PLANNING
DEPARTMENT

Austin's Population with Disabilities

Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities

September 13, 2024

The data summarized in this presentation come from questions on disability asked by the Census Bureau.

The Census Bureau measures 6 types of disability by assessing difficulty in hearing, vision, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care, and independent living among the population ages 5 years and older.

United States Census Bureau **American Community Survey**

19 **a. Is this person deaf or do they have serious difficulty hearing?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

b. Is this person blind or do they have serious difficulty seeing even when wearing glasses?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

20 **a. Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, does this person have serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

b. Does this person have serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

c. Does this person have difficulty dressing or bathing?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

21 **Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, does this person have difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

*This question is only asked of individuals ages 15 or older.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

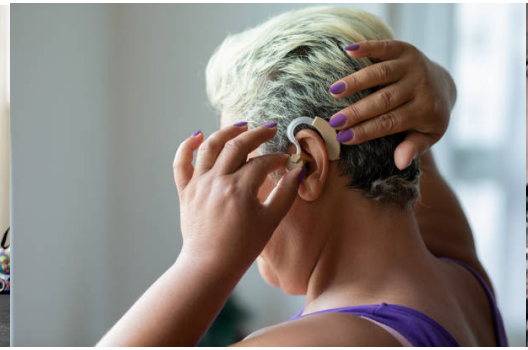
In 2022, Austin's population with disabilities was estimated at 102,219 or 10.5% of the total Austin population.

- Grew by 23,888 at a rate of 30% since 2012
- Individuals can have multiple disabilities = **172,159**
- Type of Disability
  - Cognitive difficulty = 46,736 (27.1%)
  - Ambulatory difficulty = 37,704 (21.9%)
  - Independent living difficulty = 33,643 (19.5%)
  - Hearing difficulty = 22,728 (13.2%)
  - Vision difficulty = 15,719 (9.1%)
  - Self-care difficulty = 15,629 (9.1%)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2012, 2022 1-year estimates; iStock Getty images

Nearly 3 out of 5 Austinites with disabilities have a single type of disability but are likely to experience additional disabilities as they age.

Number of Disabilities	Total	Under 5 years	5 to 17 years	18 to 34 years	35 to 64 years	65 to 74 years	75 years and older
One type of disability	58.3%	0.0%	61.7%	68.4%	60.3%	57.3%	35.1%
Two or more types of disability	41.7%	0.0%	38.2%	31.6%	39.7%	42.7%	64.9%



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2022 1-year estimates

Disabilities occur at varying rates, but the prevalence of all disabilities increase as individuals age.

Type of Disability	Total	Under 5 years	5 to 17 years	18 to 34 years	35 to 64 years	65 to 74 years	75 years and older
Self-Care	15,629	1.0%		0.8%	1.3%	3.7%	11.9%
Vision	15,719	0.0%	1.2%	1.5%	1.5%	1.6%	7.3%
Hearing	22,728	0.0%	0.7%	0.9%	2.3%	3.8%	20.8%
Independent Living	33,643	--		3.1%	2.7%	7.6%	21.7%
Ambulatory	37,704	0.8%		0.8%	4.0%	11.9%	29.1%
Cognitive	46,736	4.6%		6.2%	3.9%	3.3%	11.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2022 1-year estimates

The prevalence of disability increasing with age produces slightly higher shares of disability among women because they tend to live longer.

- Sex
  - 53,493 or 11.2% are female
  - 48,726 or 9.9% are male
- Age
  - 0% under 5 years
  - 6.1% 5 to 17 years
  - 9.1% 18 to 34 years
  - 9.9% 35 to 64 years
  - 18.4% 65 to 74 years
  - 42.7% 75 years and older

