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2015 Disability Characteristics Among DC Residents

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Introduction

The U.S. Census Bureau first included questions about disability in the 1880 census. Since then, the form in which the questions on disability are asked has expanded. Statistics on disability are used by federal agencies to understand the population with disabilities, to monitor against discrimination, to distribute funds, provide services, and develop programs for people with disabilities. This report presents a snap-shot of the characteristics of individuals with a disability in the District of Columbia, to help assess the differences between people with and without disabilities using data obtained from the 2015.

Highlights

- Of the total civilian, non-institutional population in the District, 11.5 percent or 75,710 individuals reported having some level of disability. Individuals can report having more than one disability (Table 1).
- Individuals 65 and over had the highest percentage of disabilities: 33.6 percent reported at least one limitation. The most common disability for the elderly was ambulatory difficulty – serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs (23.5 percent).

Figure 1. Disability and Disability Types

Disability - Difficulty with any of the six types of disability collected in the American Community Survey: vision, hearing, ambulatory, cognitive, self-care, and independent living.

Vision difficulty - Blindness or serious difficulty seeing, even when wearing glasses or contacts.

Hearing difficulty - Deafness or serious difficulty hearing.

Ambulatory difficulty - Serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs.

Cognitive difficulty - Serious difficulty remembering, concentrating, or making decisions.

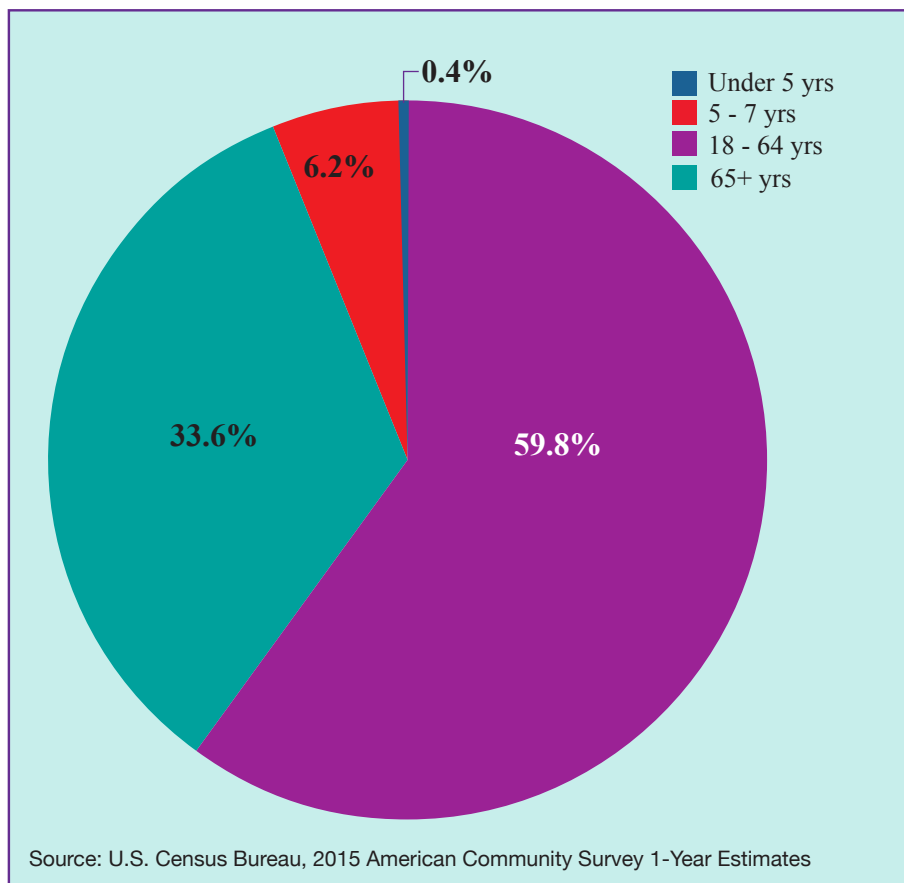
Self-care difficulty - Difficulty dressing or bathing.

Independent living difficulty - Difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping.

