

# **Wisconsin Marriages and Divorces, 1995**

January 1997

Center for Health Statistics  
Division of Health  
Department of Health and Family Services

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## Introduction

This report presents key information about marriages and divorces that occurred in 1995. It also contains information from selected previous years. Included is information on the number and rates of marriages and divorces, both in Wisconsin and nationally. *Wisconsin Marriages and Divorces, 1995* contains information previously reported in the Marriage and Divorce section of *Vital Statistics*. The source of these data is marriage and divorce certificates.

The collection of marriage and divorce data is mandated by Chapter 69 of the Wisconsin Statutes. Chapter 69 authorizes the Department of Health and Family Services to supervise and direct the collection of these data. The statute also indicates how local registrars are to collect and file certificates of marriage. Copies of the marriage and divorce/annulment certificates are included in the Technical Notes.

We would like to recognize and thank the local Register of Deeds offices. The Department of Health and Family Services produced this publication. Staff of the Vital Records and Statistics Unit, Center for Health Statistics, collected and compiled the marriage and divorce records. Joyce Knapton drafted the brief summaries in this report and produced the computer programs to generate the tables. Clare Schneider and Susan Klein provided word processing, page layout, graphics and report design. Jane Kraus supervised data collection activities.

Special Note: This report is dedicated to the memory of Clare Schneider (1933-1997).

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

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## Key Findings

- A total of 36,354 marriages occurred in Wisconsin in 1995, representing a slight decrease from the 36,375 marriages that occurred in 1994.
- Wisconsin's crude marriage rate in 1995 was 7.1 per 1,000 total population, continuing a gradual decline in this rate since the high of 8.7 in 1980.
- The marriage rate in Wisconsin has been consistently lower than the national rate for the past 75 years.
- Over the past 35 years, the average age of brides and grooms marrying for the first time has increased.
- Ever since 1960, the average bride in a first marriage has been approximately two years younger than the groom.
- For both brides and grooms, the highest number of marriages occur between the ages of 25 and 29.
- In 1995, the months with the highest number of marriages were June through September. September was the most popular month to marry.
- Milwaukee County had the highest number of marriages in 1995 (5,773), followed by Dane County (2,793), Waukesha County (2,460), and Brown County (1,624).
- A total of 17,313 divorces and annulments occurred in Wisconsin in 1995, for a divorce rate of 3.4 per 1,000 total population. This represents a slight decrease from the divorce rate in 1994 (3.5).
- The divorce and annulment rate in Wisconsin has been consistently lower than the national rate for the past 75 years.
- The total number of Wisconsin divorces in 1995 was approximately 48 percent of the total number of Wisconsin marriages in 1995.
- The highest number of divorces and annulments occurred in Milwaukee County (2,943) followed by Dane County (1,286) and Waukesha County (1,120), reflecting the large populations of these three counties.
- Approximately 59 percent of all Wisconsin divorces in 1995 involved families with children under 18 years of age. Among divorces involving families with children, an average of 1.9 children were affected by each divorce.

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## Overview of Tables and Figures

Data for 1995 and other relevant years are presented in two main sections: “Marriages” and “Divorces.” Technical Notes, which appear at the end, are provided to help the reader use and understand the report.

All tables and figures in this report present Wisconsin “occurrence” data (reflecting marriages and divorces that took place in Wisconsin).

**Marriages.** This section provides information on the number of marriages in Wisconsin, as well as the resulting marriage rates. Table 1 includes marriage rates for the nation.

Table 1. Marriages and Marriage Rates, 1920-1995.....	4
Table 2. Median Age at First Marriage and at Remarriage, 1960-1995.....	5
Figure 1. Median Age at First Marriage and Remarriage, 1960-1995.....	5
Table 3. Marriages by Bride and Groom by Number of This Marriage, 1995 .....	6
Table 4. Marriages by County by Month, 1995.....	7

**Divorces and Annulments.** This section provides information on the number of divorces and annulments in Wisconsin, as well as the resulting divorce rates. Table 5 includes divorce rates for the nation.

