

# The Dependents of Workers: Selected Data on Numbers and Types

by MARVIN S. BLOOM\*

*From time to time the Bulletin carries reports on operations in the five States that supplement the unemployment insurance benefit with a small allowance for dependents of beneficiaries. This article discusses sources from which data on the dependents of wage earners can be obtained and the use of such information in estimating the extent to which inclusion of dependents' allowances affects the costs of an unemployment insurance program.*

FIVE State unemployment insurance laws now include, and several State legislatures are considering proposals for, dependents' allowances. To determine which dependents should be covered, how many claimants would be affected by such allowances, and the estimated cost, the States need information on the number and types of claimants' dependents. This information is not readily available for States that do not provide dependents' allowances, and the States with such provisions lack important data with respect to the types of dependents not covered by the State law.

Fortunately, useful estimates may be derived from three sources: (1) the decennial censuses of the United States; (2) special studies of claimants' dependents that have been made in a few States; and (3) data from actual operations of the provisions in the five States. Selected data from these sources are presented below, with some recommendations for their use in cost analysis.

## Census Data

For each 100 workers in employment covered by old-age and survivors insurance in March 1940, there were 42 dependent wives and 63 dependent children, or 105 "primary"

dependents.<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of the analysis, a dependent wife is defined as a wife, not in the labor force, of a man in the labor force; a dependent child, as an unmarried child under 18, not in the labor force and not necessarily the child of the labor-force member but a member of a family with a head in the labor force. The ratio of 1.05 primary dependents per labor-force member in covered employment is somewhat smaller than the ratio of 1.13 primary dependents per labor-force member in noncovered employment. The difference is attributable to the larger proportion of noncovered workers in rural areas, where the ratio of dependents to workers is higher than in urban areas.

No exactly comparable data are available on dependents other than wives and children. What information is at hand, however, suggests that for every 100 primary dependents there are only about 8 to 12 dependents of other types. For example, estimates of the ratio of different types of dependents to members of the total labor force in March 1940 give the figures in the next column.<sup>1</sup>

There are, of course, categories of persons dependent on workers other than those included in the tabulation. While estimates have been made of the total number of nonworking persons per labor-force member, such estimates are excluded here, since they would not come within the specifications of even the broadest definition

<sup>1</sup> Unpublished estimates, based on census data, made by the Division of Research and Statistics, Office of the Commissioner.

Type of dependent	Number per labor-force member, March 1940
Total.....	1.19
Primary dependents, total.....	1.09
Wife.....	.43
Child under 18.....	.66
Other dependents, <sup>1</sup> total.....	.10
Incapacitated husbands.....	( <sup>2</sup> )
Incapacitated children aged 18 or over.....	.01
Parents.....	.09
Under 65.....	.14
65 and over.....	.05

<sup>1</sup> Unmarried, incapacitated children aged 18 or over living with a parent in the labor force; disabled husbands of wives in the labor force; and parents, not in the labor force, living with or receiving regular and substantial support from children in the labor force.

<sup>2</sup> Less than .005.

of dependent contemplated under social insurance laws. Recognizing that the children under age 18 in the tabulation above need not be children of the labor-force member, the ratio of 1.19 to 1.00 may be taken as roughly indicative of the number of dependents per labor-force member under the broadest workable definition. Since this ratio relates to the total labor force, it is perhaps 4 percent higher than the corresponding ratio for workers in covered employment.

The tabulation reveals that dependent children under 18 represent 56 percent of the dependents (as defined) of labor-force members and that dependent wives and children together represent 92 percent of such dependents. Consequently, a dependents' allowance provision that includes only children in its definition of dependent would cover a bare majority of dependents, while a definition covering wives and children would embrace the great majority of claimants' dependents.

*Distribution by number of dependents.*—For some purposes—when, for example, a proposed schedule of dependents' allowances provides different allowances for each dependent—distributions of the number of dependents rather than averages are desirable. Although the distributions

\*Bureau of Employment Security, Unemployment Insurance Service, Division of Program Standards. The author is grateful to Jacob Fisher, Division of Research and Statistics, Office of the Commissioner, for advice on the use of the census data cited in this article.

**Table 1.—Labor-force members in urban areas by estimated number of primary dependents, April 1940<sup>1</sup>**

Number of primary dependents	Labor-force members	
	Number (in thousands)	Percent
Assumption I <sup>2</sup>		
Total .....	29,045	100
None .....	14,248	49
1 or more .....	14,797	51
1 .....	6,697	23
2 .....	3,710	13
3 or more .....	4,390	15
Assumption II <sup>3</sup>		
Total .....	32,720	100
None .....	17,923	55
1 or more .....	14,797	45
1 .....	6,697	21
2 .....	3,710	11
3 or more .....	4,290	13

<sup>1</sup> The following sources were used in developing these estimates: *Workers and Dependents in Urban Families*, Social Security Administration, Bureau of Research and Statistics, Bureau Memorandum No. 64, June 1947, table 11; *Sixteenth Census of the United States; 1940, Population, The Labor Force (Sample Statistics), Employment and Personal Characteristics*, table 3; Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P-20, No. 17 (tables 3, 4, 5), Series P-50, No. 5 (table 4), and Series P-5, No. 20 (table 3); and unpublished data, Division of Research and Statistics, Office of Commissioner, Social Security Administration.

