



# Asian & Pacific Islander American Demographics



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(last revised 03/08/02)

For more information on EPA's Asian American & Pacific Islander Initiative, visit <[www.epa.gov/aapi](http://www.epa.gov/aapi)>

# API Kaleidoscope

There are  
28 Asian and  
19 Pacific Islander  
subgroups  
representing a  
vast array of  
languages and  
cultures.

## APIs are Americans of Asian or Pacific Islander descent

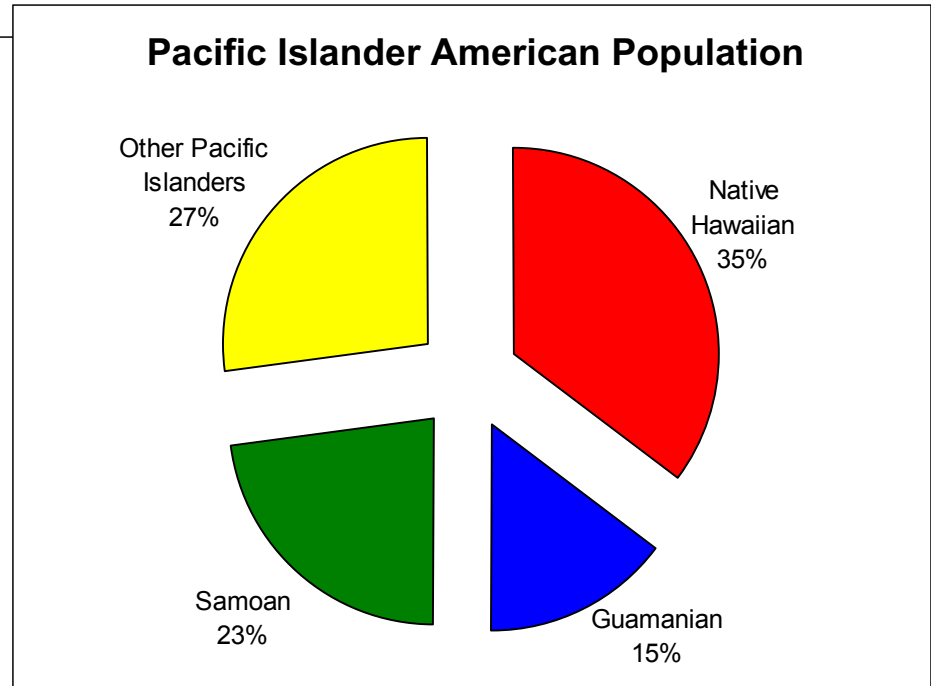
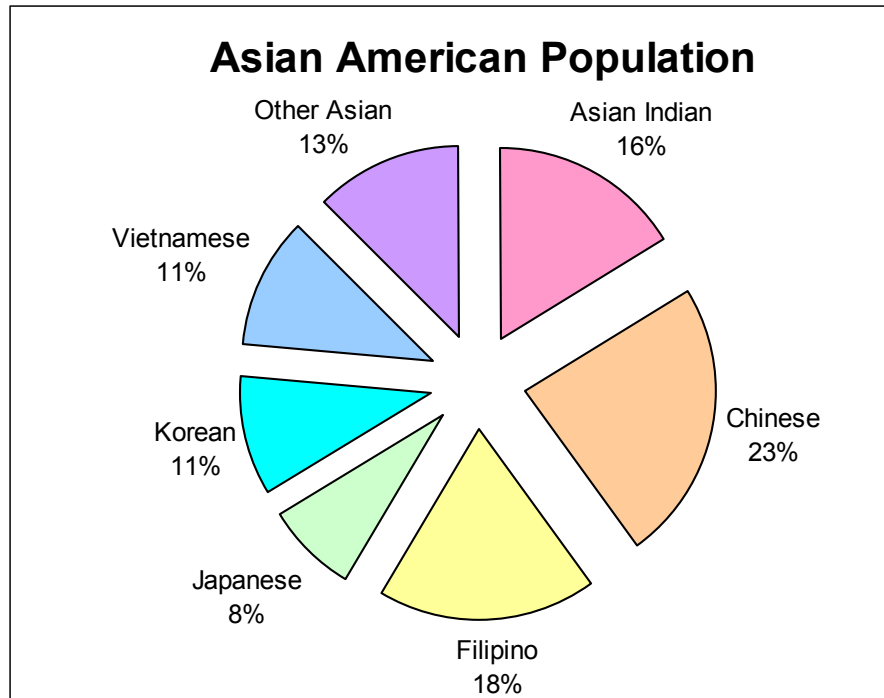
Bangladeshi	Indochinese	Pakistani
Bhutanese	Indonesian	Papua New Guinean
Bikini Islander	Iwo-Jiwan	Polynesian
Borneon	Japanese	Ponapean
Burmese	Javanese	Saipanese
Cambodian	Korean	Samoaan
Carolinian	Kwajalein Islander	Sikkim
Celebesian	Laotian	Singaporean
Cerem	Malayan	Solomon Islander
Cernam	Maldavian	Sri Lankan
Chinese	Mariana Islander	Tahitian
Cosmopolitan	Marshall Islander	Taiwanese
Eniwetok Islander	Marshallese	Tarawa Islander
Eurasian	Melanesian	Thai
Fujian	Micronesian	Tinian Islander
Filipino	Mien	Tokelauan
Guamanian	Mongolian	Tongan
Hawai'ian	Nepali	Trukese
Hmong	New Hebrides Islander	Vietnamese
Indian	Okinawan	Yapese

