

### Census information can provide valuable insights for emergency operations planning, exercises, outreach, and training strategies.

To plan for emergencies, emergency managers and others involved in emergency planning, must have a sound understanding of the unique size, characteristics, and locations of various populations within the community. Knowing the census data for your community can help you:

- Identify population segments that may need a tailored approach to preparedness education;
- Provide information to design more realistic community exercises;
- Provide insights to enhance alerts and warning systems and make them more effective at any time of day;
- Give planners a clearer understanding of the likely numbers of people needing group care or assistance with an evacuation during an incident; and
- Strategize how to build social capital in the community ([watch Dr. Daniel Aldrich's PrepTalk](#)).

The Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) website provides communities with reliable and timely demographic, housing, social, and economic data every year. Locate the ACS webpage by typing "American Community Survey" into any search engine or click here: <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/>.



Step 1: Locate the “Data” link in the navigation list on the left side of the ACS homepage.

**American Community Survey (ACS)**

About the Survey  
Respond to the Survey  
News & Updates  
**Data**  
Guidance for Data Users  
Geography & ACS  
Technical Documentation  
Methodology  
Library  
Operations and Administration  
Contact Us

The American Community Survey (ACS) helps local officials, community leaders, and businesses understand the changes taking place in their communities. It is the premier source for detailed population and housing information about our nation.

How do I respond to the ACS?  
Why do you ask each question?  
Where can I get ACS data?

**Latest**

Data News Events Lib

**2016 Data Release**  
Learn more about ACS data releases, including the January 18th release of 2012-2016 ACS 5-Year Public Use Microdata Sample files and Variance Replicate Tables.

**New Preview of County Profiles on data.census.gov**  
Search for your county on data.census.gov to explore a visual snapshot of statistics and provide feedback on this preview of the data dissemination platform.

**Data Tables and Tools**  
The ACS provides data tables including Comparison and Selected Population Profiles, and Subject, Detailed, Ranking, and Geographic Comparison Tables.

**Respond to the ACS**  
Learn how

Step 2: On the “Data” webpage, click on the link to browse the “Tables & Tools” section.

**American Community Survey (ACS)**

About the Survey  
Respond to the Survey  
News & Updates  
**Data**  
Data Tables & Tools  
Data via FTP  
Summary File Data  
PUMS Data  
Variance Replicate Tables  
Race/Ethnicity and American Indian & Alaska Native Data  
Custom Tables  
Guidance for Data Users  
Geography & ACS  
Technical Documentation

**Data**

**New Data Every Year!**  
The American Community Survey collects data on an ongoing basis, January through December, to provide every community with the information they need to make important decisions  
We release new data every year, in the form of estimates, in a variety of tables, tools, and analytical reports.

**Tables & Tools**  
Browse our [Tables & Tools Section](#) where you will find information on the many ways you can access the American Community Survey estimates in easy-to-use formats.  
For the power users, check out the additional data access options listed below.

**Other Data Options**

**Summary File Data**  
The ACS Summary File is a set of comma-delimited text files that contain all of the detailed tables for the ACS.

**API (Application Programming Interface)**  
Source for developers to access data to create software applications

**PUMS Data**  
Access ACS Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) data available through the American FactFinder website.

Step 3: On the Data Tables & Tools webpage, click on the “Data Profiles” link in the navigation list on the left side of the webpage.

The screenshot shows the navigation menu for the American Community Survey website. The menu items are: About the Survey, Respond to the Survey, News & Updates, Data, Data Tables & Tools, Data Profiles, Narrative Profiles, Subject Tables, Ranking Tables, Supplemental Tables, American FactFinder, More ACS Tools & Apps, Data via FTP, Summary File Data, PUMS Data, Variance Replicate Tables, and Race/Ethnicity & American Indian & Alaska Native Data. The 'Data Tables & Tools' item is highlighted in blue, and 'Data Profiles' is circled in red. A blue arrow points from a text box to the 'Data Profiles' link. The text box contains the instruction: 'Click on “Data Profiles” in the menu.'

