

Rhode Island State Data Center Census Data Bulletin

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State Data Center at the Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program
One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI 02908 • www.planning.ri.gov/geodeminfo

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R.I. Trends: Non-Traditional Households, Owners Becoming Renters

In December 2013, the U.S. Census Bureau released the 2010-2012 3-year American Community Survey dataset. With this dataset, we finally have two comparable 3-year datasets to compare for Rhode Island: 2007-2009 and 2010-2012. These datasets, based on surveys, describe the populations in our state and its municipalities. For example, the data show us what kinds of households people live in, the occupations they hold, and the type of housing they live in.

Rhode Island's households are shifting away from the two-person marriage model and toward nonfamily households, single-parent families, and grandparents who care for grandchildren. This month's Bulletin details those changes, along with changes in homeownership and the labor force demonstrated by comparison of 3-year datasets.

Changing Face of R.I. Households

Many interesting, statistically significant changes in households are captured by the difference in the two datasets. Between the two study periods (2007-2009 and 2010-2012), the total number of households in Rhode Island increased while the population living in households declined. The average household size dipped under 2.5 during 2010-2012. (People who live in group quarters like college dorms, prisons, and military housing are counted separately.)

Traditional, two-person married couple households are a decreasing share of Rhode Island's makeup. Married couple families currently comprise 43.6% of total households in the state. Along with this type of family, households that include children under 18 years old (29.2% of households) are declining. Average family size fell from 3.19 to 3.10. On the rise are family households led by either a male householder with no wife present or a female householder with no husband present. These households include both two parent

BY THE NUMBERS

409,308 - households in R.I.

253,509 - family households

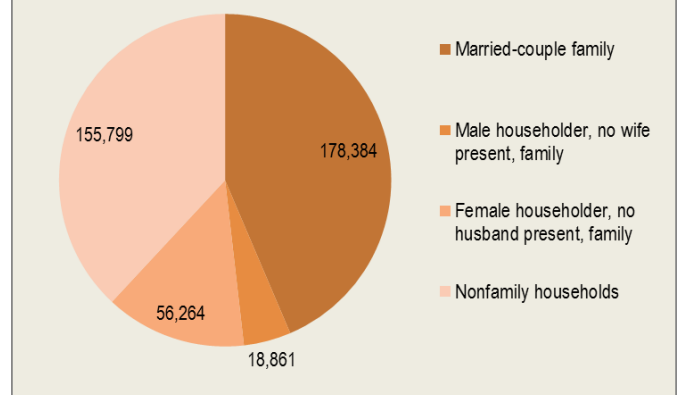
43.6% - share of all households that are married-couple families, down from 46.2% in 2007-2009

29.2% - households with 1+ person under 18

26.9% - households with 1+ person 65 or over

Source: American Community Survey 2012 3-year data.

Rhode Island Households, 2010-2012



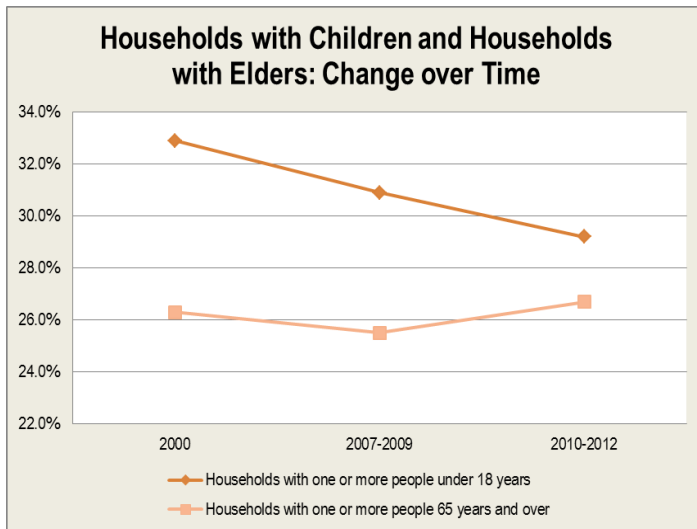
same-sex households and single-parent households. Households with one or more people who are 65 years or older are also increasing, as are households with just one person who is 65 years or over.