Highlights (continued...)

- Of the population 18 to 64 years, 59.8 percent (45,260) reported a disability, with the most common condition also being ambulatory difficulty (5.0 percent).
- Of the population 5 to 17 years, 6.2 percent reported a disability, with the most common condition being vision difficulty (1.2 percent).
- The population under 5 years had the lowest reported percentage of disability among the disabled population, with 0.4 percent (313) estimated individuals. The most common disability type for this age group was vision difficulty, with 0.6 percent.
- Individuals 18-64 years represent more than half of all individuals with a disability (59.8 percent), followed by 65 years and over (33.6 percent), 5 to 17 years (6.2 percent), and children under 5 years (0.4 percent) (Figure 2).
- Females in the District had a higher rate of disability than males: 12.0 percent for women compared to 10.9 percent for men (Table 1). The most common disability type among women was ambulatory difficulty – serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs.

Figure 2: Percentage of Individuals with Disability by Age Group: District of Columbia 2015



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. Disability Characteristics of DC Residents 2015

| Subject | Total | With a disability | Percent with a disability |
|--|-----------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | Estimate | Estimate | Estimate |
| Total civilian noninstitutionalized population | 660,682 | 75,710 | 11.5% |
| SEX | | | |
| Male | 311,147 | 33,886 | 10.9% |
| Female | 349,535 | 41,824 | 12.0% |
| RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN | | | |
| White alone | 264,710 | 13,248 | 5.0% |
| Black or African American alone | 312,675 | 56,726 | 18.1% |
| American Indian and Alaska Native alone | N | N | N |
| Asian alone | 25,901 | 1,696 | 6.5% |
| Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone | N | N | N |
| Some other race alone | 34,375 | 2,025 | 5.9% |
| Two or more races | 20,970 | 1,684 | 8.0% |
| White alone, not Hispanic or Latino | 237,792 | 11,885 | 5.0% |
| Hispanic or Latino (of any race) | 70,193 | 3,658 | 5.2% |
| AGE | | | |
| Under 5 years | 43,230 | 313 | 0.7% |
| 5 to 17 years | 74,185 | 4,675 | 6.3% |
| 18 to 34 years | 229,115 | 9,799 | 4.3% |
| 35 to 64 years | 240,475 | 35,461 | 14.7% |
| 65 to 74 years | 43,543 | 11,100 | 25.5% |
| 75 years and over | 30,134 | 14,362 | 47.7% |

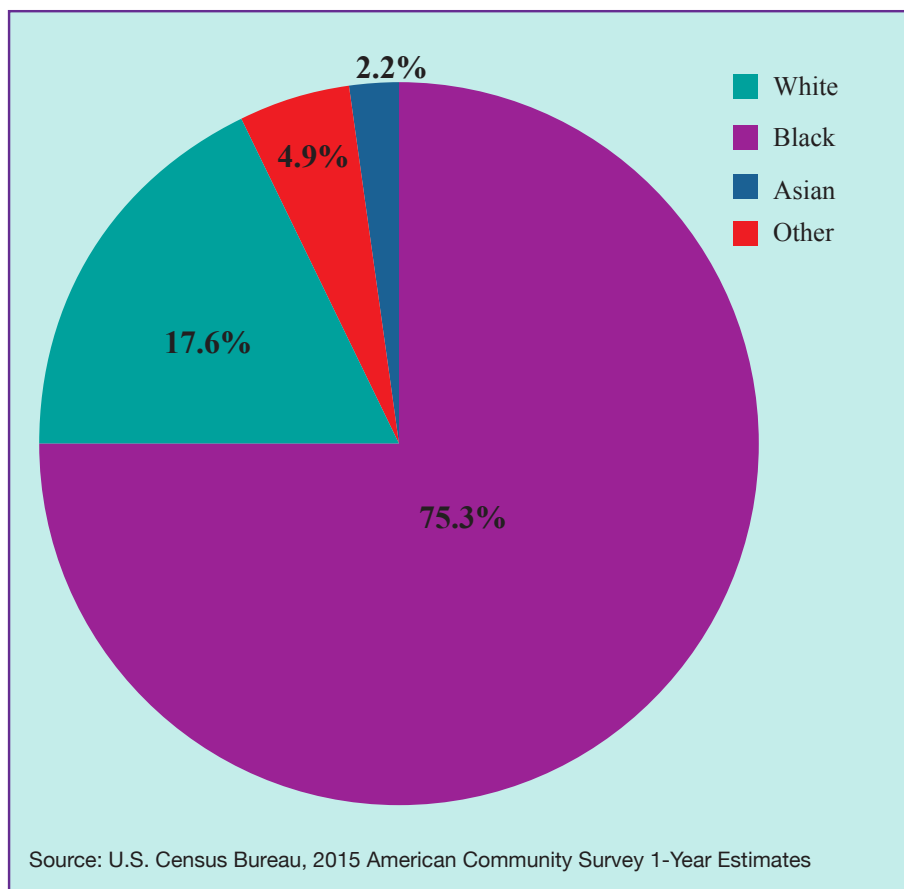
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Disability by Race

