

# Same-Sex Couple Households: 2019

## American Community Survey Briefs

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### INTRODUCTION

As the largest available nationally representative household survey, the American Community Survey (ACS) is useful for examining the characteristics of households and families.<sup>1</sup> Near the beginning of the survey questionnaire, there is a question asking how each household member is related to the householder. The householder is typically someone who owns the home or whose name is on the lease. Understanding each member's relationship to the householder allows us to distinguish various types of household composition and family structure.

<sup>1</sup> The U.S. Census Bureau reviewed this data product for unauthorized disclosure of confidential information and approved the disclosure avoidance practices applied to this release. CBDRB-FY20-POP001-0191.

**Same-sex couple households:** These households are identified using the “same-sex spouse” or “same-sex unmarried partner” selections to the relationship to householder question.

**Total coupled households:** The total of those households in which the householder reports having a spouse or unmarried partner in the household. Includes opposite-sex and same-sex married and unmarried couples.

**Unmarried partner:** A person in an intimate relationship with the householder, such as a boyfriend or a girlfriend.

Over the past decade, the U.S. Census Bureau has worked to make changes to the relationship to householder question to address known data quality issues and improve the measurement of same-sex couple households.<sup>2</sup> The revised relationship to householder question has already been implemented in the Census Bureau's other main demographic surveys, as well as in the 2020 Census.<sup>3</sup> See Figure 1 for an image of the revised relationship question.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix for information about the development of this new question.

<sup>3</sup> For details on the timing of implementation in the main demographic surveys, see the graphic located at <[www.census.gov/library/visualizations/2019/demo/same-sex-timeline.html](http://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/2019/demo/same-sex-timeline.html)>.

Figure 1.  
**2019 American Community Survey  
Relationship to Householder Question**

#### How is this person related to Person 1?

Mark (X) ONE box.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Opposite-sex husband/wife/spouse | <input type="checkbox"/> Brother or sister             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Opposite-sex unmarried partner   | <input type="checkbox"/> Father or mother              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Same-sex husband/wife/spouse     | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandchild                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Same-sex unmarried partner       | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent-in-law                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biological son or daughter       | <input type="checkbox"/> Son-in-law or daughter-in-law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adopted son or daughter          | <input type="checkbox"/> Other relative                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stepson or stepdaughter          | <input type="checkbox"/> Roommate or housemate         |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Foster child                  |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other nonrelative             |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey questionnaire.

The categories of spouse and unmarried partner were expanded to distinguish between opposite-sex and same-sex couples. In addition, the unmarried partner categories are now displayed next to the categories for spouses, which was not the case in the past.

### Distribution of Same-Sex Couple Households

Nationally, about 980,000 households in the United States were same-sex couple households in 2019 (Table 1). Among same-sex couple households, approximately 58.0 percent consisted of married couples and about 42.0 percent consisted of unmarried partner households (Figure 2). This was in contrast to opposite-sex couples, 88.3 percent of which were married couples and roughly 11.7 percent of which were unmarried partners. Among both married and unmarried same-sex couples, there were more female couple households than male couple households.<sup>4</sup>

### GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF SAME-SEX COUPLE HOUSEHOLDS

#### Same-Sex Couple Households by State

The distribution of same-sex couple households varied across the United States. In 27 states, same-sex couple households made up a lower percentage of all coupled households than the national average of 1.5 percent (Figure 3). States with the lowest

<sup>4</sup> The percentage of male same-sex unmarried partner households was not significantly different from male same-sex married couple households and the percentage of female same-sex unmarried partner households was not significantly different from female married couple households.

Table 1.

