



# Poverty And Food Needs

## Cerro Gordo County, Iowa

### Income and Poverty

#### Poverty Status

The Census Bureau determines poverty status for all people except those institutionalized, in military group quarters, in college dormitories, and/or unrelated individuals under 15 years old based on income and poverty guidelines. If the total income of a person's family is less than the threshold appropriate for that family size, that person, as well as every member of his/her family, is considered poor.

	Cerro Gordo County		State	
	n	%	n	%
Population for whom poverty status determined (2000)	45,236	--	2,824,435	--
Population at less than 100% poverty	3,866	8.5	258,008	9.1
Children 4 or younger	367	13.1	24,705	13.4
Children 5 to 17	651	8.0	42,056	10.4
Persons 65 or older	667	8.6	31,118	7.6
Population at 100% to 129% poverty	2,310	5.1	124,926	4.4
Children 4 or younger	136	4.8	11,163	6.0
Children 5 to 17	421	5.2	21,200	5.2
Persons 65 or older	599	7.8	25,761	4.5
Population at 130% to 184% poverty	5,354	11.8	280,219	9.9
Children 4 or younger	446	15.9	24,862	13.5
Children 5 to 17	1,160	14.3	52,053	12.8
Persons 65 or older	1,179	15.3	52,376	12.5

#### Income Distribution

Household income data are derived from the US Census Bureau's 1990 and 2000 census. These data are pre-tax and include all sources of income (e.g., wages/salaries, Social Security, public assistance, etc.). Median household income is that level of income for which half of the households reported a higher income level and half reported a lower income level. These data are not adjusted for inflation.

	Cerro Gordo County				State	
	1989		1999		1989	1999
	n	%	n	%	%	%
Total Households	19,044	100.0	19,354	100.0	100.0	100.0
with Incomes...						
Less than \$15,000	5,134	27.0	3,326	17.2	26.7	14.9
\$15,000 to \$34,999	7,899	41.5	6,118	31.6	39.1	29.1
\$35,000 to \$59,999	4,519	23.7	5,461	28.2	24.5	29.2
\$60,000 or more	1,492	7.8	3,608	18.7	9.6	26.9
Median Household Income	\$25,116		\$35,867		\$26,229	\$39,469



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# Food Accessibility

## Grocery and Convenience Stores

The number of food retailing establishments with employees are reported by the U.S. Census Bureau's *County Business Patterns*. Grocery stores are firms that retail a general line of food, including fresh fruits and vegetables, fresh and prepared meats, fish and poultry, and frozen and canned goods. Convenience stores offer a limited line of products that generally includes milk, bread, soda and snacks.



		2001	
Type of Store		Estimated Number of Firms	Estimated # of Residents Served
Cerro Gordo County	Grocery Stores	8	5,806
	Convenience Stores	30	1,548
	Total	38	1,222
Iowa	Grocery Stores	705	4,151
	Convenience Stores	1,704	1,717
	Total	2,409	1,215

Farmers' markets provide Iowans opportunities for fresh produce that is locally produced. Seniors with limited incomes and families who participate in the WIC program are eligible to receive coupons to purchase fresh produce at farmers' markets.

The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship reported 3 farmers' markets in Cerro Gordo County in 2003.

## Vehicle Accessibility

For those living in small towns and rural areas where public transportation is seldom available, access to a vehicle is important for an active life-style. Most rural residents have a personal car. However, rural households lacking their own vehicle have limited access to grocery stores and other consumer goods. These data on the number of households with no vehicle available are taken from the *U.S. Census Bureau's 2000 census*.

	Cerro Gordo County	Iowa
Households (2000)		
With no vehicle available	1,674	73,684
As a % of total households	8.6	6.4

## Food-Related Health Issues

Limited household income can hinder access to nutritious foods, which in turn may result in health issues. Data on the percent of the population that is overweight and obese are synthetic estimates based on the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) calculated by Iowa's *State Center for Health Statistics*. Overweight is defined as Body Mass Index (BMI)  $\geq 25.0$  and  $< 30.0$ . Obesity is defined as BMI  $\geq 30.0$ . The Body Mass Index is a person's body weight in kilograms divided by their height in meters squared. Diabetes is more common among populations with low incomes than those with higher incomes. The diabetes hospitalization figures are for Type II, adult onset diabetes and were provided by the *Iowa Hospital Association*. Rates are per 1,000 people aged 19 or older.



	Cerro Gordo County	State
Estimated Percent Overweight (2002)	38.3	38.3
Estimated Percent Obese (2002)	23.2	22.9
Number of Hospitalizations from Diabetes (2000)	533	37,587
Number per 1,000 adults	15.7	17.9

# Food Assistance Programs

## Program Participation

The monthly average number of food stamp and Family Investment Program (FIP) recipients were provided by the *Iowa Department of Human Services*. The numbers for Food Stamp activity are for the fiscal years noted; FIP are for the calendar year. Numbers of students eligible for free and reduced-price school meals were provided by the *Iowa Department of Education*, as were the numbers of students enrolled. The years are the academic years (i.e., 2000 is for the 2000-2001 school year).

