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Census Snapshot: California

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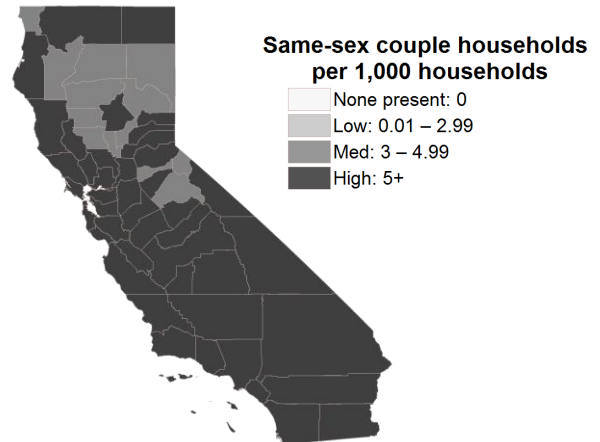
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CALIFORNIA

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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 California. 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 California.¹



In many ways, the more than 107,000 same-sex couples living in California 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 California’s economy. Census data also show that 18% of same-sex couples in California are raising children. However, same-sex couples with children have fewer economic resources to provide for their families than married parents: they have lower household incomes and lower rates of homeownership.

SAME-SEX COUPLES AND THE LGB POPULATION IN CALIFORNIA

- In 2000, there were 92,138 same-sex couples living in California.²
- By 2005, the number of same-sex couples increased to 107,772.³ This increase likely reflects same-sex couples’ growing willingness to disclose their partnerships on government surveys.
- In 2005, there were an estimated 1,338,164 gay, lesbian, and bisexual people (single and coupled) living in California.⁴

INDIVIDUALS IN SAME-SEX COUPLES ARE DEMOGRAPHICALLY AND GEOGRAPHICALLY DIVERSE

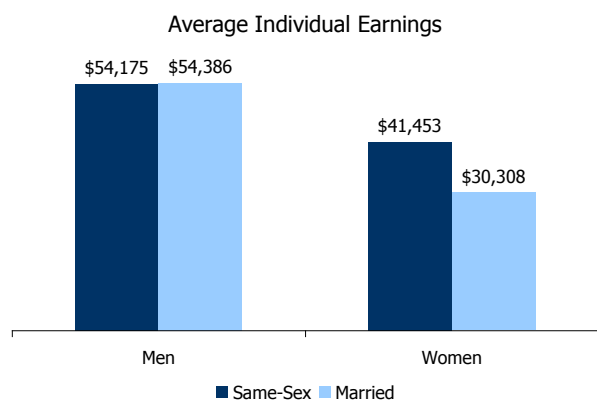
- There are more male same-sex couples (54%) than female same-sex couples (46%) in California.⁵
- Individuals in same-sex couples are, on average, 41 years old, and significantly younger than individuals in married couples (47 years old) in California.

- Same-sex couples live in every county in California and constitute 1.4% of coupled households and 0.8% of all households in the state. Los Angeles County reported the most same-sex couples with 25,173 couples (0.80% of all county households), followed by San Francisco County with 8,902 couples (2.70%), and San Diego County with 7,645 couples (0.77%). The counties with the highest percentage of same-sex couples are San Francisco County (2.70% of all county households), Sonoma County (1.23%), and Alameda County (1.12%).⁶
- California’s same-sex couples are racially and ethnically diverse: 30% of individuals in same-sex couples are nonwhite in California.

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

- Individuals in same-sex couples in California are significantly more likely to be employed than married individuals: 76% of individuals in same-sex couples are employed, compared to 62% 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 California earn \$54,175 each year, slightly less than \$54,386 for married men. The median income of men in same-sex and married couples in California is \$40,000.
- Women in same-sex couples in California earn an average of \$41,453 per year (with a median of \$33,900), more than married women, whose earnings average \$30,308 (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 California are most likely to work in the private sector: 69% of individuals in same-sex and married couples work in the private sector; 17% of individuals in same-sex couples work in the public sector, compared to 16% of married individuals; and 13% of individuals in same-sex couples are self-employed, compared to 14% of married individuals.
- Individuals in same-sex couples are significantly more likely to have a college degree: 46% of individuals in same-sex couples, and 29% 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: 11% of individuals in same-sex couples are veterans, compared to 13% of married individuals.

