



These indicators were derived from data produced by the U.S. Census Bureau and may differ from data produced by other entities.

Marital Events of District Residents

By Coleen Jordan

This report provides selected characteristics on the marital status of District of Columbia residents using data from the 2015 American Community Survey (ACS) 1-year estimates. It focuses on marital status by sex, age, race, ethnicity, labor force participation, marital history, geographical mobility and place of birth.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the context of marriage consists not only of whether and when Americans choose to marry, but also how many times they marry. In the U.S. many of the recent marriages are first marriages for both spouses. However, divorce rates are higher in the United States compared to European nations, and according to the U.S. Census Bureau, remarried adults have a higher likelihood of divorce than those in their first marriage.

Figure 1 shows some of the questions asked in the 2015 ACS concerning marriage. These questions help to evaluate how many people are currently married, widowed, divorced or never been married. This type of data is used by communities across the United States to support families, understand changing households and to provide benefits to spouses and survivors.

Note: Over the past decade, the U.S. Census Bureau worked to improve measurement of same-sex couple households in its demographic surveys and the decennial census. The June 2015 Supreme Court decision that legalized same-sex marriage in all states increased the need for estimates of same-sex married couples, since some federal agencies administer programs based on marital status. The U.S. Census Bureau expects that these actions will result in higher quality estimates of coupled households, particularly for same-sex married couples in Census 2020.

Figure 1. ACS 2015 Marital Status Questions

<p>20. What is the person's marital status?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Now married</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Widowed</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Divorced</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Separated</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Never married – SKIP to I</p> <p>21. In the PAST 12 MONTHS did this person get –</p> <table><thead><tr><th></th><th>Yes</th><th>No</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>a. Married?</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr><tr><td>b. Widowed?</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr><tr><td>c. Divorced?</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr></tbody></table>		Yes	No	a. Married?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Widowed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Divorced?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>22. How many times has this person been married?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Once</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Two times</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Three or more times</p> <p>23. In what year did this person last get married?</p> <div></div>
	Yes	No											
a. Married?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>											
b. Widowed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>											
c. Divorced?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>											

District Residents Highlights

- More than half the men (57 percent) and women (54 percent) aged 15 years and over had never been married.
- Both Asians and whites had the highest percentage of married couples (38 percent each), compared to other racial and ethnic groups.
- Women (ten percent) were more likely than men (seven percent) to be widowed.
- The black population had the largest percent by race to have never been married (57 percent).
- Men are more likely than women to remarry; more men (14 percent) than women (13 percent) married a second time.
- The median age for both men and women in the District at first marriage was 31 years.
- Of those who migrated from abroad to live in the District, thirty-two percent were married.
- Never married men and women made up the majority of the labor force.
- More women than men were married once, as men had a higher percentage of remarriages.
- Native Washingtonians were more likely to have never married compared to District residents who migrated from outside the District.

Sex and Age by Marital Status

Table 1 shows the marital status of men and women 15 years and over in the District. The majority of men (57 percent) and women (54 percent) living in the District have never been married. In 2015, 31 percent of the men and 27 percent of the women in the District were married. Seven percent of women and two percent of men were widowed. The higher possibility that men will remarry contributed to a lower percentage of widowed men than women. Also, ten percent of women were divorced compared to seven percent of men. Men and women shared the same percentage of those separated at two percent.

The median age in the District for both men and women at first marriage was 31 years. At age 15 to 34 years old, the majority of women and men had never been married. By age 35 to 54, there was an increase in the number of men and women in the District who were married. Beginning at age 35 years, there was an increase in divorce and separation among both men and women.

