

Number of Affluent Households in Multnomah County Higher Than Ever

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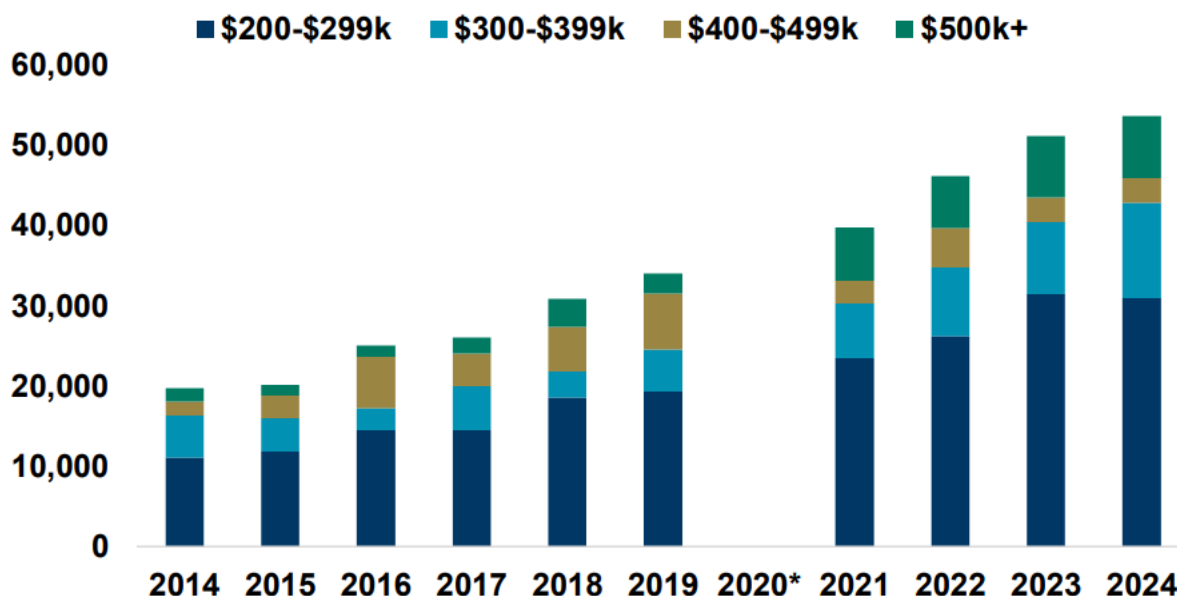
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Apparently high-income households are not fleeing Multnomah County, according to U.S. Census Bureau data provided by the Oregon Employment Department. In fact, the number of households with incomes over \$500,000 tripled from 2019 to 2024, the last year for which data is available. However, high-income households may begin to evade the Preschool for All and Metro Housing Supports taxes, requiring better collection enforcement.

The Preschool for All and Metro Housing Supports taxes said to be driving the wealthy out of the County passed easily in 2020. The number of high-income households in the County has steadily increased, seeming unaffected by the implementation of these measures.

Number of High-Income Households in Multnomah County, 2014-2024



Source: Oregon Employment Department, U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, one-year microdata estimates, IPUMS USA.

***Note:** Data unavailable for 2020, due to the impact of Covid on the response rate to the survey

The numbers underlying this graph appear below. They jump around a little, for two reasons. First, household incomes at the top tend to vary, due to the importance of their irregular capital gains incomes compared to steadier wage and salary figures. Second, sample sizes for these categories are relatively small, reducing the precision of the numbers. Together these households represent approximately the top 15% of households in one populous County. For reference, half the households in Multnomah County had incomes of \$90,423 or less in 2024.¹

Number of High-Income Households by Group by Annual Income Categories, Multnomah County, 2014-2023

Year	\$200,000-\$299,999	\$300,000-\$399,999	\$400,000-\$499,999	\$500,00 and up
2014	11,107	5,242	1,745	1,677
2015	11,889	4,150	2,814	1,338
2016	14,534	2,690	6,470	1,354
2017	14,485	5,531	4,061	1,963
2018	18,573	3,223	5,572	3,486
2019	19,294	5,303	6,939	2,541
2020	*	*	*	*
2021	23,508	6,813	2,790	6,661
2022	26,266	8,564	4,880	6,488
2023	31,455	9,030	3,015	7,683
2024	30,951	11,930	3,077	7,695

* Data unavailable for 2020, due to the impact of Covid on the response rate to the survey.

Source: Oregon Employment Department, U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2024 American Community Survey 1-year Public Use Microdata Sample.

One concern for the future of our local preschool and housing programs, though, may be the rise of tax evasion and avoidance by the 5%, documented by UC Berkeley economists Emmanuel Saez and Gabriel Zucman.² They describe the rise as facilitated by the lack of third-party reporting of income sources concentrated at the top, loosened and unenforced laws, the growth of the tax planning industry dedicated to assisting the wealthy, and diminished capacity at the IRS.

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) Program, SAIPE Interactive Tool, accessed 5/5/26, https://www.census.gov/datatools/demo/saipe/#/?s_measures=mhi&s_state=41&s_county=41051&s_geography=county

² Saez, Emmanuel and Gabriel Zucman. The Triumph of Injustice: How the Rich Dodge Taxes and How to Make Them Pay. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2019.