



District of Columbia

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The District's 55 Years and Over Population

Introduction

This report presents data on the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the population aged 55 years and over in the District of Columbia. Also highlighted are trends on the proportions of the elderly population of the District from 1900 to 2010, using data collected by the U.S. Census Bureau's decennial censuses.

In the 1900 Census, the population of the District was 278,718. Between 1900 and 1950, the District's population grew by 188 percent to 802,178. Between 1950 and 2000, the District's population declined by 28.6 percent from 802,178 in 1950 to 572,059 in 2000. During the past decade, however, the District's population grew by 5.2 percent from 572,059 in 2000 to 601,723 in 2010.

Population Highlights for District Residents 55 Years and Over

- District's population aged 55 years and over increased from 10.9 percent in 1900 to 22.1 percent in 2010.
- For the 55 years and over, the sex ratio was 75.4 men for every 100 women in 2010.
- Blacks comprised 60.5 percent of the 55 years and over in 2009.
- By percent, for the 55 years and over, men are more likely than women to be married mainly due to greater longevity of women and therefore more widowed women.
- 4.3 percent of the 55 years and over population were without health insurance in 2010.
- Men aged 55 years and over were more likely than women to be in the civilian labor force. In 2009, 49.8 percent of men aged 55 years and over were in the labor force, compared with 37.7 percent of women.
- Men aged 55 years and over were more likely than women to be unemployed. In 2009, 10.8 percent of men aged 55 years and over were unemployed, compared with 5.6 percent of women.
- Among the population aged 65 years and over, 34.6 percent of men had some type of disability, compared with 37.7 percent of women in 2009.

- In 2009, 93.5 percent of the population aged 65 years and over in the District lived in households and 6.5 percent lived in group quarters.
- In 2009, 15 percent of the population aged 55 years and over were in poverty.

Population 55 Years and Over by Age Structure

The age structure of the District's population changed considerably during the 1900 to 2010 period. In the 1900 census, 30,516 people were 55 years and over of which 12,019 people were 65 years and over and 791 people were 85 years and over. The proportion of population aged 55 years and over increased from 10.9 percent in 1900 to 22.1 percent in 2010. Persons aged 65 years and over increased from 4.3 percent in 1900 to 11.4 percent (68,809 people) in 2010, and those persons aged 85 years and over increased from 0.3 percent in 1900 to 1.7 percent (10,315 people) in 2010 (Table 1).

Population 55 Years and Over by Age and Sex

Of the 601,723 people in the District in 2010, 284,222 (47.2 percent) were men and 317,501 (52.8 percent) were women. For most states and the District, women outnumbered men, and the proportion of women increased with age. In 2010, the sex ratio for the total U.S. population was 96.7 men for every 100 women. The state of Alaska had the highest sex ratio at 108.5 men for every 100 women and the District had the lowest at 89.5 men for every 100 women, according to the 2010 Census.

In the District in 2010, there were 57,083 men and 75,703 women aged 55 years and over with a sex ratio of 75.4 men for every 100 women for this age group. Among those aged 65 years and over, 40.2 percent were men and 59.8 percent were women. For those aged 85 years and over, 30.2 percent were men and 69.8 percent were women, with a sex ratio of 43.3 men for every 100 women (Table 2).

Table 1. Population by Selected Age Groups: 1900 to 2010

Year	Total	Under 15 Years		15 to 54 Years		55 Years and Over		65 Years and Over		85 Years and Over	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
2010	601,723	83,801	13.9	385,136	64.0	132,786	22.1	68,809	11.4	10,315	1.7
2000	572,059	97,939	17.1	354,439	62.0	119,681	20.9	69,898	12.2	8,975	1.6
1990	606,900	98,666	16.3	379,487	62.5	128,747	21.2	77,847	12.8	7,847	1.3
1980	638,333	113,116	17.7	387,345	60.7	137,872	21.6	74,287	11.6	6,385	1.0
1970	756,510	188,381	24.9	426,422	56.4	141,707	18.7	70,803	9.4	5,555	0.7
1960	763,956	193,550	25.3	425,136	55.6	145,270	19.0	67,878	8.9	3,761	0.5
1950	802,178	160,861	20.1	515,481	64.3	125,836	15.7	56,687	7.1	2,581	0.3
1940	663,091	118,185	17.8	451,073	68.0	93,833	14.2	41,206	6.2	1,672	0.3
1930	486,869	100,640	20.7	318,627	65.4	67,602	13.9	29,035	6.0	3,049	0.6
1920	437,571	90,092	20.6	297,856	68.1	49,623	11.3	22,524	5.1	2,772	0.6
1910	331,069	76,630	23.1	215,988	65.2	38,451	11.6	18,252	5.5	1,885	0.6
1900	278,718	69,615	25.0	178,587	64.1	30,516	10.9	12,029	4.3	791	0.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1900 to 2010

Population 55 years and Over by Race and Ethnicity

Note: Detailed characteristics of the population from the 2010 Census are not yet available.