<sup>2</sup> Includes labor-force members in primary and related subfamilies and in other husband-wife or parent-child groups; not counted as dependents were a small number of nonworking wives not living with husbands, or children not living with parent or related head of primary family; children in related subfamilies counted as children of labor-force head of primary family. Assuming 3.78 dependents per labor-force member with 3 or more dependents, distribution corresponds to 1.06 dependents per labor-force member.

<sup>3</sup> Includes all labor-force members; labor-force members not in primary families, related subfamilies, or other husband-wife or parent-child groups counted as having no dependents; not counted as dependents were a small number of nonworking wives not living with husbands, or children not living with parent or related head of primary family; children in related subfamilies counted as children of labor-force head of primary family. Assuming 3.78 dependents per labor-force member with 3 or more dependents, distribution corresponds to 0.94 dependents per labor-force member.

are somewhat more difficult to derive from census data, they can be estimated with the use of various assumptions. Two estimated distributions have been made of labor-force members in urban areas in April 1940 by the number of their primary dependents (table 1). Assumption I excludes from the total labor force workers not in a primary family (head of a household and persons related to the head), related subfamily, or other husband-wife or parent-child group; assumption II counts these workers as having no dependents.

**Variations by States.**—The data on

dependents so far discussed relate to the labor force in the Nation as a whole or to its urban areas. Family size, however, and therefore the number of dependents per labor-force member, varies significantly among regions and States. While State figures are not available for the urban labor force, data on the total labor force reveal the variations from State to State in number of dependents per worker. Thus, the average number of primary dependents per labor-force member ranged from 0.7 in the District of Columbia to 1.6 in New Mexico (table 2). Even among the largest States there were some, though less marked, variations. The ratio was 0.9 in California, Massachusetts, and New York, but 1.1 in Michigan, Ohio, and Pennsylvania.

**Variations by employment status of labor-force member.**—The average number of dependents per unemployed worker in any given period may differ from the average number of dependents per employed worker. Both averages fluctuate with changes in the volume of unemployment and with the composition of the employed or the unemployed group. For long-run purposes and for analysis of periods covering upswings and downswings in the business cycle, it is simplest to base these averages on the labor force as a whole. For shorter periods, some recognition must be given at least to the direction if not the magnitude of changes introduced by fluctuations in the volume of unemployment.

In the earliest stages of a recession, the workers first laid off probably include a relatively large proportion of workers without dependents. When millions of workers have been laid off, the number of dependents per unemployed worker presumably corresponds roughly to the ratio for the labor force as a whole. As the recession deepens, so-called additional workers, usually persons without major responsibility for dependents, enter the labor market, and the ratio of dependents (persons dependent in fact) per unemployed worker would probably decline. In a period of relatively full employment, like the present, this ratio might also be expected to be below average. Up to the closing months of 1948 at least, a disproportional

number of the unemployed were women, older workers, and youths, who generally have fewer dependents. Though specific data on the magnitude of these differences are limited, estimated data suggest that in 1940, when unemployment was relatively heavy, the unemployed appeared to have fewer dependents than the employed. According to these estimates, of the labor-force members in urban areas in April 1940, 48 percent had one or more adults or chil-

**Table 2.—Average number of non-gainfully occupied wives and children under age 18 per labor-force member, by State, April 1940<sup>1</sup>**