## American Community Survey

About the Survey

Respond to the Survey

News & Updates

**Data**

**Data Tables & Tools**

Data Profiles

Narrative Profiles

Subject Tables

Ranking Tables

Supplemental Tables

American FactFinder

More ACS Tools & Apps

Data via FTP

Summary File Data

PUMS Data

Variance Replicate Tables

Race/Ethnicity & American Indian & Alaska Native Data

### Data Tables & Tools

**Data Profiles Selector**

Data Profiles consist of four tables (Social, Economic, Housing, Demographic) to give a broad statistical view of a particular geography. We provide an easy to use [Data Profiles geography selector](#) for the most popular geographies: state, county and place. Our full data website, [American FactFinder](#), provides additional geographies for this table type and many more.

### Narrative Profiles

The only place to find the current Narrative Profiles is right here on American Community Survey website. Narrative Profiles contain much of the same information found in the Data Profiles, except it is a text-based report with plenty of colorful graphs and charts. Use the map selector or the dropdown boxes to [generate a Narrative Profile](#) for your favorite place.

### Subject Tables

More interested in a particular topic than a particular geography? Check out our listing of ACS Subject Tables. Subject tables have both numbers and percentages making them the versatile choice for data seekers. You can search/filter the listing, and then link to American Factfinder (AFF) where you can change geographies and go back in time! [Choose your subject table here!](#)

**Step 4: Select a state, and county or place. Click on “Get Data Profile.”**

**American Community Survey**

About the Survey | Respond to the Survey | News & Updates | **Data** | Data Tables & Tools | **Data Profiles** | Narrative Profiles | Subject Tables | Ranking Tables | Supplemental Tables | American FactFinder | More ACS Tools & Apps | Data via FTP | Summary File Data | PUMS Data | Variance Replicate Tables | Race/Ethnicity & American Indian & Alaska Native Data | Custom Tables | Guidance for Data Users | Geography & the ACS

**Data Profiles** Tell Us What You Think!

Data Profiles have the most frequently requested social, economic, housing, and demographic data. Each of these four subject areas is a separate data profile. The data profiles summarize the data for a single geographic area, both numbers and percent, to cover the most basic data on all topics.

2016 | 2015 | 2014 | 2013 | 2012

**2012 - 2016 ACS 5-Year Data Profiles**

**United States**

[Social Characteristics](#) — includes Education, Marital Status, Relationships, Fertility, Grandpa  
[Economic Characteristics](#) — includes Income, Employment, Occupation, Commuting to Work  
[Housing Characteristics](#) — includes Occupancy and Structure, Housing Value and Costs, Util  
[Demographic Characteristics](#) — includes Sex and Age, Race, Hispanic Origin, Housing Units

\*All links go to American FactFinder

**Choose your State, County, or Place**

**Select a state to begin:**

**Choose County/Place Geography Level:**

County  
 Place

**You have selected:**

**Select County/Place:**

**Get Data Profile** **Clear Selections**

**Select a state and county or place\* from the dropdown menus. Click on “Get Data Profile”.**

\*A “place” refers to a Census Designated Place (CDP) which provides data for an area of concentrated population that is not legally incorporated.

Step 5: After retrieving your data profile, the website will provide you with four tables of data to complete the Community Identity Worksheets.

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**2012 - 2016 ACS 5-Year Data Profiles**

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\*All links go to [American FactFinder](#)

**Choose your State, County, or Place**

Select a state to begin:

You have selected:  
**Fort Dodge city, Iowa**

Choose County/Place Geography Level:  
 County  
 Place

Select County/Place:

**Fort Dodge city, Iowa**

- [Social Characteristics](#) — includes Education, Marital Status, Relationships, Fertility, Grandparents...
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- [Housing Characteristics](#) — includes Occupancy and Structure, Housing Value and Costs, Utilities...
- [Demographic Characteristics](#) — includes Sex and Age, Race, Hispanic Origin, Housing Units...

Open each of the four data tables to complete the Community Overview Worksheet.