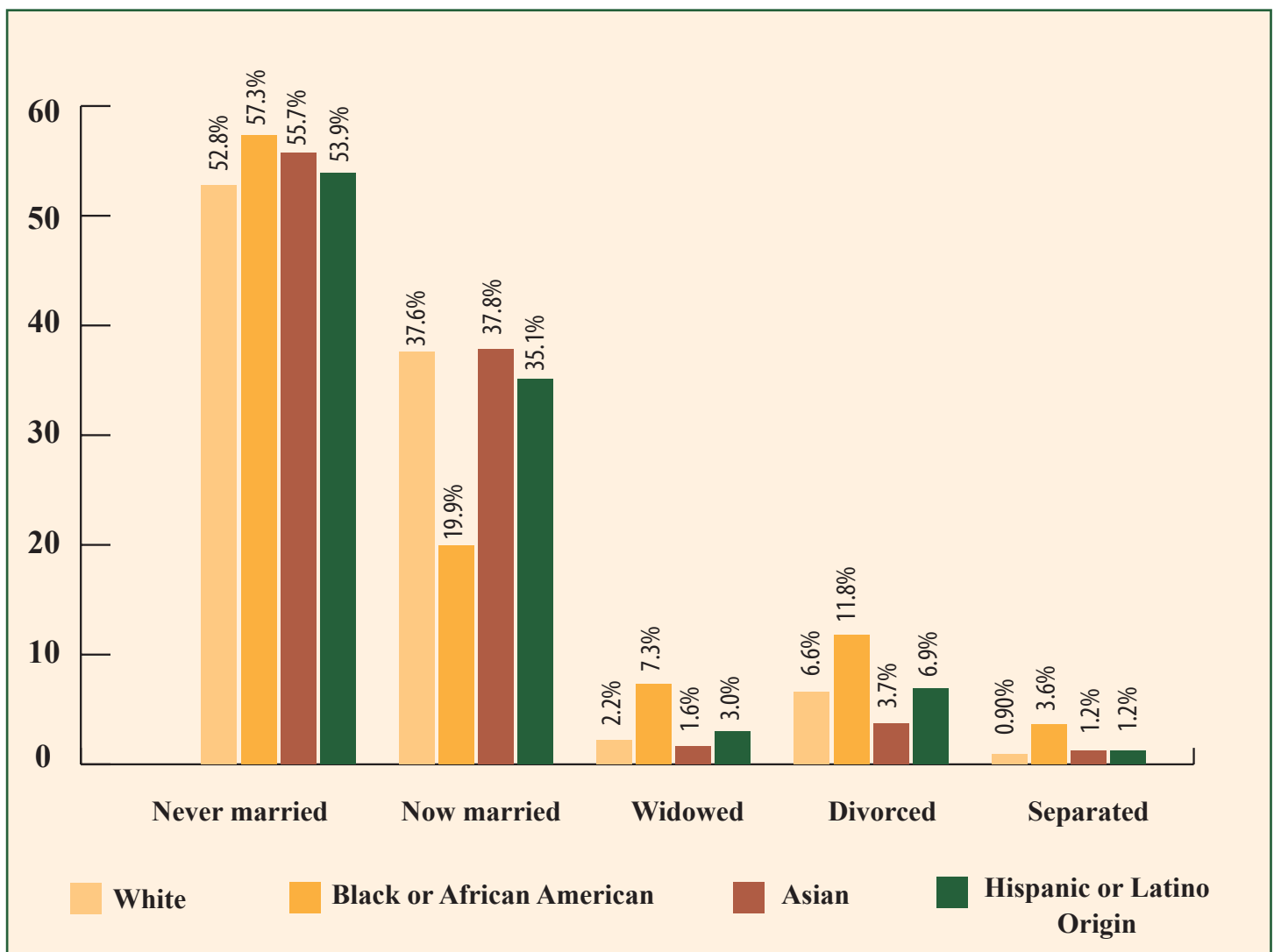
Table 1. Percent of Men and Women by Marital Status 2015		
Marital Status	Men	Women
Married	31%	27%
Widowed	2%	7%
Divorced	7%	10%
Separated	2%	2%
Never Married	57%	54%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates		

Age Group	Table 2. Marital Status by Age and Sex 2015					
	Total	Now married	Widowed	Divorced	Separated	Never married
	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
Population 15 years and over	569,946	29.0%	4.6%	8.8%	2.2%	55.4%
Males 15 years and over	267,946	31.1%	2.2%	7.1%	2.3%	57.4%
15 to 19 years	18,351	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	99.5%
20 to 34 years	98,802	18.2%	0.0%	1.0%	0.2%	80.5%
35 to 44 years	48,025	44.9%	1.0%	8.0%	1.4%	44.8%
45 to 54 years	38,763	37.7%	0.9%	13.1%	4.9%	43.4%
55 to 64 years	33,234	39.1%	3.5%	14.9%	5.8%	36.8%
65 years and over	30,771	52.0%	12.6%	13.9%	4.2%	17.3%
Females 15 years and over	302,000	27.1%	6.8%	10.4%	2.1%	53.6%
15 to 19 years	20,174	0.3%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	99.7%
20 to 34 years	112,222	18.2%	0.2%	1.8%	0.5%	79.3%
35 to 44 years	48,394	43.3%	0.8%	10.6%	3.3%	41.9%
45 to 54 years	38,590	38.8%	3.9%	15.9%	4.0%	37.3%
55 to 64 years	36,800	34.1%	9.4%	23.7%	3.8%	29.0%
65 years and over	45,820	28.1%	32.5%	20.4%	2.8%	16.3%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates						

