

## MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE HIGHLIGHTS

In 2006, 12,053 marriages took place in Nebraska, which is a decrease from the 12,262 marriages that occurred here in 2005. The Nebraska resident marriage rate in 2006 was 6.8 marriages per 1,000 population, which is the state's lowest annual marriage rate since 1925.

During the 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s, Nebraska marriage data showed a strong trend toward fewer first marriages and more remarriages. In recent years, this trend has stabilized and has even reversed slightly. In 2006, 7,356 (61.0%) Nebraska marriages were the first marriage for both bride and groom, compared to the 1996 figure of 57.6%. The 2006 figure is still considerably lower than that recorded 40 years ago, in 1966, when 68.9% of the state's marriages were the first for both the bride and groom.

Age at marriage continues to increase in Nebraska, although this trend has slowed down considerably in recent years. In 2006, 5.9% of all Nebraska marriages involved a teenaged bride or groom, a decrease from the 1996 figure of 9.3% but well below the 1966 figure of 36.7%. Conversely, nearly half (46.0%) of all Nebraska marriages in 2006 involved either a bride or groom who was at least 30 years of age, up from 44.9% in 1996 and 24.2% in 1966. The trend toward increasing age at marriage remains even when limited to first marriages alone. In 2006, the proportion of first marriages in Nebraska that involved a teenaged bride or groom was 9.1%, down from 50.4% in 1966, while the proportion of first marriages involving a bride or groom age 30 or older increased during the same period, from 4.8% in 1966 to 20.5% in 2006.

There were 6,065 divorces granted in Nebraska in 2006, which is an increase from the 2005 count of 5,830. The 2006 number translates into a divorce rate of 3.4 per 1,000 population. Nebraska's divorce rate rose dramatically during the 1960s and 1970s (along with the number of divorces granted), stabilized during the 1980s, and has declined steadily since the early 1990s.

More divorces were granted to people in their thirties than in any other decade of life, with 45.0% of Nebraska divorces in 2006 involving at least one person between 30 and 39 years of age. Almost one of every four (24.8%) Nebraska divorces in 2006 terminated marriages lasting three years or less, while about half (51.4%) ended marriages lasting seven years or less. Over half (56.4%) of all divorces granted in Nebraska in 2006 ended a first marriage for both husband and wife. More than half (53.8%) of the state's 2006 divorces involved couples with children. In close to two-thirds (63.2%) of all divorces in which a child was involved, custody of some or all of the children was awarded to the wife.