State	Average number non-gainfully occupied		
	Wives and children	Wives	Children
Continental States .....	1.1	0.4	0.7
Alabama .....	1.4	.5	.9
Arizona .....	1.3	.4	.9
Arkansas .....	1.4	.5	.9
California .....	.9	.4	.5
Colorado .....	1.2	.5	.7
Connecticut .....	.9	.4	.5
Delaware .....	.9	.4	.5
District of Columbia .....	.7	.3	.3
Florida .....	1.0	.4	.6
Georgia .....	1.2	.4	.8
Idaho .....	1.3	.5	.9
Illinois .....	1.0	.4	.5
Indiana .....	1.2	.5	.7
Iowa .....	1.2	.5	.7
Kansas .....	1.2	.5	.7
Kentucky .....	1.4	.5	.9
Louisiana .....	1.3	.4	.8
Maine .....	1.1	.4	.7
Maryland .....	1.0	.4	.6
Massachusetts .....	.9	.4	.5
Michigan .....	1.1	.5	.7
Minnesota .....	1.1	.4	.7
Mississippi .....	1.4	.5	.9
Missouri .....	1.1	.5	.6
Montana .....	1.1	.4	.7
Nebraska .....	1.2	.5	.7
Nevada .....	1.0	.4	.5
New Hampshire .....	1.0	.4	.6
New Jersey .....	.9	.4	.5
New Mexico .....	1.6	.5	1.1
New York .....	.9	.4	.5
North Carolina .....	1.3	.4	.9
North Dakota .....	1.3	.4	.9
Ohio .....	1.1	.5	.6
Oklahoma .....	1.4	.5	.9
Oregon .....	1.0	.4	.5
Pennsylvania .....	1.1	.4	.6
Rhode Island .....	.9	.4	.5
South Carolina .....	1.3	.4	.9
South Dakota .....	1.3	.5	.8
Tennessee .....	1.3	.5	.8
Texas .....	1.2	.5	.8
Utah .....	1.5	.5	1.0
Vermont .....	1.1	.4	.7
Virginia .....	1.2	.4	.8
Washington .....	1.0	.4	.5
West Virginia .....	1.4	.5	1.0
Wisconsin .....	1.1	.5	.7
Wyoming .....	1.2	.4	.7

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from census data by Division of Research and Statistics, Office of Commissioner, Social Security Administration.

dren dependent on them for support; of the labor-force members in families with one or more persons unemployed, the proportion with such dependents was smaller—only 37 percent.<sup>2</sup>

**Responsibility for support of dependents.**—In computing the averages and distributions of number of dependents per labor-force member, persons were considered dependents of only one worker in the household. This assumption corresponds to the requirement in the State unemployment insurance laws with dependents' allowances that the dependent be wholly or chiefly maintained by the claimant. When both a husband and wife are working, however, it is not unreasonable to consider children dependent on either parent. Under such an assumption, the number of labor-force members with child dependents and the average number of child dependents per labor-force member

<sup>2</sup> Estimates derived from census data but not comparable with distributions previously shown, since somewhat different methodology was used.

would be increased by less than 10 percent.<sup>3</sup>

**Changes in number of dependents, 1940-47.**—The data so far presented estimate the number of dependents per worker in April 1940. In the 7 years between then and April 1947 the number of persons in the labor force increased by about 12 percent, and the number of their primary dependents by about 9 percent. Hence the average number of primary dependents per worker decreased slightly—about 3 percent. This slight change can be readily explained. As job opportunities increased in this period, some persons who were formerly dependent on earners became earners in their own right. The decrease in number of dependents was only partly offset as persons who were themselves responsible for the support of individuals shifted from nonearning to

<sup>3</sup> Based on estimates developed for table 1. According to these estimates, there were, in 1940, fewer than a million married couples with both members in the labor force and with one or more children, in comparison with more than 10 million labor-force members with one or more children.

earning. This shift in status increased the number of dependents (as defined), since individuals under the definition are not counted as dependents unless the person supporting them is in the labor force. A large proportion of the so-called additional workers had no dependents. The net effect of these changes was minor; for most purposes the 1940 census data on number of dependents may safely be used without correction.

### Special State Studies

Because of the paucity of accurate, detailed data on claimants' family responsibilities, the Bureau of Employment Security in 1941 initiated studies of claimants' dependents in selected areas throughout the United States. Since the basic information for these studies could be obtained only by interviewing claimants in local offices of State employment security agencies, the study was limited by the availability of local office personnel and by State interest in obtaining this type of information. The dependents' survey was thus restricted to Delaware (Wilmington,

Table 3.—Summary of current dependents' allowance provisions, five State laws

State	Effective date of dependents' allowances	Dependents covered	Special restrictions	Basic benefit			Dependents' allowance		Maximum augmented benefit	
				Fraction of highest quarterly earnings	Maximum		Per dependent	Maximum	Amount	Percent of weekly wages <sup>1</sup>
					Amount	Percent of weekly wages <sup>1</sup>				
Conn.....	July 23, 1945	Child or stepchild under age 16 and wholly or mainly supported by claimant.	If both husband and wife receive benefits, only one entitled to dependents' allowance.	1/26	\$24	49	\$3	( <sup>2</sup> )	\$36	74
D. C.....	Jan. 1, 1938	If wholly or mainly supported by claimant: spouse, parent, step-parent, brother, or sister, unable to work because of age or disability; child or stepchild under age 16; child or stepchild unable to work because of disability.	None.....	1/23	20	57	1	\$3	20	57
Mass.....	Apr. 1, 1947	Dependent child under age 18.....	None.....	1/20	25	65	2	( <sup>3</sup> )	( <sup>3</sup> )	<sup>1</sup> 100
Mich.....	Apr. 1, 1945	Child, stepchild, or adopted child under age 18 (or under 21 and unable to work because of disability), if solely or principally supported by claimant.	Only father may claim child as dependent unless mother provides sole or principal support.	( <sup>4</sup> )	20	67	<sup>5</sup> 2	<sup>5</sup> 8	<sup>(3)</sup> 28	<sup>1</sup> 93
Nev.....	July 1, 1945	If wholly or mainly supported by claimant: wife, child, or stepchild under age 16, if not gainfully employed; husband, parent, step-parent, brother, sister, child, or stepchild, if unable to work because of age or disability.	If husband and wife, living in same household, are simultaneously receiving benefits, no dependents' allowances payable to either.	1/20	20	66	2	6	26	88

