Delaware Data: State Demographic Background

Delaware is the second smallest state in the United States, with total landmass equaling 1,949 square miles (US Census Bureau, n.d.). There are three counties in the state: New Castle County, the most populated county, and Sussex and Kent Counties, which are primarily rural. According to the most recent data available from the United States Census, the state population is estimated at 952,065. The demographic snapshot indicates that 70% of the state population is reported as White, 22% as Black or African American, 9% as Hispanic or Latino, 4% as Asian, and the remaining population of the state identifies as Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian, American Indian/Alaska Native. From 2011-2015, 13% of Delawareans spoke a language other than English at home (US Census Bureau, n.d.).

The median age in Delaware during the 2011-2015 timeframe analyzed by the American Community Survey was 39.3 years. Currently, individuals aged 18 and under comprise 21.6% of the State’s overall population (US Census Bureau, n.d.). However, Delaware’s population is changing in key ways. In particular, the population is aging. Since 2000, the population between the ages of 60 to 84 increased by 52% and the population over the age of 85 increased by 70%. This trend is particularly pronounced in Sussex County, where the population over 85 increased by 106% since 2000. Delawareans aged 65 and older comprise 17% of the total population (DelawareFOCUS.org, n.d.).

The median household income from 2011 through 2015 was $60,509. In February 2017, the unemployment rate was 4.5% with over 21,000 people currently unemployed (US Bureau of Labor Statistics, n.d.). In 2015, 7% of the Delaware population was uninsured. About one in five
was enrolled in Medicaid, and one in six was enrolled in Medicare (Kaiser Foundation, n.d.). From 2013 – 2015, 20% of children in the state lived below the federal poverty line. In 2015, 71,393 families were enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and 5,258 families received Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. Two in five children were raised in one-parent families (Center for Community Research and Service, 2016).

Due to unique tax and corporate policies and access to the Delaware Court of Chancery, Delaware has attracted more than half of all U.S. publicly traded companies to incorporate in the state. For this reason, Delaware is often named as the “corporate capital of the world.” One of Delaware’s major industries is corporate financing and banking. Additionally, Delaware’s economy is also driven by chemical manufacturing, aviation, health services, tourism, and agriculture. In Kent and Sussex County, agriculture has greater predominance. The state’s largest agricultural output is broiler chickens, followed by soybeans and corn. Many thousands of people, from across the country, visit Delaware’s beach resort towns every year, making tourism a great driver of economic development in Sussex County (State of Delaware Office of Economic Development, n.d.). Delaware has also become a retirement destination, which accounts, in part, for the growth in population of older citizens.

**New Castle County**

The northernmost and most densely populated county, New Castle County had an estimated 538,479 residents during the 2010 Census. Delaware’s largest city, Wilmington, is located in New Castle, with an estimated 70,851 people living in the city in 2010 (US Census Bureau, n.d.). There is an upsurge in the number of people in the downtown business district during the day, with much of that population leaving the city for homes in the suburban outlying areas at night. Recent residential and business developments along the waterfront in the city were designed, in part, to attract more working professionals to the city to live, and for dining and entertainment. Efforts to motivate locals to dine and entertain in the city are hampered by concerns over high
crime rates. In 2014, Newsweek featured an article on the troubling homicide rate within the city, entitled, Murder Town USA (Jones, 2014). Attention to increasing homicide rates led local residents and policymakers to call gun violence a public health epidemic, and epidemiologists from the CDC treated it as such and spent several months in 2015 identifying risk factors that lead to gun violence within the city (Sumner et al., 2015).

Newark, the state’s third largest city, with 31,454 people in 2010, is also located in New Castle County (US Census Bureau, n.d.). Delaware’s flagship university, the University of Delaware, is located in the city. Towns in lower New Castle County have seen explosive growth in the past two decades. Between the 2000 and 2010 Census reporting periods, Middletown grew by 206%, and Townsend by 492%.