### Coupled Households by Type: 2019

(For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions in the American Community Survey, see <[www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/code-lists.html](http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/code-lists.html)>)

| Couple type                          | Estimate          | Margin of error <sup>1</sup> (±) |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Total coupled households.....</b> | <b>66,427,835</b> | <b>169,899</b>                   |
| Married couples.....                 | 58,370,842        | 156,460                          |
| Opposite-sex.....                    | 57,802,732        | 156,789                          |
| Same-sex.....                        | 568,110           | 13,533                           |
| Male-male.....                       | 264,691           | 7,746                            |
| Female-female.....                   | 303,419           | 10,013                           |
| Unmarried partners.....              | 8,056,993         | 51,391                           |
| Opposite-sex.....                    | 7,644,827         | 49,340                           |
| Same-sex.....                        | 412,166           | 10,776                           |
| Male-male.....                       | 197,524           | 7,923                            |
| Female-female.....                   | 214,642           | 8,386                            |

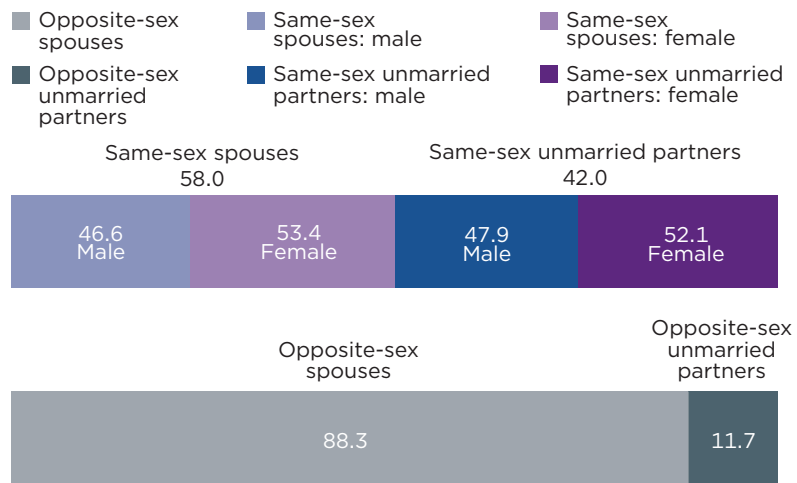
<sup>1</sup> Data are based on a sample and are subject to sampling variability. A margin of error is a measure of an estimate's variability. The larger the margin of error in relation to the size of the estimate, the less reliable the estimate. When added to and subtracted from the estimate, the margin of error forms the 90 percent confidence interval.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, 1-year data.

Figure 2.

### Same-Sex and Opposite-Sex Couple Households by Type: 2019

(In percent)