<sup>1</sup> Computed, except for Michigan, by dividing the benefit amount by the weekly wages needed to barely qualify for maximum, assuming 12.5 weeks of employment in the quarter of highest earnings; for Michigan, by dividing benefit by wages specified in table in law. For Massachusetts, the 100 percent shown is based on average wages in 2 highest quarters of base period.

<sup>2</sup> 50 percent of basic weekly benefit amount.

<sup>3</sup> Augmented benefit may not exceed average weekly wage in 2 base-period quarters of highest earnings.

<sup>4</sup> 75.67 percent of weekly wages.

<sup>5</sup> Or less, depending on wage class.

**Table 4.—Number of beneficiaries and percent entitled to dependents' allowances, by statutory type of dependent, five States, September 1946–September 1948**

Period	Child only						Spouse and child		Spouse, child, and others			
	Michigan		Massachusetts		Connecticut		Connecticut		District of Columbia		Nevada	
	Number of beneficiaries	Percent with dependents' allowances	Number of beneficiaries	Percent with dependents' allowances	Number of beneficiaries	Percent with dependents' allowances	Number of beneficiaries	Percent with dependents' allowances	Number of beneficiaries	Percent with dependents' allowances	Number of beneficiaries	Percent with dependents' allowances
Sept. 1946–Mar. 1947	141,565	33.0					23,395	34.3	7,708	19.7	2,270	21.2
Apr. 1947	14,878	28.3	64,062	11.9			9,090	33.9	1,518	24.4	378	21.4
May 1947	19,782	32.0	39,613	16.3			9,063	27.4	1,077	16.8	315	23.2
June 1947	16,332	31.3	36,242	15.9			6,639	24.4	995	17.3	295	20.0
July–Sept. 1947	79,089	32.6	54,337	15.1			17,740	26.2	2,547	14.1	933	34.4
Oct.–Dec. 1947	41,321	28.3	33,242	16.4			8,744	29.4	2,723	11.5	1,138	27.9
Jan.–Mar. 1948	83,266	35.8	46,307	22.2			14,394	35.8	4,798	11.1	1,868	28.5
Apr.–June 1948	56,280	32.6	89,825	13.4	21,643	13.5			2,947	12.7	1,052	23.0
July–Sept. 1948	43,118	31.7	50,098	14.1	19,162	16.4			2,508	13.8	824	24.2

<sup>1</sup> Dependents' allowances for the first dependent became payable in July 1947.

**Table 5.—Number of beneficiaries and percent entitled to dependents' allowances, by sex, five States, September 1946–September 1948**

Period	Michigan				Massachusetts				Connecticut				District of Columbia				Nevada			
	Men		Women		Men		Women		Men		Women		Men		Women		Men		Women	
	Number	Percent with dependents' allowances	Number	Percent with dependents' allowances	Number	Percent with dependents' allowances	Number	Percent with dependents' allowances	Number	Percent with dependents' allowances	Number	Percent with dependents' allowances	Number	Percent with dependents' allowances	Number	Percent with dependents' allowances	Number	Percent with dependents' allowances	Number	Percent with dependents' allowances
Sept. 1946–Mar. 1947	99,265	44.9	42,300	5.2					14,124	53.3	9,271	5.3	5,025	17.6	2,683	23.6	1,578	27.2	692	7.7
Apr. 1947	9,907	40.0	4,971	4.9	33,739	21.7	30,323	0.9	5,435	52.6	3,655	6.0	1,068	25.3	460	22.2	253	28.1	125	8.0
May 1947	14,141	43.2	5,641	4.1	19,048	31.6	20,565	2.1	4,490	48.8	4,573	6.3	600	13.2	477	21.4	214	31.3	101	5.9
June 1947	11,485	42.5	4,847	4.7	17,148	31.6	19,094	1.7	2,876	48.3	3,763	6.1	478	11.7	517	22.4	205	24.9	90	8.9
July–Sept. 1947	55,050	43.9	24,039	6.9	28,293	27.9	26,044	1.3	8,636	48.9	9,104	4.7	1,201	10.0	1,346	17.8	589	48.0	344	11.0
Oct.–Dec. 1947	27,487	40.1	13,034	4.8	19,183	27.6	14,059	1.2	4,864	48.8	3,880	5.2	1,268	8.8	1,455	14.0	741	37.1	397	10.6
Jan.–Mar. 1948	65,514	43.2	17,752	8.7	30,429	33.1	15,878	1.2	9,385	51.3	5,009	6.7	3,179	9.7	1,619	13.7	1,273	37.4	595	9.6
Apr.–June 1948	42,040	40.5	14,240	9.3	43,899	26.2	45,926	1.1	10,250	24.1	11,393	3.8	1,353	8.0	1,594	16.7	664	34.6	388	3.1
July–Sept. 1948	30,267	40.6	12,851	10.5	25,450	26.6	24,648	1.1	8,777	31.3	10,385	3.8	1,122	7.8	1,386	18.6	452	38.9	372	6.2

