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Census Snapshot: Delaware

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DELAWARE

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Using data from the U.S. Census Bureau, this report provides demographic and economic information about same-sex couples and same-sex couples raising children in Delaware. We compare same-sex “unmarried partners,” which the Census Bureau defines as an unmarried couple who “shares living quarters and has a close personal relationship,” to different-sex married couples in Delaware.¹



Same-sex couple households
per 1,000 households

None present: 0
Low: 0.01 – 2.99
Med: 3 – 4.99
High: 5+

In many ways, the nearly 2,100 same-sex couples living in Delaware are similar to married couples. According to Census 2000, they live throughout the State, are racially and ethnically diverse, have partners who depend upon one another financially, and actively participate in Delaware’s economy. Census data also show that about 12% of same-sex couples in Delaware are raising children. Same-sex couples have higher household incomes but lower rates of homeownership than married couples. Individuals in same-sex couples are more likely to be employed than married individuals.

SAME-SEX COUPLES AND THE LGB POPULATION IN DELAWARE

- In 2000, there were 1,868 same-sex couples living in Delaware.²
- By 2005, the number of same-sex couples increased to 2,087.³ This increase likely reflects same-sex couples’ growing willingness to disclose their partnerships on government surveys.
- In 2005, there were an estimated 24,001 gay, lesbian, and bisexual people (single and coupled) living in Delaware.⁴

INDIVIDUALS IN SAME-SEX COUPLES ARE DEMOGRAPHICALLY AND GEOGRAPHICALLY DIVERSE

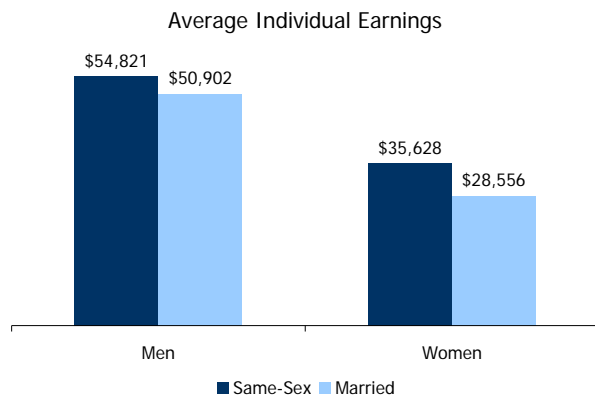
- There are more male same-sex couples (52%) than female same-sex couples (48%) in Delaware.⁵
- Individuals in same-sex couples are, on average, 40 years old, and significantly younger than individuals in married couples (48 years old) in Delaware.

- Same-sex couples live in every county in Delaware and constitute 1.1% of coupled households and 0.6% of all households in the state. New Castle County reported the most same-sex couples with 1,100 couples, followed by Sussex County with 559 couples, and Kent County with 209 couples. Sussex County reported the highest percentage of same-sex couples of all households in the county (0.89%), followed by New Castle County (0.58%), and Kent County (0.44%).⁶
- Delaware’s same-sex couples are more racially and ethnically diverse than their married counterparts: 21% of individuals in same-sex couples are nonwhite, compared to 18% of married individuals.

PEOPLE IN SAME-SEX COUPLES ARE ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN THE STATE ECONOMY

- Individuals in same-sex couples in Delaware are significantly more likely to be employed than married individuals: 86% of individuals in same-sex couples are employed, compared to 66% of married individuals.

- Contrary to a popular stereotype, the annual earnings of men in same-sex couples are similar to those of married men. On average, men in same-sex couples in Delaware earn \$54,821 each year, compared to \$50,902 for married men. The median income of men in same-sex couples in Delaware is \$42,000, compared to \$40,000 for married men.
- Women in same-sex couples in Delaware earn an average of \$35,628 per year (with a median of \$38,000), more than married women, whose earnings average \$28,556 (with a median of \$24,000). Women in same-sex couples earn less than married men as well as men in same-sex couples.