According to the 2009 American Community Survey (ACS), 60.5 percent of people aged 55 years and over in the District indicated that their race was Black or African American alone, 35.4 percent reported White alone, 2.2 percent reported Asian alone, and 1.9 percent reported other races. The non-Hispanic whites accounted for 31.1

percent and the Hispanics or Latinos represented 5 percent of people aged 55 years and over in the District in 2009 (Table 3).

Population 55 Years and Over by Marital Status

Table 4 presents the marital status of the population 55 years and over in the District. In 2009, 41.2 percent of people aged 55 years and over were married, 21.8 percent had never married, 19.2 percent were divorced and 17.8 percent were widowed.

Table 2. Population by Sex and Selected Age Groups: 2010

Age	Both Sexes	Male		Female		Both Sexes	Percent of District Total	
		Number	%	Number	%		Male	Female
All ages	601,723	284,222	47.2	317,501	52.8	100.0	47.2	52.8
Under 55 years	468,937	227,139	48.4	241,798	51.6	77.9	37.7	40.2
55 years and over	132,786	57,083	43.0	75,703	57.0	22.1	9.5	12.6
55 to 59 years	34,274	15,994	46.7	18,280	53.3	5.7	2.7	3.0
60 to 64 years	29,703	13,398	45.1	16,305	54.9	4.9	2.2	2.7
65 years and over	68,809	27,691	40.2	41,118	59.8	11.4	4.6	6.8
65 to 69 years	21,488	9,605	44.7	11,883	55.3	3.6	1.6	2.0
70 to 74 years	15,481	6,671	43.1	8,810	56.9	2.6	1.1	1.5
75 years and over	31,840	11,415	35.9	20,425	64.1	5.3	1.9	3.4
75 to 79 years	11,820	4,782	40.5	7,038	59.5	2.0	0.8	1.2
80 to 84 years	9,705	3,516	36.2	6,189	63.8	1.6	0.6	1.0
85 years and over	10,315	3,117	30.2	7,198	69.8	1.7	0.5	1.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census

For the 55 years and over, the sex ratio was 75.4 men for every 100 women

Blacks were 60.5% of the 55 years and over population in 2009

Table 3. Population 55 Years and Over by Race and Ethnicity: 2009

Race and Ethnicity	55 Years and Over		65 Years and Over		75 Years and Over		85 Years and Over	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total	136,677	100.0	70,022	100.0	32,086	100.0	10,100	100.0
Race								
White alone	48,346	35.4	24,534	35.0	10,363	32.3	4,102	40.6
Black	82,664	60.5	43,412	62.0	20,748	64.7	5,589	55.3
Asian alone	3030	2.2	1266	1.8	690	2.2	290	2.9
Other races	2637	1.9	810	1.2	285	0.9	119	1.2
Ethnicity								
White alone not Hispanic or Latino	43,081	31.5	21,799	31.1	9,406	29.3	4,031	39.9
Hispanic or Latino	6,858	5.0	3,052	4.4	1,017	3.2	71	0.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 American Community Survey

For the 55 years and over, men are more likely to be married than women

Table 4. Marital Status of the Population 55 Years and Over by Sex and Age: 2009

Sex and Marital Status	55 Years and Over		65 Years and Over		75 Years and Over		85 Years and Over	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Both Sexes	136,677	100.0	70,022	100.0	32,086	100.0	10,100	100.0
Never married	29,824	21.8	10,605	15.1	3,898	12.1	971	9.6
Now married	56,277	41.2	27,303	39.0	9,423	29.4	2,208	21.9
Widowed	24,300	17.8	19,361	27.6	13,768	42.9	5,574	55.2
Divorced	26,276	19.2	12,753	18.2	4,997	15.6	1,347	13.3
Male								
Never married	12,702	22.1	4,585	16.6	1,101	10.0	367	11.8
Now married	30,949	53.9	15,573	56.4	5,814	53.0	1,445	46.4
Widowed	4,951	8.6	3,348	12.1	2,377	21.7	865	27.8
Divorced	8,853	15.4	4,097	14.8	1,682	15.3	440	14.1
Female								
Never married	17,122	21.6	6,020	14.2	2,797	13.2	604	8.6
Now married	25,328	32.0	11,730	27.7	3,609	17.1	763	10.9
Widowed	19,349	24.4	16,013	37.7	11,391	54.0	4,709	67.4
Divorced	17,423	22.0	8,656	20.4	3,315	15.7	907	13.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 American Community Survey