Table 5. Divorces and Annulments and Rates, 1920-1995 .....	9
Table 6. Divorces and Annulments by County, 1995 .....	10
Table 7. Divorces Affecting Children < 18 Years by County, 1995.....	11

## Technical Notes.

Reporting Requirements.....	12
Sample of Marriage Certificate .....	13
Sample of Divorce/Annulment Certificate.....	14

**Table 1. Marriages and Marriage Rates, 1920-1995**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Wisconsin Marriages</u>	<u>Wisconsin Marriage Rate</u>	<u>United States Marriage Rate</u>
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
1991	37,765	7.6	9.4
1992	37,069	7.4	9.2
1993	36,415	7.2	9.0
1994	36,375	7.2	9.1
1995	36,354	7.1	8.9

Notes: U.S. marriage rates are from the National Center for Health Statistics, *Vital Statistics of the United States*.

The Wisconsin numbers and rates reflect marriages that occurred in Wisconsin.

Rates are marriages per 1,000 total population.

- A total of 36,354 marriages occurred in Wisconsin in 1995, representing a slight decrease from the 36,375 marriages that occurred in 1994.
- Wisconsin's crude marriage rate in 1995 was 7.1 per 1,000 total population, continuing a gradual decline in this rate since a high of 8.7 in 1980.
- The marriage rate in Wisconsin has been consistently lower than the national rate for the past 75 years.

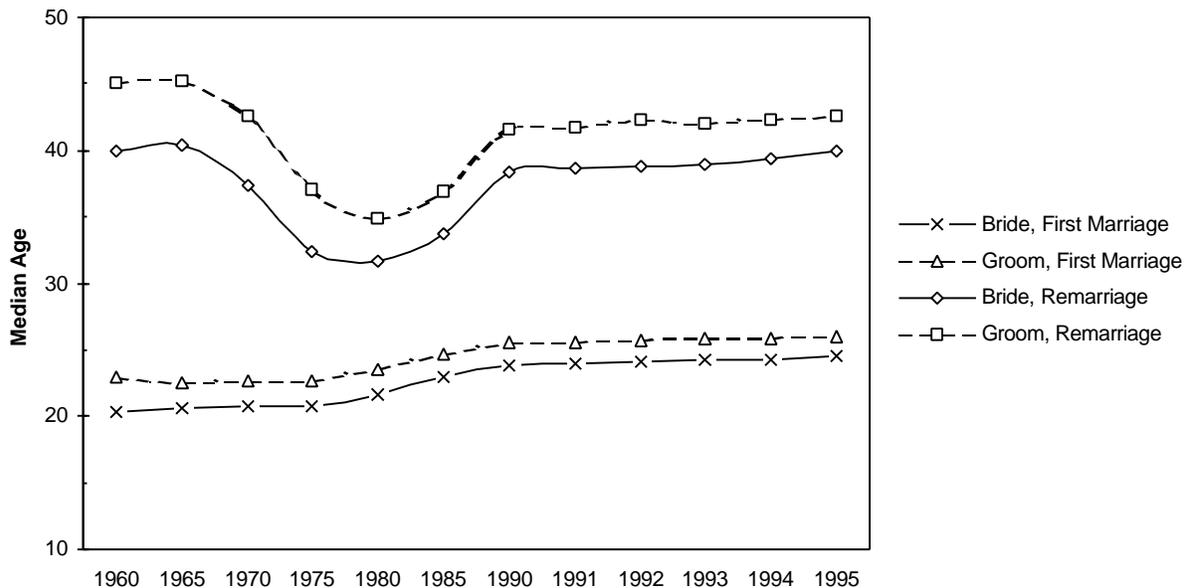
**Table 2. Median Age at First Marriage and at Remarriage, 1960-1995**

Year	First Marriages		All Remarriages	
	Bride	Groom	Bride	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

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 1995 the median age for brides at first marriage was 24.5, meaning that half of all brides being married for the first time in 1995 were younger, and half were older, than 24.5. The numbers in this table reflect all marriages that occurred in Wisconsin in the stated years.