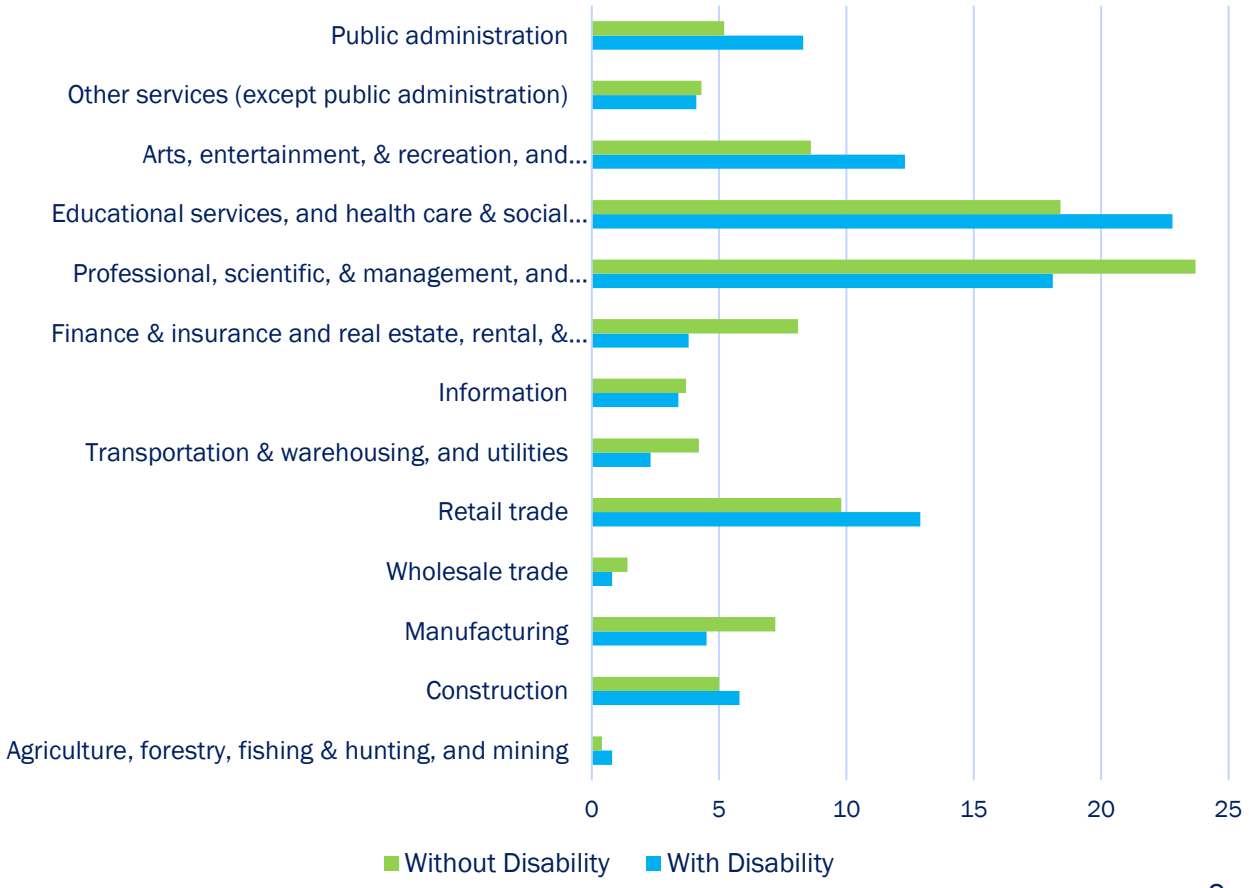
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2022 1-year estimates; iStock photo Getty images

The racial/ethnic make up of Austin's population with disabilities mostly represents the overall population. However, Black Austinites are over-represented in the population with disabilities.

- Race/Ethnicity (% of total population)
  - 5.0% (8.3%) Asian
  - 13.0% (7.6%) Black
  - 33.1% (33.1%) Hispanic
  - 45.2% (46.8%) NH White
- Race/Ethnicity within own Group
  - 6.3% Asian
  - 18.0% Black
  - 10.5% Hispanic
  - 10.2% White

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2022 1-year estimates; iStock Getty images

Austin has 46,148 employees with disabilities, with nearly half of the population with a disability being employed.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2022 1-year estimates; iStock Getty images

Austin workers with disabilities are more multimodal than the overall population, indicating opportunities for targeted transit and infrastructure programs.

	Population with Disabilities	Total Population
Drove to work alone	59.1%	56.8%
Worked from home	21.9%	30.7%
Carpooled	8.2%	6.2%
Public Transit	5.1%	2.2%
Walked	4.2%	2.3%
Unemployment Rate	8.8%	3.0%
Living Below Poverty	18.6%	11.0%
Without Health Insurance	10.5%	12.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2022 1-year estimates; iStock Getty images

Austinites with disabilities have higher shares of associate's degrees or some college, yet their earnings are 75% of median earnings citywide.

	Population with Disabilities	Total Population
Less than High School degree	12.9%	7.3%
High School grad or equivalency	19.0%	12.6%
Some college or associate's degree	28.9%	19.9%
Bachelor's degree or higher	39.2%	60.2%
Median Earnings	$40,481	$53,767

