

# Pacific Islander Health Fact Sheet

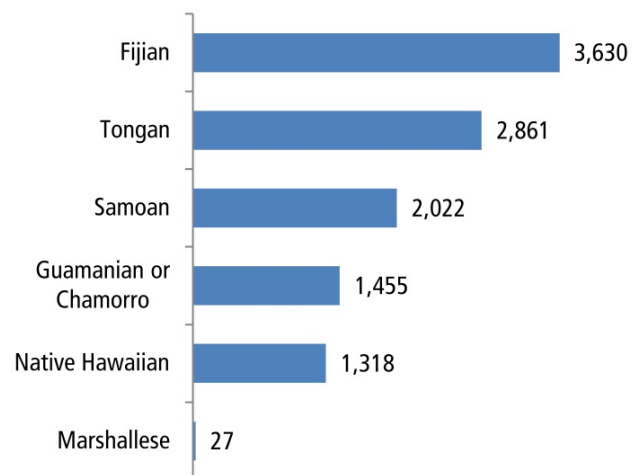
## for Alameda County

Pacific Islanders are a relatively small, diverse, and fast-growing population in Alameda County. In socio-demographic and health indicators, Pacific Islanders are often grouped together with Asians and seen as being part of a “model minority” group that is universally healthy, wealthy, and highly educated.<sup>1</sup> Due to API (Asian and Pacific Islander) data aggregation and this “model minority” myth, the health disparities/inequities faced by Pacific Islanders often go unrecognized and under-addressed. This fact sheet highlights the unique characteristics and health concerns of Pacific Islanders in Alameda County.

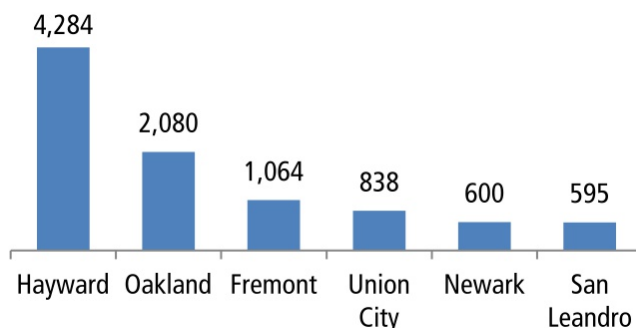
## Socio-demographics

- Pacific Islanders are the **fastest-growing** population in Alameda County, with a 41% increase in Pacific Islander residents from 2000 to 2010.<sup>2</sup>
- Pacific Islanders made up 0.8% of the Alameda County population in 2010, with just under **12,000** residents identifying as Pacific Islander.<sup>2</sup>
- 13% of Pacific Islanders live in poverty, a rate similar to that of the total population in Alameda County.<sup>3</sup> The poverty rate differs for different Pacific Islander groups, with 26% of Samoans living in poverty.<sup>4</sup>

Pacific Islanders in Alameda County<sup>6</sup>



Alameda County Cities with the Most Pacific Islander Residents<sup>5</sup>



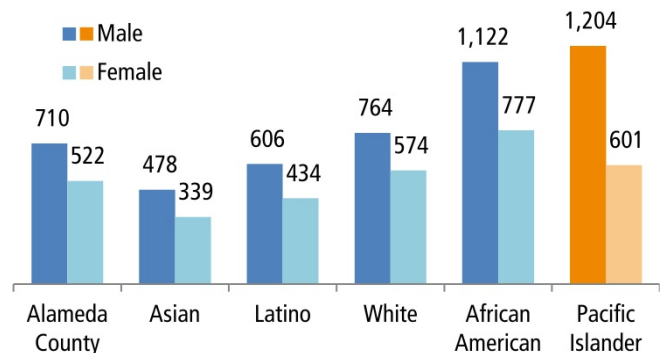
- There are many Pacific Islands (see map on final page). In Alameda County, the majority of Pacific Islanders are Fijian, Tongan, Samoan, Guamanian/Chamorro and Hawaiian.
- 19% of Pacific Islanders have less than a high school degree. Demonstrating the differences within the Pacific Islander population, 12% of Samoans and 41% of Tongans have less than a high school degree.<sup>4</sup>
- The **unemployment rate** is 29% for Tongans and 17% for Samoans in Alameda County. When all groups are combined, the Pacific Islander unemployment rate is 17%.<sup>4</sup>
- Hayward and Oakland have the largest number of Pacific Islander residents. Over half (53%) of Pacific Islanders live in Hayward (36%) or Oakland (17%).

