Wisconsin Marriages and Divorces

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Bureau of Health Information and Policy Division of Public Health Wisconsin Department of Health Services

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Introduction

This report presents key information about marriages and divorces that occurred in Wisconsin in 2008. It also contains information from selected previous years, as well as information on the number and rate of marriages and divorces, both in Wisconsin and nationally. The sources of data for Wisconsin are marriage and divorce certificates on file with the Bureau of Health Information and Policy, Division of Public Health, Department of Health Services.

The collection of marriage and divorce data is mandated by Chapter 69 of the Wisconsin Statutes. Chapter 69 authorizes the Department of Health Services to supervise and direct the collection of these data. This statute also specifies how local registrars are to collect and file certificates of marriage.

The Department of Health Services produced this publication. Staff of the Vital Records Registration and Statistics Unit, Bureau of Health Information and Policy, collected and compiled the marriage and divorce records. Joyce Knapton drafted the summaries in this report and produced the computer programs to generate the tables. Patricia Nametz edited the report. The report was prepared under the supervision of John Kiesow, State Registrar, Vital Records Section, and Jane Kraus, Supervisor, Registration and Statistics Unit. Patricia Guhleman, Director, Bureau of Health Information and Policy, provided overall direction.

The Bureau of Health Information and Policy would like to thank the County Clerks and Clerks of Tribal Court for issuing accurate marriage licenses, the local Register of Deeds offices for their accurate recording of all marriage records, and the County Clerks of Court and Clerks of Tribal Court for their timely filing of completed divorce or annulment certificates.

This report is available on the Department of Health Services Web site, at http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/stats/marriages.htm.

Comments, suggestions, and requests for additional marriage or divorce data may be addressed to:

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Key Findings

- A total of 31,444 marriages occurred in Wisconsin in 2008, representing a decrease of 715 from the 32,159 marriages that occurred in 2007. These counts reflect all marriages that occurred in Wisconsin (of both residents and non-residents of the state).
- The number of marriages has been declining annually since 1980.
- Wisconsin's marriage rate in 2008 was 5.6 per 1,000 total population, lower than the 2007 rate (5.7). The marriage rate has gradually declined since 1980, when the rate was 8.7.
- The marriage rate in Wisconsin has been consistently lower than the national rate for more than 80 years. The United States provisional marriage rate for the 12 months ending in July 2008 was 7.1 per 1,000 population.
- The median age for first marriages in 2008 was 25.3 years for women and 26.8 years for men. In 1960, the median age at first marriage was 20.4 for brides and 22.9 for grooms.
- Since 1960, the bride in a first marriage, on average, has been a year or two younger than the groom.
- In 2008, the months with the highest number of marriages were June, August and September. August was the most popular month to marry.
- Milwaukee County had the highest number of marriages in 2008 (4,378), followed by Dane County (2,642), Waukesha County (1,947) and Brown County (1,534). These are Wisconsin's four most populous counties. Of these four counties, Milwaukee and Waukesha had a decrease in the number of marriages from 2007 to 2008.
- A total of 16,885 divorces occurred in Wisconsin in 2008, for a divorce rate of 3.0 per 1,000 total population. This is slightly higher than the 2007 rate (2.9).
- In 2008, the ratio of Wisconsin marriages to Wisconsin divorces was 1.9 to 1 (there were 1.9 marriages for each divorce). This ratio has been falling since 1920, when it was 9.2 to 1; it was 6.7 to 1 in 1960; 2.2 to 1 in 1990; and 2.1 to 1 in 2000.
- The highest number of divorces in 2008 occurred in Milwaukee County (2,432 divorces and 11 annulments), followed by Dane County (1,391 divorces and 4 annulments) and Waukesha County (1,014 divorces and 2 annulments), reflecting the large populations of these three counties.
- Fifty-three percent of all Wisconsin divorces in 2008 involved families with children under 18 years of age. Among divorces involving children, an average of 1.8 children were affected by each divorce.

