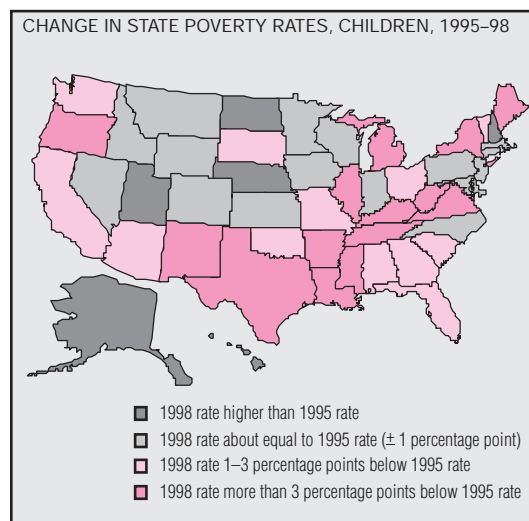
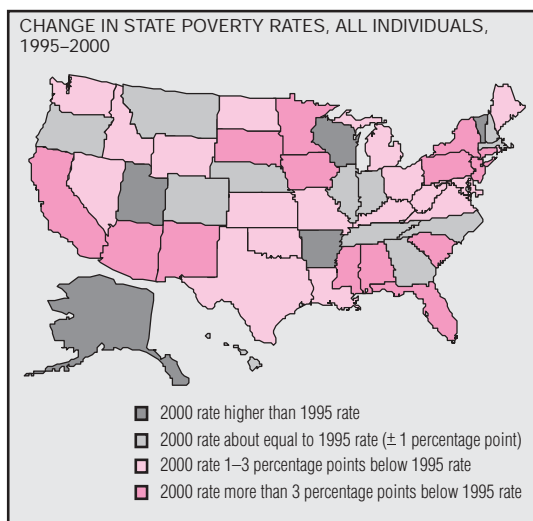
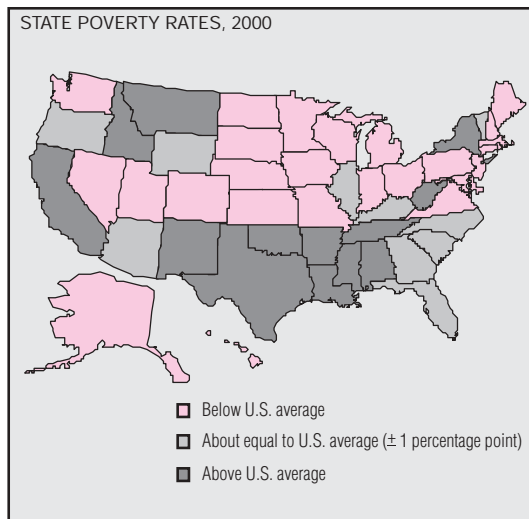
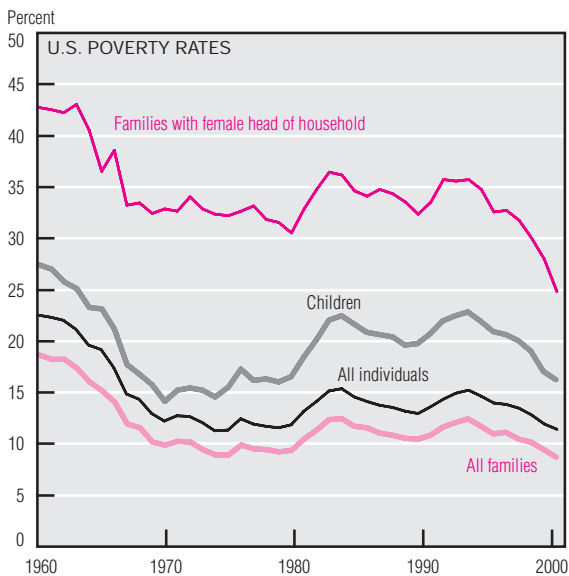


Poverty



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

Overall U.S. poverty rates for both individuals and families fell again in 2001. At 11.3%, the rate for individuals is the lowest since 1974. The family poverty rate of 8.6% is the lowest since the Census Bureau began calculating it in 1959.

Some groups continue to experience disproportionately high poverty rates. The rate for children (16.8%) is about 50% higher than the rate for individuals. Households headed by females are nearly three times more likely to live in poverty than families in general.

Poverty rates tend to be near or above the national average in the south, and below average in the north. The latest available data show that the states with the highest poverty rates are Arkansas (17.8%), Louisiana (17.3%), and New Mexico (16.8%). Poverty rates are lowest in New Hampshire (5.2%), Minnesota (6.0%), and Connecticut (6.6%).