# Overall Health

The five leading causes of death for Pacific Islanders in Alameda County are as follows:<sup>8</sup>

1. Heart disease
  2. Cancer
  3. Diabetes
  4. Stroke
  5. Chronic lower respiratory disease
- The five leading causes of death among Pacific Islanders account for 67% of Pacific Islander deaths in Alameda County. These are all chronic diseases that are **largely preventable**.<sup>9</sup>
  - Pacific Islander children have the **highest obesity rates** in the county, with 31% of Pacific Islander 5th, 7th, and 9th graders being classified as obese.<sup>10</sup>

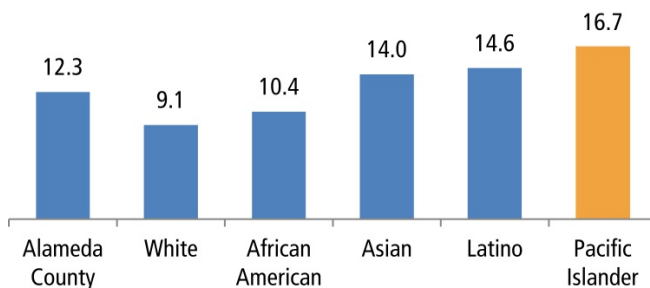
**All-Cause Mortality<sup>8</sup>**  
(Age-adjusted rate per 100,000 people)



- Pacific Islander men have the **highest all-cause mortality rate** in Alameda County.<sup>8</sup>
- The average life expectancy for a Pacific Islander in Alameda County is **77.2 years**, which is lower than the county average of **81.9 years**.<sup>8</sup>

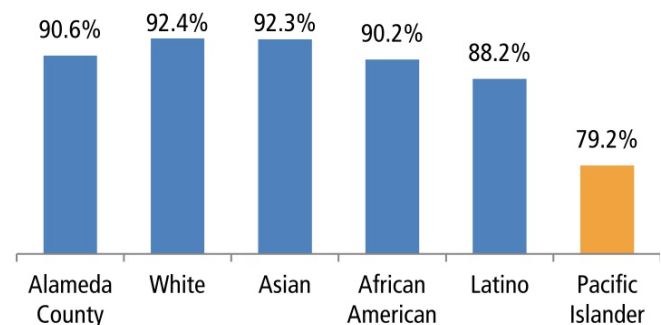
# Reproductive Health

**Alameda County Birth Rates<sup>11</sup>**  
(Births per 1,000 people)



- In 2013, there were 197 births to Pacific Islander mothers in Alameda County. Pacific Islanders have the **highest birth rate** in the county with 16.7 births per 1,000 people. The overall Alameda County birth rate is 12.3 births per 1,000 people.<sup>11</sup>
- 9.1% of Pacific Islander babies are born **premature**, compared to 9.2% of all Alameda County births.<sup>12</sup>

**First Trimester Entry into Prenatal Care<sup>11</sup>**  
(Percentage)



- 79.2% of Pacific Islander pregnant women receive **prenatal care** in the first trimester, the lowest rate in the county.<sup>11</sup>
- 6.1% of Pacific Islander births are **low birth weight** babies, compared to 7.3% of all Alameda County births.<sup>12</sup>

- In 2011, Pacific Islanders had the **highest infant mortality** rate in California compared to other race/ethnicities with 10.7 infant deaths per 1,000 live births. The state rate was 4.8 infant deaths per 1,000 live births.<sup>13</sup>
- 36.1% of Pacific Islander births are to mothers receiving **Medi-Cal**, higher than the overall county rate of 26.4%.<sup>11</sup>
- 4.7% of Pacific Islander births are to **teen mothers**, about the same as the county rate of 4.8%.<sup>12</sup>
- Pacific Islanders have the **lowest breastfeeding rates** in the county with 69.6% of Pacific Islander newborns being exclusively breastfed in the hospital. The Alameda County rate is 82.3%.<sup>14</sup>



1. Tammy Lee, CAPE. *Overlooked and Underserved: Problematizing the API Model Minority Myth*. Presentation. May 2014.
2. Census 2000 and 2010. *Alameda County Health Data Profile, 2014*.
3. American Community Survey 2013 5-year files.
4. American Community Survey, PUMS data, 2009-2011.
5. CAPE. Data from Esri and Census 2010.
6. Census 2010. Tammy Lee, CAPE. *Overlooked and Underserved: Problematizing the API Model Minority Myth*. Presentation. May 2014.
7. Matt Beyers, CAPE.
8. Alameda County Vital Statistics 2010-2012. *Alameda County Health Data Profile, 2014*.
9. Alameda County Vital Statistics 2010-2012. Tammy Lee, CAPE. *Overlooked and Underserved: Problematizing the API Model Minority Myth*. Presentation. May 2014.
10. California CSE, Physical Fitness Test 2011-2012. *Alameda County Health Data Profile, 2014*.
11. Alameda County Vital Statistics files, Birth files, 2013.
12. Alameda County Vital Statistics files, Birth files, 2009-2013.
13. California Department of Public Health. California Birth Cohort file, 2011.
14. California Department of Public Health. In-hospital Breastfeeding, 2013. Available at [www.cdph.ca.gov/data/statistics/Pages/InHospitalBreastfeedingInitiationData.aspx](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/data/statistics/Pages/InHospitalBreastfeedingInitiationData.aspx)

Prepared by the Pacific Islander Health Promotion Subcommittee of the Community Forum for Perinatal Health.  
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