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Census Snapshot: Maryland

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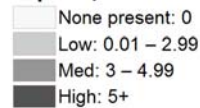
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Using data from the U.S. Census Bureau, this report provides demographic and economic information about same-sex couples and same-sex couples raising children in Maryland. We compare same-sex “unmarried partners,” which the Census Bureau defines as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

**Same-sex couple households per 1,000 households**



In many ways, the over 15,600 same-sex couples living in Maryland are similar to married couples. According to Census 2000, they live throughout the State, are racially and ethnically diverse, have partners that depend upon one another financially, and actively participate in Maryland’s economy. Census data also show that 21% of same-sex couples in Maryland are raising children. However, same-sex parents have fewer economic resources to provide for their families than do their married counterparts: they have significantly lower household incomes, on average, and significantly lower rates of home ownership.

### SAME-SEX COUPLES AND THE LGBT POPULATION IN MARYLAND

- In 2000, there were 11,243 same-sex couples living in Maryland.<sup>2</sup>
- By 2005, the number of same-sex couples increased to more than 15,600.<sup>3</sup> The increase likely reflects same-sex couples’ growing willingness to disclose their partnerships on government surveys.
- There are more than 178,000 gay, lesbian, and bisexual people (single and coupled) currently living in Maryland.<sup>4</sup>

### INDIVIDUALS IN SAME-SEX COUPLES ARE DEMOGRAPHICALLY AND GEOGRAPHICALLY DIVERSE

- More same-sex couples in Maryland are female (53%) than male (47%).<sup>5</sup>
- Individuals in same-sex couples are, on average, 41 years old, and significantly younger than individuals in married couples (48 years old).

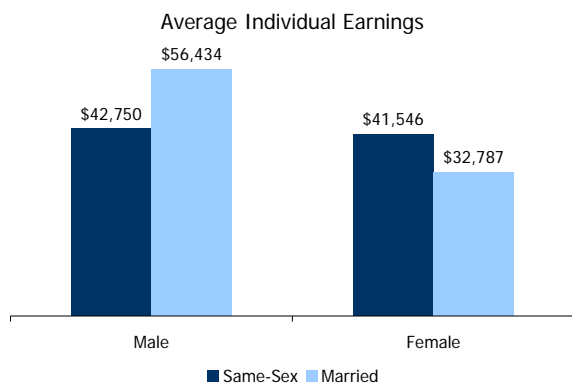
- Same-sex couples live in every county in Maryland and constitute 1.0% of all coupled households and 0.6% of all households in the State. In 2000, Baltimore City reported the most same-sex couples at 2,118 (0.8% of all city households), followed by Montgomery County with 2,070 couples (0.6% of all county households), Prince George’s County with 1,680 couples (0.6%), and Baltimore County at 1,538 couples (0.5%).<sup>6</sup>
- Same-sex couples in Maryland are as racially and ethnically diverse as their married counterparts: 26% of same-sex couples and 27% of married couples in Maryland are nonwhite.

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

- Individuals in same-sex couples in Maryland are more likely to be employed than are married individuals: 80% compared to 70%.
- Contrary to a popular stereotype, men in same-sex couples have significantly lower incomes than married men. On average, men in same-sex couples in Maryland earn \$42,750 per year,

compared to \$56,434 for married men. The median income of men in same-sex couples in Maryland is \$35,200, or 21% less than that of married men (\$44,600).

- Women in same-sex couples earn an average of \$41,546 per year (with a median of \$35,000), significantly more than married women, whose earnings average \$32,787 (with a median of \$28,000). Women in same-sex couples, on average, earn less than married men and men in same-sex couples.



- Individuals in same-sex couples in Maryland are more likely to work in the private sector: 69% of individuals in same-sex couples work in the private sector, compared to 65% of married individuals; 21% of individuals in same-sex couples work in the public sector, compared to 24% of married individuals; and 10% of individuals in same-sex couples are self-employed, compared to 11% of married individuals.
- Individuals in same-sex couples are significantly more likely to have a college degree: 48% of individuals in same-sex couples and 36% 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: 8% of individuals in same-sex couples are veterans, compared to 17% of married individuals.

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

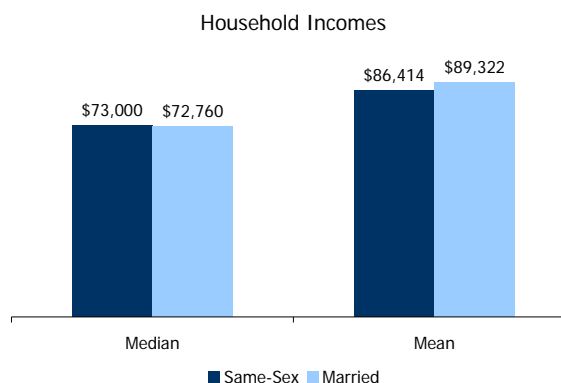
- Couples in which one partner does not work or earns significantly less than the other partner may indicate financial interdependence: 21% of same-sex couples have only one wage earner, compared to 29% of married couples.
- The average income gap between same-sex partners is sizeable at \$26,853, though smaller than the gap for married couples (\$34,163).