**Table 6.—Number of beneficiaries and percent with dependents' allowances, by sex and by basic weekly amount, five States, July–September 1948**

Sex and basic weekly benefit amount	Total		Connecticut		District of Columbia		Massachusetts		Michigan		Nevada	
	Total number	Percent receiving dependents' allowances	Total number	Percent receiving dependents' allowances	Total number	Percent receiving dependents' allowances	Total number	Percent receiving dependents' allowances	Total number	Percent receiving dependents' allowances	Total number	Percent receiving dependents' allowances
All beneficiaries, total	115,710	21.1	19,162	16.4	2,508	13.8	50,098	14.1	43,118	31.7	824	24.2
Men, total	66,068	33.4	8,777	31.3	1,122	7.8	25,450	26.6	30,267	40.6	452	38.9
Less than \$10	860	14.7	319	16.9	46	21.7	399	6.3	91	39.6	5	20.0
10–14.99	2,208	11.1	537	17.3	156	17.3	1,091	8.2	415	8.2	9	22.8
15–19.99	3,954	19.9	1,058	19.0	256	19.9	1,794	11.3	825	39.8	21	23.8
20 and over	59,046	35.4	6,863	35.0	664	( <sup>1</sup> )	22,166	29.1	28,936	41.1	417	40.3
Basic maximum	54,294	37.1	5,343	38.6	664	( <sup>1</sup> )	18,934	31.9	28,936	41.1	417	40.3
Women, total	49,642	4.7	10,385	3.8	1,386	18.6	24,648	1.1	12,851	10.5	372	6.2
Less than \$10	1,885	3.8	864	4.7	79	27.8	844	.9	91	( <sup>2</sup> )	7	( <sup>2</sup> )
10–14.99	5,097	5.2	1,708	3.4	351	28.2	2,464	.8	550	15.3	24	12.5
15–19.99	10,416	4.2	3,239	3.2	509	26.9	5,236	.8	1,354	11.3	78	6.4
20 or over	32,244	4.8	4,574	4.1	447	( <sup>1</sup> )	16,104	1.3	10,856	10.3	263	5.7
Basic maximum	23,125	5.9	2,072	4.6	447	( <sup>1</sup> )	9,487	1.4	10,856	10.3	263	5.7

<sup>1</sup> In the District of Columbia, no dependents' allowances are payable above the basic weekly maximum of \$20.

<sup>2</sup> Less than 0.05 percent.

Georgetown, and Dover offices), Iowa (Des Moines offices), Michigan (offices throughout the State), and Missouri (Springfield office). The studies covered claimants during different periods of 2 to 4 months between December 1941 and July 1942.

These studies revealed that 31-48 percent of the claimants had one or more dependent children under age 18. The distribution of claimants by number of primary dependents was as follows:

Area	Percent of claimants with specified number of primary dependents <sup>1</sup>					
	Total	None	1 or more			
			Total	1	2	3 or more
Delaware...	100	53	47	23	11	13
Des Moines	100	36	64	26	16	22
Michigan...	100	36	64	24	18	22

<sup>1</sup> Nonworking wife or child of the claimant; a child was counted as a dependent of a female claimant, regardless of the presence in the household or work status of the husband; in practically no cases were husband and wife claiming benefits simultaneously. Missouri data are not shown since the sample included only 320 cases. In the other areas, the samples were: Delaware, 1,288; Des Moines, 2,520; and Michigan, 10,013.

Next to wives and children, the principal class of dependents consisted of parents—a father who was unable to work, a widowed mother, or a mother whose husband was unable to work—but only 3 percent of the Des Moines claimants and 5 percent of the Delaware claimants provided the chief support for such dependents.<sup>4</sup> Brothers and sisters or other relatives were being supported by only 3 percent of the Des Moines and 5 percent of the Delaware claimants. Thus, from 6 to 10 percent of the claimants in Delaware and Des Moines had a dependent other than a wife or child. About half these dependents were in households which included a wife or child of the claimant. Nonworking wives and children constituted more than 80 percent of the persons in Des Moines and Delaware who were wholly or mainly supported by the claimants.