With regards to race, the total Black population had the highest proportion of individuals reporting a disability at 18.1 percent or 56,726 individuals (Table 1). Whites had the second highest number of individuals with disability at 13,248 or 5.0 percent. The Asian population had the second highest percent with disability at 6.5 percent or 1,696 individuals. Hispanic of any race had 5.2 percent or 3,658 individuals reporting a disability.

The Black population comprised 47.3 percent of the total population of the District, however, it represented 74.9 percent of all individuals reporting at least one disability (Figure 3). The White population however, consists of 40.1 percent of the District of Columbia total population of the District and 17.5 percent of the population with a disability.

**Figure 3. Percentage Disability Distribution by Race:
District of Columbia 2015**



Disability by Poverty and Income

In the District, there are more individuals with disabilities living at or above the poverty level (65.5 percent or 48,510), than those living below the poverty level (34.5 percent or 25,512) (Table 2). The median earnings of those with a disability in the District of Columbia was \$25,818 in 2015 (Table 3). Most of the disabled population 16 years and over with earnings (19.4 percent) had income between \$5,000 to \$14,999. Of those with a disability (9.9 percent) and without a disability (8.4 percent) had an income of \$25,000 to \$34,999. When compared to majority of those without a disability, (33.3 percent) they had earnings of \$75,000 or more (Table 3).

| Table 2. Disability by Age by Poverty Level 2015 | | |
|---|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Subject | District of Columbia | |
| | Population Estimate | Percent |
| Total: | 635,682 | 100% |
| Under 18 years: | 116,058 | 18.3% |
| With a disability: | 4,988 | 4.3% |
| Income in the past 12-months below poverty level | 2,294 | 46.0% |
| Income in the past 12-months at or above poverty level | 2,694 | 64.0% |
| No disability: | 111,070 | 95.7% |
| Income in the past 12-months below poverty level | 27,435 | 24.7% |
| Income in the past 12-months at or above poverty level | 83,635 | 75.3% |
| 18 to 64 years: | 445,947 | 70.1% |
| With a disability: | 43,572 | 9.8% |
| Income in the past 12-months below poverty level | 17,408 | 40.0% |
| Income in the past 12-months at or above poverty level | 26,164 | 60.0% |
| No disability: | 402,375 | 90.2% |
| Income in the past 12-months below poverty level | 52,196 | 13.1% |
| Income in the past 12-months at or above poverty level | 350,179 | 87.0% |
| 65 years and over: | 73,677 | 11.6% |
| With a disability: | 25,462 | 34.6% |
| Income in the past 12-months below poverty level | 5,810 | 22.8% |
| Income in the past 12-months at or above poverty level | 19,652 | 77.2% |
| No disability: | 48,215 | 65.4% |
| Income in the past 12-months below poverty level | 5,357 | 11.1% |
| Income in the past 12-months at or above poverty level | 42,858 | 88.9% |
| Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates | | |

