



News Release

For Immediate Release

Jewish Federation of New Mexico Announces the Results of its First-Ever New Mexico Jewish Population Survey

New Mexico's Jewish population is growing, more mature, highly educated, and involved in the community

Albuquerque, N.M. – January 15, 2015 – The Jewish Federation of New Mexico, an Albuquerque-based, multi-faceted social service organization that serves the needs of New Mexico's Jewish community through leadership, philanthropy, education and social action, announces today the preliminary results of its first-ever statewide demographic survey of New Mexico's Jewish population. Conducted between September 2 and November 3, 2014, the survey received nearly 1,700 respondents and is the first part of a two-step research project to better understand the composition and needs of the state's Jewish community.

In conjunction with the work of the Steinhardt Social Research Institute at Brandeis University, the preliminary results of the survey revealed that New Mexico has a growing Jewish population with approximately 24,000 residents, double the amount the Jewish Federation of New Mexico previously estimated. According to the survey results, Jews reside throughout New Mexico, though most live in the Albuquerque and Santa Fe metropolitan areas. The survey revealed nearly 60 percent of Jews in New Mexico have a graduate or professional degree, and most are older than 45 years old. The survey results show that 87 percent of the Jewish population in the

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state moved to New Mexico from a different location, and 70 percent of the people surveyed plan to remain in the state for the foreseeable future. Also, 48 percent surveyed identified as Reform Jews compared to the national average of 35 percent. According to the survey results:

The Jewish population in New Mexico is an aging community with 71% older than age 45, (compared with 56% of all New Mexicans). According to the survey:

- 34% are over 65 years old
- 21% are between the ages of 45 and 54
- 16% are between the ages of 55 and 64
- 29% are 44 years old or younger

The community is well-educated. According to the survey:

- 58% of New Mexico Jews have a graduate or professional degree
- 28% received a four-year university degree
- 6% possess a two-year associate's degree
- 7% graduated from high school

Eighty-seven percent of New Mexico's Jewish population have moved from elsewhere, while 12 percent were born in in the state. Most are long-term residents. Forty percent have lived here for more than 20 years and 23 percent have lived in New Mexico between 11 years and 20 years. The majority moved to New Mexico from either coast. According to the survey:

- 19% moved from New York
- 14% moved from California
- 6% moved from Texas

Nearly 1,700 members of the New Mexico Jewish population were surveyed, or approximately 7% of the state's population, providing a robust portrait of the community. Of this group:

- 48% said they are Reform
- 18% are Conservative
- 5% Renewal
- 3% said they were Reconstructionist
- 2% are Orthodox
- 2% Chabad

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Seventy-eight percent feel it is important to be involved in the Jewish community where they live and 56 percent are currently a members of a synagogue. Based on membership of those surveyed, the top five Jewish community organizations include:

- Anti-Defamation League (35%)
- Hadassah (33%)
- Jewish Community Center (31%)
- Jewish National Fund (28%)
- Jewish Federation of New Mexico (24%)

Of those surveyed, it was also revealed:

- 78% said they are emotionally attached to Israel.
- 84% were raised Jewish. Of the 16% that were not, 65% formally converted to Judaism.
- More than 70% plan to remain in New Mexico for the foreseeable future, and less than 20% are considering moving in the next few years.
- 89% of the New Mexico Jewish population consider themselves white and 5% said they herald from Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origins.

“We were extremely pleased with our initial findings of this statewide survey,” said Sara Koplik, director of community outreach for the Jewish Federation of New Mexico. “There are more Jews living in New Mexico than what we originally thought, comprising 1% of the total New Mexican population. Individuals have significantly more education and experience than we initially hypothesized. The survey results will help us provide better tailored resources to serve our Jewish communities for decades to come.”

The Jewish Federation of New Mexico worked in conjunction with Kupersmit Research, a strategic research firm with more than a decade’s experience in market research, on the survey which provided positive insights and preliminary survey results of the two-part research project. The second portion of the research process will include focus groups with Jewish community

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members throughout the state to gain in-depth, qualitative information about local Jewish communities. After the focus groups are completed and the results are analyzed with the demographic survey, the Jewish Federation of New Mexico will have a better understanding of how Jews in New Mexico identify as being Jewish, attitudes towards their religion, participation in the Jewish community, level of Judaic practice, and further demographic characteristics. This data will be directed to better serving the needs of the Jewish communities, while also supporting future planning and resource allocation statewide.

All of the preliminary survey results from the demographic survey will be announced at a press conference at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Albuquerque today at 10:30 a.m. “We encourage attendance at today’s event announcing the preliminary results of the first state-wide survey of Jews in New Mexico,” said Koplik. The Jewish Community Center of Greater Albuquerque is located at 5520 Wyoming Boulevard, NE in Albuquerque.

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About The Jewish Federation of New Mexico

Founded in 1948, the Jewish Federation of New Mexico (JFNM) is a part of the United Jewish Communities, a network of 189 Jewish federations and 400 independent communities across North America. It assists Jews in New Mexico, Israel and worldwide through leadership, philanthropy, education and social action. JFNM works to implement programs that meet the needs of Jews of all ages in New Mexico; strengthens Jewish identity and participation among Jewish New Mexicans; and supports Israel and Jews in need around the world and by mobilizing the Jewish community to respond to humanitarian crises.

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