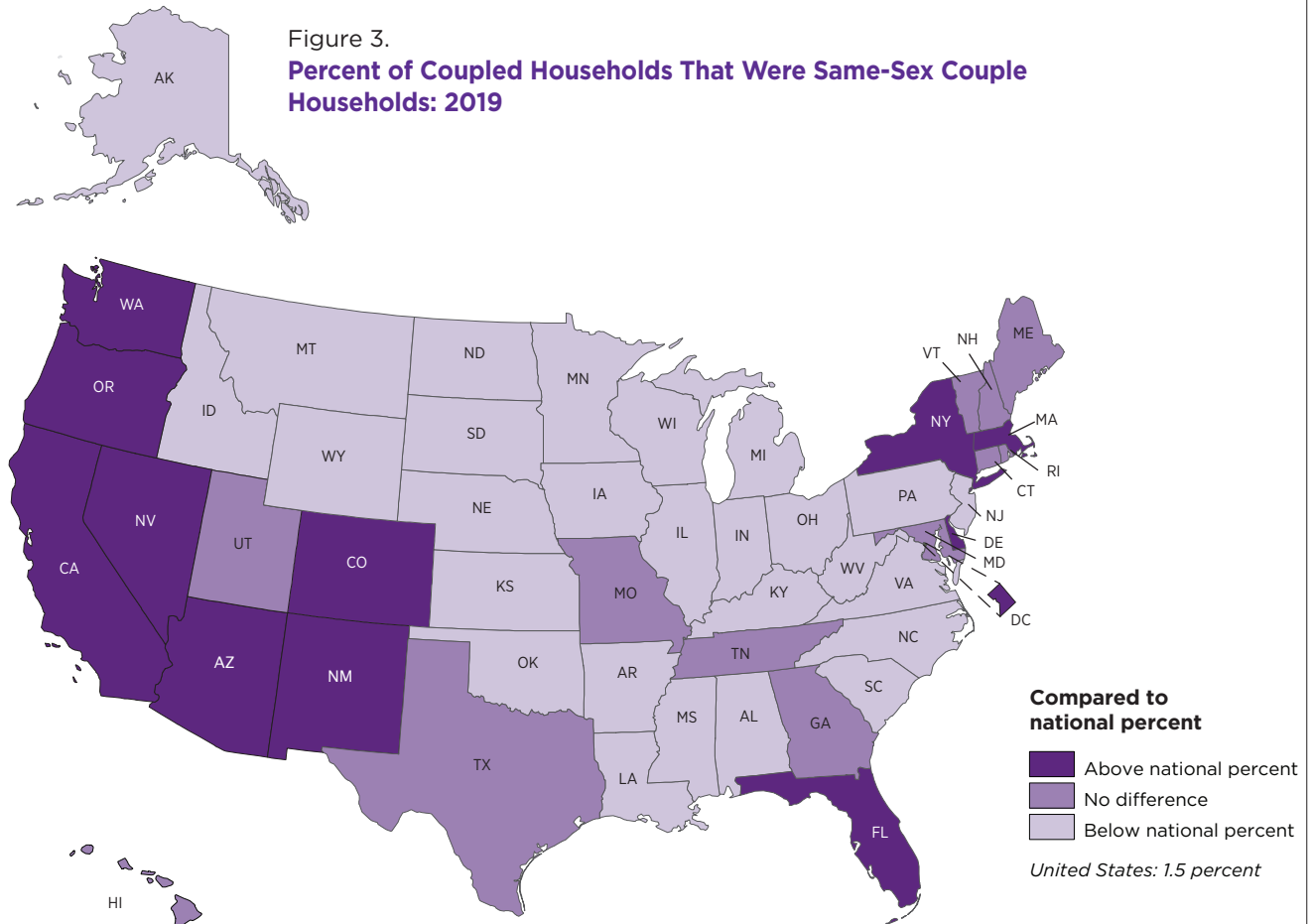
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, 1-year data.

percentages of same-sex couple households included North Dakota (0.5 percent), Idaho (0.6 percent), and Montana (0.6 percent).<sup>5</sup> On the other hand,

<sup>5</sup> Idaho, Montana, and North Dakota were not significantly different from each other or from Mississippi, South Dakota, and Wyoming. Idaho was not significantly different from Alaska, Iowa, Nebraska, and West Virginia. Montana was not significantly different from Alaska, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, and West Virginia.

11 states plus the District of Columbia had higher percentages of same-sex couple households than the national percentage. The highest percentage was in the District of Columbia (7.1 percent). Delaware (2.3 percent) and Oregon (2.2 percent) were

Figure 3.  
**Percent of Coupled Households That Were Same-Sex Couple Households: 2019**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, 1-year data.

also among the states with the highest percentages.<sup>6</sup>

### Same-Sex Couple Households by Metropolitan Statistical Area

Table 2a presents ten metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) that had among the highest percentages of same-sex couple households. Approximately 2.8 percent of all coupled households in the San Francisco-Oakland-Berkeley, CA MSA consisted of same-sex married couple or same-sex unmarried partner

households.<sup>7</sup> The Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD MSA (2.0 percent), meanwhile, was about 1.3 times higher than the national percentage.<sup>8</sup>

Table 2b lists the same ten MSAs for same-sex married couple households. Just as was true for all same-sex couple households combined, the San Francisco-Oakland-Berkeley, CA MSA

<sup>7</sup> The percentage of same-sex couple households in the San Francisco-Oakland-Berkeley, CA MSA was not significantly different from the Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford, FL MSA; Portland-Vancouver-Hillsboro, OR-WA MSA; or Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA MSA.

