

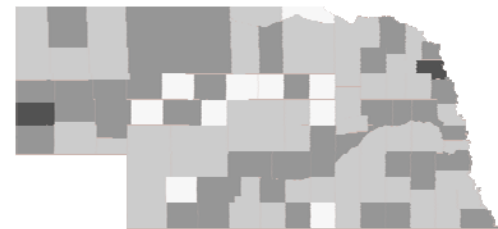
NEBRASKA

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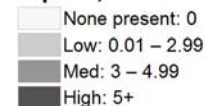
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Using data from the U.S. Census Bureau, this report provides demographic and economic information about same-sex couples and same-sex couples raising children in Nebraska. We compare same-sex “unmarried partners,” which the Census Bureau defines as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

In many ways, the almost 4,000 same-sex couples living in Nebraska 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 Nebraska’s economy. Census data also show that 30% of same-sex couples in Nebraska 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 couple households
per 1,000 households



SAME-SEX COUPLES AND THE LGB POPULATION IN NEBRASKA

- In 2000, there were 2,332 same-sex couples living in Nebraska.²
- By 2005, the number of same-sex couples increased to 3,986.³ This increase likely reflects same-sex couples’ growing willingness to disclose their partnerships on government surveys.
- In 2005, there were an estimated 42,934 gay, lesbian, and bisexual people (single and coupled) living in Nebraska.⁴

INDIVIDUALS IN SAME-SEX COUPLES ARE DEMOGRAPHICALLY AND GEOGRAPHICALLY DIVERSE

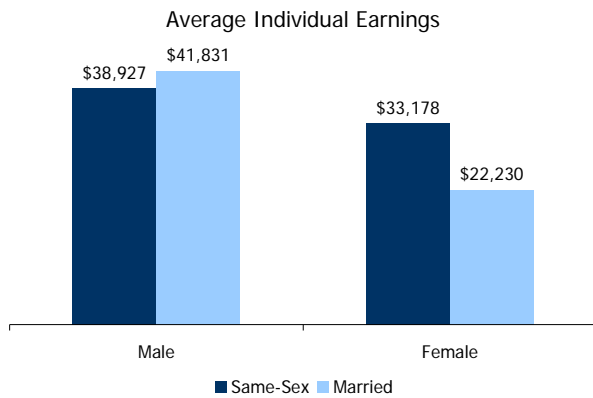
- There are more female same-sex couples (52%) than male same-sex couples (48%) in Nebraska.⁵
- Individuals in same-sex couples are, on average, 40 years old, and significantly younger than individuals in married couples (48 years old) in Nebraska.

- Same-sex couples live in almost every county in Nebraska and constitute 0.6% of coupled households and 0.4% of all households in the state. Douglas County reported the most same-sex couples with 800 couples (0.44% of all households in the county), followed by Lancaster County with 422 couples (0.43%), and Sarpy County with 129 couples (0.30%). The counties with the highest percentage of same-sex couples are Thurston County (0.67% of all county households), Banner County (0.64%), and McPherson County (0.50%).⁶
- Nebraska’s same-sex couples are more racially and ethnically diverse than their married counterparts: 12% of same-sex couples are nonwhite, compared to 8% of married couples.

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

- Individuals in same-sex couples in Nebraska are significantly more likely to be employed than are married individuals: 85% of individuals in same-sex couples are employed, compared to 72% of married individuals.

- Contrary to a popular stereotype, the annual earnings of men in same-sex couples are lower than those of married men. On average, men in same-sex couples in Nebraska earn \$38,927 each year, less than \$41,831 for married men. The median income of men in same-sex couples in Nebraska is \$30,400, or 8% less than that of married men (\$33,000).
- Women in same-sex couples in Nebraska earn an average of \$33,178 per year (with a median of \$25,000), more than married women, whose earnings average \$22,230 (with a median of \$19,000). Women in same-sex couples earn less than married men as well as men in same-sex couples.