	Cerro Gordo County		State	
	2000	2003	2000	2003
Avg. Monthly Food Stamp Recipients	2,026	2,318	124,384	149,991
As percent of total population	4.4	5.1	4.3	5.1
Average monthly benefit per recipient (\$)	63	78	67	80
Avg. Monthly Family Investment Program (FIP) Recipients	619	611	51,842	51,827
As percent of total population	1.3	1.4	1.8	1.8
Average monthly benefit per recipient (\$)	120	124	123	128
Students Eligible for...				
Free School Meal Program	1,354	1,360	93,823	107,324
As percent of total enrollment	19.5	20.5	19.1	22.3
Reduced Price School Meal Program	743	529	37,754	36,907
As percent of total enrollment	10.7	8.0	7.7	7.7

\*Contact your local WIC agency for average monthly WIC participation (<http://www.idph.state.ia.us/common/pdf/wic/wicmap.pdf>)

## Program Eligibility

**FOOD STAMP PROGRAM** To receive food stamps, households must meet three financial criteria. 1) A household's gross income before taxes in the previous month must be at or below 130 percent of the poverty line. Households headed by someone over the age of 60 are exempt from this test (although they must still pass the net income test). 2) A household must have a net monthly income at or below the poverty line. 3) All net-income-eligible households with assets less than \$2,000 qualify for the program (\$3,000 for households headed by someone over age 60). The value of a vehicle above \$4,650 (in 2003) is also considered an asset unless it is used for work or for the transportation of disabled persons. The value of a home is not considered an asset. Households participating in the Family Investment Program (FIP), or households where all members receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI), are categorically eligible for food stamps and do not have to meet these three tests.

**FAMILY INVESTMENT PROGRAM (FIP)** Iowa's Family Investment Program provides cash assistance to needy families with dependent children. Eligibility requirements are relatively complex due to the large number of factors involved but include such things as income, resources (e.g., household goods, motor vehicles, etc.), and an interview process. For more detailed information, see <http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/FinancialHealthandWorkSupports/financialassistance.asp>

**SCHOOL MEALS** Children from families with incomes at or below 130 percent of the poverty level are eligible for free lunches and breakfasts. Children from families with incomes between 130 percent and 185 percent of the poverty level are eligible for reduced-price lunches and breakfasts, for which no more than 40 cents may be charged. While virtually all schools offer lunch, a large number of schools do not offer breakfast.

### Federal Poverty Income Guidelines , 2004

Household Size	Federal Poverty Guideline (\$)		
	100%	130%	185%
1	9,310	12,103	17,224
2	12,490	16,237	23,107
3	15,670	20,371	28,990
4	18,850	24,505	34,873
5	22,030	28,639	40,756
6	25,210	32,773	46,639

Source: USDA Food and Nutrition Service.  
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cga/Federal-Register/2004/032904-b.pdf>

# Demographic Profile

## Age Distribution by Race and Ethnicity

Statistics on age, race and Hispanic origin are taken from the *U.S. Census Bureau* and the 2000 census. Although respondents had the option of identifying themselves in more than one racial category in 2000, only those respondents who identified themselves in a single racial category are highlighted in the table below. NOTE: The Census Bureau defines Hispanic as an ethnicity not a race; therefore individuals of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

	Total	19 Years or Younger			20 to 44 Years			45 to 64 Years			65 Years or Older		
		Cerro Gordo County		State	Cerro Gordo County		State	Cerro Gordo County		State	Cerro Gordo County		State
		n	%	%	n	%	%	n	%	%	n	%	%
Total Population (2000)	46,447	12,515	26.9	28.3	14,951	32.2	34.6	10,762	23.2	22.2	8,219	17.7	14.9
White	44,711	11,673	26.1	27.4	14,341	32.1	34.1	10,569	23.6	22.8	8,128	18.2	15.6
Black	373	171	45.8	39.9	139	37.3	39.3	43	11.5	14.9	20	5.4	5.9
American Indian	135	79	58.5	39.1	43	31.9	41.3	11	8.1	16.1	2	1.5	3.5
Asian/Pacific Islander	333	142	42.6	32.1	125	37.5	49.2	49	14.7	15.1	17	5.1	3.6
Other	410	176	42.9	42.9	157	38.3	46.7	51	12.4	8.8	26	6.3	1.6
Hispanic (of any race)	1,291	578	44.8	44.0	441	34.2	43.3	153	11.9	9.8	119	9.2	2.9

## Education

Education is reported for the adult population after their education is largely complete (25 years of age or older). These numbers are provided by the *U.S. Census Bureau*.

	Cerro Gordo County		State	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Population 25 Years or Older	30,988	31,215	1,776,798	1,895,856
Percent with...				
Less than 12 years school	18.7	12.7	19.9	13.9
High school graduate	34.8	33.3	38.5	36.1
Less than 4 years college	30.9	33.7	24.7	28.8
4 or more years college	15.5	20.3	16.9	21.2

For more information about these and other data, please visit the web site of the Office of Social and Economic Trends Analysis: <http://www.seta.iastate.edu>

## Employment

The labor force in an area consists of all persons aged 16 or older who either are currently employed or actively seeking work. The employment rate is calculated by dividing the number employed by the civilian labor force. Labor force and employment rate figures are provided by *Iowa Workforce Development*.

	1997	2003
<b>Total Civilian Labor Force</b>		
Cerro Gordo County	26,690	26,500
State	1,579,400	1,612,300
<b>Employment Rate (%)</b>		
Cerro Gordo County	96.8	96.2
State	96.7	95.5

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For more information on these and other topics, please visit the Iowa Food Insecurity Program Web site at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/hunger>