

# MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE



*5,319 MARRIAGES*  
*3,031 DIVORCES*

## MARRIAGES

There were 5,319 marriages performed in Alaska in 1996, involving 4,763 Alaska resident brides and 4,731 Alaska resident grooms. This is a decrease of 3.5% from the 5,514 marriages which occurred in 1995.<sup>1</sup> The crude marriage rate in 1996 was 8.8 marriages per 1,000 residents, down from 9.1 marriages per 1,000 in 1995.

Crude marriage rates vary widely between census areas in Alaska. For instance, the lowest rate of 1.4 marriages per 1,000 residents was in the Aleutians East census area. The highest rate of 15.2 marriages per 1,000 residents was in the Denali Borough census area. Crude marriage rates represent the number of marriages occurring in a census area per 1,000 residents. Sex-specific marriage rates, also shown on Table 4.1A, reflect the number of resident grooms (or brides) per 1,000 resident males (or females) and more accurately reflect real rates because non-resident marriages are not included.

The average age for brides was 30.3 and the average age for grooms was 32.8. It was the first marriage for 56.2 percent of brides and 59.4 percent of grooms. The average age for first-time brides was 24.8 and the average age for first-time grooms was 27.3.

June, July and August were the months with the most marriages with 703, 626, and 728 marriages respectively. January had the fewest marriages with only 270.

There were 414 marriages in which neither the bride nor the groom was a resident of Alaska, a 9.5 percent increase over the 378 non-resident marriages in 1995. The Anchorage census area had the greatest number of non-resident

<sup>1</sup> Crondahl, J., Mitchell, P., Anderson, C., and Walden, S. Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, *Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics 1995 Annual Report*, Juneau, Alaska, July 1997, p. 67.

marriages with 104; however, Juneau had the second largest number of non-resident marriages with 103, 32.4% of all marriages occurring in Juneau.

**TABLE 4.1A MARRIAGES AND CRUDE MARRIAGE RATES BY CENSUS AREA OF OCCURRENCE, ALASKA, 1996**

CENSUS AREA	OCCURRENCES		RESIDENT GROOMS		RESIDENT BRIDES	
	MARRIAGES	CRUDE RATE	MARRIAGES	SEX-SPECIFIC RATE	MARRIAGES	SEX-SPECIFIC RATE
ALEUTIANS EAST	3	1.4	4	3.3	3	3.0
ALEUTIANS WEST	31	5.4	31	8.9	33	14.6
ANCHORAGE BOROUGH	2,258	8.9	2,131	16.3	2,151	17.4
ANGOON-HOONAH-SKAGWAY	32	8.4	10	4.9	11	6.2
BETHEL	77	5.0	77	9.7	76	10.3
BRISTOL BAY BOROUGH	15	12.0	16	23.5	15	26.1
DENALI BOROUGH	29	15.2	12	11.0	9	11.0
DILLINGHAM	24	5.4	23	9.8	24	11.3
FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH	804	9.8	715	16.5	721	18.5
HAINES BOROUGH	23	9.8	21	17.4	21	18.2
JUNEAU BOROUGH	318	10.9	209	14.0	213	14.8
KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH	482	10.3	390	15.9	399	17.8
KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH	155	10.5	125	16.4	127	18.0
KODIAK ISLAND BOROUGH	116	8.2	107	14.0	109	17.0
LAKE AND PENINSULA	7	3.9	10	10.4	8	9.5
MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH	429	8.5	361	13.7	370	15.2
NOME	56	6.1	56	11.6	54	12.6
NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH	45	6.3	52	13.9	47	13.9
NORTHWEST ARCTIC BOROUGH	33	5.1	32	9.4	32	10.2
PRINCE OF WALES-OUTER KETCHIKAN	38	5.4	47	12.2	45	14.2
SITKA BOROUGH	99	11.4	75	16.8	75	17.8
SOUTHEAST FAIRBANKS	40	6.4	39	11.7	34	11.5
VALDEZ-CORDOVA	96	9.2	84	15.0	79	16.1
WADE HAMPTON	29	4.3	30	8.6	31	9.7
WRANGELL-PETERSBURG	50	6.9	46	12.0	49	14.4
YAKUTAT	7	8.8	6	13.6	7	19.6
YUKON-KOYUKUK	23	3.6	22	6.3	20	6.9
TOTAL	5,319	8.8	4,731	14.9	4,763	16.4

TABLE 4.1B MARRIAGES BY NATIVE REGIONAL CORPORATION OF OCCURRENCE, GROOM'S RESIDENCE, AND BRIDE'S RESIDENCE, ALASKA, 1996