- Individuals in same-sex couples in Nebraska are more likely to work in the private sector: 76% of individuals in same-sex couples work in the private sector, compared to 68% of married individuals; 16% of individuals in same-sex couples work in the public sector, compared to 15% of married individuals; and 8% of individuals in same-sex couples are self-employed, compared to 16% of married individuals.
- Individuals in same-sex couples are significantly more likely to have a college degree: 40% of individuals in same-sex couples and 26% 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: 13% of individuals in same-sex couples are veterans, compared to 17% of married individuals.

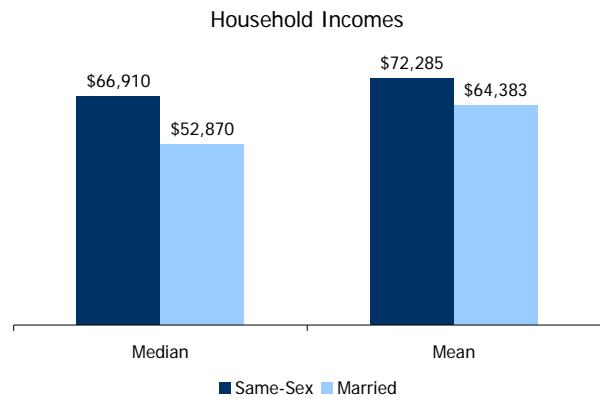
SAME-SEX PARTNERS IN NEBRASKA DEPEND UPON ONE ANOTHER IN WAYS THAT ARE SIMILAR TO MARRIED COUPLES

- Couples in which one partner does not work or earns significantly less than the other partner may indicate financial interdependence. 20% of same-sex couples have only one wage earner, compared to 25% of married couples.

- The income gap between same-sex partners is \$23,432, compared to \$24,324 for married spouses.
- A larger percentage of same-sex couples in Nebraska have at least one partner who is disabled: 29% of same-sex couples, compared to 24% of married couples.
- 4% of same-sex couples have at least one partner who is age 65 or older, compared to 19% of married couples.

SAME-SEX HOUSEHOLDS IN NEBRASKA HAVE SIMILAR ECONOMIC RESOURCES TO MARRIED HOUSEHOLDS

- The median income of same-sex coupled households in Nebraska is \$66,910, compared to \$52,870 for married couples. The average household income of same-sex couples is \$72,285, compared to \$64,383 for married couples.

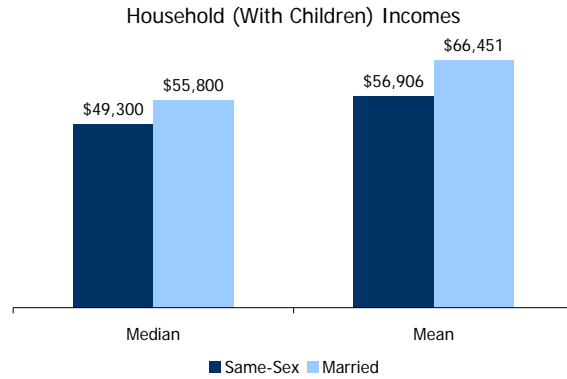


- Same-sex couples are significantly less likely than married couples to own their homes: 68% of same-sex couples in Nebraska own their home, compared to 83% of married couples.

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

- About 30% of same-sex couples in Nebraska are raising children under the age of 18.
- As of 2005, an estimated 1,885 of Nebraska's children are living in households headed by same-sex couples.⁷
- In Nebraska, married and same-sex couples with children under 18 in the home have, on average, 2 children.
- More than 3% of Nebraska's adopted children (or 367 children) live with a lesbian or gay parent.⁸
- 17% of same-sex parents have only one wage earner, compared to 24% of married parents.

- Same-sex parents have fewer financial resources to support their children than married parents in Nebraska. The median household income of same-sex couples with children is \$49,300, or 12% lower than that of married parents (\$55,800). The average household income of same-sex couples with children is \$56,906, less than \$66,451 for married parents.
- While 48% of same-sex couples with children own their home, a significantly larger percentage of married parents (79%) own their home.



