

SECTION II

Geography and Demography of Hawai‘i

..... Basic Geography and Demography of Hawai‘i

Hawai‘i’s island geography makes it a unique and wonderful place. But island geography also creates problems in health care access and delivery across the state. Hawai‘i is the most remote landfall in the world, 2-3 time zones or a six-hour flight away from any other part of the United States and equally distant to Asia.

Barriers are of concern for many communities in rural Hawai‘i. As is true with rural areas across the nation, reliable, convenient public transportation is not available on any island except O‘ahu (where Honolulu is located). However, Hawai‘i also has the unique geographic feature of being a state composed of islands. This is a significant barrier to services that are not provided on-island because the only way to reach those services is to take a commercial flight to another island or to the continental United States. Inter-island air transportation costs average \$150 for a roundtrip and ground transportation can add considerably to this cost.

A particular problem for Hawai‘i’s residents who don’t live on O‘ahu is that health care resources are concentrated in Honolulu. These include tertiary care, medical and dental specialists, and some diagnostic and therapeutic services.

- Maldistribution and shortage of health and workforce resources.
 - Shortage of primary care and specialty clinicians of all sorts, especially in communities most likely to be served by a Community Health Center.
 - Lack of well-prepared administrative and support staff.
 - Island populations are increasing but the health care infrastructure isn’t. Community Health Centers are being asked to provide more urgent and specialty services.
- Transportation barriers on ALL islands.
 - Air transportation in Hawai‘i is expensive and irregular.
 - All islands are plagued with inadequate road systems and shortages of public transportation.

- Demographic, language, and cultural diversity on ALL islands.
 - Poor, elderly, and native populations are being further marginalized by demographic changes in Hawai‘i.
 - Hawai‘i is the most culturally diverse state in the nation.
 - Community Health Centers serve Native Hawaiians, people from various countries in Asia and Latin America, and Pacific countries and territories.
 - Some Community Health Centers offer health care in as many as 14 languages.
- Diversity of health conditions and needs.
 - Native Hawaiians suffer disproportionately from chronic diseases.
 - Immigrants and migrants come from areas where Hansen’s Disease, tuberculosis, and hepatitis are endemic.
 - Oral health and access to dental care is a problem all over Hawai‘i.
 - Hawai‘i is second in the nation in treatment of crystal methamphetamine abuse.
 - Hawai‘i has four times the national rate of homelessness.
 - Pacific populations suffer from conditions of the developed world such as diabetes, as well as problems like infections, parasitic diseases, and communicable diseases found most often in underdeveloped areas.
- Cost of infrastructure and doing business in Hawai‘i.
 - Hawai‘i is an expensive place to do business — prohibitive costs of land and buildings; lengthy time and high cost of shipping; lack of choice and variety in purchasing goods and services.

The population of Hawai‘i in 2003 was 1,257,608, up 3.8% since the 2000 Census. In Hawai‘i, 10.8% of the population was below 100% of poverty in 2003, compared to 12.5% for the U.S. However, this figure is unadjusted to take into consideration the 15% higher poverty threshold for Hawai‘i compared to the contiguous states and District of Columbia. Populations and poverty levels by county for 2003 were:

County	Total Pop¹	< 100% of Poverty²
Hawai‘i County (also known as the Big Island)	158,423	13.1%
Maui County (Maui, Moloka‘i, and Lāna‘i)	135,734	10.2%
City & County of Honolulu (O‘ahu)	902,704	10.5%
Kaua‘i County (Ni‘ihau and Kaua‘i)	60,747	10.5%

¹ Hawai‘i Department of Business Economic Development & Tourism *State of Hawai‘i Data Book*, 2003

² USDA Economic Research Service, *2003 County-Level Poverty Rates for Hawai‘i*.

Hawai'i has a population in which no ethnic or racial group holds the majority. According to 2000 U.S. Census, the ethnic composition of Hawai'i is:

Racial composition of Hawai'i (U.S. Census 2000)

ONE RACE (racially full-blooded)	947,950	78.2%
White	292,457	24.1%
Asian	503,950	41.6%
Asian Indian	1,244	0.1%
Chinese	56,547	4.7%
Filipino	171,678	14.2%
Japanese	200,364	16.5%
Korean	23,708	2.0%
Vietnamese	8,345	0.7%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	112,561	9.3%
Native Hawaiian	80,965	6.7%
Guamanian or Chamorro	1,491	0.1%
Samoaan	14,359	1.2%
Black or African American	20,945	1.7%
American Indian and Alaska Native	3,216	0.3%
Some other race	14,821	1.2%

Racially full-blooded or racially mixed

(number of individuals who reported having any of the following ethnicities in their ancestry)³

TWO OR MORE RACES (racially mixed)	263,587	21.8%
White	476,812	39.4%
Asian	703,720	58.1%
Asian Indian	2,650	0.2%
Chinese	170,439	14.1%
Filipino	277,514	22.9%
Japanese	295,875	24.4%
Korean	41,119	3.4%
Vietnamese	10,631	0.9%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	282,476	23.3%
Native Hawaiian	241,512	19.9%
Guamanian or Chamorro	3,999	0.3%
Samoaan	26,365	2.2%
Black or African American	32,066	2.6%
American Indian and Alaska Native	25,707	2.1%
Some other race	56,102	4.6%

³ These numbers may add to more than the total population and the percentages may add to more than 100 percent because individuals may report more than one race.