The Delaware and census distributions are rather similar, but data for Des Moines and Michigan show a somewhat higher proportion of claim-

<sup>4</sup> Separate counts of the dependents discussed in this paragraph were not available for Michigan.

ants with dependents than the census data would suggest. This difference can be traced to higher proportions of men, married persons, and principal earners among the claimants in Des Moines and Michigan than in the urban labor force in 1940.

Several other States have made sample studies of claimants' dependents since 1942. Among the most recent are those of Oregon and Maryland. A sample of 7,771 Oregon workers who filed a valid claim during the week May 10-15, 1948, yields the following distribution, by number of dependents:

Type of dependent	Percent of claimants with specified number of dependents					
	Total	None	1 or more			
			Total	1	2	3 or more
Dependent children <sup>1</sup>	100	69	31	14	9	8
Dependent wife <sup>2</sup>	100	63	37	37	-----	-----
Other dependent relative <sup>3</sup>	100	89	11	9	1	1
Any of above....	100	44	56	27	12	17

<sup>1</sup> Child or stepchild of the claimant, under age 18, wholly or mainly dependent on claimant.

<sup>2</sup> Nonworking wife wholly or mainly dependent on claimant.

<sup>3</sup> Husband, parent, stepparent, brother, sister, or child 18 years of age or older, wholly or mainly dependent on claimant because of age or disability.

The Maryland agency made a survey of the 4,814 claimants in the Baltimore City office during the week October 11-15, 1948, which revealed that 29 percent of the claimants had one or more dependent children under age 16; 13 percent had one, 8 percent had two, and 8 percent had three or more dependent children.

### Operation of State Laws

Beginning with September 1946, statistics are available on the dependents of claimants in the five States with provisions for dependents' allowances in their laws. The proportions of claimants who have received a dependents' allowance vary in these States from about 14 percent to 33 percent, depending on the definition of dependent in the law and other statutory conditions for the receipt of the allowances (as shown in table 3) as well as the age and sex of the claimants.

*Dependent children.*—Only children are counted as dependents for whom allowances are payable in Connecticut (since April 1948), Massachusetts, and Michigan. Despite the similarity in definitions of dependent, a much larger proportion of claimants have received dependents' allowances in Michigan than in the other two States (table 4).

The differences between Massachusetts and Michigan have persisted quarter by quarter since allowances were first payable in Massachusetts in April 1947. The proportion of beneficiaries with one or more dependent children has ranged from 28 to 36 percent in Michigan and from 12 to 22 percent in Massachusetts. These differences can be attributed to the larger proportion of women and the somewhat older age group in Massachusetts, the larger average number of child dependents per labor-force member in Michigan (table 2) and, to a very minor extent, Michigan's somewhat broader definition of dependent child (table 3).

The effect of the relative number of men and women among beneficiaries on the proportion of beneficiaries with dependents is clear from table 5. In Michigan, the proportion of men with compensable dependents has ranged from 40 to 45 percent and the proportion of women with compensable dependents, from 4 to 10 percent. Since May 1947, the corresponding proportions in Massachusetts have ranged from 26 to 33 percent for men and from 1.1 to 2.1 percent for women. For Massachusetts, the unusually low proportions of both men and women beneficiaries with dependents in April 1947 suggest that claimants were not fully aware of the dependents' allowance provisions during the first month of operation.

*Dependent spouse and child.*—Until April 1948, allowances in Connecticut were payable on behalf of a wife, dependent husband, and dependent children 16 years of age or older, as well as children under 16. When these first three groups were eliminated from the definition, the proportion of claimants with dependents was reduced more than one-half. This elimination principally affected claimants with a nonworking wife but no

children. Before April 1948, from 48 to 53 percent of the men beneficiaries were entitled to dependents' allowances; during April-June 1948 only 24 percent, and during July-September 1948 only 31 percent, qualified for an allowance (table 5).

*Spouse, child, and others.*—While provisions for dependents' allowances in the District of Columbia and Nevada cover the largest group of dependents (table 3), other features of these provisions, plus the relatively small number of covered workers in these jurisdictions, lessen the value of their statistics. In the District, the weekly benefit augmented by dependents' allowances may not exceed the basic maximum weekly benefit amount. As a result, workers entitled to the maximum benefit receive no allowance for any dependents they may have, and workers entitled to \$1 or \$2 less than the maximum may not receive allowances for some of their dependents. Since workers with the higher basic weekly benefits are more likely to have dependents, the statistics from the District of Columbia do not fully reflect the proportion of claimants in that area who have dependents as defined in its law.

