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## Births in the Mountain West, 2016-2020

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**BIRTHS IN THE MOUNTAIN WEST, 2016-2020**

**Health Fact Sheet No. 19 | December 2022**

Prepared by: Corryn Richardson, Hira Ahmed, Caitlin J. Saladino, and William E. Brown, Jr.

**PURPOSE:**

This fact sheet examines state-level data on births and health indicators from the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), a government health statistics unit of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).<sup>1</sup> This fact sheet presents data related to births in the Mountain West states of Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada, and Utah.

**ABOUT THE DATA:**

The original report from the NCHS includes comprehensive state-by-state data of key health indicators including birth and death rates in the United States. This fact sheet synthesizes four categories of birth data for each of the Mountain West states from 2016-2020: Cesarean delivery rates (C-section), infant mortality, preterm births, and low birthweight births. National averages for each category were individually calculated based on the original data of all 50 states from the NCHS webpage. The metrics used in this fact sheet are defined below:

Birth Category	Definition	Unit of Measurement
C-section Delivery	Rate of cesarean deliveries as opposed to natural births	Percent
Preterm Births	Babies born prior to 37 weeks of gestation	Percent
Low Birthweights	Babies weighing < 2,500 grams, or 5 pounds 8 ounces at birth	Percent
Infant Mortality	Number of infant deaths	Deaths per 1,000 live births

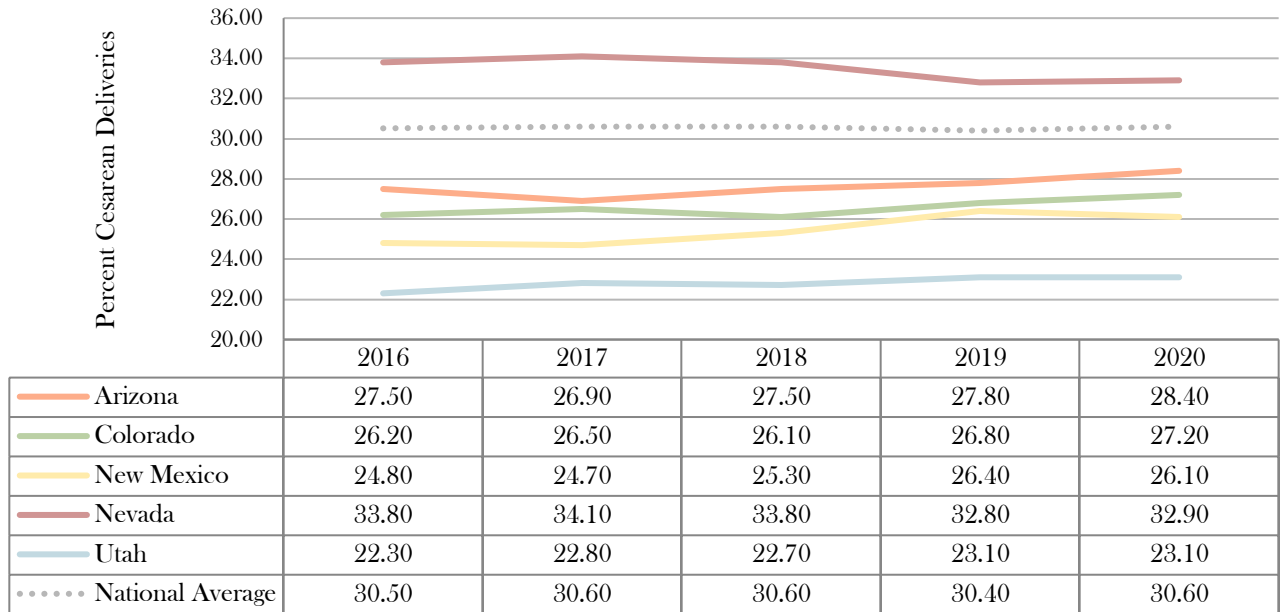
**KEY FINDINGS:**

1. Nevada recorded the highest rate of C-section deliveries in the Mountain West each year from 2016 to 2020.
2. Colorado experienced the lowest infant mortality rates per 1,000 live births from 2016 to 2019. Nevada (6.14), with the highest infant mortality rate in 2018, dipped below Colorado in 2020, reporting the lowest rate (4.34) of all Mountain West states during the 5-year period.
3. Among Mountain West states, Nevada reported the highest rate of preterm birth delivery in 2016, 2017, 2019 and 2020; in 2018, Utah reported the highest rate in the Mountain West.
4. Both Utah and Arizona fall below the national average for low birthweight rates each year from 2016 to 2020.

Figure 1 shows the percentage of all live births that were cesarean deliveries in each Mountain West state. This figure also shows a comparison to the national average from 2016 to 2020. Nevada reported the highest cesarean delivery rates in all five years, whereas Utah reported the lowest.

