

CENSUS SNAPSHOT



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CALIFORNIA LESBIAN, GAY, AND BISEXUAL POPULATION

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This report provides a general demographic overview of same-sex couples as well as the broader lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) population in California.

We use the 2005/2006 American Community Survey (ACS), conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, to compare characteristics of same-sex couples to their different-sex married counterparts. In all cases, when this report describes characteristics of couples, the data source is the ACS. While these data provide an excellent source of information about same-sex couples, it cannot provide information about the broader LGB population because it includes no explicit questions about sexual orientation.

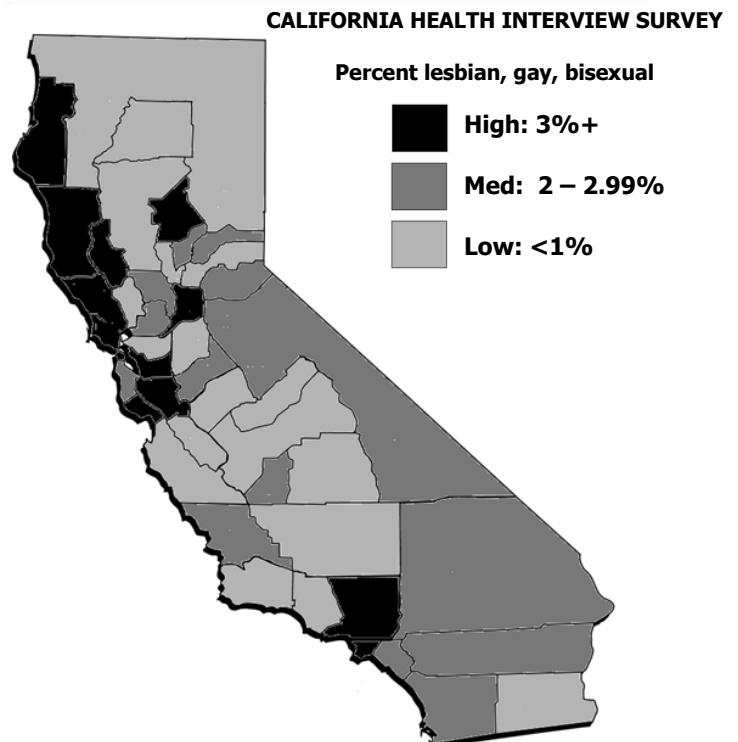
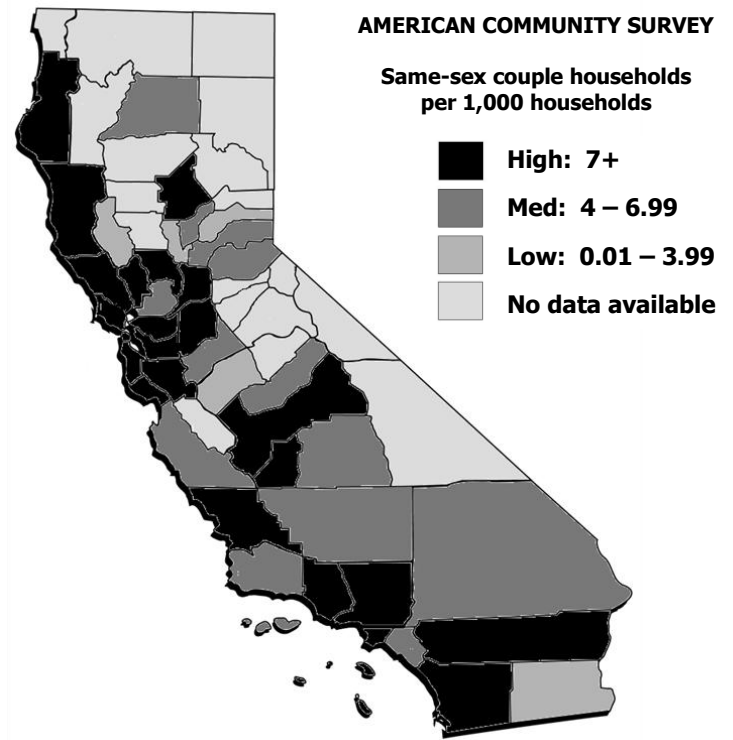
The 2003 and 2005 California Health Interview Surveys (CHIS) ask respondents their sexual orientation and collect much of the same demographic information included in the ACS. We use data from the CHIS to compare demographic traits between LGB and heterosexual men and women (both single and coupled), providing a more well-rounded demographic portrait of California's LGB community. In all cases where this report describes characteristics of the LGB community, the data source is the CHIS.¹

THERE ARE 861,000 LESBIAN, GAY, AND BISEXUAL ADULTS LIVING IN CALIFORNIA. 109,000 SAME-SEX COUPLES LIVE IN THE STATE.

