

2020 PROFILE OF **AFRICAN AMERICANS** **AGE 65 AND OLDER**

The Administration for Community Living, which includes the Administration on Aging, is an operating division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



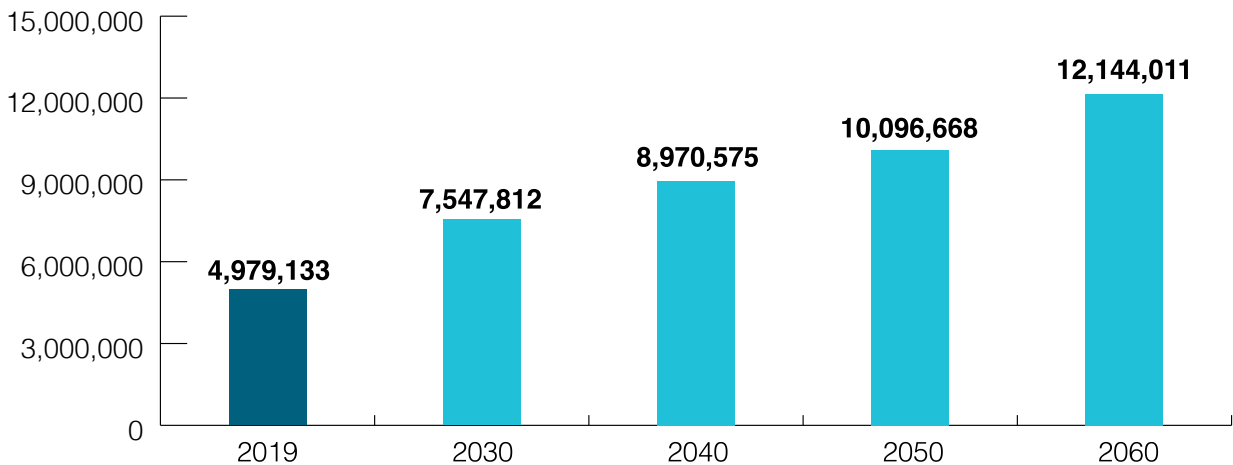
Introduction

Each year, ACL compiles [The Profile of Older Americans](#), a summary of critical statistics related to the older population in the United States. Relying primarily on data offered by the U.S. Census Bureau, the Profile illustrates the shifting demographics of Americans age 65 and older. It includes key topic areas such as education, marital status, employment, and income. This supplement to the Profile presents some of those same demographics as they pertain to the African American population age 65 and older.

Older American Population

In 2019, there were 54.1 million Americans age 65 and older and 6.6 million age 85 and older. The population age 65 and older is expected to increase to 94.7 million in 2060. The population age 85 and older is expected to nearly triple to 19 million during the same period. Among the population age 65 and older, there were 125 women for every 100 men. At age 85 and older, this ratio increased to 178 women for every 100 men. Along with these general trends for America's older population, the African American older population is also growing.

Population and Projections of African Americans Age 65+: 2019 to 2060



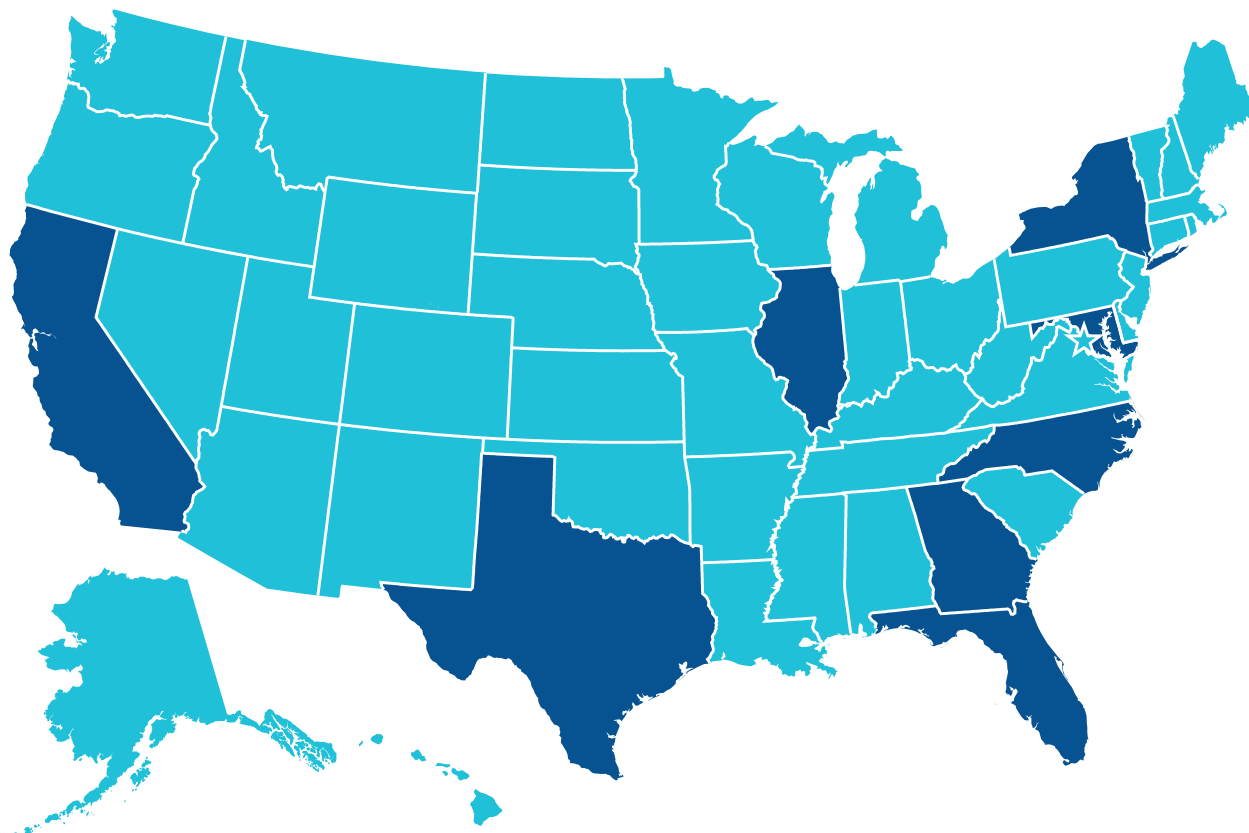
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Population Estimates and Projections, 2017 (revised)*