<sup>1</sup>National Center for Health Statistics “Stats of the States: Births,” 2022. ([www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/stats\\_of\\_the\\_states.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/stats_of_the_states.htm)).

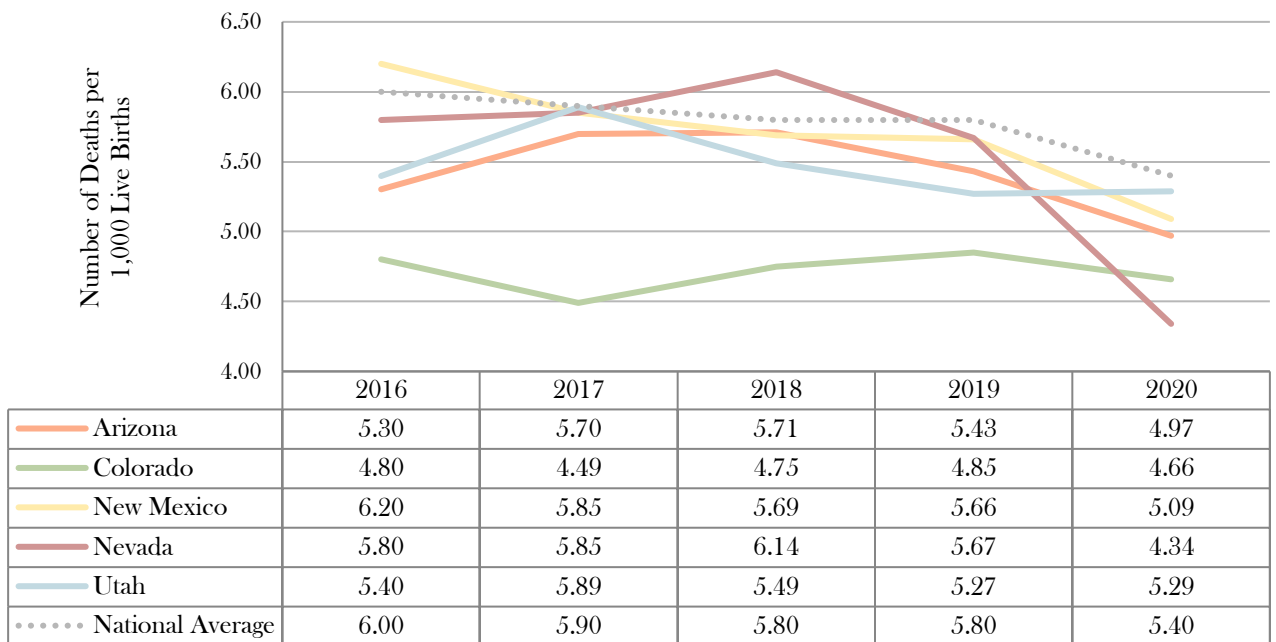
**Figure 1: Percent of Cesarean Deliveries in the Mountain West, 2016-2020**



\* Adapted from "Stats of the States." *National Center for Health Statistics*. [www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/stats\\_of\\_the\\_states.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/stats_of_the_states.htm)

Figure 2 shows infant mortality rates in each of the Mountain West states, compared to the national average from 2016 to 2020. Rates are reported as the number of infant deaths per 1,000 live births. Colorado experienced the lowest infant mortality rates from 2016 to 2019. Nevada (6.14), with the highest infant mortality rate in 2018, dipped below Colorado in 2020, reporting the lowest rate (4.34) of all Mountain West states in the 5-year period.

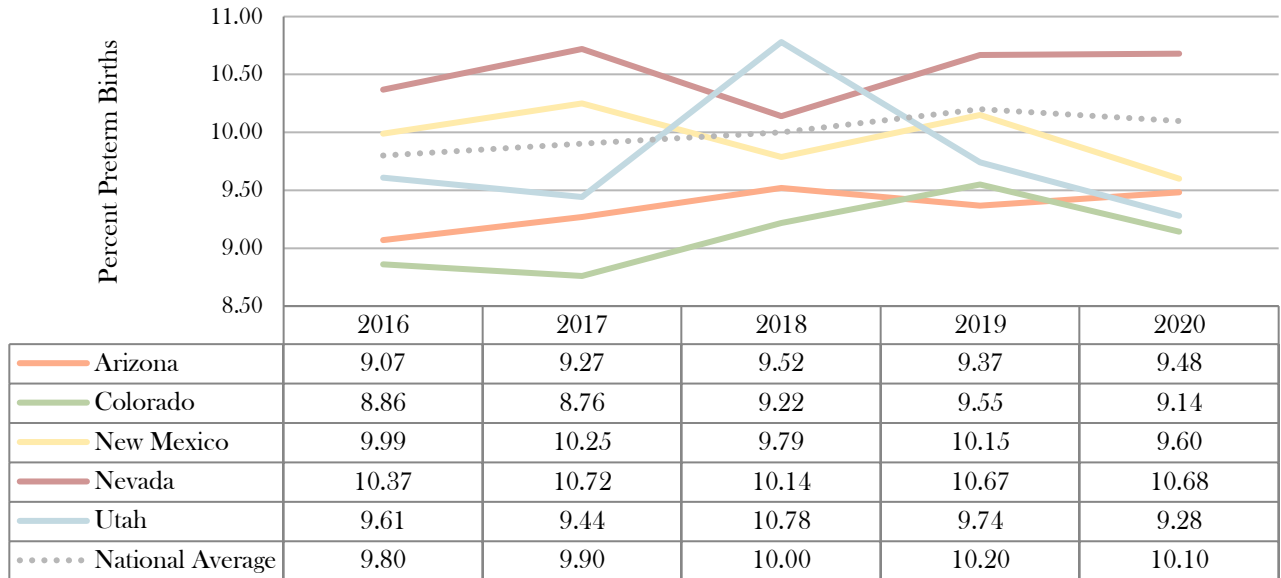
**Figure 2: Infant Mortality Rates per 1,000 Live Births in the Mountain West, 2016-2020**