<sup>8</sup> The percentage of same-sex couple households in the Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD MSA was significantly different from the percentage in the San Francisco-Oakland-Berkeley, CA MSA.

contained a significantly higher percentage of same-sex married couple households (1.9 percent) compared with most of the other top ten metropolitan areas. The exception was the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA MSA, whose same-sex married couple households were 1.6 percent of total coupled households within the MSA. Both the San Francisco-Oakland-Berkeley, CA MSA and the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA MSA had same-sex married couple households at about twice the national rate (0.9 percent).

Table 2c indicates the variation in the percentage of coupled households that were unmarried

<sup>6</sup> Delaware and Oregon were not significantly different from each other.

Table 2a.

### Selected Metropolitan Statistical Areas Among the Highest Percentage of All Same-Sex Couple Households: 2019

(For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions in the American Community Survey, see <[www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/code-lists.html](http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/code-lists.html)>)

| Metropolitan statistical areas <sup>1,2</sup>     | Total coupled households | Margin of error <sup>3</sup> (±) | All same-sex couple households |                                  |
|---|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
|   |                          |                                  | Percent of coupled households  | Margin of error <sup>3</sup> (±) |
| San Francisco-Oakland-Berkeley, CA . . . . .      | 953,939                  | 9,801                            | 2.8                            | 0.27                             |
| Portland-Vancouver-Hillsboro, OR-WA . . . . .     | 548,325                  | 8,635                            | 2.6                            | 0.31                             |
| Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA . . . . .             | 878,709                  | 13,181                           | 2.4                            | 0.30                             |
| Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford, FL . . . . .           | 501,674                  | 11,137                           | 2.4                            | 0.59                             |
| Austin-Round Rock-Georgetown, TX . . . . .        | 451,691                  | 8,470                            | 2.2                            | 0.41                             |
| Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach, FL . . . . . | 1,110,820                | 12,708                           | 2.2                            | 0.23                             |
| Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA . . . . .             | 1,008,283                | 10,819                           | 2.1                            | 0.23                             |
| Denver-Aurora-Lakewood, CO . . . . .              | 639,286                  | 9,631                            | 2.0                            | 0.29                             |
| Phoenix-Mesa-Chandler, AZ . . . . .               | 993,119                  | 13,091                           | 2.0                            | 0.24                             |
| Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD . . . . .           | 554,091                  | 7,651                            | 2.0                            | 0.35                             |

<sup>1</sup> Metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) listed in table may not differ statistically from other MSAs not listed.

<sup>2</sup> MSAs include a minimum of 100 unweighted same-sex couple households.

<sup>3</sup> Data are based on a sample and are subject to sampling variability. A margin of error is a measure of an estimate's variability. The larger the margin of error in relation to the size of the estimate, the less reliable the estimate. When added to and subtracted from the estimate, the margin of error forms the 90 percent confidence interval.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, 1-year data.

Table 2b.

### Selected Metropolitan Statistical Areas Among the Highest Percentage of Same-Sex Married Couple Households: 2019

(For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions in the American Community Survey, see <[www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/code-lists.html](http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/code-lists.html)>)

| Metropolitan statistical areas <sup>1,2</sup>     | Total coupled households | Margin of error <sup>3</sup> (±) | Same-sex married couple households |                                  |
|---|--------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
|   |                          |                                  | Percent of coupled households      | Margin of error <sup>3</sup> (±) |
| San Francisco-Oakland-Berkeley, CA . . . . .      | 953,939                  | 9,801                            | 1.9                                | 0.21                             |
| Portland-Vancouver-Hillsboro, OR-WA . . . . .     | 548,325                  | 8,635                            | 1.4                                | 0.25                             |
| Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA . . . . .             | 878,709                  | 13,181                           | 1.6                                | 0.23                             |
| Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford, FL . . . . .           | 501,674                  | 11,137                           | 1.2                                | 0.31                             |
| Austin-Round Rock-Georgetown, TX . . . . .        | 451,691                  | 8,470                            | 1.2                                | 0.28                             |
| Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach, FL . . . . . | 1,110,820                | 12,708                           | 1.3                                | 0.18                             |
| Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA . . . . .             | 1,008,283                | 10,819                           | 1.3                                | 0.17                             |
| Denver-Aurora-Lakewood, CO . . . . .              | 639,286                  | 9,631                            | 1.1                                | 0.19                             |
| Phoenix-Mesa-Chandler, AZ . . . . .               | 993,119                  | 13,091                           | 1.3                                | 0.22                             |
| Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD . . . . .           | 554,091                  | 7,651                            | 1.1                                | 0.28                             |

