

Standards for Collecting

Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Race Data in Hawai'i:

Recommendations from the Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander 3R Data and Research Subcommittee of the Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander COVID-19 Response, Recovery, and Resilience Team

Executive Summary:

The Data and Research Committee (DRC) of the Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander COVID-19 Resilience, Response, and Recovery Team (NHPI 3R Team) strongly recommends that all organizations and agencies in the State of Hawai'i who collect race data collect the following detailed 14 Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander subgroup categories: Native Hawaiian, Chamorro/CHamoru, Chuukese, Fijian, I-Kiribati, Kosraean, Marshallese, Palauan/Belauan, Pohnpeian, Samoan, Tahitian, Tokelauan, Tongan, and Yapese. For all other Pacific Islander subgroups, the category of "Other Pacific Islander" can be used. The DRC further recommends that data collection methods allow respondents to select as many racial categories as necessary.

Background:

There is currently no mandated standard for the collection of race data in the State of Hawai'i. Without an accepted standard, the federal government's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) 1997 Standards have become the default categories for collection and reporting of race and ethnicity data for many local government agencies and organizations. The federal minimum standards combine populations into five broad racial groups: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and White. These labels reflect a revision to previous standards released in 1977 (Directive 15) which, at the time acknowledged that the previous categories combining Pacific Islanders (including Native Hawaiians) with Asian Americans, "had come under increasing criticism from those who believe that the minimum categories set forth in Directive 15 do not reflect the increasing diversity of our Nation's population that has resulted primarily from growth in immigration and in

interracial marriages". And yet, the 1997 OMB Standards have become increasingly obsolete in the last 25 years, particularly for Hawai'i's diverse and multiracial population.

The critical need for a statewide standard was highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic in which the 1997 OMB Standards were initially used by the State of Hawai'i's Department of Health to characterize demographic patterns of disease. However, it quickly became apparent that the Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander data needed to be disaggregated, as well as Pacific Islander subgroups, in order to get a more accurate assessment of the impact of COVID-19 across the diverse Pacific Islander populations. When they were disaggregated into specific Pacific Islander subgroups, large differences in the number of positive COVID-19 cases and related deaths were discovered, which allowed for targeted public health efforts to the communities that needed assistance the most¹.

The absence of a consistent standard for race and ethnicity data across programs creates unnecessary barriers to characterizing the experiences of specific communities within the state and limits efforts to reduce disparities created by historical structural inequities and social determinants of health. Having access to accurate and detailed demographic information is essential to equitable allocation of resources and effective implementation of interventions.

It is important to highlight the common misconception that the federal 1997 OMB Standards preclude the collection of more detailed information. This is not the case; in fact, the 1997 OMB standards encourage states to disaggregate further as appropriate. More detailed information should be collected as long as data collected can be rolled up to the minimum categories.

Recommended Standards for Collecting Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Race Data in Hawai'i:

To address the inadequacies of the federal minimum standards, the DRC convened a Data Standards Workgroup to develop a statewide standard for the collection of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander race data that would satisfy federal reporting requirements and more importantly, local needs:

Recommendations:

1. Racial categories specify as much detail as possible.
2. Data collection allow respondents to select more than one race (e.g., check all that apply, mark one or more boxes).
3. Race selection be based upon self-identification (except in instances where consultation with others such as a family member for identification purposes is more practical or necessary, e.g., responding to EMS in an emergency or completing a death certificate).
4. Allow participants who select “Other Pacific Islander” or any “Other” category to write in their specific race.

In support of the implementation of recommendation #1 to specify as much detail as possible, the Data Standards Workgroup has developed a Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Race Categories list with fourteen (14) identified groups, respectively. (See Table 1)

Cultural Guidance:

No Kākou, Na Kākou (For us, by us) - Engage with NHPI community, including NHPI and NHPI-serving expertise in data collection, analysis, and reporting to inform timely decision making. Engagement includes ensuring diversity among staff and training staff members that will be working with the data.