Table 1. Marriages and Marriage Rates, Wisconsin and United States, Selected Years, 1920-2008

| <u>Year</u> | Number of Wisconsin Marriages | Wisconsin Marriage Rate* | United States Marriage Rate* |
|-------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1920 | 22,293 | 8.4 | 12.0 |
| 1925 | 16,385 | 5.8 | 10.3 |
| 1930 | 15,328 | 5.2 | 9.2 |
| 1935 | 21,075 | 6.9 | 10.4 |
| 1940 | 23,379 | 7.5 | 12.1 |
| 1945 | 25,269 | 8.5 | 12.2 |
| 1950 | 29,081 | 8.4 | 11.1 |
| 1955 | 25,543 | 7.0 | 9.3 |
| 1960 | 24,573 | 6.2 | 8.5 |
| 1965 | 28,410 | 6.7 | 9.3 |
| 1970 | 34,415 | 7.8 | 10.6 |
| 1975 | 35,888 | 7.9 | 10.0 |
| 1980 | 41,113 | 8.7 | 10.6 |
| 1985 | 40,014 | 8.4 | 10.1 |
| 1990 | 38,934 | 8.0 | 9.8 |
| 1995 | 36,354 | 7.1 | 8.9 |
| 2000 | 36,100 | 6.7 | 8.5 |
| 2001 | 34,790 | 6.5 | 8.4 |
| 2002 | 34,241 | 6.3 | 7.9 |
| 2003 | 34,220 | 6.2 | 7.7 |
| 2004 | 34,056 | 6.2 | 7.8 |
| 2005 | 33,876 | 6.1 | 7.5 |
| 2006 | 33,437 | 6.0 | 7.3 |
| 2007 | 32,159 | 5.7 | 7.3 |
| 2008 | 31,444 | 5.6 | 7.1 |

Source: U.S. marriage rates are from the National Center for Health Statistics, *National Vital Statistics Reports*. Wisconsin numbers and rates are from the Bureau of Health Information and Policy, Division of Public Health, Department of Health Services. The Wisconsin marriage rate for 2008 was calculated using 2007 population figures.

Notes: The Wisconsin numbers and rates reflect marriages that occurred in Wisconsin. The U.S. marriage rate for 2007 is provisional based on marriages that occurred in the 12 months ending in December, 2007. The U.S. marriage rate for 2008 is provisional based on marriages occurring in the 12 months ending in July, 2008.

- A total of 31,444 marriages occurred in Wisconsin in 2008, representing a decrease of 715 from the 32,159 marriages that occurred in 2007.
- The number of marriages has been declining annually since 1980.
- Wisconsin's marriage rate in 2008 was 5.6 per 1,000 total population, lower than the 2007 rate (5.7). The marriage rate has gradually declined since 1980, when the rate was 8.7.

^{*} Rates shown are marriages per 1,000 total population.

Table 2. Median Age at First Marriage and All Remarriages, Wisconsin 1960-2008

| | First Ma | arriages | All Rema | rriages |
|------|--------------|----------|--------------|---------|
| Year | <u>Bride</u> | Groom | <u>Bride</u> | Groom |
| 1960 | 20.4 | 22.9 | 39.9 | 45.1 |
| 1965 | 20.6 | 22.5 | 40.4 | 45.2 |
| 1970 | 20.8 | 22.6 | 37.4 | 42.6 |
| 1975 | 20.8 | 22.7 | 32.4 | 37.1 |
| 1980 | 21.7 | 23.5 | 31.7 | 34.9 |
| 1985 | 22.9 | 24.7 | 33.7 | 36.9 |
| 1990 | 23.8 | 25.5 | 38.3 | 41.6 |
| 1991 | 23.9 | 25.6 | 38.6 | 41.7 |
| 1992 | 24.1 | 25.7 | 38.8 | 42.3 |
| 1993 | 24.2 | 25.8 | 39.0 | 42.0 |
| 1994 | 24.3 | 25.8 | 39.4 | 42.3 |
| 1995 | 24.5 | 26.0 | 39.9 | 42.6 |
| 1996 | 24.6 | 26.2 | 40.4 | 43.6 |
| 1997 | 24.6 | 26.3 | 40.7 | 43.4 |
| 1998 | 24.6 | 26.3 | 41.1 | 43.9 |
| 1999 | 24.6 | 26.3 | 41.6 | 44.5 |
| 2000 | 24.7 | 26.3 | 41.7 | 44.6 |
| 2001 | 24.7 | 26.3 | 42.3 | 45.2 |
| 2002 | 24.8 | 26.3 | 42.9 | 45.5 |
| 2003 | 24.8 | 26.4 | 43.3 | 46.0 |
| 2004 | 24.9 | 26.4 | 43.7 | 46.6 |
| 2005 | 25.0 | 26.4 | 44.4 | 47.1 |
| 2006 | 25.1 | 26.6 | 44.6 | 47.2 |
| 2007 | 25.2 | 26.8 | 45.1 | 47.6 |
| 2008 | 25.3 | 26.8 | 45.2 | 48.0 |