In 2009, 4.3% of people aged 55 years and older were without health insurance

Table 5. Health Insurance Coverage of the Population 55 Years and Over by Sex and Age: 2009

Sex and Age	Total	Insured		Uninsured	
		Number	%	Number	%
Both Sexes					
55 years and over	131,978	126,242	95.7	5,736	4.3
55 to 64 years	66,214	60,968	92.1	5,246	7.9
65 years and over	65,764	65,274	99.3	490	0.7
65 to 74 years	37,420	37,016	98.9	404	1.1
75 years and over	28,344	28,258	99.7	86	0.3
Male					
55 years and over	56,094	53,700	95.7	2,394	4.3
55 to 64 years	29,510	27,460	93.1	2,050	6.9
65 years and over	26,584	26,240	98.7	344	1.3
65 to 74 years	16,364	16,043	98.0	321	2.0
75 years and over	10,220	10,197	99.8	23	0.2
Female					
55 years and over	75,884	72,542	95.6	3,342	4.4
55 to 64 years	36,704	33,508	91.3	3,196	8.7
65 years and over	39,180	39,034	99.6	146	0.4
65 to 74 years	21,056	20,973	99.6	83	0.4
75 years and over	18,124	18,061	99.7	63	0.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 American Community Survey

Men aged 55 years and over are more likely than women to be married mainly due to greater longevity of women and therefore more widowed women. In 2009, 53.9 percent of men aged 55 years and over were married, compared with 32 percent of women in the same age group. Among those aged 65 years and over, 56.4 percent of men and 27.7 percent of women were married. For those aged 85 years and over, 46.4 percent of men and 10.9 percent of women were married. In 2009, 8.6 percent of men and 24.4 percent of women aged 55 years and over were widowed.

Population 55 Years and Over by Health Insurance Coverage

In 2009, 4.3 percent of people aged 55 years and over were without health insurance, compared with 0.7 percent of people aged 65 years and over, and 0.3 percent of people aged 75 years and over. In 2009, 4.3 percent of men aged 55 years and over were without health insurance, compared with 4.4 percent of women. For those aged 55 to 64 years, 6.9 percent of men and 8.7 percent of women were without health insurance. Among people aged 65 to 74 years, 2 percent of men and 0.4 percent of women were without health insurance. For those aged 75 years and over, 0.2 percent of men and 0.3 percent of women were without health insurance coverage (Table 5).

Men aged 55 years and over were more likely than women to be unemployed

Table 6. Population 55 Years and Over by Employment Status: 2009

Employment Status	55 Years and Over		65 Years and Over		75 Years and Over	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Both Sexes	136,677	100	70,022	100	32,086	100
In labor force	60,213	44.1	15,795	22.6	2,764	8.6
Employed	55,372	40.5	14,676	21	2,764	8.6
Unemployed	4,841	3.5	1,119	1.6	0	0
Not in labor force	76,464	55.9	54,227	77.4	29,322	91.4
Percent Unemployed	8.0%	(X)	7.1%	(X)	0.0	(X)
Male	57,455	100	27,603	100	10,974	100
In labor force:	28,621	49.8	7,871	28.5	1,309	11.9
Employed	25,540	44.5	7,180	26	1,309	11.9
Unemployed	3,081	5.4	691	2.5	0	0
Not in labor force	28,834	50.2	19,732	71.5	9,665	88.1
Percent Unemployed	10.8%	(X)	8.8%	(X)	0.0	(X)
Female	79,222	100	42,419	100	21,112	100
In labor force	31,592	39.9	7,924	18.7	1,455	6.9
Employed	29,832	37.7	7,496	17.7	1,455	6.9
Unemployed	1,760	2.2	428	1	0	0
Not in labor force	47,630	60.1	34,495	81.3	19,657	93.1
Percent Unemployed	5.6%	(X)	5.4%	(X)	0.0	(X)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 American Community Survey

Population 55 Years and Over by Employment Status

Labor force participation rate varies by age and sex among people aged 55 years and over in the District. Men aged 55 years and over are more likely than women to be in the civilian labor force. In 2009, 49.8 percent of men aged 55 years and over were in the labor force, compared with 37.7 percent of women. Among people aged 65 years and over, 28.8 percent of men and 18.7 percent of women were in the labor force. For those aged 75 years and over, 11.9 percent of men and 6.9 percent of women were in the labor force. Men aged 55 years and over were more likely than women to be unemployed. In 2009, 10.8 percent of men aged 55 years and over were unemployed, compared with 5.6 percent of women (Table 6).

