

Person—marital status, code N

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Person—marital status, code N

Identifying and definitional attributes

Metadata item type:	Data Element
Short name:	Marital status
Synonymous names:	Marital status
METEOR identifier:	270060
Registration status:	Community Services (retired) , Superseded 25/08/2005 Health , Superseded 04/05/2005

Data element concept attributes

Identifying and definitional attributes

Data element concept:	Person—marital status
METEOR identifier:	269533
Registration status:	Aged Care , Standard 30/06/2023 Commonwealth Department of Social Services (retired) , Standard 20/06/2018 Community Services (retired) , Standard 01/03/2005 Disability , Standard 13/08/2015 Health , Standard 01/03/2005 Housing assistance , Standard 10/02/2006 Independent Hospital Pricing Authority , Qualified 23/11/2015 Tasmanian Health , Standard 01/09/2016 WA Health , Standard 19/03/2015
Definition:	A person's current relationship status in terms of a couple relationship or, for those not in a couple relationship, the existence of a current or previous registered marriage.
Context:	<p>Marital status is a core metadata item in a wide range of social, labour and demographic statistics. Its main purpose is analysis of the association of marital status with the need for and use of services, and for epidemiological analysis.</p> <p>Marital status also acts as an indicator for the level of support adult recipients of the welfare system have at home. The item is also used in comparisons of administrative data and population censuses and surveys.</p>
Object class:	Person
Property:	Marital status

Source and reference attributes

Submitting organisation:	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
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Value domain attributes

Identifying and definitional attributes

Value domain:	Marital status code N
METEOR identifier:	270666
Registration status:	Community Services (retired) , Standard 01/03/2005 Disability , Standard 13/08/2015 Health , Superseded 09/12/2022 Housing assistance , Standard 10/02/2006 Independent Hospital Pricing Authority , Qualified 23/11/2015

Definition: A code set representing the marital status of a person.

Representational attributes

Representation class: Code
Data type: Number
Format: N
Maximum character length: 1

	Value	Meaning
Permissible values:	1	Never married
	2	Widowed
	3	Divorced
	4	Separated
	5	Married (registered and de facto)
Supplementary values:	6	Not stated/inadequately described

Collection and usage attributes

Guide for use: Refers to the current marital status of a person.

CODE 2 Widowed

This code usually refers to registered marriages but when self-reported may also refer to de facto marriages.

CODE 4 Separated

This code refers to registered marriages but when self-reported may also refer to de facto marriages.

CODE 5 Married (registered and de facto)

Includes people who have been divorced or widowed but have since re-married, and should be generally accepted as applicable to all de facto couples, including of the same sex.

CODE 6 Not stated/inadequately described

This code is not for use on primary collection forms. It is primarily for use in administrative collections when transferring data from data sets where the item has not been collected.

Source and reference attributes

Submitting organisation: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Origin: The ABS standards for the collection of Social and Registered marital status appear on the ABS Website. Australian Bureau of Statistics. [Family, household and income unit variables. Cat. no. 1286.0.](#) Canberra: ABS.

Data element attributes

Collection and usage attributes

Collection methods: This metadata item collects information on social marital status. The recommended question module is:

Do you/Does the person usually live with a partner in a registered or de facto marriage?

Yes, in a registered marriage

Yes, in a defacto marriage

No, never married

No, separated

No, divorced

No, widowed

It should be noted that information on marital status is collected differently by the ABS, using a set of questions. However, the question outlined above is suitable and mostly sufficient for use within the health and community services fields. See below (Source document) for information on how to access the ABS standards.

While agencies are encouraged to use the recommended question described above, it is acknowledged that this is not always possible in practice. For example, where the data collection is a by-product of the provision of a health or community service, the information may be ascertained using different means. However, the recommended question should be used wherever practically possible.

Comments: The ABS standards identify two concepts of marital status:

- Registered marital status - defined as whether a person has, or has had, a registered marriage;
- Social marital status - based on a person's living arrangement (including de facto marriages), as reported by the person.


It is recommended that the social marital status concept be collected when information on social support/home arrangements is sought, whereas the registered marital status concept need only be collected where it is specifically required for the purposes of the collection.

While marital status is an important factor in assessing the type and extent of support needs, such as for the elderly living in the home environment, marital status does not adequately address the need for information about social support and living arrangement and other data elements need to be formulated to capture this information.

Source and reference attributes

Submitting organisation: National Health Data Standards Committee
National Community Services Data Committee

Relational attributes

Related metadata references: Has been superseded by [Person—marital status, code N Community Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 25/08/2005
[Disability](#), Standard 13/08/2015
[Health](#), Superseded 09/12/2022
[Housing assistance](#), Standard 10/02/2006
[Independent Hospital Pricing Authority](#), Qualified 23/11/2015
Is re-engineered from  [Marital status, version 4, DE, Int. NCSDD & NHDD, NCSIMG & NHIMG, Superseded 01/03/2005.pdf](#) (19.8 KB)
No registration status