



Immigrants in Hawaii

Hawaii has a sizable community of immigrants, many of whom emigrated from the Philippines. Nearly one in five people who live in Hawaii was born in another country, while one in seven is a native-born American who has at least one immigrant parent. Foreign-born residents also represent a vital share of the state's labor force in many sectors: over a third of healthcare support workers are immigrants, as are nearly two-fifths of the state's farmers, fishers, and foresters. Immigrants own over a quarter of businesses in Hawaii. As neighbors, business owners, taxpayers, and workers, immigrants are an integral part of Hawaii's diverse and thriving communities and make extensive contributions that benefit all.

Nearly one in five Hawaii residents is an immigrant, while one in seven residents is a native-born U.S. citizen with at least one immigrant parent.

- In 2018, 266,147 immigrants (foreign-born individuals) comprised 19 percent of the population.¹
- Hawaii was home to 145,237 women, 105,564 men, and 15,346 children who were immigrants.²
- The top countries of origin for immigrants were the Philippines (45 percent of immigrants), China (9 percent), Japan (8 percent), Korea (6 percent), and the Marshall Islands (4 percent).³
- In 2018, 213,848 people in Hawaii (15 percent of the state's population) were native-born Americans who had at least one immigrant parent.⁴

Nearly three in five immigrants in Hawaii are naturalized U.S. citizens.

- 155,756 immigrants (59 percent) had naturalized as of 2018,⁵ and 48,828 immigrants were eligible to become [naturalized U.S. citizens](#) in 2017.⁶
- More than three-quarters (78 percent) of immigrants reported speaking English "well" or "very well."⁷

Immigrants in Hawaii are distributed across the educational spectrum.

- More than a quarter (28 percent) of adult immigrants had a college degree or more education in 2018, while almost one-fifth (19 percent) had less than a high school diploma.⁸

Education Level	Share (%) of All Immigrants	Share (%) of All U.S.-Born
College degree or more	28	35
Some college	27	33
High school diploma only	26	27
Less than a high school diploma	19	5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

Nearly 30,000 U.S. citizens in Hawaii live with at least one family member who is undocumented.

- 45,000 [undocumented immigrants](#) comprised 17 percent of the immigrant population and 3 percent of the total state population in 2016.⁹
- 60,202 people in Hawaii, including 29,223 U.S. citizens, lived with at least one [undocumented family member](#) between 2010 and 2014.¹⁰
- During the same period, about 4 percent of children in the state were U.S. citizens living with at least one undocumented family member (13,536 children in total).¹¹

Hawaii is home to hundreds of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients.

- Approximately 340 [active DACA recipients](#) lived in Hawaii as of March 2020, while DACA has been granted to about 368 people in total since 2012.¹²
- As of 2019, 11 percent of [DACA-eligible immigrants](#) in Hawaii had applied for DACA.¹³
- Fewer than a thousand Hawaii residents would satisfy all but the educational requirements for DACA, and less than a thousand would become eligible as they grew older.¹⁴

Almost one in four workers in Hawaii is an immigrant, making up a vital share of the state's labor force across industries.

- 161,938 immigrant workers comprised 23 percent of the labor force in 2018.¹⁵

- Immigrant workers were most numerous in the following industries:

Industry	Number of Immigrant Workers
Accommodation and Food Services	36,591
Health Care and Social Assistance	21,891
Retail Trade	21,266
Public Administration	12,991
Administrative & Support; Waste Management; and Remediation Services	12,530

Source: Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2018 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.

- The largest shares of immigrant workers were in the following industries:¹⁶

Industry	Immigrant Share (%) (of all industry workers)
Accommodation and Food Services	33
Administrative & Support; Waste Management; and Remediation Services	30
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	30
Other Services (except Public Administration)	29
Transportation and Warehousing	27

Source: Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2018 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.

Immigrants are an integral part of the Hawaii workforce in a range of occupations.

- In 2018, immigrant workers were most numerous in the following occupation groups:¹⁷

Occupation Category	Number of Immigrant Workers
Food Preparation and Serving Related	21,591
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	20,763
Sales and Related	20,242
Office and Administrative Support	17,183
Transportation and Material Moving	16,130

Source: Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2018 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.

- The largest shares of immigrant workers were in the following occupation groups:¹⁸

Occupation Category	Immigrant Share (%) (of all workers in occupation)
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	44
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	38
Production	36
Healthcare Support	35
Food Preparation and Serving Related	29

Source: Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2018 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.

- Undocumented immigrants comprised 5 percent of Hawaii's workforce in 2016.¹⁹

Immigrants in Hawaii have contributed billions of dollars in taxes.

- [Immigrant-led households in the state paid](#) \$1.7 billion in federal taxes and \$960.7 million in state and local taxes in 2018.²⁰
- Undocumented immigrants in Hawaii paid an estimated \$65.3 million in federal taxes and \$47.6 million in [state and local taxes](#) in 2018.²¹
- [DACA recipients](#) and DACA-eligible individuals in Hawaii paid an estimated \$2.5 million in state and local taxes in 2018.²²

As consumers, immigrants add billions of dollars to Hawaii's economy.