<sup>1</sup> Metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) listed in table may not differ statistically from other MSAs not listed.

<sup>2</sup> MSAs include a minimum of 100 unweighted same-sex couple households.

<sup>3</sup> Data are based on a sample and are subject to sampling variability. A margin of error is a measure of an estimate's variability. The larger the margin of error in relation to the size of the estimate, the less reliable the estimate. When added to and subtracted from the estimate, the margin of error forms the 90 percent confidence interval.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, 1-year data.

Table 2c.

### Selected Metropolitan Statistical Areas Among the Highest Percentage of Same-Sex Unmarried Partner Households: 2019

(For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions in the American Community Survey, see <[www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/code-lists.html](http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/code-lists.html)>)

| Metropolitan statistical areas <sup>1,2</sup>     | Total coupled households | Margin of error <sup>3</sup> (±) | Same-sex unmarried partner households |                                  |
|---|--------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
|   |                          |                                  | Percent of coupled households         | Margin of error <sup>3</sup> (±) |
| San Francisco-Oakland-Berkeley, CA . . . . .      | 953,939                  | 9,801                            | 1.0                                   | 0.17                             |
| Portland-Vancouver-Hillsboro, OR-WA . . . . .     | 548,325                  | 8,635                            | 1.2                                   | 0.24                             |
| Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA . . . . .             | 878,709                  | 13,181                           | 0.8                                   | 0.18                             |
| Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford, FL . . . . .           | 501,674                  | 11,137                           | 1.1                                   | 0.45                             |
| Austin-Round Rock-Georgetown, TX . . . . .        | 451,691                  | 8,470                            | 1.0                                   | 0.28                             |
| Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach, FL . . . . . | 1,110,820                | 12,708                           | 0.9                                   | 0.15                             |
| Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA . . . . .             | 1,008,283                | 10,819                           | 0.8                                   | 0.15                             |
| Denver-Aurora-Lakewood, CO . . . . .              | 639,286                  | 9,631                            | 1.0                                   | 0.18                             |
| Phoenix-Mesa-Chandler, AZ . . . . .               | 993,119                  | 13,091                           | 0.8                                   | 0.13                             |
| Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD . . . . .           | 554,091                  | 7,651                            | 0.9                                   | 0.28                             |

<sup>1</sup> Metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) listed in table may not differ statistically from other MSAs not listed.

<sup>2</sup> MSAs include a minimum of 100 unweighted same-sex couple households.

<sup>3</sup> Data are based on a sample and are subject to sampling variability. A margin of error is a measure of an estimate's variability. The larger the margin of error in relation to the size of the estimate, the less reliable the estimate. When added to and subtracted from the estimate, the margin of error forms the 90 percent confidence interval.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, 1-year data.

same-sex couple households among metro areas. For example, the percentage of total coupled households that were same-sex unmarried partner households in the San Francisco-Oakland-Berkeley, CA MSA was about 1.5 times higher than the national rate (0.6 percent), while the Portland-Vancouver-Hillsboro, OR-WA MSA was about two times the national rate.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the percentage of coupled households that were same-sex unmarried partner households in the Portland, OR MSA (1.2 percent) was significantly higher than several other top-ranked MSAs such as Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach, FL (0.9 percent), Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA (0.8 percent), Phoenix-Mesa-Chandler, AZ (0.8 percent), and Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA (0.8 percent).<sup>10</sup>

### **SAME-SEX HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN**

Table 3 displays detailed information for coupled households by the presence of children

<sup>9</sup> The San Francisco-Oakland-Berkeley, CA MSA and the Portland-Vancouver-Hillsboro, OR-WA MSA were not significantly different from each other.