- There are an estimated 861,000 lesbian, gay, and bisexual men and women in California, comprising 3.2% of the adult population.
- There are an estimated 108,734 same-sex couples in the state comprising nearly 9 of every 1,000 households in California, well above the national average of 7 per 1,000 households.

SAME-SEX COUPLES AND LGB INDIVIDUALS LIVE THROUGHOUT CALIFORNIA

- While data for same-sex couples are not available for all California counties in 2006, Census 2000 data show that same-sex couples live in all of California's 58 counties.



- The number of same-sex couples per 1,000 households exceeds the national average in 38% (22) of California counties, led by San Francisco at 29, Marin at 15, Alameda at 13, and Napa, Mendocino, Riverside, Santa Cruz, and Sonoma all at 11.
- Among California counties, San Francisco has the highest percentage of lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals at 14%. That percentage is above the state average in 11 other California counties: Humboldt (5.6%), Lake (5%), Santa Cruz (5%), Sacramento (4.3%), Alameda (4.2%), Los Angeles (3.9%), Mendocino (3.7%), Sonoma (3.7%), Butte (3.5%), Santa Clara (3.3%), and Marin (3.3%).

SAME-SEX COUPLES AND LGB INDIVIDUALS ARE MORE URBAN

- Same-sex couples are slightly more likely to live in urban areas than are different-sex married couples, 96% vs. 94%. Conversely, 4% of same-sex couples live in rural areas, compared to 6% of different-sex married couples.
- The LGB population is significantly more urban than the heterosexual population with 81% of LGB individuals living in an urban area compared to 69% of heterosexuals. Conversely, 19% of heterosexuals live in suburban areas and 11% live in rural areas, compared to 12% and 7%, respectively, for LGB individuals.

NEARLY A QUARTER OF SAME-SEX COUPLES IN CALIFORNIA ARE RAISING MORE THAN 52,000 CHILDREN

- A third of female same-sex couples (33%) and 18% of male same-sex couples (approximately 26,100 couples in total) in California are raising more than

52,000 children under the age of 18. 53% of different-sex married couples in California are raising children.

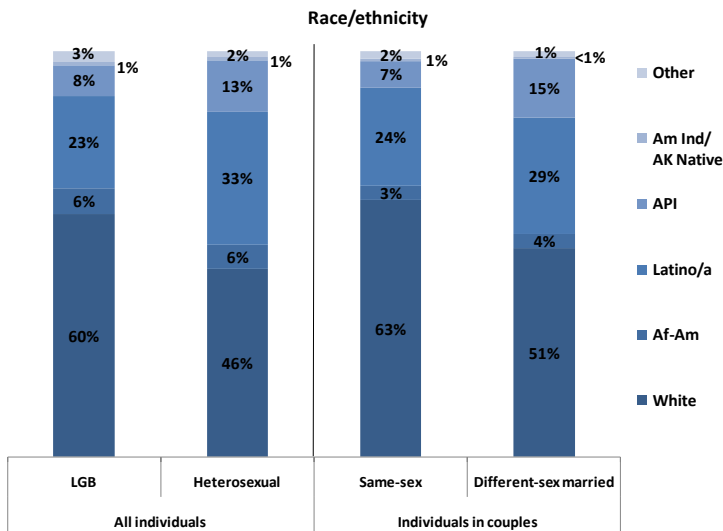
- Among LGB individuals, both single and coupled, 6% of men and 25% of women (approximately 125,000 individuals) are raising children, as are 42% of heterosexuals.

MEN COMPRISE A MAJORITY AMONG SAME-SEX COUPLES AND LGB INDIVIDUALS

- Among same-sex couples, 58% are male and 42% are female.
- Similarly, 58% of LGB individuals are male. Heterosexuals are evenly split between men and women.

A QUARTER OF SAME-SEX COUPLES AND LGB INDIVIDUALS ARE LATINOS OR LATINAS

- Latinos and Latinas constitute the largest racial ethnic minority among California’s same-sex couples and the LGB population. Nearly a quarter of those in same-sex couples are Latino/a (24%) compared to 29% of different-sex married couples. Similarly, Latinos and Latinas constitute 23% of California’s LGB population, compared to 33% of heterosexuals.²
- Among those in same-sex couples, 7% are Asians and Pacific Islanders (APIs), compared to 15% of those in different-sex married couples. APIs comprise 8% of California’s LGB population, compared to 13% of heterosexuals.
- Only 3% of individuals in same-sex couples and 4% of those in different-sex married couples are African-American. African-Americans comprise a somewhat higher portion of LGB and heterosexual individuals, constituting 6% of those in each group.