Population 65 Years and Over by Educational Attainment

In 2009, 76.1 percent of the population aged 65 years and over were high school graduates and 35.9 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher education. (Data are not available for the 55 years and over age group). Educational level varies by sex for the population 65 years and over in the District. In 2009, 78.6 percent of men aged 65 years and

over were high school graduates or more, compared with 74.4 percent of women. In 2009, 43.6 percent of men aged 65 years and over had a bachelor's degree or higher education, compared with 31 percent of women (Table 7).

Population 65 years and Over by Disability Status

Table 8 presents disability status of the population aged 65 years and over in the District. In 2009, 36.5 percent of the civilian non-institutionalized population aged 65 years and over, and 46.7 percent of those aged 75 years and over in the District had some type of disability.

Among the population aged 65 years and over, 34.6 percent of men had some type of disability, compared with 37.7 percent of women. However, among those aged 75 years and over, men (48.4 percent) were more likely than women (45.8 percent) to experience disability in 2009.

In 2009, 35.9% of the population aged 65 years and over had a bachelors degree or higher

Table 7. Educational Attainment of the Population 65 Years and Over by Sex: 2009

Educational Attainment	Both Sexes		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
65 years and over	70,022	100.0	27,603	100.0	42,419	100.0
Less than 9th grade	7,089	10.1	2,640	9.6	4,449	10.5
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	9,674	13.8	3,266	11.8	6,408	15.1
High school graduate	15,373	22.0	5,887	21.3	9,486	22.4
Some college, no degree	10,881	15.5	3,375	12.2	7,506	17.7
Associate's degree	1,840	2.6	408	1.5	1,432	3.4
Bachelor's degree	9,720	13.9	3,867	14.0	5,853	13.8
Graduate or professional degree	15,445	22.1	8,160	29.6	7,285	17.2
Less than high school graduate	16,763	23.9	5,906	21.4	10,857	25.6
High school graduate or more	53,259	76.1	21,697	78.6	31,562	74.4
Less than bachelor's degree	44,857	64.1	15,576	56.4	29,281	69.0
Bachelor's degree or more	25,165	35.9	12,027	43.6	13,138	31.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 American Community Survey

46.7% of the population aged 75 years and over had some type of disability

Table 8. Disability Status of the Population 65 Years and Over by Sex and Age: 2009

Sex and Age	Total	With a Disability		No Disability	
		Number	%	Number	%
Both Sexes					
65 years and over	65,764	23,971	36.5	41,793	63.5
65 to 74 years	37,420	10,730	28.7	26,690	71.3
75 years and over	28,344	13,241	46.7	15,103	53.3
Male					
65 years and over	26,584	9,187	34.6	17,397	65.4
65 to 74 years	16,364	4,240	25.9	12,124	74.1
75 years and over	10,220	4,947	48.4	5,273	51.6
Female					
65 years and over	39,180	14,784	37.7	24,396	62.3
65 to 74 years	21,056	6,490	30.8	14,566	69.2
75 years and over	18,124	8,294	45.8	9,830	54.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 American Community Survey

Population 65 Years and Over by Household Type

In 2009, 93.5 percent of the population aged 65 years and over in the District lived in households and 6.5 percent lived in group quarters. For the 65 years and over population, 54.2 percent lived in family households and 39.2 percent lived in non-family households, in 2009 (Table 9).

Population 55 Years and Over by Housing Tenure

In 2009, for the District as a whole, 44.8 percent of the households lived in owner occupied housing units and 55.2 percent lived in renter occupied housing units. Among people aged 55 years and over, 59.2 percent lived in owner occupied housing units and 40.8 percent lived in renter occupied housing units. For those aged 75 years and over, 63.9 percent lived in owner occupied housing units and 36.1 percent lived in renter occupied housing units (Table 10).