<sup>10</sup> The percentage of same-sex partner households in the Portland-Vancouver-Hillsboro, OR-WA MSA was not significantly different from the other MSAs listed in Table 2c and not mentioned here. Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach, FL; Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA; Phoenix-Mesa-Chandler, AZ; and Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA were not significantly different from each other or any other MSAs listed in Table 2c except for the Portland-Vancouver-Hillsboro, OR-WA MSA.

under 18.<sup>11</sup> Overall, married opposite-sex couple households (40.9 percent) and married same-sex couple households (21.5 percent) had higher percentages of children under 18 present than their counterparts in unmarried partner households (38.1 percent of opposite-sex unmarried partners and 14.3 percent of same-sex unmarried partners, respectively). This underscores that a higher percentage of kids lived with married couples than unmarried partners, and this held true whether they were opposite-sex or same-sex married couples.<sup>12</sup> Of all couple types, opposite-sex married couples were the most likely to have children under 18 present in the household.

The second half of Table 3 displays the type of relationship to the householder among children under 18 who resided in coupled households. Opposite-sex couple households were more likely than same-sex couple households to contain biological children only. Looking at the type of couple relationship, about 83.8 percent of married opposite-sex couple households with children contained only

<sup>11</sup> “Children under 18” indicates the presence of any person under the age of 18 in the household.

<sup>12</sup> This statement applies to married versus unmarried couples within the same-sex and opposite-sex classifications. Opposite-sex unmarried partners were more likely to have children present than same-sex married couples.

biological children of the householder, compared with 51.6 percent of married same-sex couple households. Results were similar for unmarried partners, with 70.7 percent of opposite-sex unmarried partner households containing biological children only in 2019, compared with 44.0 percent of same-sex unmarried partner households.

In contrast, same-sex couple households were more likely to contain adopted children only. Just 1.7 percent of married opposite-sex couple households and just over half a percent (0.6 percent) of opposite-sex unmarried partner households included adopted children only, compared with 17.2 percent of married same-sex couples and 5.9 percent of unmarried partner same-sex couples.

The presence of only foster children within opposite-sex couple households was also less common than it was for same-sex households. While 1.7 percent of married same-sex couples and 1.2 percent of unmarried same-sex couples had foster children present, this was true for roughly 0.2 percent of married opposite-sex couples and 0.1 percent of unmarried opposite-sex couples.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> The percentages of opposite-sex married and unmarried households with only foster children present were not significantly different from each other.

Table 3.

**Presence of Children in Coupled Households by Type: 2019**

(For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions in the American Community Survey, see <[www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/code-lists.html](http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/code-lists.html)>)