- Individuals in same-sex and married couples in Delaware are most likely to work in the private sector: 75% of individuals in same-sex couples work in the private sector, compared to 74% of married individuals; 13% of individuals in same-sex couples work in the public sector, compared to 15% of married individuals; and 11% of individuals in same-sex and married couples are self-employed.
- Individuals in same-sex couples are significantly more likely to have a college degree: 42% of individuals in same-sex couples, and 28% of married individuals have earned a college degree.
- Despite the military's historic policies of excluding gay men and lesbians from service, individuals in same-sex couples have served in the military: 9% of individuals in same-sex couples are veterans, compared to 19% of married individuals.

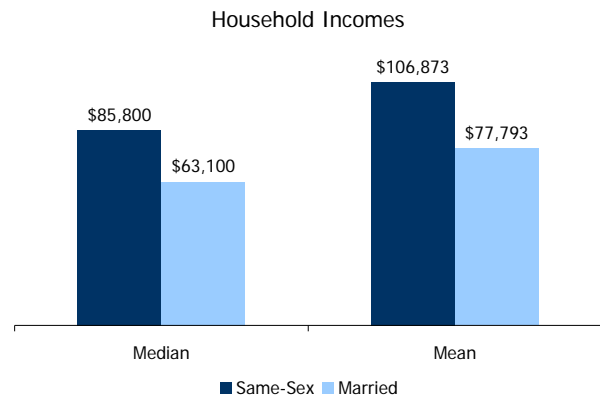
SAME-SEX PARTNERS IN DELAWARE DEPEND UPON ONE ANOTHER IN WAYS THAT ARE SIMILAR TO MARRIED COUPLES

- Couples in which one partner does not work or earns significantly less than the other partner may indicate financial interdependence. 12% of same-sex couples have only one wage earner, compared to 29% of married couples.

- The average income gap between Delaware's same-sex partners is \$21,555, compared to \$28,889 for married spouses.
- 22% of same-sex couples in Delaware have at least one partner who is disabled, compared to 28% of married couples.
- 6% of same-sex couples in Delaware have at least one partner who is age 65 or older, compared to 20% of married couples.

SAME-SEX HOUSEHOLDS IN DELAWARE HAVE GREATER INCOMES BUT LOWER HOMEOWNERSHIP THAN MARRIED HOUSEHOLDS

- The median income of same-sex coupled households in Delaware is \$85,800, compared to \$63,100 for married couples. The average household income of same-sex couples is \$106,873, compared to \$77,793 for married couples.

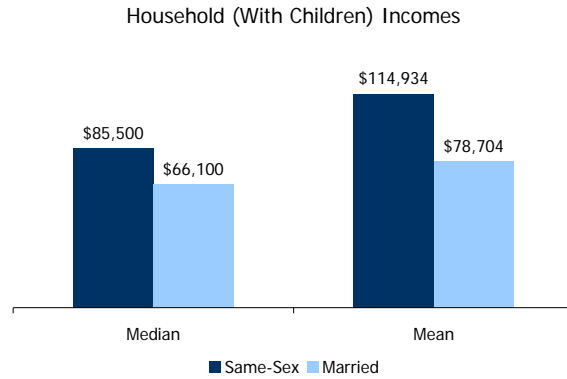


- Same-sex couples are less likely than married couples to own their homes: 80% of same-sex couples in Delaware own their home, compared to 86% of married couples.

SAME-SEX COUPLES IN DELAWARE ARE RAISING CHILDREN WITH GREATER ECONOMIC RESOURCES THAN MARRIED PARENTS

- 12% of same-sex couples in Delaware are raising children under the age of 18.
- As of 2005, an estimated 448 of Delaware's children are living in households headed by same-sex couples.⁷
- In Delaware, married and same-sex couples with children under 18 in the home have, on average, two children.

