

**SURVEY TITLE:** American Community Survey

**ACRONYM:** ACS

**SPONSOR:** United States Department of Commerce, United States Census Bureau.

**SURVEY PURPOSE:** Collects annual demographic and economic information previously only available through the Decennial Census long-form data collection. Data are used to inform the distribution of public funds and evaluate public programs and emerging needs.

**LOCATION SAMPLED:** United States.

**YEARS SEXUAL ORIENTATION DATA COLLECTED:** Annually since 2000 for a national sample.

**SAMPLE SIZE:** Varies by year with increasing samples since the 2000 survey. In 2005, the survey included more than 1 million U.S. households. Eventually, the sample sizes will be sufficient to obtain statistics at geographies similar to those used in the Decennial Census.

**METHOD OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION DATA COLLECTION:** For most people, self-completed mail questionnaires collected at the household level. Usually one person in the household provides responses for all members.

#### **SEXUAL ORIENTATION QUESTIONS:**

Sexual orientation is not directly assessed. However, the ACS can be used to identify same-sex couples. The questionnaire asks for head of household information first, coding sex of the head of household; it then asks for information on all other persons in the household, coding sex for each of these persons. For the other members of the household, the form asks how they are related to the head of household.

Question: "How is this person related to Person 1?"

Same-sex unmarried partner households include a person aged 15 or older who is the same sex as the person who filled out the form and is identified as either a "Husband/wife" or an "Unmarried Partner." Households with a same-sex "husband/wife" are edited by the Census Bureau such that the spouse is changed to an "unmarried partner." This change is considered a consistency edit by the Census Bureau and is not flagged in any publicly released data.