LOCAL STUDY AREA / ACS 2020–2024 5-YEAR PUMS

Sacramento: living alone and household vehicle availability among older adults

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Study area: Sacramento and Placer counties, CA. Data: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 2020–2024 5-year Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), analyzed by SeniorMedRides.com.

Key numbers

- An estimated **15,137 ±904** people 65+ in the Sacramento study area live alone in a household with no vehicle (based on 794 sample records): 4.73% ±0.28 of all people 65+.
- **65.12% ±3.37** of people 65+ in a household with no vehicle live alone, compared with 21.89% ±0.65 of those with a vehicle.
- Among people 65+ who live alone, 18.89% ±1.09 have no household vehicle, compared with 3.38% ±0.41 of those who live with others. Adjusted for age: 16.68% ±0.97 vs 3.40% ±0.42, a difference of 13.28 ±1.10 points (ratio 4.91 ±0.71). The difference remains after Holm adjustment and is unchanged under the alternative age standard.
- An estimated 7,067 ±641 people 65+ live alone, have no household vehicle and report serious walking difficulty: 46.69% ±3.82 of the living-alone, no-vehicle group.
- 38.89% ±3.01 of people 65+ in a household with no vehicle report independent living difficulty, compared with 13.60% ±0.56 of those with a vehicle.
- Version 1.0 context: 23,244 ±1,199 people 65+ in the study area live in a household with no vehicle (7.26% ±0.38 of all people 65+), reused as published in Version 1.0 of the Senior Transportation Access Report (https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.24210261).

These estimates do not directly measure missed medical appointments, transportation demand, wheelchair use, or unmet transportation needs. Independent living difficulty is a self-reported difficulty doing errands alone, such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping; it is not a record of missed appointments. Figures are ACS 2020–2024 5-year estimates: period averages for 2020–2024, not single-year values. They cover people 65+ living in housing units; nursing homes and other group quarters are excluded. ± is the 90% margin of error.

By age

Age	People living alone with no vehicle	Share of all people in the age group	Share of no-vehicle older adults in the age group who live alone	No-vehicle share, all people in the age group (Version 1.0)
65–74	4,721 ±594 (n=257)	2.49% ±0.31	51.54% ±4.68	4.84% ±0.42
75–84	4,335 ±540 (n=244)	4.63% ±0.59	65.40% ±6.08	7.08% ±0.80
85+	**6,081 ±697 (n=293)**	**16.42% ±1.76**	**81.55% ±4.49**	**20.13% ±2.12**

Profile: people 65+ with no household vehicle and with a vehicle

Characteristic	Category	No household vehicle	With a household vehicle
Sex	Male	33.78% ±2.59	44.94% ±0.28
Sex	Female	66.22% ±2.59	55.06% ±0.28
Living arrangement	Lives alone	65.12% ±3.37	21.89% ±0.65
Living arrangement	Lives with others	34.88% ±3.37	78.11% ±0.65
Poverty	Below 100% of poverty threshold	27.20% ±2.93	7.73% ±0.45
Poverty	100–149% of poverty threshold	16.91% ±3.02	6.25% ±0.48
Poverty	150% or more of poverty threshold	55.89% ±3.09	86.02% ±0.65
Tenure	Owner	36.10% ±3.67	82.37% ±0.68
Tenure	Renter or occupied without paying rent	63.90% ±3.67	17.63% ±0.68
Tenure detail	of which rented	60.34% ±3.88	16.48% ±0.72
Tenure detail	of which occupied without payment of rent	3.55% ±1.38 (indicative only; do not quote on its own)	1.15% ±0.17
Serious walking difficulty	With	43.59% ±2.87	19.84% ±0.69
Serious walking difficulty	Without	56.41% ±2.87	80.16% ±0.69
Independent living difficulty	With	38.89% ±3.01	13.60% ±0.56
Independent living difficulty	**Without**	**61.11% ±3.01**	**86.40% ±0.56**

Shares of each group, in percent; ± is the 90% margin of error. Descriptive only. "— (sample too small)" marks a cell based on fewer than 30 sample records (or a CV above 50%), which is not shown; "indicative only" marks a cell based on 30–49 sample records or a CV above 30%, which should not be quoted on its own.

How this study area compares with the other seven combined

- On the age-standardized share of all people 65+ who live alone in a household with no vehicle, the Sacramento study area is **higher than the other seven combined** (+0.56 ±0.30 points; Holm-adjusted p 0.00889). Unchanged under the alternative age standard S2 (S2 Holm-adjusted p 0.00277).
- Each study area is compared only with the other seven areas combined, using the age-standardized share of all people 65+ who live alone in a household with no vehicle; p-values are Holm-adjusted across the 8 comparisons at a 10% familywise level (more lenient than the common 5%). Study areas are not ranked. All eight comparisons, with their sensitivity notes, are in Table 6 of the full report.

Terms and limits

- **No household vehicle:** no car, van or truck (1 ton or less) kept at home for use by household members (ACS item VEH = 0). It describes household vehicle availability. It does not show whether a person drives, and it is not a measure of transportation access.
- **Living alone:** the only person in the household (NP = 1), for people 65+ in housing units. Living alone is measured from the household roster; the survey does not record whether relatives or friends live nearby or help with rides.
- **Serious walking difficulty:** the ACS ambulatory difficulty item (serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs), self- or proxy-reported; a functional-difficulty measure, not a clinical diagnosis.
- **Independent living difficulty:** a self-reported difficulty doing errands alone, such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping; it is not a record of missed appointments.
- These estimates do not directly measure missed medical appointments, transportation demand, wheelchair use, or unmet transportation needs. A household without a vehicle may still get rides from family, friends, transit or paratransit.
- Differences between groups are associations, not causes. Study-area figures describe the area as a whole and should not be applied to individual people or to places outside the study-area definition. Figures are ACS 2020–2024 5-year estimates: period averages for 2020–2024, not single-year values.

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How to cite

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Source data: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 2020–2024 5-year Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS). The Census Bureau has not reviewed, endorsed or certified this analysis or its findings.

Full report: https://seniormedrides.com/research/aging-without-a-car/. This page: https://seniormedrides.com/research/aging-without-a-car/sacramento/. Version 1.0 study-area page: https://seniormedrides.com/research/senior-transportation-access/sacramento/. Rides and providers in the area: https://seniormedrides.com/sacramento-ca/.