Race and Hispanic Origin by Marital Status

Marital trends by race and Hispanic origin are shown in Figure 2. The black population were the least likely to be currently married among the three race groups, with 20 percent. There was no significant difference between the white and Asian populations of those who are currently married – both are at 38 percent. Blacks had the highest percentages among all three major race groups when comparing marital status except for those currently married. The separation rate for blacks was four percent, widowed at seven percent, divorced at 12 percent and never married at 57 percent. The white population had one percent separated, two percent widowed, seven percent divorced and 53 percent never married. The Asian population had one percent separated, three percent widowed, four percent divorced and 55 percent never married. For Hispanics, 35 percent were currently married, one percent were separated, three percent widowed, seven percent divorced and 54 percent were never married.

Figure 2. Marital Status by Race and Hispanic Origin 2015

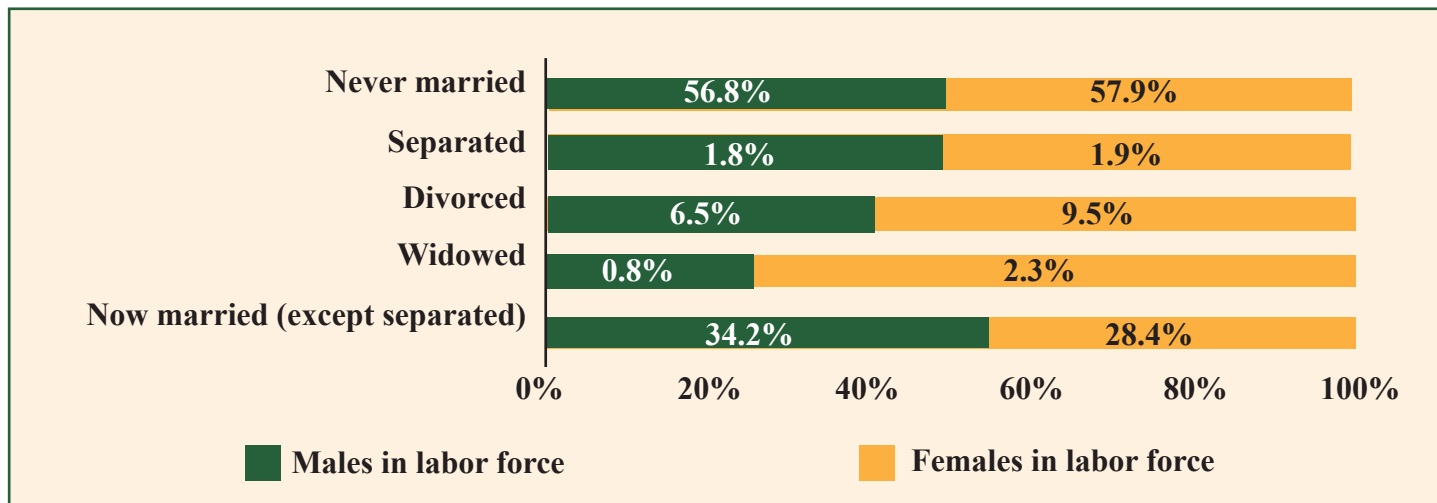


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Labor Force Participation by Marital Status

Figure 3 shows the marital status of those 16 years and older who participated in the labor force. Those who were never married had the highest percentage participation rate in the labor force, with men at 57 percent and women at 58 percent. Followed by those who were now married with 34 percent men and 28 percent women in the labor force.

Figure 3. Marital Status by Labor Force Participation 2015



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Marital History

Not all newlyweds begin married life with the same marital history. Table 3 looks at the number of times men and women had married in the District. The marriage might be the first for one or both spouses may have married previously. More women than men were married once, as men had a higher percentage of remarriage. Of all men who were married, 14 percent married two times. For women, 13 percent married twice. Men were more likely than women to be married three or more times.