The Nevada statistics also do not accurately reflect the total number of dependents for the reason that, before July 1947, no dependents' allowances were payable to a claimant with only one dependent. The proportion of beneficiaries entitled to allowances has increased about one-third since that date (table 4).

Quite striking is the unusually high proportion of women beneficiaries who receive dependents' allowances in the District of Columbia, ranging from 14 to 24 percent during the period September 1946-September 1948 (table 5). Even in Nevada, where, as in the District, the law recognizes as dependents many of the persons for whose support women are frequently responsible, this proportion has never exceeded 11 percent. State differences in age, race, and family characteristics of claimants undoubtedly account for this variation.

*Effect of limitation on number of dependents.*—Only the Massachusetts law sets no specific limit on the

number of dependents for whom allowances may be paid, but children are the only dependents covered. Connecticut and Michigan will pay allowances for children up to and including four, and the District of Columbia and Nevada, for all types of dependents up to and including three. In Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, and Michigan, moreover, maximum dependents' allowances or the maximum augmented benefit are explicitly limited by previous earnings or the weekly benefit amount; these limitations also have the effect of restricting, in varying degrees, the number of dependents for whom allowances are payable.

Data for July-September 1948 (table 6) illustrate the effect of these limitations. The proportion of beneficiaries receiving dependents' allowances and entitled to the maximum dependents' allowance was 7 percent in Connecticut, 14 percent in the District of Columbia and Michigan, and 20 percent in Nevada. Had Massachusetts restricted the number of compensable dependents to four, 5 percent of those who received an allowance for dependents would have received a smaller allowance.

*Variation by basic weekly benefit amount.*—In general, the largest proportions of claimants with dependents are found among those with the higher basic weekly benefit amounts. In Massachusetts during July-September 1948, for example, the proportion of men with dependents ranged from 6 percent for claimants with weekly benefits of less than \$10 to 29 percent for those with weekly benefits of \$20 or more (table 7). This relationship merely reflects the differences among claimants in age and marital status: those with the lower weekly benefits include more of the younger, unmarried workers without dependents.

### Implications for Cost Analysis

Which, if any, of the distributions presented above can be used by a given State in estimating the cost of dependents' allowances? The distributions are by no means in perfect agreement. There are two saving features, however. First, the differences can, to a large extent, be explained. Second, the disparities have little effect

on the costs under most of the plans for dependents' allowances under discussion.

The proportions (of workers or claimants, as the case may be) with one or more dependents were higher in the special 1942 studies than the census data suggest; the proportions with one or more dependents under State laws were lower in Connecticut and Massachusetts and higher in Michigan, as the following summary shows:

Source	Percent of workers or claimants with 1 or more dependent children	Percent of workers or claimants with 1 or more primary dependents <sup>1</sup>
Census (Assumption II) 1942 studies:	28	45
Delaware	31	47
Iowa	41	64
Michigan	48	64
1948 studies:		
Maryland	29	-----
Oregon	31	-----
State operations:		
Connecticut, April-June 1948	13	-----
Connecticut, Sept. 1946-March 1948	-----	31
Massachusetts, April 1947-June 1948	16	-----
Michigan, Sept. 1946-June 1948	33	-----

<sup>1</sup> Wife or child.

The claimants sampled in the three 1942 State studies differed in many important respects from the average worker in the urban labor force in the United States in 1940. Of the 1942 claimants, who included a large number of skilled workers laid off as plants converted to war production, particularly in Michigan, 75-88 percent were men, compared with 70 percent in the 1940 labor force. About 70 percent of the Michigan and Iowa claimants were married, compared with 54 percent of the workers in 1940. The workers in the 1942 samples included a far greater proportion of primary workers and of workers who were the only wage earners in their families than did the 1940 census data. All these factors tended to increase the proportion of workers with dependents in the three States in 1942, as compared with the proportions in the urban labor force in 1940.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> No attempt has been made to compare the situation in the 3 States in 1940 with that in the 3 States in 1942, or the composition of the total urban labor force in 1940 with that in 1942.

The studies prepared in 1948 in Maryland and Oregon show a fairly close correspondence with the 1940 census results. Similarly, the proportion of claimants who have received dependents' allowances under the Michigan law is reasonably close to what the census data suggest. By contrast, the proportions in Connecticut and Massachusetts are considerably lower. As noted earlier, these differences can be attributed to a larger proportion of women among the Massachusetts and Connecticut beneficiaries, a somewhat older age group, and a lower ratio of children

to labor-force members, as compared with census data.