Note: The median age is one way of expressing the average age, and represents the midpoint of all persons in the group (half are older and half are younger than the median age). For example, in 2005 the median age for brides at first marriage was 25.0, meaning that half of all brides being married for the first time in 2005 were younger, and half were older, than 25.0. The numbers in this table reflect all marriages that occurred in Wisconsin in the stated years.

- The median age for first marriages in 2008 was 25.3 years for women and 26.8 years for men. In 1960, the median age at first marriage was 20.4 for brides and 22.9 for grooms.
- Since 1960, the bride in a first marriage, on average, has been a year or two younger than the groom.

Table 3. Marriages and Remarriages by Age of Bride and Groom, Wisconsin 2008

| | | | Bride | | | | | Groom | | |
|--------|------------------|--------------|--------|--------------|---------|------------------|--------------|--------|--------------|---------|
| Age in | Total | | | | Fourth | Total | | | | Fourth |
| Years | <u>Marriages</u> | <u>First</u> | Second | Third | or More | <u>Marriages</u> | <u>First</u> | Second | Third | or More |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 31,444 | 23,060 | 6,572 | 1,494 | 318 | 31,444 | 23,048 | 6,697 | 1,437 | 262 |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| 16 | 67 | 67 | | | | 4 | 4 | | | |
| 17 | 103 | 103 | | | | 14 | 14 | | | |
| 18 | 435 | 434 | 1 | | | 160 | 159 | | | |
| | | | | | | | | 1 | | |
| 19 | 668 | 667 | 1 | | | 333 | 333 | | | |
| 20 | 915 | 914 | 1 | | | 489 | 488 | 1 | | |
| 21 | 1,279 | 1,269 | 10 | | | 861 | 856 | 5 | | |
| 22 | 1,828 | 1,805 | 23 | | | 1,238 | 1,231 | 7 | | |
| 23 | 2,300 | 2,244 | 55 | 1 | | 1,675 | 1,646 | 29 | | |
| 24 | 2,436 | 2,357 | 79 | | | 1,982 | 1,943 | 38 | 1 | |
| 25-29 | 9,473 | 8,581 | 856 | 36 | | 9,680 | 9,163 | 503 | 14 | |
| 30-34 | 3,978 | 2,727 | 1,143 | 95 | 13 | 5,118 | 4,079 | 984 | 54 | 1 |
| 35-39 | 2,402 | 1,006 | 1,147 | 221 | 28 | 2,991 | 1,648 | 1,164 | 168 | 11 |
| 40-44 | 1,805 | 423 | 1,022 | 291 | 69 | 2,115 | 759 | 1,087 | 234 | 35 |
| 45-49 | 1,588 | 259 | 945 | 309 | 75 | 1,763 | 395 | 1,015 | 299 | 54 |
| 50-54 | 1,036 | 127 | 605 | 257 | 47 | 1,307 | 206 | 773 | 274 | 54 |
| 55-59 | 551 | 54 | 312 | 141 | 44 | 800 | 87 | 492 | 171 | 50 |
| 60-64 | 295 | 13 | 166 | 87 | 29 | 441 | 26 | 255 | 123 | 37 |
| 65-69 | 128 | 4 | 92 | 26 | 6 | 211 | 5 | 145 | 53 | 8 |
| 70-74 | 74 | 3 | 52 | 16 | 3 | 133 | 3 | 99 | 23 | 8 |
| 75+ | 83 | 3 | 62 | 14 | 4 | 129 | 3 | 99 | 23 | 4 |

Note: Totals shown represent marriages that occurred in Wisconsin in 2008.

• For first-time brides and grooms, the highest number of marriages occurred between the ages of 22 and 29.