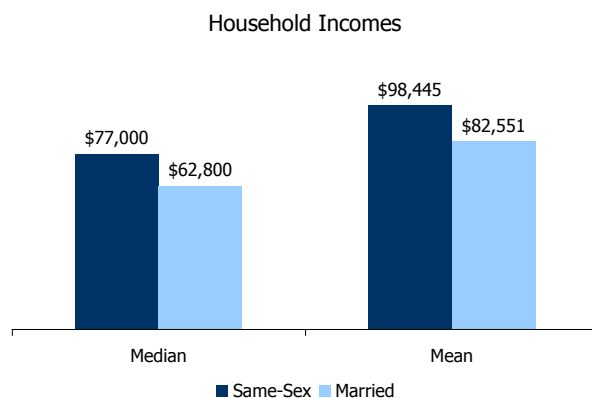
SAME-SEX PARTNERS IN CALIFORNIA DEPEND UPON ONE ANOTHER IN WAYS THAT ARE SIMILAR TO MARRIED COUPLES

- Couples in which one partner does not work or earns significantly less than the other partner may indicate financial interdependence. 25% of same-sex couples have only one wage earner, compared to 34% of married couples.

- The average income gap between same-sex partners in California is \$34,293, compared to \$33,190 for married spouses.
- 29% of same-sex and 30% of married couples in California have at least one partner who is disabled.
- 7% of same-sex couples in California have at least one partner who is age 65 or older, compared to 17% of married couples.

SAME-SEX COUPLES IN CALIFORNIA HAVE HIGHER HOUSEHOLD INCOMES BUT LOWER RATES OF HOMEOWNERSHIP THAN MARRIED COUPLES

- The median income of same-sex coupled households in California is \$77,000, compared to \$62,800 for married couples. The average household income of same-sex couples is \$98,445, compared to \$82,551 for married couples.

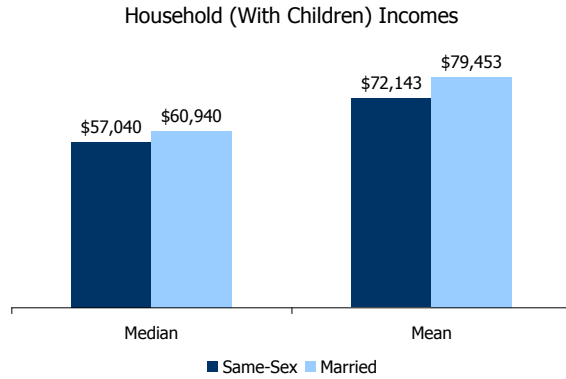


- Same-sex couples are significantly less likely than married couples to own their homes: 55% of same-sex couples in California own their home, compared to 70% of married couples.

SAME-SEX COUPLES ARE RAISING CHILDREN IN CALIFORNIA, YET WITH FEWER ECONOMIC RESOURCES THAN MARRIED PARENTS

- 18% of same-sex couples in California are raising children under the age of 18.
- As of 2005, an estimated 37,311 of California's children are living in households headed by same-sex couples.⁷
- In California, married and same-sex couples with children under 18 in the home have, on average, 2 children.
- 10% of California's adopted children (or 16,458 children) live with a lesbian or gay parent.⁸
- 36% of California's same-sex parents have one wage earner, compared to 39% of married parents.

- Same-sex parents have fewer financial resources to support their children than married parents in California. The median household income of same-sex couples with children is \$57,040, or 6% lower than that of married parents (\$60,940). The average household income of same-sex couples with children is \$72,143, significantly less than \$79,453 for married parents.
- While 48% of same-sex couples with children own their home, a significantly larger percentage of married parents (64%) own their home.