- Over the past 35 years, the average age of brides and grooms marrying for the first time has increased.
- Every year since 1960, the average bride in a first marriage has been approximately two years younger than the groom.
- In remarriage, the age difference between bride and groom has tended to average about 3-5 years.

**Figure 1. Median Age at First Marriage and Remarriage, Wisconsin, 1960-1995**



## Marriages

**Table 3. Marriages by Bride and Groom by Number of This Marriage, 1995**

Age In Years	BRIDE					GROOM				
	Total Marriages	First	Second	Third	Fourth or More	Total Marriages	First	Second	Third	Fourth or More
<b>Total</b>	<b>36,354</b>	<b>25,086</b>	<b>9,191</b>	<b>1,740</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>36,354</b>	<b>25,780</b>	<b>8,742</b>	<b>1,583</b>	<b>249</b>
16	177	177				9	9			
17	198	198				37	37			
18	702	700	1	1		232	232			
19	1,083	1,079	4			468	467	1		
20	1,498	1,482	16			798	796	2		
21	1,774	1,735	39			1,129	1,120	9		
22	2,387	2,322	65			1,598	1,580	18		
23	2,603	2,491	109	2	1	2,225	2,172	53		
24	2,843	2,678	164	1		2,647	2,577	70		
25-29	9,889	8,055	1,746	82	6	10,705	9,717	957	31	
30-34	5,351	2,712	2,326	286	27	6,611	4,499	1,968	141	3
35-39	3,240	957	1,807	414	62	3,924	1,701	1,892	298	33
40-44	1,958	329	1,162	381	86	2,315	580	1,347	344	44
45-49	1,214	100	781	270	63	1,409	155	903	294	57
50-54	646	34	409	160	43	889	61	581	199	48
55-59	276	13	188	50	25	495	28	317	117	33
60-64	191	8	133	35	15	326	12	230	71	13
65-69	154	5	122	23	4	204	14	150	30	10
70-74	86	1	64	17	4	166	2	127	30	7
75+	71	3	51	16	1	141	2	111	27	1
Unknown	13	7	4	2		26	19	6	1	

Note: These numbers represent marriages that occurred in Wisconsin in 1995.

- For both brides and grooms, the highest number of marriages occur between the ages of 25 and 29.
- In 1995, first-time grooms in Wisconsin outnumbered first-time brides by approximately 700.