Table 4. Monthly Marriage Totals by County, Wisconsin 2008

| County | Total | <u>Jan</u> | Feb | <u>Mar</u> | <u>Apr</u> | May | <u>Jun</u> | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-------------|--------|------------|-------|------------|------------|-------|------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| State Total | 31,444 | 1,046 | 1,287 | 1,203 | 1,737 | 3,150 | 4,234 | 3,194 | 4,958 | 3,884 | 3,626 | 1,583 | 1,542 |
| Adams | 124 | 7 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 13 | 19 | 9 | 17 | 19 | 10 | 8 | 8 |
| Ashland | 138 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 8 | 15 | 19 | 27 | 24 | 11 | 6 | 6 |
| Barron | 319 | 12 | 14 | 7 | 15 | 29 | 45 | 34 | 55 | 46 | 39 | 12 | 11 |
| Bayfield | 144 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 7 | 7 | 16 | 23 | 39 | 23 | 12 | 5 | 6 |
| Brown | 1,534 | 55 | 48 | 58 | 87 | 178 | 184 | 158 | 230 | 186 | 194 | 79 | 77 |
| Buffalo | 64 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 9 | 8 | 6 | 10 | 13 | 5 | 1 | 5 |
| Burnett | 83 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 6 | 12 | 4 | 15 | 9 | 12 | 4 | |
| Calumet | 194 | 3 | 10 | 9 | 9 | 12 | 34 | 19 | 28 | 22 | 33 | 13 | 2 |
| Chippewa | 361 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 19 | 46 | 44 | 31 | 63 | 44 | 38 | 17 | 23 |
| Clark | 228 | 6 | 11 | 11 | 19 | 19 | 32 | 13 | 26 | 38 | 33 | 8 | 12 |
| Columbia | 452 | 12 | 17 | 20 | 32 | 57 | 57 | 40 | 71 | 54 | 59 | 14 | 19 |
| Crawford | 102 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 14 | 16 | 7 | 13 | 10 | 13 | 5 | 5 |
| Dane | 2,642 | 102 | 104 | 133 | 139 | 290 | 357 | 269 | 423 | 306 | 263 | 135 | 121 |
| Dodge | 423 | 13 | 20 | 20 | 34 | 54 | 52 | 37 | 58 | 46 | 54 | 19 | 16 |
| Door | 416 | 9 | 14 | 9 | 4 | 50 | 66 | 45 | 74 | 62 | 53 | 20 | 10 |
| Douglas | 246 | 12 | 9 | 7 | 14 | 16 | 30 | 23 | 48 | 25 | 32 | 9 | 21 |
| Dunn | 217 | 13 | 5 | 20 | 10 | 22 | 36 | 20 | 29 | 24 | 14 | 14 | 10 |
| Eau Claire | 641 | 20 | 28 | 21 | 37 | 76 | 88 | 45 | 118 | 74 | 69 | 26 | 39 |
| Florence | 17 | 3 | | | 1 | | 1 | 4 | | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Fond du Lac | 521 | 17 | 20 | 17 | 39 | 56 | 73 | 43 | 68 | 68 | 64 | 26 | 30 |
| Forest | 49 | 1 | 3 | | 2 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 12 | 6 | 2 | |
| Grant | 267 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 18 | 29 | 32 | 26 | 44 | 32 | 36 | 19 | 14 |
| Green | 159 | 2 | 8 | 6 | 12 | 13 | 24 | 15 | 22 | 20 | 14 | 11 | 12 |
| Green Lake | 137 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8 | 16 | 20 | 17 | 20 | 15 | 18 | 11 | |
| Iowa | 178 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 14 | 10 | 29 | 22 | 37 | 18 | 30 | 4 | 4 |
| Iron | 33 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 7 | | 10 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| Jackson | 112 | 4 | 7 | 4 | 10 | 9 | 15 | 10 | 20 | 16 | 11 | 3 | 3 |
| Jefferson | 440 | 20 | 30 | 19 | 21 | 43 | 60 | 46 | 54 | 57 | 51 | 17 | 22 |
| Juneau | 159 | 2 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 18 | 22 | 17 | 21 | 9 | 25 | 10 | 17 |
| Kenosha | 727 | 28 | 37 | 26 | 43 | 61 | 92 | 85 | 130 | 85 | 62 | 38 | 40 |
| Kewaunee | 96 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 8 | 15 | 18 | 17 | 14 | 4 | 3 |
| La Crosse | 749 | 16 | 33 | 27 | 34 | 67 | 114 | 86 | 123 | 91 | 84 | 43 | 31 |
| Lafayette | 105 | 1 | | 3 | 5 | 15 | 11 | 9 | 21 | 13 | 18 | 5 | 4 |
| Langlade | 104 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 7 | 10 | 15 | 24 | 14 | 11 | 1 | 5 |
| Lincoln | 159 | 1 | 7 | 5 | 9 | 7 | 21 | 18 | 28 | 21 | 21 | 13 | 8 |
| Manitowoc | 502 | 21 | 18 | 18 | 18 | 49 | 75 | 53 | 86 | 61 | 54 | 19 | 30 |
| Marathon | 798 | 23 | 29 | 35 | 48 | 80 | 106 | 76 | 137 | 115 | 79 | 31 | 39 |
| Marinette | 242 | 11 | 5 | 10 | 7 | 29 | 43 | 33 | 35 | 25 | 24 | 12 | 8 |
| Marquette | 83 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 12 | 18 | 9 | 7 | 11 | 8 | 2 | 5 |
| Menominee | 33 | | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 2 | |
| Milwaukee | 4,378 | 177 | 209 | 190 | 302 | 406 | 545 | 439 | 650 | 493 | 474 | 279 | 214 |
| Monroe | 288 | 6 | 14 | 12 | 23 | 31 | 40 | 28 | 30 | 25 | 41 | 18 | 20 |