| Characteristic  | Married opposite-sex couples |                                  | Unmarried partner opposite-sex couples |                                  | Married same-sex couples |                                  | Unmarried partner same-sex couples |                                  |
|---|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
|   | Percent                      | Margin of error <sup>1</sup> (±) | Percent                                | Margin of error <sup>1</sup> (±) | Percent                  | Margin of error <sup>1</sup> (±) | Percent                            | Margin of error <sup>1</sup> (±) |
| <b>Total coupled households</b> .....                                       | <b>57,802,732</b>            | <b>156,789</b>                   | <b>7,644,827</b>                       | <b>49,340</b>                    | <b>568,110</b>           | <b>13,533</b>                    | <b>412,166</b>                     | <b>10,776</b>                    |
| No children under 18 present <sup>2</sup> .....                             | 59.1                         | 0.11                             | 61.9                                   | 0.32                             | 78.5                     | 0.97                             | 85.7                               | 1.06                             |
| Children under 18 present.....  | 40.9                         | 0.11                             | 38.1                                   | 0.32                             | 21.5                     | 0.97                             | 14.3                               | 1.06                             |
| <b>Coupled households with children under 18 present</b> <sup>3</sup> ..... | <b>23,670,000</b>            | <b>84,750</b>                    | <b>2,909,000</b>                       | <b>32,180</b>                    | <b>122,200</b>           | <b>6,856</b>                     | <b>58,850</b>                      | <b>4,583</b>                     |
| Biological children only.....   | 83.8                         | 0.13                             | 70.7                                   | 0.55                             | 51.6                     | 2.81                             | 44.0                               | 3.77                             |
| Stepchildren only.....  | 2.0                          | 0.05                             | 5.3                                    | 0.22                             | 8.5                      | 1.14                             | 10.7                               | 2.32                             |
| Adopted children only.....  | 1.7                          | 0.04                             | 0.6                                    | 0.09                             | 17.2                     | 2.08                             | 5.9                                | 1.53                             |
| Foster children only.....   | 0.2                          | 0.01                             | 0.1                                    | 0.04                             | 1.7                      | 0.72                             | 1.2                                | 0.73                             |
| Other relative/other nonrelative only <sup>4</sup> .....                    | 1.0                          | 0.03                             | 6.8                                    | 0.30                             | 5.0                      | 1.09                             | 18.7                               | 2.67                             |
| Households with more than one type of child relationship <sup>5</sup> ..... | 5.4                          | 0.08                             | 12.8                                   | 0.41                             | 8.9                      | 1.41                             | 10.5                               | 2.13                             |

<sup>1</sup>Data are based on a sample and are subject to sampling variability. A margin of error is a measure of an estimate's variability. The larger the margin of error in relation to the size of the estimate, the less reliable the estimate. When added to and subtracted from the estimate, the margin of error forms the 90 percent confidence interval.

<sup>2</sup>Children under the age of 18 present represents any household with any person under 18.

<sup>3</sup>Percentages do not total to 100 percent. All relationship categories not shown.

<sup>4</sup>Only the relationship categories of "other relative" and "other nonrelative" are included. Other relationship categories that may be classified as relatives or nonrelatives, such as roommates or housemates, are not included.

<sup>5</sup>Represents households containing a combination of children from more than one of the following categories: biological children, stepchildren, adopted children, foster children, or other relatives/other nonrelatives.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, 1-year data.



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Because only relationship to the householder was collected, it was possible for children raised in an unmarried partner household to be reported as an “other relative” or “other nonrelative” of the householder, rather than their biological children, adopted children, or stepchildren. American society does not have a succinct term that refers to the child of one’s unmarried partner. So, it is likely that these two categories included the children of unmarried partners. In fact, unmarried couple households were much more likely than married couple households to have only “other relative” and “other nonrelative” children present. However, there were differences in the percentages between same-sex and opposite-sex unmarried partner households: 18.7 percent of same-sex unmarried partner households contained only children identified as “other relative/nonrelative” compared with just 6.8 percent of opposite-sex unmarried partner households.

## SUMMARY

Like opposite-sex couple households, same-sex couple households were more likely to contain married as opposed to unmarried couples, though the percentage of same-sex couple

households that were married was much lower than opposite-sex couple households. A similar pattern was present when looking at households with children under 18. While both same-sex and opposite-sex married couple households were more likely than the corresponding unmarried couples to have children under 18 present,<sup>14</sup> same-sex married couple households had children about half as frequently as opposite-sex married couples. Interestingly, the types of relationships children under 18 had with the householder differed depending on whether they were in a same-sex or opposite-sex couple household.

