



Blacks and African Americans in Utah

History

African American fur trappers, explorers, and gold prospectors lived and worked in what is now Utah almost 25 years before the arrival of the Mormon pioneers. The first permanent African American settlers included several families that traveled to Utah with the Mormon pioneer wagon trains in 1847. The Utah Territorial Census of 1860 counted 59 people of African descent, including 29 slaves.

Population

There are about 48,000 African Americans living in Utah¹ - with 70% living in Salt Lake (19,892), Davis (5,291), Weber (4,182), and Utah (4,006) counties.² Between 2000 and 2010, Utah's African American population experienced a 77% growth rate, from 24,382 to 43,209.³

Some of this growth may be attributed to the arrival of African Americans who relocated to Utah from Louisiana and Mississippi in the wake of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, as well as military families living near Hill Air Force Base. Community leaders emphasize Utah's low cost of living, educational opportunities, and strong jobs and housing markets as factors that continue to draw people to Utah.

Sociodemographics

The median age of Utah African Americans in 2014 is 19.6 years – the “youngest” population in Utah, with a sex distribution of 55.2% males and 44.8 females.¹

Utah's Black/African American population is ethnically diverse, with 17% being born outside the U.S.⁴ Census data shows that 66% of those born abroad are from Africa, 29% from Latin America, 3% from Asia, and 2% from Europe.⁵ About 23% of African Americans speak a non-English language at home.⁵

Nearly 15% of Utah African Americans holds a bachelor's degree.⁶

RACE/ETHNICITY	Population	Median Age (Years)	% Male	% Female	Foreign Born	Other Language	Bachelor's Degree
White	2,601,525	29.4	50.2%	49.8%	5.3%	9.2%	20.5%
Hispanic/Latino	370,870	23.6	51.6%	48.4%	40.0%	67.1%	8.2%
Asian	80,037	26.8	47.5%	52.5%	48.2%	57.1%	24.2%
Am. Indian/AK Native	59,338	24.1	49.6%	50.4%	2.5%	31.4%	8.7%
Black/African Am.	47,856	19.6	55.2%	44.8%	17.2%	22.8%	14.5%
N.Hawaiian/Pacific I.	37,994	20.2	52.2%	47.8%	21.3%	44.0%	11.2%

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Age, Race Alone or in Combination, 2014 Population Estimates, Table PEPA SR5H.

² U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2006-2010 Selected Population Tables, Table B01001.

³ U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 2 (SF 2), Table DP-1; Census 2010 Summary File 2 (SF 2), Table DP-1.

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2006-2010 5-Year Estimates, Table B05003.

⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2011-2013 3-Year Estimates, Table S0201.

⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2006-2010 5-Year Estimates, Table B15002.