Table 4. Monthly Marriage Totals by County, Wisconsin 2008

| County | Total | <u>Jan</u> | <u>Feb</u> | <u>Mar</u> | <u>Apr</u> | May | <u>Jun</u> | <u>Jul</u> | Aug | <u>Sep</u> | <u>Oct</u> | Nov | <u>Dec</u> |
|---------------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-----|------------|------------|-----|------------|------------|-----|------------|
| Oconto | 181 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 10 | 8 | 25 | 10 | 37 | 31 | 28 | 11 | 7 |
| Oneida | 265 | 6 | 9 | 10 | 19 | 31 | 38 | 27 | 52 | 28 | 25 | 6 | 14 |
| Outagamie | 1,180 | 54 | 51 | 45 | 82 | 104 | 148 | 117 | 161 | 130 | 165 | 71 | 52 |
| Ozaukee | 386 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 16 | 31 | 52 | 52 | 74 | 49 | 49 | 16 | 22 |
| Pepin | 40 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 3 |
| Pierce | 197 | 6 | 12 | 4 | 14 | 25 | 26 | 14 | 36 | 21 | 22 | 6 | 11 |
| Polk | 254 | 6 | 19 | 9 | 16 | 20 | 36 | 30 | 37 | 37 | 22 | 14 | 8 |
| Portage | 369 | 16 | 17 | 9 | 22 | 45 | 56 | 34 | 65 | 43 | 39 | 13 | 10 |
| Price | 74 | 3 | | 3 | 5 | 6 | 12 | 6 | 16 | 11 | 9 | 1 | 2 |
| Racine | 830 | 29 | 34 | 33 | 38 | 81 | 104 | 84 | 124 | 112 | 103 | 37 | 51 |
| Richland | 124 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 10 | 13 | 13 | 18 | 23 | 15 | 5 | 7 |
| Rock | 804 | 26 | 37 | 28 | 42 | 91 | 114 | 102 | 108 | 78 | 88 | 43 | 47 |
| Rusk | 94 | 2 | | 2 | 6 | 8 | 12 | 9 | 21 | 14 | 13 | 4 | 3 |
| St. Croix | 371 | 11 | 12 | 21 | 25 | 35 | 43 | 37 | 58 | 52 | 37 | 14 | 26 |
| Sauk | 477 | 24 | 21 | 24 | 13 | 45 | 61 | 40 | 59 | 63 | 71 | 28 | 28 |
| Sawyer | 126 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 13 | 17 | 17 | 30 | 9 | 11 | 6 | 8 |
| Shawano | 236 | 8 | 12 | 9 | 12 | 18 | 35 | 23 | 35 | 28 | 31 | 8 | 17 |
| Sheboygan | 765 | 20 | 32 | 26 | 38 | 73 | 98 | 74 | 132 | 103 | 82 | 49 | 38 |
| Taylor | 136 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 10 | 15 | 27 | 9 | 20 | 18 | 18 | 4 | 10 |
| Trempealeau | 172 | 7 | 8 | 7 | 8 | 24 | 32 | 12 | 20 | 23 | 18 | 5 | 8 |
| Vernon | 176 | 3 | 11 | 4 | 5 | 22 | 24 | 21 | 26 | 21 | 22 | 11 | 6 |
| Vilas | 152 | 4 | 5 | 6 | | 13 | 25 | 14 | 28 | 30 | 13 | 4 | 10 |
| Walworth | 808 | 14 | 26 | 26 | 32 | 85 | 128 | 88 | 131 | 96 | 107 | 43 | 32 |
| Washburn | 119 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 14 | 11 | 13 | 22 | 14 | 11 | 5 | 8 |
| Washington | 637 | 17 | 29 | 22 | 38 | 63 | 88 | 57 | 88 | 99 | 81 | 34 | 21 |
| Waukesha | 1,947 | 62 | 59 | 66 | 95 | 204 | 275 | 206 | 309 | 257 | 231 | 90 | 93 |
| Waupaca | 367 | 9 | 15 | 17 | 11 | 40 | 49 | 37 | 66 | 49 | 45 | 13 | 16 |
| Waushara | 159 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 8 | 16 | 17 | 17 | 30 | 21 | 24 | 7 | 8 |
| Winnebago | 896 | 26 | 43 | 33 | 45 | 83 | 116 | 105 | 137 | 131 | 81 | 51 | 45 |
| Wood | 438 | 11 | 24 | 21 | 25 | 40 | 58 | 44 | 73 | 40 | 58 | 15 | 29 |