Technical Guidance

In acknowledgement of the complexities associated with processing and reporting multiracial data, the NHPI COVID-19 3R Data & Research Committee is developing a technical guidance document.

Recommended question wording:

What is your race? (check all that apply)

This question helps us better understand which populations we are reaching.

Table 1. Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander race categories to maximize detail and specificity, with alignment to the federal 1997 OMB minimum race category

| <u>State of Hawai'i NHPI Race Categories (14)</u> | <u>1997 OMB Standards Minimum Race Category</u> |
|---|---|
| Native Hawaiian | Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander |
| Chamorro/CHamoru | |
| Chuukese | |
| Fijian | |
| I-Kiribati | |
| Kosraean | |
| Marshallese | |
| Palauan/Belauan | |
| Pohnpeian | |
| Samoan | |
| Tahitian | |
| Tokelauan | |
| Tongan | |
| Yapese | |
| Other Pacific Islander (please specify) | |

Methodology:

1. This list was created by a panel of subject matter experts including NHPI clinicians, researchers, public health professionals, community and cultural leaders. Recognizing that there may be system constraints or limitations, as well as small sample or privacy considerations, the recommended standardized list was created using available Census data (2010)². (See Appendix A)
2. The list of NHPI race categories further expands the Pacific Islander group to include any group that represents at least 100 persons in the State of Hawai'i population alone or in combination, based on the most recently available complete decennial census count.
3. This list is population-based and therefore dynamic. It should be updated after the release of each decennial census or based upon user and community feedback as our collective understanding of the social constructs of race and ethnic identity evolve over time. Pacific Island groups not currently represented can achieve inclusion in future iterations if at least 100 individuals from their group indicate their racial identity in the next U.S. Census. While this list was developed to address data collection, processing, and reporting issues of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders who continue to be disproportionately impacted by health crises such as COVID, organizations are not precluded from expanding other race categories based on the aforementioned methods of inclusion for the list.
4. Preferences in naming conventions and appropriate labels for population groups may also evolve (e.g., Micronesian, Guamanian) and this list may be revised based on periodic review and community and partner input. For example, in this list Micronesian, Polynesian, and Melanesian are not used as these terms refer to political geographies, not race categories. Instead, the specific races for the geographies were included. Further, Guamanian, a nationality reference rather than a race, was removed and the traditional spelling of CHamoru for the original peoples of Guam was included. The Chamorro spelling is used by the original peoples of the Northern Marianas.

About Race and Ethnicity^{3,4}:

The terms race and ethnicity are often used interchangeably; however, there are some distinctions between the two terms. According to the 1997 OMB Standards, “the racial and ethnic categories set forth in should not be interpreted as being primarily biological or genetic in reference. Race and ethnicity may be thought of in terms of social and cultural characteristics as well as ancestry.” However, race is often used colloquially to refer to biologically linked physical characteristics, such as skin color, hair color and texture, or facial features. Racial categories typically include White, Black, and Asian. In contrast, ethnicity is commonly used in a broader sense to refer to people who share the same geographic origin and/or national, cultural, or tribal identification, language, and behaviors, and ancestral connections that may or may not overlap with racial categories in obvious ways. A person may identify as “White” as her/his racial category, but Scottish as her/his ethnicity. As defined by the OMB, race and ethnicity are collected and reported as separate categories for each individual, with racial categories including American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islanders, and White; and ethnicity categories including Hispanic or Latino or Not Hispanic or Latino. To align with existing federal standards and definitions, we use the definition of race consistent with the OMB designations.

The minimum categories for data on race and ethnicity for Federal statistics, program administrative reporting, and civil rights compliance reporting are defined as follows:

American Indian or Alaska Native. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.

Asian. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Black or African American. A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa. Terms such as “Haitian” or “Negro” can be used in addition to “Black or African American.”

Hispanic or Latino. A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race. The term, "Spanish origin," can be used in addition to "Hispanic or Latino."