## Marriages

**Table 4. Marriages by County by Month, 1995**

<u>Area</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Jan</u>	<u>Feb</u>	<u>Mar</u>	<u>Apr</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Jun</u>	<u>Jul</u>	<u>Aug</u>	<u>Sep</u>	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Dec</u>
<b>State Total</b>	<b>36,354</b>	<b>1,144</b>	<b>1,525</b>	<b>1,565</b>	<b>2,462</b>	<b>3,602</b>	<b>4,690</b>	<b>4,231</b>	<b>4,493</b>	<b>5,042</b>	<b>3,697</b>	<b>1,912</b>	<b>1,991</b>
Adams	118	2	5	4	9	10	20	17	11	13	12	6	9
Ashland	172	3	5	6	10	21	30	21	22	30	13	5	6
Barron	323	11	20	15	13	25	49	39	47	41	29	14	20
Bayfield	107	6	5	3	6	6	12	14	19	19	7	4	6
Brown	1,624	57	74	72	130	170	209	174	185	201	173	92	87
Buffalo	79	2	5	1	9	3	8	11	16	13	10		1
Burnett	102	3	3	3	6	10	20	13	10	18	9	3	4
Calumet	158	3	4	6	8	12	23	18	23	28	20	9	4
Chippewa	389	11	19	20	26	47	43	40	46	63	39	10	25
Clark	244	10	6	9	19	18	35	33	32	21	36	12	13
Columbia	404	10	15	22	33	34	61	37	47	58	45	20	22
Crawford	138	2	6	9	13	10	21	14	19	15	19	5	5
Dane	2,793	103	102	130	167	272	352	348	350	400	275	136	158
Dodge	485	7	27	12	40	46	61	47	61	77	48	27	32
Door	355	8	12	11	17	38	60	36	48	57	38	12	18
Douglas	348	11	19	20	28	21	41	51	56	48	22	10	21
Dunn	206	5	3	9	13	21	32	24	29	34	16	11	9
Eau Claire	627	18	23	24	42	70	90	82	71	75	69	27	36
Florence	19				1	2	2	3	4	2	3	2	
Fond du Lac	675	23	32	24	47	73	84	72	73	106	57	41	43
Forest	68	2	1	5	3	4	11	8	5	10	7	4	8
Grant	337	9	9	12	24	31	50	45	37	46	38	17	19
Green	235	7	16	9	19	19	32	19	30	27	32	15	10
Green Lake	181	3	3	5	15	21	21	22	24	29	21	7	10
Iowa	186	4	6	8	18	19	19	19	28	32	16	9	8
Iron	57	1	2	1	3	10	5	5	9	10	4	3	4
Jackson	142	7	11	9	7	13	17	16	16	17	18	5	6
Jefferson	520	17	20	24	40	63	63	45	59	66	62	28	33
Juneau	181	3	8	4	11	16	21	20	21	24	26	11	16
Kenosha	962	38	48	51	76	80	117	104	111	125	94	64	54
Kewaunee	133	4	1		8	10	22	18	20	20	15	9	6
La Crosse	749	25	27	27	58	81	96	93	100	97	73	37	35
Lafayette	103	3	3	8	8	9	15	15	12	15	7	4	4
Langlade	181	7	9	4	13	19	30	18	21	23	14	8	15
Lincoln	231	9	13	14	16	24	25	21	27	39	23	5	15
Manitowoc	549	15	21	19	33	62	73	68	64	71	52	48	23
Marathon	877	27	30	29	53	94	120	104	118	120	85	50	41
Marinette	318	9	12	8	23	38	42	42	37	37	32	17	21
Marquette	90	6	4	2	7	9	12	12	13	11	7	5	2
Menominee	42		4	2	1	6	7	5	3	7	2	2	3
Milwaukee	5,773	215	286	302	390	530	704	654	660	743	581	384	324
Monroe	294	7	16	15	24	32	35	25	26	46	29	11	28

(continued)

## Marriages

**Table 4. Marriages by County by Month, 1995**

<u>Area</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Jan</u>	<u>Feb</u>	<u>Mar</u>	<u>Apr</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Jun</u>	<u>Jul</u>	<u>Aug</u>	<u>Sep</u>	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Dec</u>
Oconto	203	6	4	9	17	23	25	24	23	39	18	5	10
Oneida	286	11	9	13	19	18	44	41	40	33	26	17	15
Outagamie	1,126	43	47	58	63	113	131	118	139	150	137	76	51
Ozaukee	518	16	17	19	26	41	60	80	53	86	64	25	31
Pepin	54		2	5	3	8	5	7	7	7	7	2	1
Pierce	217	2	11	3	19	19	22	28	29	41	26	3	14
Polk	281	3	12	11	19	25	44	36	51	36	20	6	18
Portage	446	13	18	16	23	51	51	61	71	62	52	13	15
Price	120	3	4	6	8	13	26	18	13	10	8	4	7
Racine	1,187	41	60	55	79	121	143	139	142	165	110	62	70
Richland	114	2	2	9	11	10	13	13	11	18	10	6	9
Rock	1,013	29	47	56	74	114	116	114	109	144	101	55	54
Rusk	112	3	3	3	12	16	18	11	17	12	6	5	6
St. Croix	412	13	14	14	27	46	54	47	53	62	43	16	23
Sauk	472	13	15	20	43	57	61	51	71	59	43	17	22
Sawyer	120	2	8	6	4	18	12	15	17	10	12	10	6
Shawano	287	3	17	10	23	30	31	29	41	46	24	17	16
Sheboygan	846	22	35	56	57	77	105	98	89	133	87	37	50
Taylor	150	4	9	8	10	13	25	13	17	25	14	4	8
Trempealeau	192	4	7	2	13	16	26	22	26	29	23	8	16
Vernon	178	6	6	5	14	21	29	22	25	18	15	9	8
Vilas	173	9	9	3	3	15	23	22	31	29	11	5	13
Walworth	664	19	23	20	44	57	82	80	93	95	67	49	35
Washburn	126	5	7	2	12	6	12	15	22	26	9	3	7
Washington	743	18	17	26	44	88	99	101	86	121	79	28	36
Waukesha	2,460	73	92	82	160	257	323	295	316	342	272	128	120
Waupaca	491	17	10	7	28	41	76	60	70	77	64	20	21
Waushara	152	3	12	13	11	14	17	14	17	18	13	9	11
Winnebago	1,028	33	57	38	65	114	149	111	138	127	92	51	53
Wood	608	15	16	32	44	61	78	74	66	88	66	33	35