Note: These numbers represent marriages that occurred in Wisconsin in 2008.

- In 2008, the months with the highest number of marriages were June, August and September. August was the most popular month to marry.
- Milwaukee County had the highest number of marriages in 2008 (4,378), followed by Dane County (2,642), Waukesha County (1,947) and Brown County (1,534). These are Wisconsin's four most populous counties.
- The lowest number of marriages occurred in the counties of Florence (17), Menominee (33), Iron (33) and Pepin (40).

Table 5. Divorces and Divorce Rates, Wisconsin and United States, Selected Years, 1920-2008

| <u>Year</u> | Number of Wisconsin Divorces | Wisconsin <u>Divorce Rate*</u> | United States <u>Divorce Rate*</u> |
|-------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1920 | 2,425 | 0.9 | 1.6 |
| 1925 | 2,467 | 0.9 | 1.5 |
| 1930 | 2,553 | 0.9 | 1.6 |
| 1935 | 3,543 | 1.2 | 1.7 |
| 1940 | 3,599 | 1.1 | 2.0 |
| 1945 | 6,393 | 2.2 | 3.5 |
| 1950 | 4,845 | 1.4 | 2.6 |
| 1955 | 4,720 | 1.3 | 2.3 |
| 1960 | 3,672 | 0.9 | 2.2 |
| 1965 | 5,232 | 1.2 | 2.5 |
| 1970 | 8,930 | 2.0 | 3.5 |
| 1975 | 13,187 | 2.9 | 4.8 |
| 1980 | 17,589 | 3.7 | 5.2 |
| 1985 | 16,596 | 3.5 | 5.0 |
| 1990 | 17,727 | 3.6 | 4.7 |
| 1995 | 17,313 | 3.4 | 4.4 |
| 2000 | 17,388 | 3.2 | 4.2 |
| 2001 | 17,457 | 3.3 | 4.0 |
| 2002 | 17,471 | 3.2 | 4.0 |
| 2003 | 17,150 | 3.1 | 3.8 |
| 2004 | 16,802 | 3.0 | 3.7 |
| 2005 | 16,297 | 2.9 | 3.6 |
| 2006 | 16,730 | 3.0 | 3.6 |
| 2007 | 16,458 | 2.9 | 3.6 |
| 2008 | 16,885 | 3.0 | 3.5 |

Source: U.S. divorce rates are from the National Center for Health Statistics, *National Vital Statistics Reports*. Wisconsin numbers and rates are from the Bureau of Health Information and Policy, Division of Public Health, Department of Health Services. The Wisconsin divorce rate for 2008 was calculated using 2007 population figures.