# API Demographics



- As of 2000, APIs constitute 3.6% - 4.2% of the US total population (12 million)
- APIs are the fastest growing racial group in the United States (a 95% increase from 1980 to 1990, a 48% increase since 1990)
- Approximately 70% are recent immigrants and/or refugees, 40-50% of whom have limited English proficiency
- Census estimates by 2050, one out of every 10 Americans will be of Asian or Pacific Islander descent

# API Demographics



Source: US Census 2000

Ethnic enclaves are growing around the US along with the burgeoning API population. In some counties, API populations are already above 10%. Census estimates 45% of APIs are concentrated in 3 metropolitan areas: Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco

Likewise, 80% of APIs reside in ten states -- California, New York, Hawaii, Texas, New Jersey, Illinois, Washington, Florida, Virginia and Massachusetts.

But the fastest growing API populations are in states such as Georgia, Nevada, North Carolina, Nebraska, Arizona, Delaware and New Mexico.



# Limited English Proficient & Linguistically Isolated Groups

**Cultural and linguistic barriers significantly affect API access to health care and information.**

## Percentage of APIs who do not speak English “well” (or at all)

Hmong (76%)  
Cambodian (70%)  
Laotian (68%)  
Vietnamese (61%)  
Taiwanese (54%)  
Korean (52%)  
Chinese, except Taiwanese (50%)  
Thai (46%)  
Indonesian (40%)  
Tongan (39%)  
Pakistani (30%)  
Japanese (25%)  
Filipino (24%)  
Asian Indian (24%)  
Samoan (22%)  
Guamanian (16%)  
Hawaiian (3%)

## Percentage of APIs who are linguistically isolated

Hmong (60%)  
Cambodian (55%)  
Laotian (52%)  
Vietnamese (42%)  
Taiwanese (37%)  
Korean (35%)  
Chinese, except Taiwanese (34%)  
Thai (27%)  
Indonesian (26%)  
Tongan (19%)  
Pakistani (15%)  
Japanese (14%)  
Filipino (11%)  
Asian Indian (10%)  
Samoan (8%)  
Guamanian (7%)  
Hawaiian (1%)

# Socio-Economic Factors

While the average API family enjoys the highest median family income among all racial/ethnic groups, APIs also have one of the highest rates of poverty in urban and rural areas.

According to the US Department of Agriculture, “The disparity between a high median family income and a poverty rate of 15% suggests a high level of income inequality among rural Asian families.”

An estimated 27% of APIs families earn approximately one-quarter of the poverty level for a family of four.

Source: USDA Rural Conditions and Trends, Vol. 11, No. 2 (2000)

**In San Francisco, 29% of the API population live below the poverty line**

Source: Asian/Pacific Islander Family Resources Network (2001)

**In New York City, 43% of Asian American children are born into poverty**

Source: Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (1997)

**In Minnesota, API children are three times as likely (37%) to live in poverty than all other children**

Source: White House Initiative on Asian Americans & Pacific Islander (2001)

**In Massachusetts, API children are twice as likely (24%) to be impoverished than all other children**

Source: White House Initiative on Asian Americans & Pacific Islander (2001)

# Socio-Economic Factors

- AAPI families are the majority of users of public and HUD-assisted housing in a number of cities with large AAPI populations.
- In its diversity, the AAPI population belies the stereotype of Asian Americans as a "model minority" whose members are uniformly prosperous and well integrated into American life. This diversity poses special challenges for AAPI residents and serious difficulties for the community organizations that serve them.

