

SOURCES OF DATA

Information on births, deaths, and fetal deaths is compiled from the original documents filed with the Arizona Department of Health Services' Office of Vital Records and from transcripts of original birth and death certificates filed in other states but affecting Arizona residents (copies of certificates for births, deaths, and fetal deaths occurring to Arizona residents outside the United States are not sent to Arizona).

Information on induced terminations of pregnancy (abortions) performed on Arizona women is compiled from reports sent to the Arizona Department of Health Services by facilities within but only rarely outside the state.

Pregnancies are the sum of live births, spontaneous terminations of pregnancy (fetal deaths or stillbirths), and abortions.

Arizona has no central registry for marriage and divorce records. Statistics are limited to counts of marriages and divorces reported monthly by the Clerk of the Superior Court in each county in which the marriage or divorce occurred. These reports contain no demographic data on the people marrying or divorcing.

Data on morbidity, levels of disease and disability in the population, are obtained for certain infectious diseases that must be reported by law. The ADHS Epidemiology and Disease Control Services conduct surveillance and monitoring of these reportable diseases and provided data for the morbidity sections in this report.

All State-licensed nonfederal hospitals in Arizona are required to submit uniform patient reports to the Arizona Department of Health Services every six months. Beginning in 2010 the psychiatric hospitals also are subject to reporting requirements. The Section of Cost Reporting and Discharge Data Review in the Bureau of Public Health Statistics collect the information about both hospital inpatient discharges and emergency room visits.

Population denominators for Arizona residents, used to calculate rates for 1980, 1990, 2000 and 2010, are census enumerations from the U.S. Census Bureau. Population denominators for the intercensal years utilize the best available data sources. They are described in detail at <http://www.azdhs.gov/plan/>

Our website at <http://www.azdhs.gov/plan/> provides additional reports and studies, as well as links to other sources of information on topics such as morbidity from certain diseases or population composition.

DEFINITIONS

Urban and Rural Areas

For the purpose of this report, the following are Arizona's **urban areas**: Phoenix-Scottsdale-Mesa Metropolitan Statistical Area (Maricopa and Pinal Counties), Tucson Metropolitan Statistical Area (Pima County), and Yuma Metropolitan Statistical Area (Yuma County). The remaining counties (Apache, Cochise, Coconino, Gila, Graham, Greenlee, La Paz, Mohave, Navajo, Santa Cruz, and Yavapai) comprise Arizona's **rural areas**.

Race/Ethnicity

Racial/ethnic designations used in this report are White non-Hispanic, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African-American, American Indian or Alaska Native (including Aleut and Eskimo), and Asian or Pacific Islander (including Hawaiian). In some of the trend tables the designation "Other" includes Asian and Pacific Islanders for years prior to 2012. Non-White Hispanics are included in their appropriate race groups.

The American Indian figures include those living both on and off the reservation.

The race/ethnicity of mother, father, or decedent is as stated on the certificate.

This year's report includes a new method of combining, or bridging, race/ethnicity for individuals identified as both Hispanic and one other race. This new method allows us to match the categories of race/ethnicity used by the Arizona Department of Administration to create the population projections used as denominators in this report, as well as to create more meaningful racial/ethnic categories by placing individuals identified with both race and ethnicity into the group representing a smaller proportion of Arizona's population. In previous reports, individuals who identified as both Hispanic and any other race were identified as Hispanic. This year, individuals identified as Hispanic plus another race are included in the racial/ethnic category with the lowest population in the state. This approach to bridging is defined as the smallest group deterministic whole method. In this method, individuals identified as both White and Hispanic are classified as Hispanic, where individuals identified as Hispanic and any other race (Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, and Asian or Pacific Islander) are categorized by their racial identification. Race/ethnicity was bridged in the birth, death, and fetal death data, but was left un-bridged in the abortion and HDD data to allow comparison with other reports using differing racial/ethnic categorization.

Rates

Rate is a measure of the frequency of some event in relation to a unit of population during a specified time period such as a year; events in the numerator of the year occur to individuals in the denominator. Rates express the likelihood (or risk) of the event in the specified population during a particular time and are generally expressed as units of population in the denominator (per 1,000, 10,000, 100,000 and so forth).

Many rates shown in this report are based on a small population, a small number of events, or both. Rates based on small numbers are unreliable and thus should be viewed with caution. Rates for many counties or Arizona's ethnic minorities also vary considerably from year to year due to small populations and few events. Finally, the difference in methods used to calculate population denominators can lead to variation in rates that do not accurately reflect changes in the number of events occurring in the population. We recommend analyzing the underlying counts for each event before interpreting variation in rates from 2011 to 2012.