Note: These numbers represent marriages that occurred in Wisconsin in 1995.

- In 1995, the months with the highest number of marriages were June through September. September was the most popular month to marry.
- Milwaukee County had the highest number of marriages in 1995 (5,773), followed by Dane County (2,793), Waukesha County (2,460), and Brown County (1,624).
- Florence County had the lowest number of marriages in 1995 (19). The next lowest number of marriages occurred in Menominee County (42).

**Table 5. Divorces and Annulments and Rates, 1920-1995**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number in Wisconsin</u>	<u>Rate in Wisconsin</u>	<u>Rate in United States</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
1991	18,480	3.7	4.7
1992	18,487	3.7	4.8
1993	17,527	3.5	4.6
1994	17,569	3.5	4.6
1995	17,313	3.4	4.4

Notes: U.S. divorce and annulment rates are from the National Center for Health Statistics, *Vital Statistics of the United States*. Rates are divorces and annulments per 1,000 total population. The Wisconsin numbers and rates represent divorces and annulments that occurred in Wisconsin.

- A total of 17,313 divorces and annulments occurred in Wisconsin in 1995, for a divorce rate of 3.4 per 1,000 population. This represents a slight decrease from the divorce rate in 1994 (3.5).
- The divorce and annulment rate in Wisconsin has been consistently lower than the national rate for the past 75 years.
- The total number of Wisconsin divorces in 1995 was approximately 48 percent of the total number of Wisconsin marriages in 1995.

## Divorces

**Table 6. Divorces and Annulments by County, 1995**

<u>AREA</u>	<u>DIVORCES</u>	<u>ANNULMENTS</u>	<u>AREA</u>	<u>DIVORCES</u>	<u>ANNULMENTS</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,248</b>	<b>65</b>			
Adams	49		Marathon	372	1
Ashland	57	1	Marinette	150	1
Barron	171		Marquette	54	
Bayfield	63		Menominee	1	
Brown	773	3	Milwaukee	2,924	19
Buffalo	38		Monroe	140	
Burnett	50		Oconto	102	
Calumet	97		Oneida	164	2
Chippewa	192	1	Outagamie	470	2
Clark	95		Ozaukee	210	1
Columbia	165		Pepin	18	
Crawford	52		Pierce	115	
Dane	1,281	5	Polk	140	
Dodge	264		Portage	204	
Door	66		Price	38	
Douglas	154		Racine	576	2
Dunn	148	1	Richland	61	
Eau Claire	316	3	Rock	645	3
Florence	18		Rusk	65	
Fond du Lac	329	1	St. Croix	227	
Forest	35		Sauk	77	
Grant	122		Sawyer	120	
Green	121	1	Shawano	370	
Green Lake	72		Sheboygan	211	1
Iowa	71		Taylor	69	
Iron	20		Trempealeau	78	
Jackson	61	1	Vernon	73	1
Jefferson	224	3	Vilas	82	1
Juneau	96		Walworth	305	
Kenosha	530	1	Washburn	66	
Kewaunee	43		Washington	395	1
La Crosse	307	1	Waukesha	1,118	2
Lafayette	43		Waupaca	210	
Langlade	78		Waushara	84	1
Lincoln	97		Winnebago	496	3
Manitowoc	241	1	Wood	279	1

Note: These numbers represent divorces and annulments that occurred in Wisconsin in 1995.