\* Adapted from "Stats of the States." *National Center for Health Statistics*. [www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/stats\\_of\\_the\\_states.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/stats_of_the_states.htm)

Figure 3 shows the percentage of infants born preterm in each Mountain West state compared to the national average from 2016 to 2020. Preterm births are defined as babies born prior to 37 weeks of gestation. Among Mountain West states, Colorado recorded the lowest percentage of preterm births in 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2020. Nevada reported the highest rate of preterm birth delivery in 2016, 2017, 2019 and 2020.

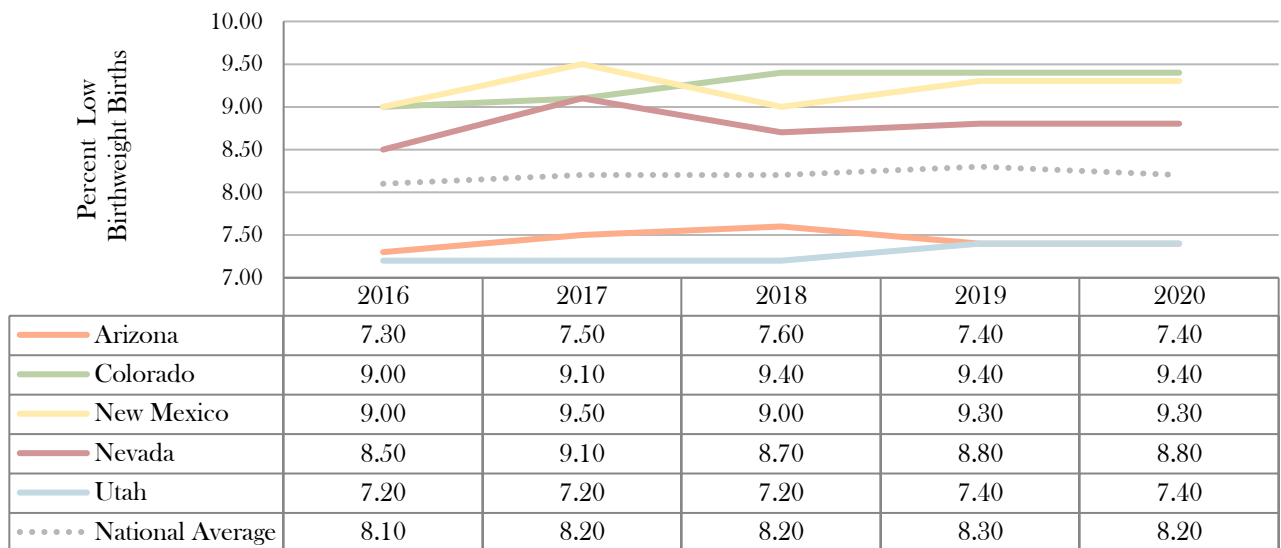
**Figure 3: Percentage of Preterm Births in the Mountain West, 2016-2020**



\*Adapted from "Stats of the States." *National Center for Health Statistics*. [www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/stats\\_of\\_the\\_states.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/stats_of_the_states.htm)

Figure 4 shows the percentage of babies born with a low birthweight in each Mountain West state compared to the national average. Low birthweight is defined as babies born weighing less than 2500 grams, or 5 pounds, 8 ounces. Both Utah and Arizona fall below the national average for low birthweight rates each year from 2016 to 2020.

**Figure 4: Percent of Low Birthweight Births in the Mountain West, 2016-2020**



\*Adapted from "Stats of the States." *National Center for Health Statistics*. [www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/stats\\_of\\_the\\_states.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/stats_of_the_states.htm)