Table 3. Marital History in the District by Sex 2015

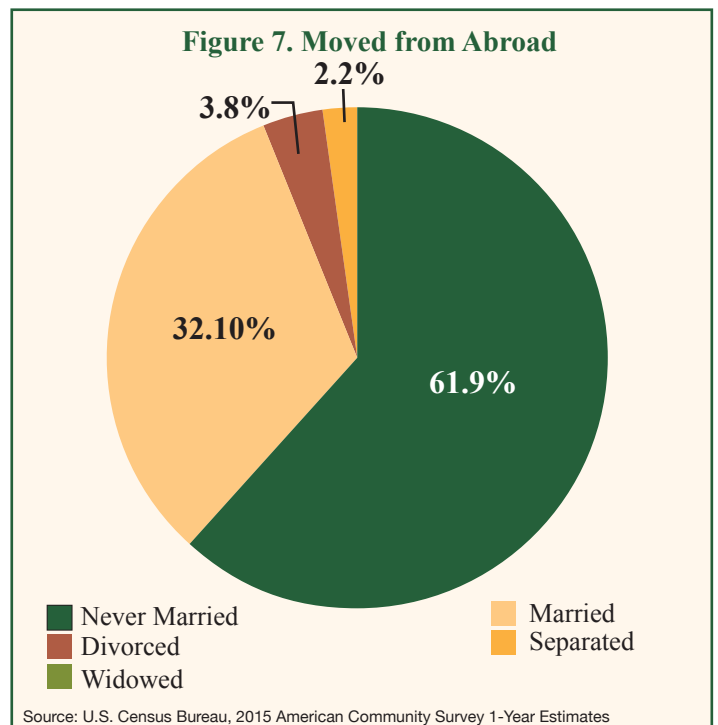
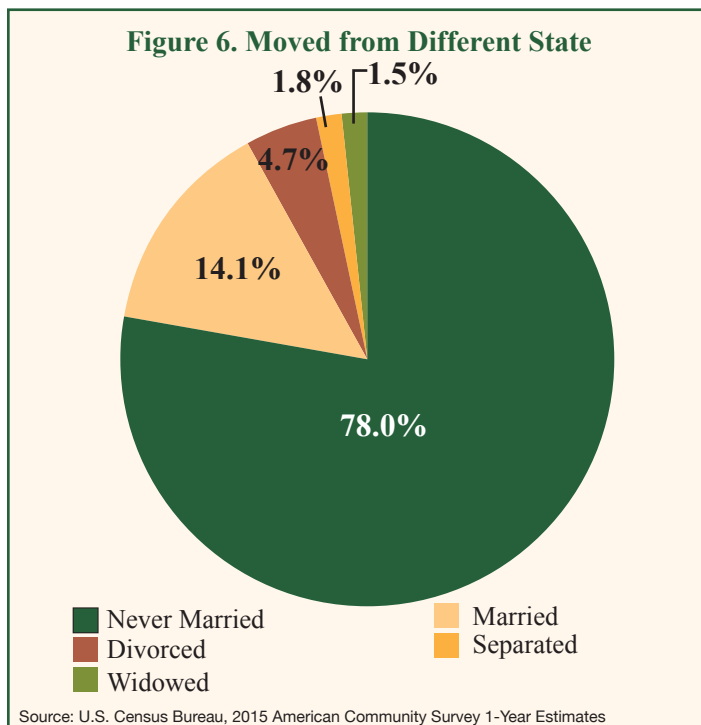
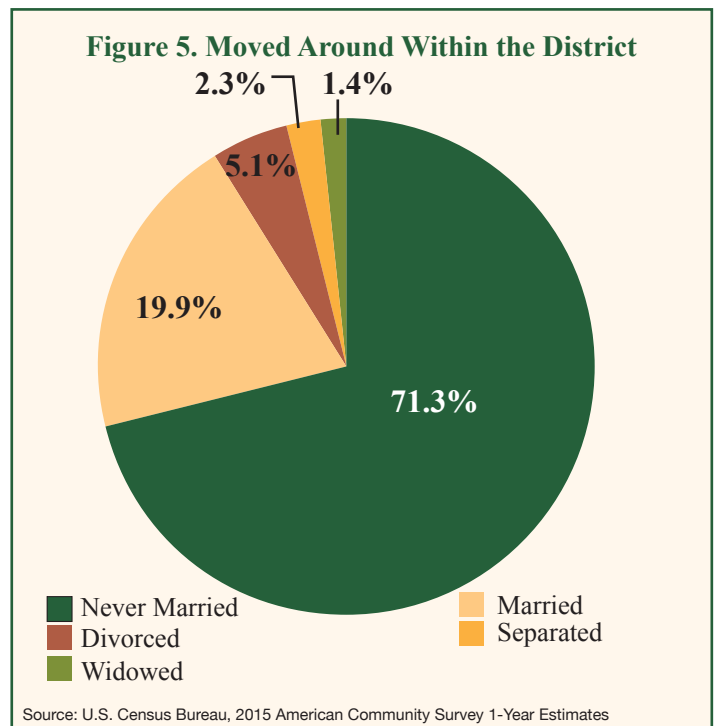
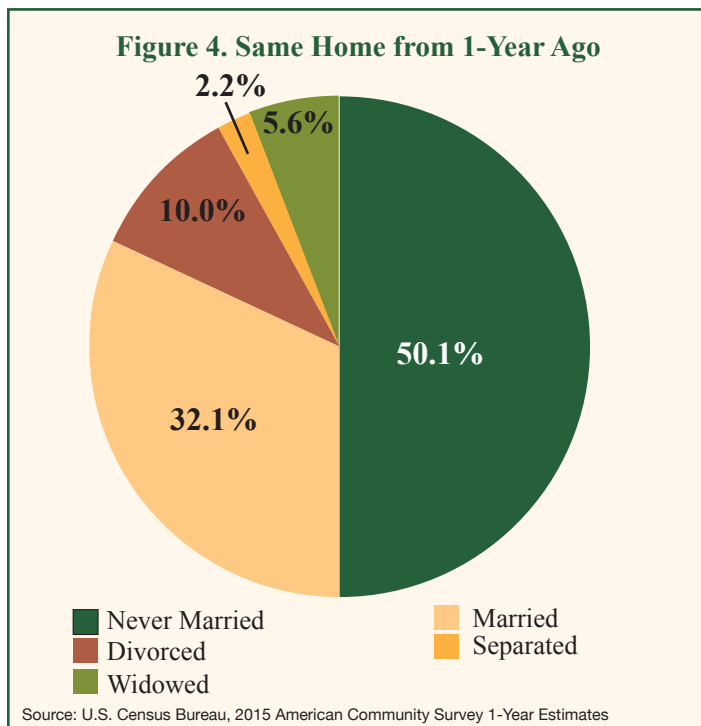
Subject	Estimate	Percent
Total: Population 15 years and over	569,946	100%
Male:	267,946	47.0%
Never married	153,707	57.4%
Ever married:	114,239	42.6%
Once	95,118	83.3%
Two times	16,192	14.2%
Three or more times	2,929	2.6%
Female:	302,000	53.0%
Never married	161,935	53.6%
Ever married:	140,065	46.4%
Once	119,959	85.6%
Two times	17,706	12.6%
Three or more times	2,400	1.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Geographical Mobility by Marital Status