CONCLUSION

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

	Same-Sex	Married
Race/Ethnicity ⁹		
White	87.9%	92.3%
Black	7.2%	1.8%*
Hispanic	0.6%	3.7%*
Asian	1.5%	1.1%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1.5%	0.4% ^
Other	1.4%	0.6%
Average age	40.3	48.0*
Percent with a college degree or better	39.7%	26.1%*
Percent Employed	84.7%	72.0%*
Employment ⁹		
Private employer	76.4%	68.3%
Public employer	16.0%	15.3%
Self-employed	7.6%	15.9% ^
Veteran Status	13.1%	17.0%
Average individual salary		
Men	\$38,927	\$41,831
Woman	\$33,178	\$22,230*
Median individual salary		
Men	\$30,400	\$33,000
Woman	\$25,000	\$19,000

* 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	4.2%	19.3%*
Percent disabled	28.9%	23.8%
Average household income	\$72,285	\$64,383
Median household income	\$66,910	\$52,870
Income gap between partners	\$23,432	\$24,324
Single wage earner	20.5%	24.5%
Homeownership	67.9%	83.0%*
Percent with children under 18	29.7%	47.5%*

* 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	1.6	2.0*
Single wage earner (parents)	16.9%	24.3%
Average household income (parents)	\$56,906	\$66,451
Median household income (parents)	\$49,300	\$55,800
Homeownership	48.2%	79.5%*

* 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
Adams	20	0.16%
Antelope	4	0.14%
Arthur	0	0.00%
Banner	2	0.64%
Blaine	0	0.00%
Boone	2	0.08%
Box Butte	12	0.25%
Boyd	0	0.00%
Brown	4	0.26%
Buffalo	62	0.39%
Burt	12	0.38%
Butler	9	0.26%
Cass	39	0.43%
Cedar	15	0.41%
Chase	3	0.18%
Cherry	12	0.48%
Cheyenne	6	0.15%
Clay	8	0.29%
Colfax	12	0.33%
Cuming	6	0.15%
Custer	9	0.19%
Dakota	24	0.34%
Dawes	12	0.34%
Dawson	30	0.34%
Deuel	1	0.11%
Dixon	7	0.29%
Dodge	47	0.33%
Douglas	800	0.44%
Dundy	2	0.21%
Fillmore	5	0.19%
Franklin	6	0.40%
Frontier	4	0.34%
Furnas	4	0.18%
Gage	18	0.19%
Garden	4	0.39%
Garfield	3	0.37%
Gosper	2	0.23%
Grant	1	0.34%
Greeley	0	0.00%
Hall	72	0.35%
Hamilton	7	0.20%
Harlan	4	0.25%
Hayes	0	0.00%
Hitchcock	5	0.39%
Holt	7	0.15%
Hooker	0	0.00%
Howard	9	0.35%
Jefferson	15	0.43%

County	Number of same-sex couples	Percent of same-sex couples out of all households
Johnson	2	0.11%
Kearney	6	0.23%
Keith	10	0.27%
Keya Paha	1	0.24%
Kimball	6	0.35%
Knox	6	0.16%
Lancaster	422	0.43%
Lincoln	39	0.28%
Logan	0	0.00%
Loup	0	0.00%
Madison	31	0.23%
McPherson	1	0.50%
Merrick	13	0.41%
Morrill	7	0.33%
Nance	2	0.13%
Nemaha	9	0.30%
Nuckolls	6	0.27%
Otoe	12	0.20%
Pawnee	3	0.22%
Perkins	1	0.08%
Phelps	12	0.31%
Pierce	12	0.40%
Platte	43	0.36%
Polk	2	0.09%
Red Willow	22	0.47%
Richardson	17	0.43%
Rock	3	0.39%
Saline	13	0.25%
Sarpy	129	0.30%
Saunders	21	0.28%
Scotts Bluff	59	0.40%
Seward	19	0.32%
Sheridan	5	0.20%
Sherman	1	0.07%
Sioux	1	0.17%
Stanton	2	0.09%
Thayer	8	0.31%
Thomas	1	0.31%
Thurston	15	0.67%
Valley	2	0.10%
Washington	20	0.29%
Wayne	9	0.26%
Webster	0	0.00%
Wheeler	0	0.00%
York	13	0.23%

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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