## Community Overview Worksheets<sup>1</sup>

The Community Overview Worksheets included below will help focus your ACS research to better understand your community. Please note: The ACS website may not have data for your jurisdiction for all the subject topics identified in these worksheets. You may also need to calculate percentages from the available data.

### Community Overview: Demographic Characteristics

Use the ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates table to find this information.

Subject	Estimate	Percent
Total Population		
Male		
Female		
Median Age (Years)		
<i>Population Age</i>		
0 to 19 years		
19 to 34 years		
35 to 64 years		
65 years and over		
<b><i>Race alone or in combinations with one or more other races.</i></b>		
White		
Black or African American		
American Indian and Alaska Native		
Asian		
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander		
Some Other Race		
Total Population – Hispanic or Latino (of any race)		

<sup>1</sup> Source: EMI Course E426 – Building a Roadmap to Resilience: A Whole Community Training

**Community Overview: Housing Characteristics**

Use the Selected Housing Characteristics table to find this information.

Subject	Estimate	Percent
Total Housing Units		
Owner-Occupied Housing Units		
Renter-Occupied Housing Units		
Housing Units with No Telephone Service Available		

**Community Overview: Social Characteristics**

Use the Selected Social Characteristics in the United States table to find this information.

Subject	Estimate	Percent
Total Households		
Family Households (Families)		
With own children under 18 years		
Nonfamily Households		
Householder living alone		
Householder living alone 65 years and over		
Households with one or more people under 18 years		
Households with one or more people 65 years and over		
<b>School Enrollment</b>		
Population 3 years and older enrolled in school		
Kindergarten through 12 <sup>th</sup> grade		
College or graduate school		

Subject	Estimate	Percent
<b><i>Educational Attainment of population 25 years and over</i></b>		
No high school diploma		
High school graduate (includes equivalency)		
Some college, no degree		
Associate's degree		
Bachelor's degree		
Graduate or professional degree		
<b><i>Disability Status of the Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population</i></b>		
Total population with a disability		
Under 18 years with a disability		
18 to 64 years with a disability		
65 years and over with a disability		
<b><i>Language Spoken at Home</i></b>		
English Only		
Language other than English		
<b><i>Computers and Internet Use</i></b>		
Total Households with a computer		
Total Households with a broadband internet subscription		



**Community Overview: Economic Characteristics**

Use the Selected Economic Characteristics table to find this information.

Subject	Estimate	Percent
<b><i>Employment Status</i></b>		
Population 16 years and over		
In labor force		
Employed		
Unemployed		
Not in labor force		
<b><i>Commuting to Work</i></b>		
Workers who drive or carpool		
Use Public Transportation		
Walk		
<b><i>Occupation – List the top 3 occupations and the respective statistics</i></b>		
1.		
2.		
3.		
<b><i>Industry – List 3 largest industries and the respective statistics</i></b>		
1.		
2.		
3.		
<b><i>Income (by Household)</i></b>		
\$24,999 or less		
\$25,000 to \$74,999		
\$75,000 or more		
Median Household Income		
Mean Household Income		

After completing the Community Overview Worksheets, consider the following questions:

- What did you learn? Did you learn anything new about your community?
- Did you find any statistics surprising?
- In reviewing all the data profiles from 2012-2016, are there any interesting trends in the data for your community?
- Do you think this information is common knowledge amongst other community partners?
- How can you best share this information among community leaders?
- How can you use this information during your community disaster planning process?
- Do your community's plans reflect the makeup of your population?
- Thinking back to the objectives outlined on page 1, discuss how your Core and Collaborative Planning Teams can use this information to improve the following:
  - Identify population segments that may need a tailored approach to preparedness education,
  - Provide information to design more realistic community exercises,
  - Provide insights to enhance alerts and warning systems and make them more effective at any time of day,
  - Give planners a clearer understanding of the likely numbers of people needing group care or assistance with an evacuation during an incident, and
  - Strategize how to build social capital in the community ([watch Dr. Daniel Aldrich's PrepTalk](#)).