Note: Increments in years are uneven. Lighter bars indicate projections.

The African American population age 65 and older was 4,979,133 in 2019, and is projected to grow to 12.1 million by 2060. In 2019, African Americans made up 9% of the older population. By 2060, the percentage is projected to grow to 13%. The number of African Americans age 85 and older is projected to increase from 511,540 in 2019 to 2.2 million in 2060.

Residence

In 2019, slightly more than half (52%) of all older African Americans lived in eight states: New York (396,670), Florida (394,307), Georgia (362,535), Texas (350,106), California (304,751), North Carolina (298,365), Maryland (238,219), and Illinois (237,467).



Education

The past decade has seen a significant increase in educational attainment among older Americans, including African Americans. In 2020, 81% of the African American population age 65 and older had finished high school, and 22% had a bachelor's degree or higher. There are still educational differences among racial and ethnic groups. In 2020, 89% of all older persons were high school graduates and 33% had a bachelor's degree or higher.

Marital Status

In 2020, 38% of older African Americans were married, 26% were widowed, 22% were divorced (including separated and spouse absent), and 14% had never been married.

Grandparents

Among African American grandparents age 60 and older living with their grandchildren, 35% were responsible for the basic needs of one or more grandchildren under age 18 living with them, and 65% were not.

Employment

In 2020, 962,000 (18.2%) of African Americans age 65 and older were in the labor force (working or actively seeking work) – 20.7% of men and 16.4% of women. This is compared to 10.6 million (19.4%) of all older adults age 65 and older, 23.9% of all men, and 15.8% of all women in this age range.

Income and Poverty

In 2019, households containing families headed by African Americans age 65 and older reported a median income of \$51,743. This is compared to \$70,254 for all older households. The median personal income for older African American men was \$25,106 and \$18,214 for older African American women. The comparable figures for all older persons were \$36,921 for men and \$21,815 for women. The poverty rate in 2019 for African Americans age 65 and older was 18%, double the rate of 8.9% for all older Americans.

Life Expectancy

In 2018, life expectancy at birth for African Americans was 71.3 years for men and 78.0 years for women. At age 65, life expectancy for this group was 16.1 years for men and 19.5 years for women. This is in comparison to the total population which has a life expectancy at birth of 76.2 for men and 81.2 for women, and a life expectancy at age 65 of 18.1 for men and 20.7 for women.

Leading Causes of Death

In 2018, the top five leading causes of death for African American men age 65 and older were heart disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes, and chronic lower respiratory diseases. The top five causes for older African American women were heart disease, cancer, stroke, Alzheimer's disease, and diabetes.

Disability Status

In 2019, 38% of older African Americans had one or more disabilities compared with 33.5% of all older adults age 65 and older.

Participation in Older Americans Act (OAA) Programs

In 2019, State and Area Agencies on Aging provided services to a total of 10.5 million persons age 60 and older. Consistent with requirements of the OAA, considerable emphasis was placed on services to persons with the greatest social and economic need, including members of racial and ethnic minority groups, and especially those who are poor. Among older persons who received Title III OAA home and community-based registered services, 13.3% were African American.

Notes

The sources for the data in this report come from the U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates; Population Projections; Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement; and American Community Survey. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Health Interview Survey; National Vital Statistics System. Administration for Community Living, State Program Report data.

This report includes data on the age 65 and older population unless otherwise noted. The phrases “older adults” or “older persons” refer to the population age 65 and older. Age-adjusted estimates are used when available.

The data presented in this report refer to the noninstitutionalized population except where noted. Numbers in this report may not add up due to rounding.

Due to availability of data, content of profiles may differ.

Profile of African Americans Age 65 and Older: 2020 was developed by the Administration for Community Living, an operating division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.