- Nearly two-thirds (63%) of individuals in same-sex couples are White, compared to just over half (51%) of those in different-sex married couples. The 60% of LGB individuals who are White compares to just over half (46%) of heterosexuals.

THOSE IN SAME-SEX COUPLES AND LGB INDIVIDUALS ARE YOUNGER

- People in same-sex couples are significantly younger than their different-sex married counterparts as nearly 38% are under age 40 compared to only 31% of those in different-sex couples.

- Among LGB individuals, 54% are under age 40 compared to 49% of heterosexuals. Conversely, LGB individuals are significantly less likely than heterosexuals to be aged 65 or older, 3% versus 5%.

WOMEN IN SAME-SEX COUPLES AND LESBIAN/BISEXUAL WOMEN HAVE HIGHER RATES OF MILITARY SERVICE THAN OTHER WOMEN

- Despite the military’s historic policies of excluding LGB people from service, 4% of women in same-sex couples and 3% of lesbian/bisexual women in California have served in the military. These rates are significantly higher than the 1% of women in different-sex married couples and heterosexual women who have served.
- While men in same-sex couples are significantly less likely to have served in the military than men in different-sex married couples (11% versus 20%), service rates for gay/bisexual men and heterosexual men are similar, 13% versus 15%.

THOSE IN SAME-SEX COUPLES AND LGB INDIVIDUALS HAVE HIGHER LEVELS OF EDUCATION

- Nearly half (47%) of those in same-sex couples in California hold a college degree, significantly higher than the third (33%) of those in different-sex married couples who have a college degree.
- Similarly, 46% of LGB individuals hold a college degree compared 32% of heterosexuals.

THOSE IN SAME-SEX COUPLES AND LGB INDIVIDUALS HAVE HIGHER LEVELS OF EMPLOYMENT

- Three-quarters of those in same-sex couples are employed, significantly higher than the 65% of those in different-sex married couples who are employed.
- Similarly, 72% of LGB individuals are employed, significantly higher than the 68% of heterosexuals who are employed.

INDIVIDUAL INCOME IS LOWER FOR MEN IN SAME-SEX COUPLES THAN MEN IN DIFFERENT-SEX MARRIED COUPLES

- The annual individual earnings of men in same-sex couples are slightly lower than the earnings of men in different-sex married couples (individual income data is only available in the ACS). On average, men in same-sex couples in

California earn \$62,831 each year, slightly less than the \$65,636 average earnings of men in different-sex married couples. The median income for men in same-sex couples is \$48,000, lower than the \$49,800 figure for men in different-sex married couples.

- Women in same-sex couples in California earn an average of \$51,127 per year (with a median of \$42,000), significantly more than women in different-sex married couples, whose earnings average \$39,277 (with a median of \$30,000). Women in same-sex couples still earn less than men in same-sex couples.

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOMES OF SAME-SEX COUPLES ARE HIGHER THAN INCOMES OF DIFFERENT-SEX MARRIED COUPLES; HOUSEHOLD INCOMES FOR GLB INDIVIDUALS ARE SIMILAR TO HETEROSEXUALS

- Same-sex couples have higher median household incomes (\$103,030 for male couples and \$86,000 for female couples) than their different-sex married counterparts (\$76,500).
- The median household income of gay/bisexual men and heterosexual men is the same (\$55,000). For lesbian/bisexual women, median household income is higher (\$55,000) than that for heterosexual women (\$45,000).

SAME-SEX COUPLES AND THE LGB POPULATION IN CALIFORNIA HAVE LOWER HOME OWNERSHIP RATES

- Same-sex couples in California are significantly less likely to own their homes when compared to different-sex married couples (65% versus 73%).



- LGB individuals in California are also significantly less likely than heterosexuals to own their homes. Ownership rates are 44% for LGB individuals and 57% for heterosexuals.

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

- Couples in which one partner does not work or earns significantly less than the other partner may indicate financial interdependence: 31% of same-sex couples have only one wage earner, compared to 37% of different-sex married couples.
- The average income gap between same-sex partners in California is \$41,985, compared to \$40,627 for different-sex married spouses.
- At least one partner is disabled in 19% of both same-sex couples and different-sex married couples in California.
- At least one partner is age 65 or older in 9% of same-sex couples in California, compared to 17% of different-sex married couples.