NATIVE REGIONAL CORPORATION	OCCURRENCES	RESIDENT GROOMS	RESIDENT BRIDES
AHTNA INC.	33	30	25
ALEUT CORP.	34	35	36
ARCTIC SLOPE CORP.	45	52	47
BERING STRAITS CORP.	56	56	54
BRISTOL BAY CORP.	43	47	47
CALISTA CORP.	106	107	107
CHUGACH NATIVES INC.	115	85	84
COOK INLET REG CORP.	3,121	2,854	2,891
DOYON LTD.	895	787	783
KONIAG INC.	116	107	109
NANA REGIONAL CORP.	33	32	32
SEALASKA CORP.	722	539	548
TOTAL	5,319	4,731	4,763

TABLE 4.2 MARRIAGES BY CENSUS AREA OF BRIDE'S RESIDENCE, AND BY CENSUS AREA OF GROOM'S RESIDENCE, ALASKA, 1996

BRIDE'S RESIDENCE	GROOM'S RESIDENCE															
	ALE	ALW	ANC	AHS	BET	BBB	DEN	DIL	FBK	HNS	JUN	KPB	KET	KOD	LKP	
ALEUTN EAST	3															
ALEUTN WEST		30										1		1		
ANCHORAGE	1		2,030		1				4		3	6		2		
ANG-HNH-SKG			2	8												
BETHEL					73											
BRISTOL BAY						15										
DENALI							7		1							
DILLINGHAM			1					21	1							
FAIRBANKS			4	1			2		662		1	1				
HAINES										20						
JUNEAU			2	1	1					1	196			1		
KENAI PEN			9			1			2		1	375				
KETCHIKAN			1										119			
KODIAK			1	1					1					101		
LAKE-PENIN															8	
MAT-SU			18								1	2				
NOME																
NORTH SLOPE									1							
NW ARCTIC								1								
PRINCE-WALES											1					
SITKA			1													
SE FAIRBANKS																
VALDEZ-CORDV									1							
WADE HAMPTON					1				1							
WRANGELL-PBG			1													
YAKUTAT			1													
YUKON-KOY																
NON-RESIDENT			60		1		3	1	41		6	5	6	2	2	
TOTAL	4	31	2,131	10	77	16	12	23	715	21	209	390	125	107	10	

Continued ➞

TABLE 4.2 CONTINUED

BRIDE'S RESIDENCE	GROOM'S RESIDENCE													TOTAL
	MSB	NOM	NSB	NAB	POW	SIT	SEF	VAL	WAH	WRP	YAK	YUK	OOS	
ALEUTN EAST														3
ALEUTN WEST													1	33
ANCHORAGE	16					1		3					84	2,151
ANG-HNH-SKG													1	11
BETHEL									2				1	76
BRISTOL BAY														15
DENALI													1	9
DILLINGHAM													1	24
FAIRBANKS			2				3	1				3	41	721
HAINES					1									21
JUNEAU		1								3			7	213
KENAI PEN	3												8	399
KETCHIKAN					1			1					5	127
KODIAK								1					4	109
LAKE-PENIN														8
MAT-SU	335							1				1	12	370
NOME		53							1					54
NORTH SLOPE			46											47
NW ARCTIC				31										32
PRINCE-WALES					44									45
SITKA						71							3	75
SE FAIRBANKS							34							34
VALDEZ-CORDV	1		1					74					2	79
WADE HAMPTON		1		1					27					31
WRANGELL-PBG					1	2				43			2	49
YAKUTAT											6			7
YUKON-KOY	1											18	1	20
NON-RESIDENT	5	1	3			1	2	3					414	556
TOTAL	361	56	52	32	47	75	39	84	30	46	6	22	588	5,319

TABLE 4.3 MARRIAGES BY AGE OF GROOM AND AGE OF BRIDE, ALASKA, 1996

AGE OF BRIDE	AGE OF GROOM										TOTAL
	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55+		
15-19	158	321	68	25	6	1	2	1	1	583	
20-24	44	686	407	134	41	15	6	1	1	1,335	
25-29	4	145	420	258	115	48	14	5	2	1,011	
30-34	1	38	148	238	188	114	46	15	4	792	
35-39	1	10	47	112	172	142	84	39	13	620	
40-44	1	3	23	32	85	137	92	43	23	439	
45-49		2	9	16	35	62	77	44	59	304	
50-54		1		6	6	12	17	30	47	119	
55+					2	3	7	18	86	116	
TOTAL	209	1,206	1,122	821	650	534	345	196	236	5,319	

**DIVORCES**

There are three administrative methods for terminating a marriage in Alaska:

- **Divorce** is an adversarial process in which the terms of the decree are decided by the courts based upon evidence, testimony, and in accordance with Alaska statutes. These terms include disposition of property, living arrangements, and custody and support for any minor children involved. In 1996, there were 970 divorces granted in Alaska. This is a 3.4 percent decrease from 1995.

## Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics (continued) MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

- A **dissolution** of marriage is a cooperative agreement between the husband and wife in which both parties agree to the terms for distribution of property, living arrangements, and support and custody of minor children. The agreement is reviewed by the court, which can amend it if it determines the terms are not equitable. In 1996, there were 2,049 dissolutions of marriage in Alaska. This is a 1.4 percent decrease from 1995.
- An **annulment** is a judicial pronouncement declaring a marriage never existed. In 1996, there were 11 annulments granted in Alaska; in 1995 there were 12 annulments granted in Alaska.

In 1996 there was one termination of marriage in which the type of decree was not specified. When not otherwise stated, the term *divorce* refers to all three methods collectively.

In 1996, the total of 3,031 divorces, dissolutions, and annulments resulted in a crude divorce rate of 5.0 divorces per 1,000 population. This is a 2.0 percent decrease from the crude divorce rate of 5.1 in 1995.<sup>2</sup>

Because divorces are granted by the courts, Table 4.4A shows the number of decrees by judicial district. For a map showing the locations of each judicial district, see page 164.

TABLE 4.4A DIVORCES, DISSOLUTIONS AND ANNULMENTS BY JUDICIAL DISTRICT, ALASKA, 1996

JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF DECREE	DECREE TYPE				TOTAL
	DIVORCE	DISSOLUTION	ANNULMENT	NOT STATED	
01-FIRST	102	270	1		373
02-SECOND	16	26			42
03-THIRD	669	1,386	8	1	2,064
04-FOURTH	183	367	2		552
TOTAL	970	2,049	11	1	3,031

TABLE 4.4B DIVORCES BY NUMBER OF MARRIAGES FOR WIFE AND HUSBAND, ALASKA, 1996

WIFE'S MARRIAGE NUMBER	HUSBAND'S MARRIAGE NUMBER						TOTAL
	ONE	TWO	THREE	FOUR	FIVE+	UNKN	
ONE	1,470	279	64	11	4	14	1,842
TWO	307	305	75	19	4	8	718
THREE	87	103	42	11	5	3	251
FOUR	17	22	26	10	3	2	80
FIVE OR MORE	5	15	8	5	1	1	35
UNKNOWN	19	4	2	1	1	78	105
TOTAL	1,905	728	217	57	18	106	3,031

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 71.

**TABLE 4.5 DIVORCES AND DIVORCE RATES FOR WOMEN AND MEN BY CENSUS AREA OF RESIDENCE, ALASKA, 1996**

CENSUS AREA	WOMEN		MEN	
	NUMBER	RATE	NUMBER	RATE
ALEUTIANS EAST	6	6.0	4	3.3
ALEUTIANS WEST	14	6.2	13	3.7
ANCHORAGE BOROUGH	1,207	9.8	1,158	8.9
ANGOON-HOONAH-SKAGWAY	11	6.2	10	4.9
BETHEL	17	2.3	25	3.1
BRISTOL BAY BOROUGH	1	1.7	4	5.9
DENALI BOROUGH	4	4.9	4	3.7
DILLINGHAM	8	3.8	7	3.0
FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH	399	10.3	377	8.7
HAINES BOROUGH	12	10.4	10	8.3
JUNEAU BOROUGH	134	9.3	130	8.7
KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH	197	8.8	189	7.7
KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH	70	9.9	60	7.9
KODIAK ISLAND BOROUGH	72	11.2	68	8.9
LAKE AND PENINSULA			1	1.0
MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH	240	9.9	231	8.8
NOME	23	5.4	22	4.6
NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH	11	3.2	16	4.3
NORTHWEST ARCTIC BOROUGH	9	2.9	9	2.7
PRINCE OF WALES-OUTER KETCHIKAN	27	8.5	31	8.1
SITKA BOROUGH	49	11.6	45	10.1
SOUTHEAST FAIRBANKS	19	6.4	27	8.1
VALDEZ-CORDOVA	34	6.9	33	5.9
WADE HAMPTON	5	1.6	5	1.4
WRANGELL-PETERSBURG	32	9.4	36	9.4
YAKUTAT	6	16.8	5	11.3
YUKON-KOYUKUK	13	4.5	15	4.3
CENSUS AREA UNKNOWN	10		18	
TOTAL	2,630	9.0	2,553	8.1

**TABLE 4.6 DIVORCES INVOLVING CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 18 YEARS BY JUDICIAL DISTRICT, ALASKA, 1996**

JUDICIAL DISTRICT	CHILDREN UNDER 18			
	NO		YES	
	DIVORCES	PERCENT	DIVORCES	PERCENT
FIRST	153	41.0	220	59.0
SECOND	12	28.6	30	71.4
THIRD	1,044	50.6	1,020	49.4
FOURTH	281	50.9	271	49.1
TOTAL	1,490	49.2	1,541	50.8