Table 9. Population 65 Years and Over by Household Type: 2009

Household Type	Number	Percent
Total 65 years and over	70,022	100.0
In households:	65,456	93.5
In family households:	37,986	54.2
Householder:	19,862	28.4
Male	9,558	13.6
Female	10,304	14.7
In nonfamily households:	27,470	39.2
Householder:	26,119	37.3
Male:	9,534	13.6
Living alone	8,689	12.4
Not living alone	845	1.2
Female:	16,585	23.7
Living alone	16,054	22.9
Not living alone	531	0.8
In group quarters	4,566	6.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 American Community Survey

6.5% of the population aged 65 years and over lived in group quarters

Table 10. Housing Tenure by Age of Householder 55 Years and Over: 2009

Household and Tenure	55 Years and Over		65 Years and Over		75 Years and Over	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total households	86,775	100.0	45,981	100.0	20,918	100.0
Owner occupied	51,392	59.2	29,027	63.1	13,371	63.9
Renter occupied	35,383	40.8	16,954	36.9	7,547	36.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 American Community Survey

Population 65 Years and Over by Language Spoken at Home

In 2009, 92.3 percent of people aged 65 years and over spoke only English at home, 3.8 percent spoke other Indo-European languages, 2.1 percent spoke Spanish, 0.8 percent spoke Asian and Pacific Island languages, and 0.9 percent spoke other languages at home. Ninety-seven percent of people aged 65 years and over spoke English very well and 3 percent spoke English less than very well (Table 11).

Table 11. Population of 65 Years and Over by Language Spoken at Home and Ability to Speak English: 2009

Language Spoken at Home	Number	Percent
65 years and over:	70,022	100.0
Speak only English	64,634	92.3
Speak Spanish:	1,499	2.1
Speak English "very well"	472	0.7
Speak English less than "very well"	1,027	1.5
Speak other Indo-European languages:	2,648	3.8
Speak English "very well"	2,250	3.2
Speak English less than "very well"	398	0.6
Speak Asian and Pacific Island languages:	577	0.8
Speak English "very well"	184	0.3
Speak English less than "very well"	393	0.6
Speak other languages:	664	0.9
Speak English "very well"	428	0.6
Speak English less than "very well"	236	0.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 American Community Survey

15% of the population aged 55 years and over lived in poverty

Population 55 Years and Over by Poverty Status

Poverty rates varied by age and sex for the District's 55 years and over population. In 2009, the population aged 55 years and over had a poverty rate of 15.1 percent, compared with 13.5 percent for the population aged 65 years and over and 16.1 percent for those aged 75 years and over. Among the population aged 55 years and over in the District, women were more likely than men to live in poverty. In 2009, 14.6 percent of men aged 55 to 64 years were in poverty, compared with 16.4 percent women of the same age group. For those aged 65 to 74 years, 11 percent men and 15.4 percent women were in poverty in 2009. Among the population aged 75 years and over, 12.9 percent of men were in poverty, compared with 17.9 percent of women (Table 12).

According to the 2009 American Community Survey, 9.5 percent of the total U.S. population aged 65 years and over lived in poverty. When compared to states, the District had the second highest poverty rate at 14.6 percent for its population aged 65 years and over, with Mississippi at the highest at 15 percent.

Table 12. Population 55 Years and Over by Sex and Poverty Status: 2009

Sex and Age	Total	Below Poverty Level		At or Above Poverty Level	
		Number	%	Number	%
Both Sexes					
55 years and over	131,978	19,955	15.1	112,023	84.9
55 to 64 years	66,214	10,349	15.6	55,865	84.4
65 years and over	65,764	9,606	14.6	56,158	85.4
65 to 74 years	37,420	5,043	13.5	32,377	86.5
75 years and over	28,344	4,563	16.1	23,781	83.9
Male					
55 years and over	56,094	7,443	13.3	48,651	86.7
55 to 64 years	29,510	4,316	14.6	25,194	85.4
65 years and over	26,584	3,127	11.8	23,457	88.2
65 to 74 years	16,364	1,807	11.0	14,557	89.0
75 years and over	10,220	1,320	12.9	8,900	87.1
Female					
55 years and over	75,884	12,512	16.5	63,372	83.5
55 to 64 years	36,704	6,033	16.4	30,671	83.6
65 years and over	39,180	6,479	16.5	32,701	83.5
65 to 74 years	21,056	3,236	15.4	17,820	84.6
75 years and over	18,124	3,243	17.9	14,881	82.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 American Community Survey

For more information contact:
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