SAME-SEX COUPLES RAISING CHILDREN IN CALIFORNIA HAVE FEWER ECONOMIC RESOURCES THAN DIFFERENT-SEX MARRIED PARENTS

- The median household income of same-sex couples with children is \$68,000, or 10% lower than that of different-sex married parents (\$75,400). The average household income of same-sex couples with children is \$81,673, significantly less than the \$97,519 figure for different-sex married parents.
- While 53% of same-sex couples with children own their home, a significantly larger percentage of different-sex married parents (68%) own their home.
- Stay-at-home parents are nearly as common among California’s same-sex couples as they are among different-sex married couples. Among same-sex couples raising children, 39% include only one wage earner, compared to 42% of different-sex married parents.

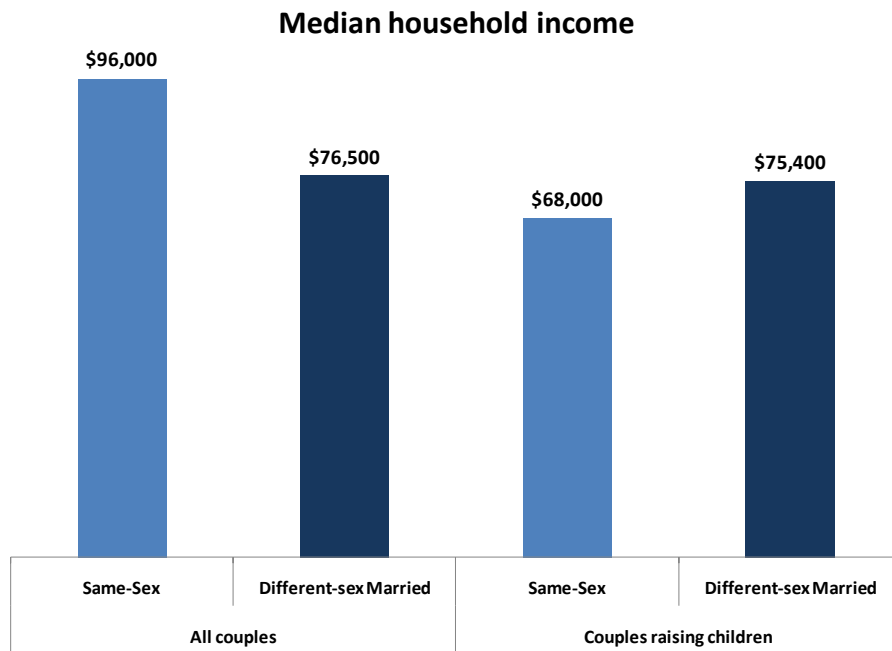


Table One: Characteristics of individuals

	California Health Interview Survey 2003/2005, Age 18-70		American Community Survey	
	LGB	Heterosexual	In a same-sex couple	In a different-sex married couple
Sex				
Male	57.5%*	49.6%	57.6%	50.0%
Female	42.5%*	50.4%	42.4%	50.0%
Race/Ethnicity				
White	59.8%*	46.4%	63.4%^	51.4%
Black	6.4%	6.0%	3.4%	3.5%
Hispanic	22.7%*	32.8%	24.1%^	28.8%
Asian/Pacific Islander	7.7%*	12.7%	6.7%^	14.5%
Am. Indian/Alaskan Native	0.7%	0.7%	.5%	0.4%
Other	2.7%*	1.5%	1.9%^	1.4%
Age				
18-24	16.0%	15.0%	5.1%^	2.0%
25-39	37.7%*	33.7%	32.7%^	29.3%
40-64	43.7%	46.1%	56.5%^	54.1%
65+	2.6%*	5.3%	5.6%^	14.5%
Place of residence				
Urban	81.0%*	69.3%	93.5%	95.6%
Suburban	12.2%*	19.4%		
Rural	6.8%*	11.4%	4.4%	6.5%
Percent with college degree or better	46.0*	31.9%	47.3%	32.8%
Median Household Income [#]				
Men	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$103,030	\$76,500
Women	\$55,000	\$45,000	\$86,000	\$76,500
Percent employed	71.8%*	68.5%	75.4 %^	65.3%
Average individual salary				
Men			\$62,831	\$65,636
Women			\$51,127^	\$39,277
Median individual salary				
Men			\$48,000	\$49,800
Women			\$42,000	\$30,000
Veteran status				
Men	12.7%	15.1%	11.4%^	19.7%
Women	3.4%*	1.0%	4.3%^	0.9%
Home ownership	43.6%*	57.4%	64.7%^	72.6%
Children under 18 in the home				
Men	6.4%*	38.6%	18.4%^	52.9%
Women	25.3%*	44.6%	32.9%^	52.9%

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

^ Difference significant from different-sex married couples at the 5% level or better (two-tailed tests).

