Black Residents in North Dakota

The 1930 North Dakota Census indicates there were only 377 Black residents in the state, down from 467 in 1920 to 617 in 1910. In 1930 Black residents constituted far less than 1/10 of one percent of the state’s total population.

By the 2000 Census that number had grown to 3,916 residents in the state, constituting 1/2 of a percent of the state’s population, concentrated in the counties of Ward - 1,305, Cass - 996 and Grand Forks - 904. That same year, data indicates that seven of North Dakota’s 53 counties had “no Black residents, and 29 reported less than 10 each in 2000.

By 2010 the number of Black residents grew by more than 50 percent to 11,282. Cass County with 6,297 surpassed Ward County with 3,156 as the county with the highest concentration of Black residents. Cass and Ward counties have the distinction of being the only two in North Dakota.

ND’s Black Population More Male than Female

North Dakota’s Black population has the highest ratio of males to female of any of the five major races.

In North Dakota the Black male population was estimated to be 45 percent larger than Black female population in 2013, the largest difference of any race. There are approximately 1.35 Black males in the state for every female. The difference in the number of individuals by sex is most pronounced in the age range of 20 – 34, where there are almost 1.6 males to every female. There were 2.2 Black males for every Black female in the Williston Region of Divide, McKenzie and Williams Counties.

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Black residents in North Dakota tend to be young, with a median age of 21.7 for males, and 18.5 for females in 2013.

Approximately 43 percent of Black residents are under 18 years of age, more than double the percentage of Whites at 21 percent.

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Black Representation Grows in the State’s Labor Force

Black employment in North Dakota is estimated to have grown 127 percent from 2009 through 2003 according to Census data. This is far higher than the growth in employment by any other race.

Wages for Blacks in the state grew in this time-frame from about $2,450 to $3,500 per month or by 43 percent. Wages for Black workers in North Dakota remained below those of Asians, Pacific Islanders and Whites, but exceeded those of Hispanics and American Indians.

Industries in which Black workers are present differ greatly by region. In the Fargo area they are most likely to be found employed in manufacturing, in the Williston area, mining.