## SOURCE AND ACCURACY

The data presented in this report are based on the ACS sample interviewed in 2019. The estimates based on this sample approximate the actual values and represent the entire household and group quarters population. Sampling error is the difference between an estimate based in a sample and the corresponding value that would be obtained if the estimate were based on the entire population (as from a census). Measures of

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<sup>14</sup> Both opposite-sex married and opposite-sex unmarried couples were more likely to have children under 18 present than either type of same-sex couple.

the sampling errors are provided in the form of margins of error for all estimates included in the report. All comparative statements in this report have undergone statistical testing, and comparisons are significant at the 90 percent level unless otherwise noted. In addition to sampling error, nonsampling error may be introduced during any of the operations used to collect and process survey data such as editing, reviewing, or keying data from questionnaires. For more information on sampling and estimation methods, confidentiality protection, and sampling and nonsampling errors, please see the 2019 ACS Accuracy of the Data document located at [https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/tech\\_docs/accuracy/ACS\\_Accuracy\\_of\\_Data\\_2019.pdf](https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/tech_docs/accuracy/ACS_Accuracy_of_Data_2019.pdf).

Since 2018, all ACS data products are released on the U.S. Census Bureau’s new data dissemination platform at <https://data.census.gov>. Data.census.gov is the new platform to access data and digital content from the Census Bureau. The centralized experience allows data users of all skill levels to search tables, visualize and download data, and create custom statistics. ACS data from

2010 forward are available on [data.census.gov](http://data.census.gov).

## APPENDIX

In reviewing the 2010 Census data, the Census Bureau became aware of a reporting error that affected data quality for same-sex married and unmarried couples. When two groups are related, and a very small proportion of the large group mismarks their answers, this can affect the estimates of the smaller group. This reporting error had the largest effect on the estimates of same-sex married couples, but also affected same-sex unmarried couples. The effect of mismarks on the estimate of same-sex married couple households was substantial.<sup>15</sup>

Working in the context of an Office of Management and Budget (OMB)-led interagency group, Measuring Relationships in Federal Household Surveys (MRFHS), the Census Bureau

<sup>15</sup> For details, see Martin O'Connell and Sarah Feliz, "Same-Sex Couple Household Statistics From the 2010 Census," *SEHSD Working Paper 2011-26*, 2011, available at [www.census.gov/library/working-papers/2011/demo/SEHSD-WP2011-26.html](http://www.census.gov/library/working-papers/2011/demo/SEHSD-WP2011-26.html).

## What Is the American Community Survey?

The American Community Survey (ACS) is a nationwide survey designed to provide communities with reliable and timely demographic, social, economic, and housing data for the nation, states, congressional districts, counties, places, and other localities every year. It has an annual sample size of about 3.54 million addresses across the United States and Puerto Rico and includes both housing units and group quarters (e.g., nursing homes and prisons). The ACS is conducted in every county throughout the nation, and every municipio in Puerto Rico, where it is called the Puerto Rico Community Survey. Beginning in 2006, ACS data were released annually for geographic areas with populations of 65,000 and greater. For information on the ACS sample design and other topics, visit [www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/](http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/).

revised the relationship to householder question to list additional categories and to address these kinds of reporting errors.<sup>16</sup> The new relationship categories specify whether the household member is the *opposite-sex spouse*, *opposite-sex unmarried partner*, *same-sex*

*spouse*, or *same-sex unmarried partner* of the householder. Numerous papers and reports detailing investigation of this reporting error and results of quantitative tests of the revised question are posted on the Census Bureau's Web site [www.census.gov/topics/families/same-sex-couples.html](http://www.census.gov/topics/families/same-sex-couples.html).

<sup>16</sup> See the Statistical Working Paper published by the OMB-led group, *Improved Measurement of Household Relationships in Federal Surveys: Measuring Same-Sex Co-Residential Relationships*, available at [https://s3.amazonaws.com/sitesusa/wp-content/uploads/sites/242/2014/04/MRFHS\\_StatisticalPolicyWorkingPaper201408.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/sitesusa/wp-content/uploads/sites/242/2014/04/MRFHS_StatisticalPolicyWorkingPaper201408.pdf).