Table 3. Earning Categories by Disability Status 2015

| Earning in the Past 12 Months | With a Disability | Without a Disability |
|---|-------------------|----------------------|
| Population Age 16 and over with earnings | 20,945 | 381,848 |
| \$1 to \$4,999 or loss | 15.9% | 9.8% |
| \$5,000 to \$14,999 | 19.4% | 9.5% |
| \$15,000 to \$24,999 | 14.0% | 8.6% |
| \$25,000 to \$34,999 | 9.9% | 8.4% |
| \$35,000 to \$49,999 | 10.1% | 12.5% |
| \$50,000 to \$74,999 | 13.5% | 17.9% |
| \$75,000 or more | 17.2% | 33.3% |
| Median Earnings | 25,818 | 50,646 |

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

Disability and Work Status

For individuals age 20-64 years with a disability, 42 percent were in the labor force and 58 percent (24,853) were not in the labor force (Table 4). Of those in the labor force, 10.4 percent were unemployed. In comparison, for individuals age 20-64 years with no disability, 85.8 percent were in the labor force and 14.2 percent were not in the labor force.

Table 4. 2015 Employment Status for Individuals with a Disability for the Population 20-64 Years

| Subject | District of Columbia | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| | Estimate | Percent |
| With a disability: | 42,920 | 100.0% |
| In labor force: | 18,067 | 42.1% |
| In Armed Forces | 80 | 0.4% |
| Civilian: | 17,987 | 41.9% |
| Employed | 13,513 | 31.5% |
| Unemployed | 4,474 | 10.4% |
| Not in labor force | 24,853 | 57.9% |
| No disability: | 395,654 | 100.0% |
| In labor force: | 339,605 | 85.8% |
| In Armed Forces | 2,232 | 0.6% |
| Civilian: | 337,373 | 85.3% |
| Employed | 317,523 | 80.3% |
| Unemployed | 19,850 | 5.0% |
| Not in labor force | 56,049 | 14.2% |

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

Work Experience by Disability Status and Type

The American Community Survey also looked at the number of individuals who reported having a disability and their working habits. For example, only 3.1 percent of individuals with a disability worked full-time, year-round. Of those with a disability and worked fulltime, year-round, ambulatory difficulty was the most common issue. Of those who worked less than fulltime, 8.0 percent had a disability. There were 30.4 percent of individuals with a disability who did not work (Table 5).

Table 5. Work Experience by Disability Status and Type 2015

| Subject | District of Columbia | |
|--|----------------------|--------------|
| | Estimate | Percent |
| Total: | 469,590 | 100% |
| Worked full-time, year round: | 259,580 | 55.3% |
| With a disability: | 8,120 | 3.1% |
| With a hearing difficulty | 1,703 | 21.0% |
| With a vision difficulty | 2,426 | 29.9% |
| With a cognitive difficulty | 2,641 | 32.5% |
| With an ambulatory difficulty | 3,390 | 41.7% |
| With a self-care difficulty | 570 | 7.1% |
| With an independent living difficulty | 928 | 11.4% |
| No disability | 251,460 | 96.9% |
| Worked less than full-time, year round: | 119,320 | 25.4% |
| With a disability: | 9,574 | 8.0% |
| With a hearing difficulty | 1,318 | 13.8% |
| With a vision difficulty | 2,795 | 29.2% |
| With a cognitive difficulty | 4,476 | 46.8% |
| With an ambulatory difficulty | 3,767 | 39.3% |
| With a self-care difficulty | 1,220 | 12.7% |
| With an independent living difficulty | 1,845 | 19.3% |
| No disability | 109,746 | 92.0% |
| Did not work: | 90,690 | 19.3% |
| With a disability: | 27,566 | 30.4% |
| With a hearing difficulty | 2,120 | 7.7% |
| With a vision difficulty | 5,928 | 21.5% |
| With a cognitive difficulty | 12,345 | 44.8% |
| With an ambulatory difficulty | 16,419 | 59.6% |
| With a self-care difficulty | 3,995 | 14.5% |
| With an independent living difficulty | 9,871 | 35.8% |
| No disability | 63,124 | 69.6% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates
 Note: Percentages may not equal to 100 percent, individuals can report having more than one disability.