- The highest number of divorces and annulments occurred in Milwaukee County (2,943), followed by Dane County (1,286) and Waukesha County (1,120), reflecting the large populations of these three counties.
- The lowest number of divorces and annulments occurred in the counties of Menominee (1), Florence (18), and Pepin (18).

## Divorces

**Table 7. Divorces Affecting Children < 18 by County, 1995**

<u>Area</u>	<u>Total Granted</u>	<u>Those With Children &lt; 18</u>	<u>No. of Children Affected</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Total Granted</u>	<u>Those With Children &lt; 18</u>	<u>No. of Children Affected</u>
<b>State Total</b>	<b>17,313</b>	<b>10,164</b>	<b>18,942</b>				
Adams	49	31	51	Marathon	373	233	441
Ashland	58	41	85	Marinette	151	92	163
Barron	171	95	184	Marquette	54	28	52
Bayfield	63	32	59	Menominee	1	0	0
Brown	776	454	846	Milwaukee	2,943	1,629	2,987
Buffalo	38	23	45	Monroe	140	88	168
Burnett	50	42	87	Oconto	102	57	104
Calumet	97	58	118	Oneida	166	103	198
Chippewa	193	132	246	Outagamie	472	270	516
Clark	95	55	113	Ozaukee	211	127	234
Columbia	165	103	190	Pepin	18	13	25
Crawford	52	34	77	Pierce	115	69	128
Dane	1,286	708	1,261	Polk	140	85	158
Dodge	264	161	313	Portage	204	114	201
Door	66	44	83	Price	38	25	54
Douglas	154	94	179	Racine	578	335	614
Dunn	149	89	159	Richland	61	39	66
Eau Claire	319	189	364	Rock	648	404	767
Florence	18	13	25	Rusk	65	43	91
Fond du Lac	330	208	383	St. Croix	227	133	240
Forest	35	18	33	Sauk	77	45	95
Grant	122	81	167	Sawyer	120	73	156
Green	122	69	122	Shawano	370	213	370
Green Lake	72	47	76	Sheboygan	212	138	267
Iowa	71	47	92	Taylor	69	43	73
Iron	20	11	16	Trempealeau	78	52	94
Jackson	62	32	59	Vernon	74	46	87
Jefferson	227	129	244	Vilas	83	50	101
Juneau	96	65	122	Walworth	305	178	332
Kenosha	531	302	520	Washburn	66	32	69
Kewaunee	43	28	52	Washington	396	265	506
La Crosse	308	163	311	Waukesha	1,120	602	1,125
Lafayette	43	31	73	Waupaca	210	120	223
Langlade	78	49	91	Waushara	85	45	93
Lincoln	97	56	106	Winnebago	499	298	546
Manitowoc	242	164	298	Wood	280	179	348

Note: These numbers represent divorces and annulments that occurred in Wisconsin in 1995.

- Approximately 59 percent of all Wisconsin divorces in 1995 involved families with children under 18 years of age. Among divorces involving families with children, an average of 1.9 children were affected by each divorce.

**Marriage Reporting Requirements:**

As specified in Wisconsin State Statute 69, 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 within three days after the event.

The local Register of Deeds must transmit the marriage certificate to the State Registrar within ten working days after receipt.

Marriage Certificate:

A copy of a sample marriage certificate form can be found on the following page.

**Divorce Reporting Requirements:**

As specified in Wisconsin State Statute 69, the following is a brief outline of the sequence of events which take place when a divorce occurs in Wisconsin:

The filing party (clerk of any court) at the end of every biweekly period must send to the State Registrar a report of every divorce or annulment of marriage granted during the biweekly period. (This is the only legal document pertaining to vital records that is not filed by the local Register of Deeds.)

Divorce Certificate:

A copy of a sample divorce certificate form can be found on page 14.