CONCLUSION

Census data provide valuable information about gay and lesbian couples in California. While in many respects California’s same-sex couples look like married couples, same-sex couples with children have fewer economic resources to provide for their families than married parents and lower rates of homeownership.

	Same-Sex	Married
Race/Ethnicity ⁹		
White*	70.3%	55.1%
Black	4.1%	4.0%
Hispanic*	18.2%	25.9%
Asian*	4.0%	12.3%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.6%	0.5%
Other*	3.0%	2.3%
Average age*	41.5	46.9
Percent with college degree or better*	45.7%	28.7%
Percent employed*	76.2%	61.7%
Employment ⁹		
Private employer	69.4%	68.9%
Public employer	17.2%	16.4%
Self-employed [^]	13.3%	14.3%
Veteran status*	11.2%	13.4%
Average individual salary		
Men	\$54,175	\$54,386
Women*	\$41,453	\$30,308
Median individual salary		
Men	\$40,000	\$40,000
Women	\$33,900	\$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*	7.0%	17.3%
Percent disabled	29.1%	30.0%
Average household income*	\$98,445	\$82,551
Median household income	\$77,000	\$62,800
Average income gap	\$34,293	\$33,190
Single wage earner*	25.3%	34.2%
Homeownership*	55.2%	70.1%
Percent with children under 18*	18.3%	54.3%

* 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	2.1
Single wage earner (parents)	36.2%	38.8%
Average household income (parents)*	\$72,143	\$79,453
Median household income (parents)	\$57,040	\$60,940
Homeownership (parents)*	48.0%	63.8%

* 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
Alameda	5884	1.12%
Alpine	2	0.41%
Amador	62	0.49%
Butte	428	0.54%
Calaveras	85	0.52%
Colusa	27	0.44%
Contra Costa	2722	0.79%
Del Norte	42	0.46%
El Dorado	351	0.60%
Fresno	1594	0.63%
Glenn	33	0.36%
Humboldt	383	0.75%
Imperial	205	0.52%
Inyo	45	0.58%
Kern	1144	0.55%
Kings	200	0.58%
Lake	196	0.82%
Lassen	42	0.44%
Los Angeles	25173	0.80%
Madera	265	0.73%
Marin	1052	1.05%
Mariposa	50	0.76%
Mendocino	284	0.85%
Merced	364	0.57%
Modoc	20	0.53%
Mono	27	0.53%
Monterey	911	0.75%
Napa	315	0.69%
Nevada	213	0.58%
Orange	5524	0.59%
Placer	472	0.51%
Plumas	37	0.41%
Riverside	4242	0.84%
Sacramento	3534	0.78%
San Benito	100	0.63%
San Bernardino	2888	0.55%
San Diego	7645	0.77%
San Francisco	8902	2.70%
San Joaquin	1139	0.63%
San Luis Obispo	500	0.54%
San Mateo	2058	0.81%
Santa Barbara	892	0.65%
Santa Clara	3932	0.69%
Santa Cruz	979	1.07%
Shasta	279	0.44%
Sierra	8	0.53%
Siskiyou	93	0.50%
Solano	917	0.70%

County	Number of same-sex couples	Percent of same-sex couples out of all households
Sonoma	2125	1.23%
Stanislaus	849	0.58%
Sutter	126	0.47%
Tehama	74	0.35%
Trinity	24	0.43%
Tulare	696	0.63%
Tuolumne	104	0.50%
Ventura	1382	0.57%
Yolo	396	0.67%
Yuba	102	0.50%

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 Gary J. Gates, M.V. Lee Badgett, Kate Chambers, Jennifer Macomber, The Williams Institute & The Urban Institute, *Adoption and Foster Care by Gay and Lesbian Parents in the United States* (2007), available at <http://www.law.ucla.edu/Williamsinstitute/publications/Policy-Adoption-index.html>.

⁹ Due to rounding, percent may not add to 100.

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