Of the population 15 years and over living in the same house from a year ago in the District, 50 percent were never married compared to 32 percent who were married. Of those who moved around within the District in the last year, 71 percent were never married compared to 20 percent were married. People who moved into the District in the last year from a different state had the highest percentage of residents who were never married, with 78 percent compared to 14 percent of those who were married. New residents who migrated to the District from abroad consists of 62 percent never married and 32 percent married. Figure 4-7 shows detail geographical mobility by marital status.

Figures 4-7 Geographical Mobility by Marital Status



Place of Birth by Marital Status

Table 4 shows the place of birth by marital status of District residents ages 15 years and over. Of those who were born in the District 166,145, or 64 percent were never married, 17 percent were married and 10 percent were divorced. Of the 300,691 residents who were born in another state, 55 percent were never married, 31 percent were married and nine percent were divorced. There were 10,963 natives born outside the United States living in the District. (Natives born outside the United States means anyone born in Puerto Rico, U.S. Island area like Guam or anyone born outside the United States to a U.S. citizen parent). The natives born outside the United States consist of 48 percent never married population, 35 percent married and seven percent divorced. The marital status of the foreign-born District population showed 43 percent were never married, 44 percent married, and seven percent divorced. See table 4 for more details including those separated and widowed.

Table 4. Place of Birth by Marital Status 2015

Subject	Estimate	Percent
Born in the District of Columbia	166,145	29.2%
Never married	106,360	64.0%
Now married, except separated	28,485	17.1%
Divorced	17,748	10.7%
Separated	5,241	3.2%
Widowed	8,311	5.0%
Born in other state in the United States	300,691	52.8%
Never married	164,511	54.7%
Now married, except separated	92,266	30.7%
Divorced	25,494	8.5%
Separated	4,535	1.5%
Widowed	13,885	4.6%
Native, born outside the United States	10,963	1.9%
Never married	5,310	48.4%
Now married, except separated	3,860	35.2%
Divorced	746	6.8%
Separated	453	4.1%
Widowed	594	5.4%
Foreign born	92,147	16.2%
Never married	39,461	42.8%
Now married, except separated	40,521	44.1%
Divorced	6,431	7.0%
Separated	2,219	2.4%
Widowed	3,515	3.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