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawai'i, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

White. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

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Sources:

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2. Census 2010 Population File SF2 (courtesy Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism. Link: [2010_race_ranking_from_SF2_final.pdf \(hawaii.gov\)](#)
3. Office of Management and Budget. Revisions to the standards for the classification of Federal data on race and ethnicity. Federal Register 62FR58781-58790, October 30, 1997. Available from: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg/1997standards.html> .
4. Quint JJ, Van Dyke ME, Maeda H, et al. Disaggregating Data to Measure Racial Disparities in COVID-19 Outcomes and Guide Community Response — Hawaii, March 1, 2020–February 28, 2021. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2021;70:1267–1273. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7037a1> .

Appendix A

| RANKING OF SELECTED RACES FOR THE STATE OF HAWAII': 2010 | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| Includes only race groups with at least 100 people residing in the State of Hawai'i. | | | |
| Ranking | Race | Race alone or in combination ¹ | Percent of State of Hawai'i population |
| 1 | White | 564,323 | 41.49% |
| 2 | Filipino | 342,095 | 25.15% |
| 3 | Japanese | 312,292 | 22.96% |
| 4 | Native Hawaiian | 289,970 | 21.32% |
| 5 | Chinese | 199,751 | 14.68% |
| 6 | Korean | 48,699 | 3.58% |
| 7 | Black or African American | 38,820 | 2.85% |
| 8 | Samoaan | 37,463 | 2.75% |
| 9 | American Indian and Alaska Native | 33,470 | 2.46% |
| 10 | Vietnamese | 13,266 | 0.98% |
| 11 | Tongan | 8,085 | 0.59% |
| 12 | Marshallese | 7,412 | 0.54% |
| 13 | Guamanian or Chamorro | 6,647 | 0.49% |
| 14 | Okinawan ² | 6,642 | 0.49% |
| 15 | Asian Indian | 4,737 | 0.35% |
| 16 | Thai | 3,701 | 0.27% |
| 17 | Laotian | 2,620 | 0.19% |
| 18 | Chuukese ² | 2,563 | 0.19% |
| 19 | Tahitian ² | 2,513 | 0.18% |
| 20 | Palauan ² | 1,216 | 0.09% |
| 21 | Indonesian | 990 | 0.07% |
| 22 | Pohnpeian ² | 775 | 0.06% |
| 23 | Fijian | 711 | 0.05% |
| 24 | Cambodian | 705 | 0.05% |

| RANKING OF SELECTED RACES FOR THE STATE OF HAWAI'I: 2010 | | | |
|---|-------------------------|---|--|
| Includes only race groups with at least 100 people residing in the State of Hawai'i. | | | |
| Ranking | Race | Race alone or in combination ¹ | Percent of State of Hawai'i population |
| 25 | Tokelauan ² | 547 | 0.04% |
| 26 | Kosraean ² | 484 | 0.04% |
| 27 | Pakistani | 303 | 0.02% |
| 28 | Malaysian | 297 | 0.02% |
| 29 | Burmese | 281 | 0.02% |
| 30 | Yapese ² | 260 | 0.02% |
| 31 | Sri Lankan | 231 | 0.02% |
| 32 | Mongolian ² | 197 | 0.01% |
| 33 | Nepalese | 146 | 0.01% |
| 34 | I-Kiribati ² | 141 | 0.01% |
| | TOTAL | 1,360,301 | 100.00% |
| <p>1. People who chose only one race or those who have chosen two or more races. Numbers for the "race alone or in combination" column may add to more than the total population. For example, a person indicating "White and Japanese and Native Hawaiian" is included in the White, Japanese, and Native Hawaiian race categories.</p> | | | |
| <p>2. New race group listing from the 2010 Census SF2. Not available in the earlier 2010 Census SF1 race listing.</p> | | | |
| <p>Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census Summary File 2 Hawai'i. Census 2010 Population File SF2 (courtesy Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism. https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/census/Census_2010/SF2/2010_race_ranking_from_SF2_final.pdf</p> | | | |