- Hawaii residents in immigrant-led households had \$6.4 billion in [spending power](#) (after-tax income) in 2018.²³

Immigrant entrepreneurs in Hawaii generate hundreds of millions of dollars in business revenue.

- 21,250 immigrant business owners accounted for 26 percent of all self-employed Hawaii residents in 2018 and generated \$441.7 million in business income.²⁴

Endnotes

1. "Foreign born" does not include people born in Puerto Rico or U.S. island areas or U.S. citizens born abroad of American parent(s). U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates. The American Immigration Council elected to use data from the 2018 ACS 1-Year estimates wherever possible to provide the most current information available. Since these estimates are based on a smaller sample size than the ACS 5-year, however, they are more sensitive to fluctuations and may result in greater margins of error (compared to 5-year estimates).
2. Children are defined as people age 17 or younger. Men and women do not include children. Ibid.
3. Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2018 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.
4. Analysis of data from the 2018 Current Population Survey by the American Immigration Council, using IPUMS CPS. Sarah Flood, Miriam King, Renae Rodgers, Steven Ruggles and J. Robert Warren, *Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Current Population Survey: Version 7.0* [dataset] (Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.18128/D030.V7.0>.
5. 2018 ACS 1-Year Estimates.
6. Augmented IPUMS-ACS data, as published in "State-Level Unauthorized Population and Eligible-to-Naturalize Estimates," Center for Migration Studies data tool, accessed April 2020, data.cmsny.org/state.html.
7. Figure includes immigrants who speak only English. Data based on survey respondents age 5 and over. Analysis of 2018 ACS 1-Year Estimates by the American Immigration Council.
8. Data based on survey respondents age 25 and older. Ibid.
9. Pew Research Center, "U.S. unauthorized immigration population estimates, 2016," February 5, 2019, www.pewhispanic.org/interactives/unauthorized-immigrants/.
10. Silva Mathema, "State-by-State Estimates of the Family Members of Unauthorized Immigrants," University of Southern California's Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration and the Center for American Progress, March 2017, www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2017/03/16/427868/state-state-estimates-family-members-unauthorized-immigrants/.
11. American Immigration Council analysis of data from the 2010-2014 ACS 5-Year, using Silva Mathema's "State-by-State Estimates of the Family Members of Unauthorized Immigrants" and IPUMS-USA. Steven Ruggles, Katie Genadek, Ronald Goeken, Josiah Grover, and Matthew Sobek, *Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 7.0* [dataset] (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, 2017).
12. The number of DACA recipients reflects USCIS' estimate of those with active DACA grants as of March 31, 2020. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), "Approximate Active DACA Recipients: As of March 31, 2020" [dataset], July 22, 2020, <https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/data/Approximate%20Active%20DACA%20Receipts%20-%20March%2031%2C%202020.pdf>. DACA grants reflect USCIS Form I-821D initial requests approved from Aug. 15, 2012-Mar. 31, 2020, as of April 2020. USCIS, "Number of Form I-821D, Consideration of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, Status, by Fiscal Year, Quarter, and Case Status: Aug. 15, 2012-Mar. 31, 2020," July 22, 2020, https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/data/DACA_performance_data_fy2020_qtr2.pdf.
13. Estimates of the DACA-eligible population as of 2019 include unauthorized immigrant youth who had been in the United States since 2007, were under the age of 16 at the time of arrival, were under the age of 31 as of 2012, and who met DACA eligibility requirements as of 2016. Migration Policy Institute (MPI) analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data from the 2012-16 American Community Survey (ACS) pooled, and the 2008 Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), with legal status assignments by James Bachmeier and Colin Hammar of Temple University and Jennifer Van Hook of The Pennsylvania State University, Population Research Institute, as cited in "Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Data Tools," accessed April 2020, www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/deferred-action-childhood-arrivals-daca-profiles.
14. Ibid.
15. Analysis of 2018 ACS 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council. Categories are based on the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/index.html.
16. Ibid.
17. Analysis of 2018 ACS 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council. Categories are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system, www.bls.gov/soc/major_groups.htm.
18. Ibid.
19. Pew Research Center, "U.S. unauthorized immigration population estimates, 2016," 2019.
20. New American Economy analysis of 2018 ACS microdata using IPUMS. New American Economy, "Map the Impact," section Taxes and Spending Power, January 31, 2020, <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/locations/>.
21. Ibid. at sec. Undocumented Immigrants.
22. Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, *State & Local Tax Contributions of Young Undocumented Immigrants* (Washington, DC: April 2018), Appendix 1, <https://itep.org/state-local-tax-contributions-of-young-undocumented-immigrants>.
23. New American Economy, "Map the Impact," section Taxes and Spending Power.
24. "Business owners" include people who are self-employed, at least 18 years old, and work at least 15 hours per week at their businesses. Analysis of 2018 ACS 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.