The fact that relatively great differences in the distribution of dependents will have little effect on cost estimates can be demonstrated by examining data on the operation of the laws in three States. For this purpose, we assume that Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Michigan each paid an average weekly benefit of \$22 to claimants with no dependents, \$24 to claimants with one dependent, \$26 to claimants with two dependents, and \$28 to claimants with three or more dependents. If the average dis-

tributions which actually obtained in these three States are applied to these averages, the resultant average weekly payments are \$22.47 for Connecticut, \$22.58 for Massachusetts, and \$23.26 for Michigan. The census distribution (table 1, Assumption II) would yield an average weekly payment of \$23.00, which is within 2.4 percent of each of these State averages. Similarly, if the assumed dependents' allowance were \$3 instead of \$2, the census distribution would yield an estimate within 3.5 percent of the averages based on the actual State distributions. These estimates are sufficiently precise for evaluating the extent to which the dependents' allowance provisions affect costs.

The considerations above suggest that the distributions derived from the census data (Assumption II) may be used to provide a reasonably accurate estimate of the cost of dependents' allowances for the country as a whole and in any State for which other data are not available. Various refinements can be made, depending on the information available with respect to the sex, marital status, or other characteristics of claimants. If the proposed dependents' allowance schedule provides higher allowances for claimants with higher basic weekly benefit amounts, an adjustment can be made on the basis of the distributions in table 7. If the definition of dependent covers husbands, older children, and parents, as well as a wife and minor child, then roughly 10 percent may be added to the additional cost of the allowances. No adjustment need be made on account of the differences in unemployment experience of claimants with and without dependents. There is no evidence that claimants with dependents draw benefits for a significantly shorter or longer period than do claimants without dependents.

During July-September 1948, dependents' allowances in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Michigan added \$0.86, \$0.57, and \$1.29, respectively, to the average basic weekly benefit amount. These amounts represented percentage increases of 4.4, 2.6, and 6.6 percent (table 8). The beneficiaries who were entitled to the dependents' allowances had their basic benefits augmented by 17-24 percent.

**Table 7.—Percentage distribution of beneficiaries with dependents' allowances, by sex and by number of dependents, five States, July-September 1948**

State and sex	Total number with dependents	Percentage distribution by specified number of dependents					
		Total	1	2	3	4	5 or more
Total.....	24,396	100.0	42.3	30.7	15.0	10.6	1.4
Connecticut.....	3,143	100.0	48.8	31.7	12.9	6.6	.....
District of Columbia.....	346	100.0	60.7	25.4	13.9	.....	.....
Massachusetts.....	7,060	100.0	43.7	29.6	15.1	6.9	4.7
Michigan.....	13,648	100.0	39.5	31.3	15.4	13.8	.....
Nevada.....	199	100.0	56.3	23.6	20.1	.....	.....
Men.....	22,088	100.0	40.8	31.3	15.6	10.8	1.5
Connecticut.....	2,753	100.0	47.1	32.1	13.6	7.2	.....
District of Columbia.....	88	100.0	52.3	30.7	17.0	.....	.....
Massachusetts.....	6,776	100.0	42.7	29.9	15.5	7.0	4.9
Michigan.....	12,295	100.0	38.1	32.1	16.0	13.8	.....
Nevada.....	176	100.0	54.0	24.4	21.6	.....	.....
Women.....	2,308	100.0	57.3	24.5	9.4	8.8	.4
Connecticut.....	390	100.0	61.0	28.7	7.4	2.8	.....
District of Columbia.....	258	100.0	63.6	23.6	12.8	.....	.....
Massachusetts.....	284	100.0	68.3	22.2	6.0	3.2	.4
Michigan.....	1,353	100.0	52.4	24.1	10.1	13.5	.....
Nevada.....	23	100.0	73.9	17.4	8.7	.....	.....

**Table 8.—Average weekly benefit excluding and including dependents' allowances, five States, July-September 1948**

Class of beneficiary and type of benefit	Total	Connecticut	District of Columbia <sup>1</sup>	Massachusetts	Michigan	Nevada
All beneficiaries:						
Average basic weekly benefit.....	\$20.59	\$19.59	\$16.87	\$22.00	\$19.63	\$19.20
Average weekly benefit including dependents' allowances.....	\$21.47	\$20.45	\$17.08	\$22.57	\$20.92	\$19.99
Percentage increase.....	4.3	4.4	1.2	2.6	6.6	4.1
Beneficiaries receiving dependents' allowances:						
Average basic weekly benefit.....	\$21.30	\$21.98	\$14.18	\$24.26	\$19.81	\$19.62
Average weekly benefit including dependents' allowances.....	\$25.47	\$27.24	\$15.71	\$28.30	\$23.88	\$22.89
Percentage increase.....	19.6	23.9	10.8	16.7	20.5	16.7
Beneficiaries not receiving dependents' allowances:						
Average basic weekly benefit.....	\$20.40	\$19.12	\$17.31	\$21.63	\$19.55	\$19.06

<sup>1</sup> In the District of Columbia, no dependents' allowances are payable above the basic weekly maximum of \$20.