Notes: Wisconsin numbers and rates represent divorces and annulments occurring in Wisconsin. The U.S. divorce rate for 2007 is provisional based on divorces that occurred in the 12 months ending in December, 2007. The U.S. divorce rate for 2008 is provisional based on divorces that occurred in the 12 months ending in July, 2008.

- A total of 16,885 divorces occurred in Wisconsin in 2008, for a divorce rate of 3.0 per 1,000 population. This is slightly higher than the 2007 rate (2.9).
- In 2008, the ratio of Wisconsin marriages to Wisconsin divorces was 1.9 to 1 (there were 1.9 marriages for each divorce). This ratio has been falling since 1920, when it was 9.2 to 1; it was 6.7 to 1 in 1960; 2.2 to 1 in 1990; and 2.1 to 1 in 2000.

^{*} Rates shown are divorces and annulments per 1,000 total population.

Table 6. Divorces and Annulments by County, Wisconsin 2008

| County | Divorces | Annulments | County | Divorces | Annulments |
|-------------|----------|------------|-------------|----------|------------|
| Total | 16,856 | 29 | | | |
| Adams | 90 | | Marathon | 390 | |
| Ashland | 45 | | Marinette | 125 | |
| Barron | 151 | | Marquette | 48 | 1 |
| Bayfield | 59 | | Menominee | 1 | |
| Brown | 827 | 1 | Milwaukee | 2,432 | 11 |
| Buffalo | 42 | | Monroe | 173 | 1 |
| Burnett | 48 | | Oconto | 122 | |
| Calumet | 141 | | Oneida | 145 | 1 |
| Chippewa | 193 | 1 | Outagamie | 624 | 1 |
| Clark | 89 | | Ozaukee | 180 | |
| Columbia | 170 | | Pepin | 18 | |
| Crawford | 38 | | Pierce | 110 | |
| Dane | 1,391 | 4 | Polk | 124 | |
| Dodge | 314 | | Portage | 196 | |
| Door | 75 | | Price | 53 | |
| Douglas | 140 | | Racine | 538 | |
| Dunn | 126 | | Richland | 56 | |
| Eau Claire | 289 | | Rock | 549 | |
| Florence | 17 | | Rusk | 52 | |
| Fond du Lac | 280 | | St. Croix | 325 | |
| Forest | 30 | | Sauk | 225 | |
| Grant | 122 | | Sawyer | 61 | |
| Green | 108 | | Shawano | 108 | |
| Green Lake | 57 | | Sheboygan | 330 | |
| Iowa | 77 | | Taylor | 54 | |
| Iron | 27 | | Trempealeau | 91 | |
| Jackson | 51 | 1 | Vernon | 75 | |
| Jefferson | 290 | 1 | Vilas | 84 | |
| Juneau | 97 | | Walworth | 327 | |
| Kenosha | 502 | 3 | Washburn | 39 | |
| Kewaunee | 62 | | Washington | 369 | |
| La Crosse | 301 | | Waukesha | 1,014 | 2 |
| Lafayette | 49 | | Waupaca | 188 | |
| Langlade | 79 | | Waushara | 92 | |
| Lincoln | 72 | | Winnebago | 558 | |
| Manitowoc | 267 | | Wood | 264 | 1 |

Services.

Note: These numbers represent divorces and annulments that occurred in Wisconsin in 2008.

- The highest number of divorces occurred in Milwaukee County (2,432 divorces and 11 annulments), followed by Dane County (1,391divorces and 4 annulments) and Waukesha County (1,014 divorces and 2 annulments), reflecting the large populations of these three counties.
- The lowest number of divorces occurred in the counties of Menominee (1 divorce), Florence (17 divorces) and Pepin (18 divorces).

