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Census Snapshot: New Mexico

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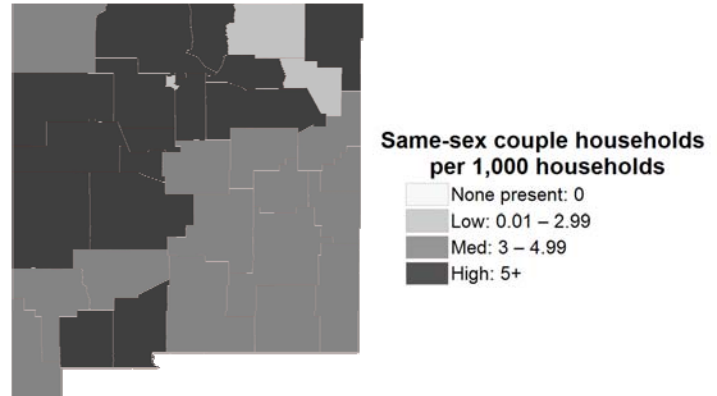
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Using data from the U.S. Census Bureau, this report provides demographic and economic information about same-sex couples and same-sex couples raising children in New Mexico. We compare same-sex “unmarried partners,” which the Census Bureau defines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



In many ways, the more than 6,000 same-sex couples living in New Mexico 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 New Mexico's economy. Census data also show that 27% of same-sex couples in New Mexico 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 home ownership.

SAME-SEX COUPLES AND THE LGB POPULATION IN NEW MEXICO

- In 2000, there were 4,496 same-sex couples living in New Mexico.²
- By 2005, the number of same-sex couples increased to 6,063.³ This increase likely reflects same-sex couples' growing willingness to disclose their partnerships on government surveys.
- In 2005, there were an estimated 68,411 gay, lesbian, and bisexual people (single and coupled) living in New Mexico.⁴

INDIVIDUALS IN SAME-SEX COUPLES ARE DEMOGRAPHICALLY AND GEOGRAPHICALLY DIVERSE

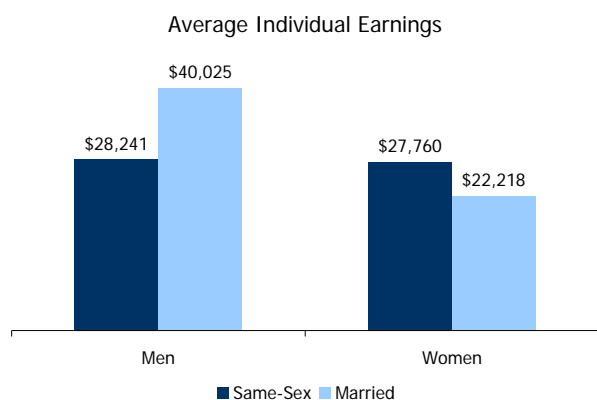
- There are more female same-sex couples (58%) than male same-sex couples (42%) in New Mexico.⁵
- Individuals in same-sex couples are, on average, 42 years old, and significantly younger than individuals in married couples (48 years old) in New Mexico.

- Same-sex couples live in every county in New Mexico and constitute 1.2% of coupled households and 0.7% of all households in the state. Bernalillo County reported the most same-sex couples with 1,770 couples (0.80% of all county households), followed by Santa Fe County with 619 couples (1.18%), and Dona Ana County with 342 couples (0.57%). The counties with the highest percentage of same-sex couples are Santa Fe County (1.18% of all county households), Sandoval County (0.81%), Bernalillo County (0.80%), and Taos County (0.71%).⁶
- New Mexico's same-sex couples are more racially and ethnically diverse than their married counterparts: 49% of individuals in same-sex couples are nonwhite, compared to 45% of married individuals.

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

- Individuals in same-sex couples in New Mexico are significantly more likely to be employed than married individuals: 71% of individuals in same-sex couples are employed, compared to 60% of married individuals.

- Contrary to a popular stereotype, the annual earnings of men in same-sex couples are significantly lower than those of married men. On average, men in same-sex couples in New Mexico earn \$28,241 each year, significantly less than \$40,025 for married men. The median income of men in same-sex couples in New Mexico is \$27,000, or 12% less than that of married men (\$30,700).
- Women in same-sex couples in New Mexico earn an average of \$27,760 per year (with a median of \$25,300), more than married women, whose earnings average \$22,218 (with a median of \$18,000). 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 New Mexico are most likely to work in the private sector: 62% of individuals in same-sex couples work in the private sector, compared to 60% of married individuals; 26% of individuals in same-sex couples work in the public sector, compared to 25% of married individuals; and 11% of individuals in same-sex couples are self-employed, compared to 15% of married individuals.
- Individuals in same-sex couples are significantly more likely to have a college degree: 39% of individuals in same-sex couples and 25% 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 18% of married individuals.

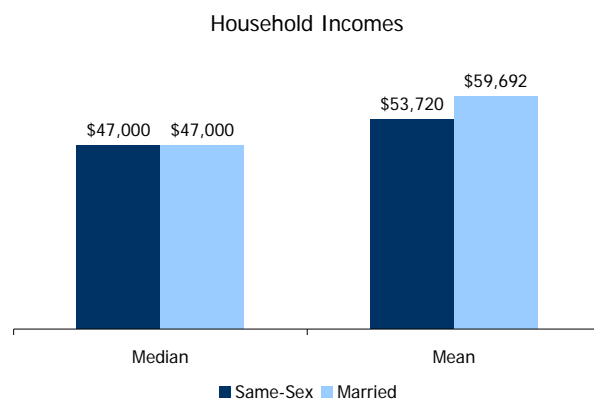
SAME-SEX PARTNERS IN NEW MEXICO DEPEND UPON ONE ANOTHER IN WAYS THAT ARE SIMILAR TO MARRIED COUPLES

- Couples in which one partner does not work or earns significantly less than the other partner may indicate financial interdependence. 21% of same-sex couples have only one wage earner, compared to 34% of married couples.