- The median household income of same-sex couples with children is \$85,500, compared to \$66,100 for married parents. The average household income of same-sex couples with children is \$114,934, compared to \$78,704 for married parents.
- Same-sex parents in Delaware are more likely to own their homes than married parents: all same-sex parents own their home, compared to 82% of married parents.



CONCLUSION

Census data provide valuable information about gay and lesbian couples in Delaware. In many respects, Delaware's same-sex couples are similar to married couples.

	Same-Sex	Married
Race/Ethnicity ⁸		
White	78.8%	82.0%
Black	14.6%	11.0%
Hispanic	2.2%	3.4%
Asian	1.0%	2.5%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1.4%	0.3%
Other	2.1%	0.8%
Average age*	39.6	48.3
Percent with college degree or better*	42.3%	28.5%
Percent employed*	86.3%	66.5%
Employment ⁸		
Private employer	75.0%	74.0%
Public employer	13.4%	15.1%
Self-employed	11.3%	10.6%
Veteran status*	9.5%	18.5%
Average individual salary		
Men	\$54,821	\$50,902
Women*	\$35,628	\$28,556
Median individual salary		
Men	\$42,000	\$40,000
Women	\$38,000	\$24,000

* Difference significant at the 5% level or better (two-tailed tests).
 ^ Difference significant at the 10% level or better (two-tailed tests).

	Same-Sex	Married
At least one partner 65 or older*	6.4%	20.3%
Percent disabled	21.6%	27.8%
Average household income [^]	\$106,873	\$77,793
Median household income	\$85,800	\$63,100
Income gap between partners	\$21,555	\$28,889
Single wage earner*	11.7%	28.5%
Homeownership	80.1%	86.0%
Percent with children under 18*	11.6%	46.0%

* Difference significant at the 5% level or better (two-tailed tests).
 ^ Difference significant at the 10% level or better (two-tailed tests).

	Same-Sex parents	Married parents
Average number of children under 18 in the household	1.9	1.9
Single wage earner (parents)	0.0%	30.4%
Average household income (parents) [^]	\$114,934	\$78,704
Median household income (parents)	\$85,500	\$66,100
Homeownership (parents)	100.0%	82.3%

* Difference significant at the 5% level or better (two-tailed tests).
 ^ Difference significant at the 10% level or better (two-tailed tests).

Appendix A: Counts and percent of same-sex couples by county

County	Number of same-sex couples	Percent of same-sex couples out of all households
Kent	209	0.44%
New Castle	1100	0.58%
Sussex	559	0.89%

About the Authors

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¹ Unless otherwise noted, we calculate the demographic characteristics from the Census 2000 Public Use Microdata Sample (5% file) available from the U.S. Census Bureau. For a detailed discussion of the Census 2000 methodology used in this report, see *Census Snapshot: Methods Note*, available at <http://www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute/publications/MethodologicalDetailsForCensusSnapshots.pdf>. In estimating numbers of same-sex couples and children raised by same-sex couples, however, we use the total number of same-sex couples from 2005 and the proportion of couples with children from 2000 in order to provide a more up-to-date estimate.

² Tavia Simmons & Martin O'Connell, U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, *Married-Couple and Unmarried-Partner Households*, Census 2000 Special Reports, CENSR-5, p. 4, tab. 2 (Feb. 2003).

³ Gary J. Gates, The Williams Institute, *Same-sex Couples and the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Population: New Estimates from the American Community Survey* (2006), p. 11, apx. 1, available at <http://www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute/publications/SameSexCouplesandGLBpopACS.pdf>. Sample sizes for individual states in 2005 are not sufficiently large for the analyses presented in this report, we therefore use data from Census 2000 where samples are on average five times larger than 2005.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ Simmons & O'Connell, *supra* note 2.

⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, *Unmarried Partner Households by Sex of Partners*, PCT14. Percentages of total households computed by dividing data in PCT14 by data in P15 (total households).

⁷ Computed by multiplying the number of same-sex couples times the percent of same-sex couples with children times the average number of children under 18 in the household.

⁸ Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100.

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