Household income figures from the CHIS use only 2005 data

Table Two: Characteristics of couples, ACS only

	All couples		Couples raising children	
	Same-Sex	Married	Same-Sex	Married
At least one partner 65 or older	8.7% [^]	17.3%	1.9%	2.1%
At least one partner disabled	19.4%	19.3%	15.2%	11.8%
Average income gap	\$41,985	\$40,615	\$29,744*	\$46,353
Single wage earner	30.5%	36.6%	38.8%	42.2%
Average household income	\$117,128 [^]	\$98,757	\$81,673 [^]	\$97,520
Median household income	\$96,000	\$76,500	\$68,000	\$75,400
Homeownership	64.7% [^]	72.6%	53.2% [^]	67.8%

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

Table Three: Counts and percent of same-sex couples by county

County	Same-sex couples		LGB individuals		County	Same-sex couples		LGB individuals	
	Total	% among households	Total	% in adult pop.		Total	% among households	Total	% in adult pop.
Alameda	6,603	1.28%	46,914	4.2%	Sacramento	4,903	0.98%	42,140	4.3%
Butte	661	0.77%	5,740	3.5%	San Bernardino	3,239	0.55%	33,275	2.5%
Contra Costa	2,786	0.78%	12,869	1.7%	San Diego	9,303	0.89%	60,760	2.8%
El Dorado	417	0.66%	3,168	2.4% [^]	San Francisco	9,368	2.90%	92,157	13.9%
Fresno	2,032	0.73%	6,655	1.1%	San Joaquin	1,727	0.82%	4,917	1.1% [^]
Humboldt	375	0.71%	5,544	5.6%	San Luis Obispo	1,012	0.99%	4,800	2.5%
Imperial	87	0.19%	550	0.5% [^]	San Mateo	2,063	0.82%	13,200	2.4%
Kern	1,150	0.48%	5,522	1.1% [^]	Santa Barbara	908	0.65%	5,624	1.9%
Kings	284	0.71%	2,160	2.4%	Santa Clara	4,610	0.79%	42,471	3.3%
Lake	63	0.25%	2,400	5.0%	Santa Cruz	1,035	1.11%	9,650	5.0%
Los Angeles	28,008	0.88%	282,516	3.9%	Shasta	338	0.49%	2,622	1.9% [^]
Madera	195	0.48%	837	0.9% [^]	Solano	932	0.68%	6,739	2.3%
Marin	1,469	1.47%	6,237	3.3%	Sonoma	6,603	1.08%	13,209	3.7%
Mendocino	367	1.11%	2,479	3.7%	Stanislaus	661	0.39%	7,391	2.1%
Merced	207	0.29%	1,630	1.0% [^]	Sutter	2,786	0.10%	NA	NA
Monterey	679	0.55%	2,682	0.9% [^]	Tulare	417	0.67%	NA	NA
Napa	541	1.13%	576	0.6% [^]	Ventura	2,032	0.94%	9,894	1.7%
Nevada	112	0.28%	2,133	2.7%	Yolo	375	0.80%	2,948	2.2%
Orange	6,237	0.64%	52,944	2.4%	Yuba	87	0.56%	966	2.1% [^]
Placer	812	0.66%	3,465	1.5% [^]	Other counties	481	-		
Riverside	7,127	1.11%	31,487	2.3%					

[^] Estimates are based on small sample sizes and are not considered to be statistically stable

NA Not available

¹ Characteristics of California's gay/lesbian, bisexual, and heterosexual population are derived from the 2003 and 2005 California Health Interview Survey (CHIS). The CHIS is conducted by the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research in collaboration with the California Department of Public Health, the Department of Health Care Services and the Public Health Institute survey more than 40,000 California households. It is funded by public agencies and private organizations. It is considered a representative sample of the California population. Adults aged 18-70 are asked their sexual orientation along with a variety of questions about their demographic, economic, and health characteristics. We combine samples from 2003 and 2005 to increase sample sizes and accuracy for the lesbian, gay, and bisexual respondents. Estimates of demographic characteristics of same-sex and different-sex couples are made using an average of the 2005 and 2006 data of the Census Bureau's American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Samples (PUMS). The American Community Survey contains detailed information about all members of the household, including a variety of demographic and economic characteristics.

² In this report, "Latinos and Latinas" ("Latino/as") are defined as those who identified their ethnicity as "Spanish/Hispanic/Latino" when filling out the census forms. All persons who identified as such, regardless of how they identified themselves racially, are designated as Latino/a in this report. All other racial categories include those who identified in those classifications and did not identify as Latino/a.

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