Nonfamily Households

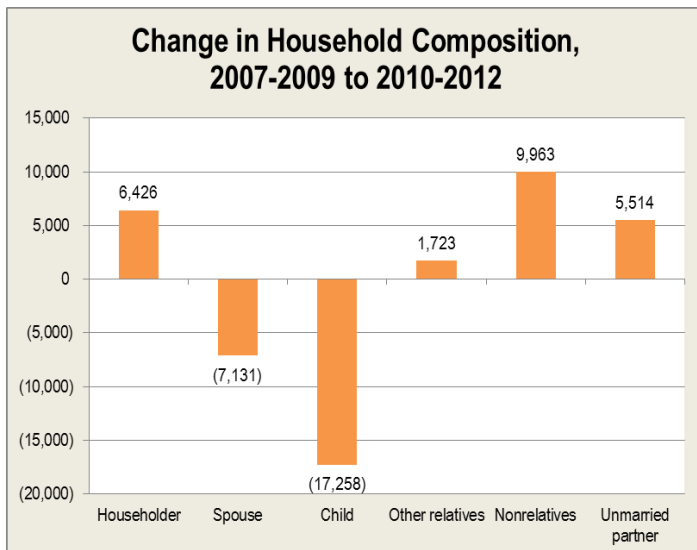
All kinds of nonfamily households are increasing in

ABOUT THE DATA

Data in this Bulletin are drawn primarily from two American Community Survey's 3-Year Datasets. The most current data come from the estimates produced for 2010-2012, and the comparison data come from estimates for 2007-2009. The advantage to using 3-year data is that margins of error are smaller than with 1-year data, but the timeframe still allows for comparisons between the recession and post-recession years. All changes described in this Bulletin are statistically significant at the 90% confidence level.



Rhode Island, up to 155,799 from 149,525. This catch-all includes those who live alone, those who have nonrelative roommates, and same-sex couples or unmarried different-sex partners who do not live with relatives, among others. This trend is also reflected in the breakdown of the population in households by their relationship to the householder. The number of people who identify as a nonrelative of the householder is increasing, while the numbers of people who are the spouse or child of the householder are decreasing.



Increasing Role for Grandparents

One exception to the decline in family households in Rhode Island is grandparents who take care of their grandchildren. While the number of grandparents who live with grandchildren remains steady around 18,800, the share who are responsible for their grandchildren grew by more than a third between the two data periods, up to 6,400 in 2010-2012. These are not necessarily temporary living situations. Grandparents who have been responsible for their children for three or more years account for two-thirds of these grandparent caretakers.

Cost-Burdened Homeowners Become Renters

Other changes captured by comparing the two 3-year ACS datasets include housing trends impacted by the housing bubble in Rhode Island. Owner-occupied units fell by 7,000 between the two 3-year periods, all of which were housing units with a mortgage. The number of households who pay more than 35% of their income on monthly owner costs dropped by over 5,000, while the number who pay less than 25 percent increased. It is likely that many of the homeowners who were paying over 35% of household income on owner costs have become renters either by choice or through foreclosure.

Labor Market Shrinking

The state's official unemployment rate, calculated by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, has fallen from its high of 12.8 in early 2010. However, the ACS data on the labor force highlight ongoing challenges for Rhode Island's workers. The population 16 and over grew by over 6,000 in Rhode Island between the two 3-year data periods, but the employed population fell by 13,000. The drop in the employed population may reflect multiple trends: consistent challenges in the job market, captured by the growth in unemployed residents from 44,100 to 57,600 between the two data periods, and the aging of the state's population, reflected in the rise in population 16 and over who are not in the labor force, and migration of residents out of the state. The nature of these datasets – data collected from surveys administered over three years – makes it difficult to fine-tune analyses of change in Rhode Island employment and labor markets, which fluctuate from month to month. For more timely data and greater detail, see the Department of Labor and Training's Labor Market Information Data Center website listed below.

TO LEARN MORE...

To explore the more data from the American Community Survey, visit the U.S. Census website, [American FactFinder](http://www.census.gov). You can locate data from a particular dataset or year by going to Advanced Search > Topics > Year or Advanced Search > Topics > Dataset. Municipalities under 20,000 residents will need to consult 5-year data.

For more detailed and timely information about the labor market and employment in Rhode Island, visit RI. Dept. of Labor and Training's [Labor Market Information Data Center](http://www.laborandtraining.com).

For information about RI State Data Center resources, contact Vincent Flood at vincent.flood@doa.ri.gov or Amanda Martin at amanda.martin@doa.ri.gov and visit the website at <http://www.planning.ri.gov/geodeminfo/data/index.php>.