Kent County
Dover, the capitol and the state’s second largest city, is located in Kent County. An estimated 36,047 people lived in Dover in 2010 (US Census Bureau, n.d.). The city is home to the Dover Air Force Base, and the Dover Downs International Speedway. Delaware State University and Wesley College are based in Dover, and Delaware Technical and Community College and Wilmington University also have locations in the city. Recent residential developments have attracted more people to Kent County. Two towns saw large increases in populations from 2000-2010; Cheswold increased by 341% during this time period, and Clayton by 129%. Kent County had an overall 28% increase in population between 2000-2010, when the US Census estimated the population at 162,349.

Sussex County
Sussex County, the southernmost of the three, is home to several beach resort towns that support a large influx of people during the warmer months, but do not host a large year-round
population. During the tourist season, tremendous congestion and traffic is evident in these coastal towns. Milford, Georgetown, and Seaford are the three largest cities in the county, all of which are inland from the coast and have primarily year-round populations. Poultry processing is a major industry in Sussex County, and a significant immigrant worker population is associated with the industry. From 2000-2010, Sussex County experienced a 26% increase in its population when the US Census reported 197,110 residents. These official numbers may not actually reflect local realities, as some of the population growth is likely due to migrant and immigrant workers that may not be counted on the Census.

**Medically Underserved Areas**

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) uses existing data to determine areas of the country that are medically underserved, and lack access to primary care doctors. Occasionally, areas do not fit official criteria for being medically underserved, but local stakeholders, aware of local context and realities, can petition to designate the area as medically underserved if additional data shows that the population does have difficulty in accessing primary care. This is considered the Governor’s Exception Criteria by the HRSA. In Delaware, much of the southern and eastern communities in New Castle County are currently considered a Medically Underserved Area (MUA), under the Governor’s Exception Criteria. All of Kent County is considered an MUA, under the same criteria. Sussex County is considered a MUA, under the HRSA coding criteria (Health Resource and Services Administration, n.d.).

In addition to physical health concerns, about a third of adults reported poor mental health status in 2015 (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2015). These factors, coupled with under-resourced service areas, amplify the need for preventative health services, including strategies to bolster behavioral health. (For an interactive map of areas of need within the state, visit the Delaware Health Tracker 2017 SocioNeeds Index.)
An Overview of the 2017 Delaware State Epidemiological Profile Report

The 2017 Delaware State Epidemiological Profile Report highlights the most recently available data on substance use among various populations. It is intended to provide decision-makers with information to support needs assessment, strategic planning, and evaluation. The report begins with an overview of consumption patterns of select substances. Following the overview, individual chapters present narrative summaries for each substance category, which highlight select findings, followed by graphs and charts detailing reported trends and use. The report also features a special topic, adverse childhood experiences (ACES) and their association with substance use. Finally, the report includes data related to protective factors, which are key to prevention efforts. References are included at the end of the report, alphabetized within chapter groups.
Overview: Statewide Consumption Patterns of Select Substances
2016 Delaware School Survey

Percent of Delaware 8th and 11th grade students reporting use of selected substances in the past 30 days

Figure 1 Reported use of selected substances in the past 30 days among Delaware 8th/11th graders

Back to table of figures

Source: “2016 Delaware School Survey.” Center for Drug and Health Studies, University of Delaware.
2016 Delaware School Survey

**Cigarettes**: Percentage of 8th and 11th public school students who reported using in the past month by zip-code

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Figure 2 Past month cigarette use map

Source:
“2016 Delaware School Survey.” Center for Drug and Health Studies, University of Delaware.
2016 Delaware School Survey
Alcohol: Percentage of 8th and 11th public school students who reported drinking in the past month by zip-code

Figure 3 Past month alcohol use map
Back to table of figures

Source:
“2016 Delaware School Survey,” Center for Drug and Health Studies, University of Delaware.
2016 Delaware School Survey

Marijuana: Percentage of 8th and 11th public school students who reported using in the past month by zip-code

Figure 4 Past month marijuana use map

Source:
“2016 Delaware School Survey.” Center for Drug and Health Studies, University of Delaware.
2016 Delaware School Survey

Pain Medications: Percentage of 8th and 11th public school students who reported using in the past month by zip-code

Figure 5 Past month pain killer use map

Source:
“2016 Delaware School Survey.” Center for Drug and Health Studies, University of Delaware.