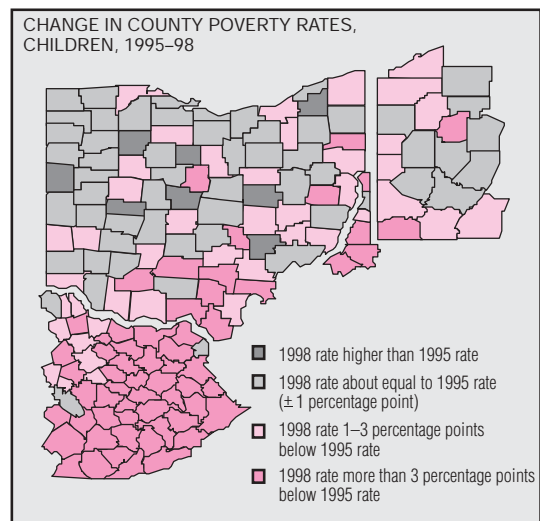
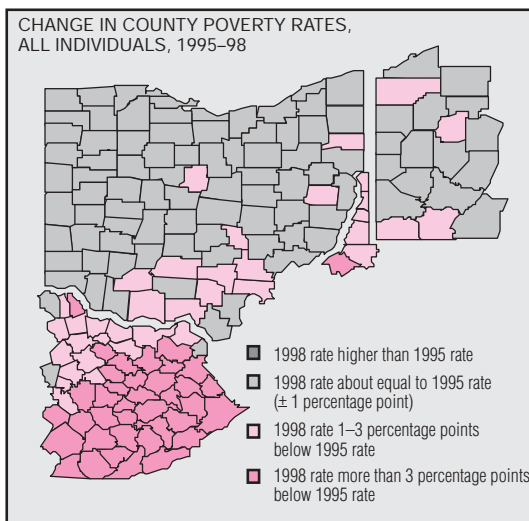
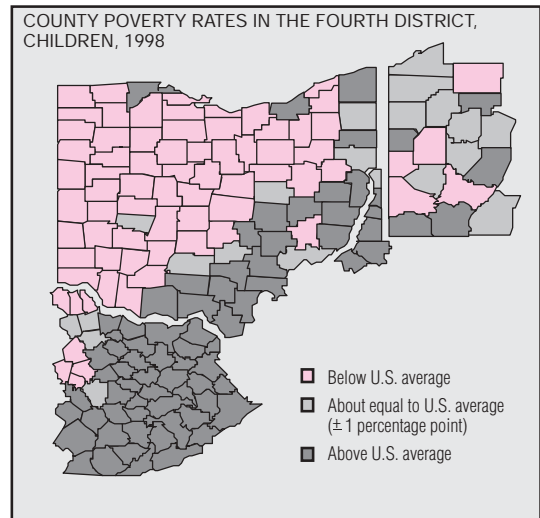
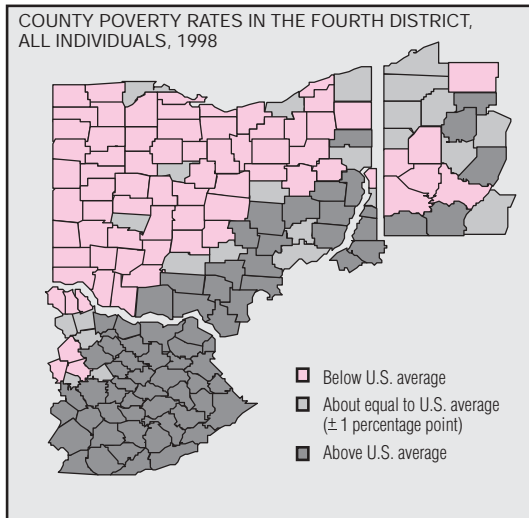
The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reauthorization Act of 1996 made sweeping welfare reforms: the introduction of time limits for welfare benefits, the removal of barriers to work for poor

adults—especially single mothers with children—and the devolution of control over welfare spending to the states. Since 1995, states have made notable progress in reducing poverty. With the exception of Arkansas, the only states where poverty rates have increased since 1995 are those with the lowest 1995 rates; nevertheless, their rates remained significantly below the national average in 2000.

The 1996 welfare reforms focused principally on improving impoverished children's quality of life. Not surprisingly, states made substantial

(continued on next page)

Poverty (cont.)



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

progress in lowering children's poverty rates from 1995 to 1998 (the latest year for which poverty data for children are available). As with general poverty rates, the states where children's rates were lowest in 1995—Alaska, New Hampshire, and Utah—posted increases but still remained substantially below U.S. poverty rates for children in 1998.

Within the Fourth District, poverty is concentrated around the Appalachian region—the southeast corner of Ohio, the eastern part of Kentucky, and most of the West Virginia

panhandle. These areas' poverty rates exceeded the U.S. average in 1998 (the last year for which data are available at the county level). Within the District, the poverty rate was highest in Owsley County, KY (35.2%), and lowest in Delaware County, OH (4.6%). Child poverty rates in Fourth District counties follow geographic patterns very similar to those of overall poverty. In Cuyahoga County and Lucas County, the centers of the Cleveland-Lorain-Elyria and Toledo metropolitan statistical areas, however, children's rates are substantially higher than the national average

despite general-population poverty rates about equal to U.S. averages.

The Fourth District's states have had varying success in lowering poverty. Although Kentucky has made significant improvement, rates in Ohio and Pennsylvania remained relatively stable from 1995 to 1998. The concerted efforts of Fourth District states to improve children's living standards (a goal perennially set forth in state budgets) have been more successful than their attempts to lower poverty rates in general, but several Ohio counties saw child poverty rates rise between 1995 and 1998.