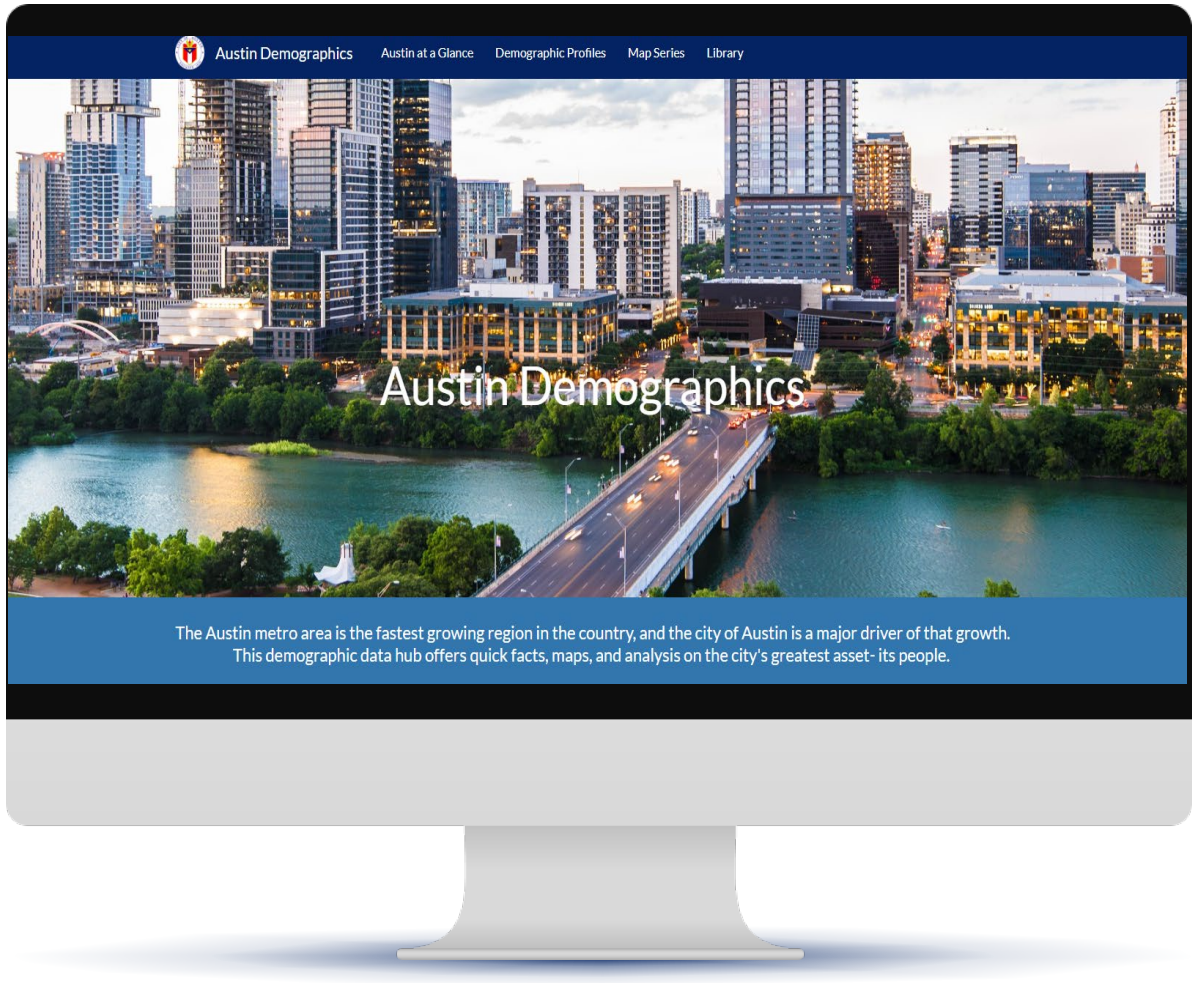
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2022 1-year estimates; iStock Getty images

To recap:

- As Austin grows, so does its population with disabilities.
- Much of the growth in the population with disabilities is related to the aging of the Austin population.
- As the population ages, so does the number of disabilities experienced and at increased prevalence.
- African Americans have higher shares of disability relative to other race/ethnicity groups indicating the need for targeted study and services.
- There is an opportunity to leverage the relatively high shares of educational attainment, especially with some college and associates degrees, among the population with disabilities.
- Accommodations and virtual work has been seen to increase employment of the population with disabilities.
- There continues to be a dearth of data on the population with disabilities especially in relation to housing and household types.

Developing standardized and more equitable, inclusive ways to ask demographic questions on City of Austin surveys.

- Spring 2022: reviewed research and best practices on collecting demographic characteristics – race/ethnicity, sex, gender, age, and ability status
- Fall 2022: conducted interviews with CoA departments reporting demographic data
- Spring 2023: drafted recommended guidelines and met with several Quality of Life commissions for feedback
- Presently: undergoing review from Equity Office and drafting community engagement plan



austintexas.gov/demographics

Visit our website for:

- Quick Stats
- Demographic profiles for the city, county, MSA, and council districts
- Interactive Maps and StoryMaps
- Library with additional resources
- Data Request form
- Sign up here for occasional emails on our latest demographic analysis.

Q & A

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Thank you!

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