Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) notifies any community with a population of over 10,000 that is over 25% severely rent burdened. Dallas (as well as Independence at 28% and Monmouth at 33%) is above that mark.
(OHCS 2022 report: https://www.oregon.gov/lcd/UP/Documents/Annual_Severe_Rent_Burden_Announcement.pdf)
- Vacancy rates are low across Polk County and are less than 1% in Dallas.
(City of Dallas 2019 Housing Needs Analysis)

Families and individuals are struggling to stay housed

- 634 households in rural Polk County received direct financial assistance such as rent and/or utilities assistance (totaling \$767,135) through Polk County Family & Community Outreach (FCO) in the 2022-23 fiscal year to help them stay housed.
(Polk County Family & Community Outreach, 2022-23)

Families and individuals are experiencing homelessness here

- 60 individuals (as of 8/11/23) on the By-Name List are experiencing Literal Homelessness in rural Polk County. 21 of these people are single and the others are in families (including 28 children). This list is maintained by the Homeless Outreach & Prevention Team at Polk County FCO, and they work in collaboration with partners across the county to provide resources.
(Polk County Family & Community Outreach)
- 91 unsheltered individuals were interviewed in rural Polk County in the 2023 Point-in-Time Count. 31 of them were staying in Dallas at the time. 84% of the unsheltered individuals had a tie to the community in which they were staying at the time.
(PATHS: <https://pc-paths.com/local-data/#pit-count>)
- 213 students (on average per school year 2018-2022 in rural Polk County) experienced homelessness and were served by the McKinney-Vento program. 191 of them were with their families and 22 of them were unaccompanied youth. In the 2021-22 school year, 44 of these students were in the Dallas School District. In the 2022-23 school year, 74 students in the Dallas School District experienced homelessness.
(Oregon Department of Education: <https://www.oregon.gov/ode/schools-and-districts/grants/esea/mckinney-ventos/pages/default.aspx>)
- 90 households from rural Polk County are in Coordinated Entry (entered 7/1/22-6/30/23). Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency (MWVCAA) supports the process which includes intake interviews and then builds a list prioritized according to needs and vulnerabilities. Out of the 90 households, 63 are from Dallas; 55 are experiencing unsheltered homelessness; 27 are families with minor children.
(Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency, Coordinated Entry data)
- 183 individuals stayed at the Polk Warming Centers in the Nov-March 2022-23 warming season. In the 2021-22 season, Polk Warming Centers were open 81 nights, served 44 unique guests, and provided 371 nights of shelter. In the 2022-23 season, Polk Warming Centers were open 106 nights, served 183 unique guests, and provided 1,060 nights of shelter.
(Polk Warming Centers: <https://polkwarming.weebly.com/>)

Check out the website for Polk County PATHS (Partners Aligned Toward Housing Solutions) for more information: <https://pc-paths.com/>