- The average income gap between same-sex partners in New Mexico is \$13,908, compared to \$23,378 for married spouses.
- 34% of same-sex and 32% of married couples in New Mexico have at least one partner who is disabled.
- 9% of same-sex couples have at least one partner who is age 65 or older, compared to 20% of married couples.

SAME-SEX HOUSEHOLDS IN NEW MEXICO HAVE SIMILAR ECONOMIC RESOURCES TO MARRIED HOUSEHOLDS

- The median income of same-sex and married coupled households in New Mexico is \$47,000. The average household income of same-sex couples is \$53,720, less than \$59,692 for married couples.

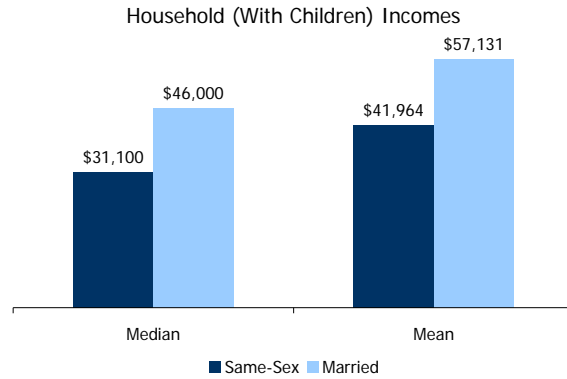


- Same-sex couples are significantly less likely than married couples to own their homes: 66% of same-sex couples in New Mexico own their home, compared to 83% of married couples.

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

- 27% of same-sex couples in New Mexico are raising children under the age of 18.
- As of 2005, an estimated 3,624 of New Mexico's children are living in households headed by same-sex couples.⁷
- In New Mexico, same-sex and married couples with children under 18 in the home have, on average, 2 children.
- 9% of New Mexico's adopted children (or 1,056 children) live with a lesbian or gay parent.⁸
- 32% of same-sex parents in New Mexico have only one wage earner, compared to 38% of married parents.

- Same-sex parents have far fewer financial resources to support their children than married parents in New Mexico. The median household income of same-sex couples with children is \$31,100, or 32% lower than that of married parents (\$46,000). The average household income of same-sex couples with children is \$41,964, significantly less than \$57,131 for married parents.
- While 61% of same-sex couples with children own their home, a significantly larger percentage of married parents (78%) own their home.



CONCLUSION

Census data provide valuable information about gay and lesbian couples in New Mexico. While in many respects New Mexico'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 home ownership.

	Same-Sex	Married
Race/Ethnicity ⁹		
White	51.1%	54.5%
Black	1.5%	1.3%
Hispanic	38.7%	36.2%
Asian	0.4%	1.2%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	7.0%	5.5%
Other	1.3%	1.3%
Average age*	41.7	47.9
Percent with college degree or better*	39.3%	24.7%
Percent employed*	71.0%	59.7%
Employment ⁹		
Private employer	62.5%	60.2%
Public employer	26.4%	24.7%
Self-employed	11.1%	14.7%
Veteran status*	9.4%	18.4%
Average individual salary		
Men*	\$28,241	\$40,025
Women*	\$27,760	\$22,218
Median individual salary		
Men	\$27,000	\$30,700
Women	\$25,300	\$18,000

* 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*	9.2%	19.7%
Percent disabled	33.6%	32.0%
Average household income [^]	\$53,720	\$59,692
Median household income	\$47,000	\$47,000
Average income gap*	\$13,908	\$23,378
Single wage earner*	21.0%	33.5%
Homeownership*	66.3%	82.7%
Percent with children under 18*	27.0%	49.8%

* 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	2.2	2.0
Single wage earner (parents)	31.9%	37.5%
Average household income (parents)*	\$41,964	\$57,131
Median household income (parents)	\$31,100	\$46,000
Homeownership (parents)*	61.3%	78.2%

* 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
Bernalillo	1770	0.80%
Catron	8	0.51%
Chaves	93	0.41%
Cibola	44	0.53%
Colfax	17	0.29%
Curry	63	0.38%
De Baca	3	0.33%
Dona Ana	342	0.57%
Eddy	76	0.39%
Grant	49	0.40%
Guadalupe	7	0.42%
Harding	1	0.27%
Hidalgo	7	0.33%
Lea	70	0.36%
Lincoln	28	0.34%
Los Alamos	21	0.28%
Luna	55	0.59%
McKinley	141	0.66%
Mora	11	0.55%
Otero	81	0.35%
Quay	17	0.40%
Rio Arriba	103	0.68%
Roosevelt	31	0.47%
Sandoval	255	0.81%
San Juan	167	0.44%
San Miguel	77	0.69%
Santa Fe	619	1.18%
Sierra	28	0.46%
Socorro	37	0.55%
Taos	90	0.71%
Torrance	27	0.45%
Union	9	0.52%
Valencia	149	0.66%

About the Authors

Adam P. Romero is Public Policy Fellow at the Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. J.D. Yale Law School; A.B., *summa cum laude*, Cornell University. His current research examines the significance of family in society and law, especially as relevant to disabled adults without family.

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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*, 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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