The presence of a senior or disabled partner may also indicate interdependence: 7% of same-sex couples in Maryland include a partner over age 65, compared to 17% of married couples.

- A similar percentage of same-sex and married couples in Maryland have at least one partner who is disabled: 23% of same-sex couples, compared to 25% of married couples.

#### **SAME-SEX AND MARRIED HOUSEHOLDS IN MARYLAND HAVE SIMILAR RESOURCES**

- The median income of same-sex coupled households in Maryland is \$73,000, compared to \$72,760 for married couples. The average household income of same-sex couples is \$86,414, less than \$89,322 for married couples.

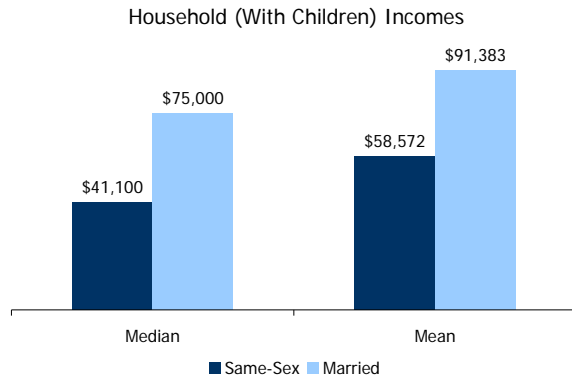


- Same-sex couples are significantly less likely than married couples to own their homes: 66% of same-sex couples in Maryland own their home, compared to 83% of married couples.

#### **SAME-SEX COUPLES ARE RAISING CHILDREN IN MARYLAND, BUT WITH MUCH FEWER RESOURCES THAN MARRIED PARENTS**

- Approximately 21% of same-sex couples in Maryland are raising children under the age of 18.
- As of 2005, an estimated 5,900 of Maryland's children are living in households headed by same-sex couples.<sup>7</sup>
- In Maryland, married couples and same-sex couples with children under 18 in the home have, on average, 2 children.
- Nearly 7% of Maryland's adopted children live with a lesbian or gay parent.<sup>8</sup>
- There are significant income disparities between same-sex and married couples with children. The median household income of same-sex couples with children is \$41,100, or 45% lower than that of married parents (\$75,000). The average

household income of same-sex couples with children is \$58,572, significantly low than \$91,383 for married parents.



- 46% of same-sex parents have a single wage earner, compared to 31% of married couples.
- While only slightly more than half (51%) of same-sex couples with children own a home, 81% of married parents own a home.

### CONCLUSION

Census data provide valuable information about gay and lesbian couples in Maryland. While in many respects Maryland's same-sex couples look like married couples, on average, those with children have significantly lower household incomes and lower rates of home ownership.

**Table One: Characteristics of individuals in couples**

	Same-Sex	Married
Race/Ethnicity <sup>9</sup>		
White	75%	73%
Black	18%	18%
Asian	1%	5%*
Hispanic	4%	4%
American Indian/Alaskan Native*	1%	<1%
Other	2%	1%
Average age	41	48*
Percent with a college degree or better	48%	36%*
Percent employed	80%	70%*
Type of employment		
Private employer	69%	65% ^
Public employer	21%	24%
Self-employed	10%	11%
Veteran Status	8%	17%*
Average individual salary		
Men	\$42,750	\$56,434*
Woman	\$41,546	\$32,787*
Median individual salary		
Men	\$35,200	\$44,600
Woman	\$35,000	\$28,000

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

**Table Two: Characteristics of couples**

	Same-Sex	Married
At least one partner over 65	7%	17%*
Percent disabled	23%	25%
Average household income	\$86,414	\$89,322
Median household income	\$73,000	\$72,760
Income gap between partners	\$26,853	\$34,163*
Single wage earner	21%	29%*
Homeownership	66%	83%*
Percent with children under 18	21%	49%*

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

**Table Three: Characteristics of couples with children**

	Same-Sex parents	Married parents
Average number of children under 18 in the household	2	2
Single wage earner (parents)*	46%	31%*
Average household income (parents)	\$58,572	\$91,383*
Median household income (parents)	\$41,100	\$75,000
Homeownership	51%	81%*

\* Difference significant at the 5% 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
Allegany	97	0.30%
Anne Arundel	903	0.50%
Baltimore	1538	0.50%
Baltimore city	2118	0.80%
Calvert	131	0.50%
Caroline	59	0.50%
Carroll	217	0.40%
Cecil	153	0.50%
Charles	177	0.40%
Dorchester	51	0.40%
Frederick	356	0.50%
Garrett	21	0.20%
Harford	349	0.40%
Howard	496	0.60%
Kent	38	0.50%
Montgomery	2070	0.60%
Prince George's	1680	0.60%
Queen Anne's	64	0.40%
Somerset	31	0.40%
St. Mary's	121	0.40%
Talbot	66	0.50%
Washington	236	0.50%
Wicomico	174	0.50%
Worcester	97	0.50%

## 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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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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).

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> Simmons & O'Connell, *supra* note 2.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, *Unmarried Partner Households by Sex of Partners*, PCT014.

<sup>7</sup> 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.

<sup>8</sup> 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>.

<sup>9</sup> Due to rounding, percent may not add to 100.

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