Table 7. Divorces Affecting Children Under 18 Years of Age by County, Wisconsin 2008

| <u>County</u> State Total | Divorces <u>Granted</u> 16,885 | Those Affecting Children < 18 8,950 | No. of Children < 18 Affected 16,490 | <u>County</u> | Divorces Granted | Those Affecting Children < 18 | No. of Children < 18 Affected |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Adams | 90 | 45 | 78 | Marathon | 390 | 226 | 433 |
| Ashland | 45 | 25 | 48 | Marinette | 125 | 70 | 124 |
| Barron | 151 | 74 | 141 | Marquette | 49 | 20 | 34 |
| Bayfield | 59 | 33 | 63 | Menominee | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Brown | 828 | 451 | 849 | Milwaukee | 2,443 | 1,213 | 2,242 |
| Buffalo | 42 | 21 | 42 | Monroe | 174 | 100 | 184 |
| Burnett | 48 | 24 | 44 | Oconto | 122 | 59 | 111 |
| Calumet | 141 | 92 | 172 | Oneida | 146 | 58 | 101 |
| Chippewa | 194 | 124 | 233 | Outagamie | 625 | 340 | 611 |
| Clark | 89 | 49 | 84 | Ozaukee | 180 | 100 | 175 |
| Columbia | 170 | 90 | 149 | Pepin | 18 | 10 | 21 |
| Crawford | 38 | 26 | 52 | Pierce | 110 | 59 | 114 |
| Dane | 1,395 | 677 | 1,192 | Polk | 124 | 70 | 145 |
| Dodge | 314 | 172 | 318 | Portage | 196 | 108 | 192 |
| Door | 75 | 36 | 61 | Price | 53 | 28 | 55 |
| Douglas | 140 | 75 | 139 | Racine | 538 | 288 | 564 |
| Dunn | 126 | 67 | 122 | Richland | 56 | 31 | 55 |
| Eau Claire | 289 | 156 | 279 | Rock | 549 | 303 | 576 |
| Florence | 17 | 10 | 18 | Rusk | 52 | 25 | 45 |
| Fond du Lac | 280 | 145 | 260 | St. Croix | 325 | 182 | 349 |
| Forest | 30 | 19 | 32 | Sauk | 225 | 109 | 199 |
| Grant | 122 | 72 | 138 | Sawyer | 61 | 28 | 50 |
| Green | 108 | 59 | 113 | Shawano | 108 | 70 | 145 |
| Green Lake | 57 | 33 | 64 | Sheboygan | 330 | 170 | 344 |
| Iowa | 77 | 37 | 69 | Taylor | 54 | 25 | 57 |
| Iron | 27 | 13 | 17 | Trempealeau | 91 | 56 | 103 |
| Jackson | 52 | 30 | 51 | Vernon | 75 | 40 | 79 |
| Jefferson | 291 | 171 | 322 | Vilas | 84 | 35 | 64 |
| Juneau | 97 | 41 | 82 | Walworth | 327 | 185 | 356 |
| Kenosha | 505 | 278 | 479 | Washburn | 39 | 12 | 19 |
| Kewaunee | 62 | 29 | 63 | Washington | 369 | 212 | 391 |
| La Crosse | 301 | 156 | 283 | Waukesha | 1,016 | 539 | 958 |
| Lafayette | 49 | 25 | 50 | Waupaca | 188 | 110 | 190 |
| Langlade | 79 | 43 | 73 | Waushara | 92 | 51 | 87 |
| Lincoln | 72 | 32 | 64 | Winnebago | 558 | 291 | 524 |
| Manitowoc | 267 | 159 | 283 | Wood | 265 | 137 | 265 |

Note: These numbers represent divorces and annulments that occurred in Wisconsin in 2008.

• Fifty-three percent of all Wisconsin divorces in 2008 involved couples with children under 18 years of age. Among divorces involving children, an average of 1.8 children were affected by each divorce.

Technical Notes

Marriage Reporting Requirements

As specified in Chapter 69, Wisconsin Statutes, the following is a brief outline of the sequence of events which take place when a marriage occurs in Wisconsin:

- The filing party (officiant) must register the certificate of marriage with the local Register of Deeds (where the marriage took place) within 3 days after the event.
- The local Register of Deeds must transmit the marriage certificate to the State Registrar within 10 working days after its receipt.

Divorce Reporting Requirements

As specified in Chapter 69, Wisconsin Statutes, the following is what takes place when a divorce occurs in Wisconsin:

• At the end of every biweekly period the filing party (clerk of any court) must send to the State Registrar a report of every divorce or annulment of marriage granted during that period.

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Wisconsin Marriages and Divorces, 2008 P-45359-08 (April 2009) Bureau of Health Information and Policy Division of Public Health Wisconsin Department of Health Services