American Community Survey (ACS)
Why We Ask: Relationship

We ask about the relationship of each person in a household to person 1 (a person who owns or rents the home) to create estimates about families, households, and other groups, and to produce other estimates such as income, by household.

![Relationship Options](image)

The question as it appears on the 2016 ACS paper questionnaire. This topic was introduced on the Decennial Census of 1880, and was transferred to the ACS when it replaced the Decennial Census long-form in 2005.

Examples of Federal Uses
- Required to describe housing needs for households of different sizes and composition. State and Local government grantees receiving formula block grant funds from the Community Development Block Grants, HOME Investment Partnership Program, Emergency Solutions Grant and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS programs, are required by law to include this information.
- Required to identify vulnerable populations which may be at disproportionate risk of experiencing limitations in health care access, poor health quality, and suboptimal health outcomes.
- Used for program planning in federal programs designed to help families, including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).
- Used to understand overcrowding in housing assistance programs.
- Used in many reporting and research tasks to understand differences in household composition over time and the relationship between household types and education, employment, home ownership, health and many other areas of interest to policymakers.

Examples of Other Uses
State and local agencies use this information to plan and administer programs promoting the well-being of families and children, and providing funds and services for household types such as single parents, low-income families, older people living alone, etc. Advocacy groups may use this information to advocate for policies that benefit single parents, working parents, grandparents caring for grandchildren, and other groups.