Source: Chris Walker et al., *Building Capacity: The Challenges and Opportunities of Asian Pacific American Community Development, A Report to the National Coalition for Asian Pacific Community Development*. The Urban Institute, April 27, 2000

- An estimated 30% of APIs in New York City live in overcrowded housing conditions.

Source: White House Initiative on Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders, Interim Report to the President (January 2001)

## Examples of APIs Living in HUD-Subsidized Housing

- Minneapolis (10%)
- Oakland (20%)
- San Francisco (25%)
- Seattle (20%)

## While an estimated 10% of all Americans are impoverished, consider certain API subgroups living in poverty:

- Cambodians (47%)
- Hmong (66%)
- Laotians (34%)
- Vietnamese (34%)

# Socio-Economic Factors

- The cost of health insurance is a major barrier for APIs who are more likely to be self-employed or working for small firms that typically do not offer employer-sponsored coverage.
- The US Census estimates 17% of API children and 24% of API adults are uninsured. Up to 34% of recent immigrants and first/second generation APIs are uninsured.
- About 20% of uninsured APIs are in working families. These workers are often low-wage earners who cannot afford to purchase private insurance.
- Approximately 50% of APIs may be medically underserved

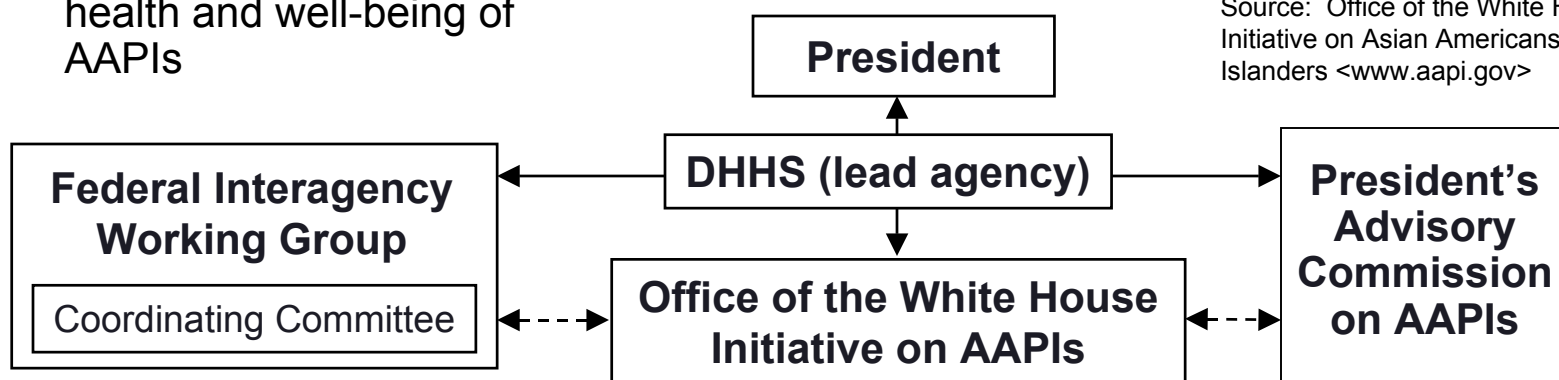


Source: Families USA (2001)



# White House Initiative on Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders

- Executive Order 13216, signed by President Bush on June 6, 2001
- Purpose
  - Increase the participation of AAPIs in federal programs
  - Foster research and data collection on AAPI populations and subpopulations
  - Increase public and private sector, and community involvement in improving the health and well-being of AAPIs
- Strategic Goals
  - Institutionalize the implementation of the WHI Initiative on AAPIs
  - Improve data collection, analysis and dissemination for AAPIs
  - Ensure access, especially linguistic access and cultural competence for AAPIs
  - Protect civil rights and equal opportunity
  - Strengthen and sustain AAPI community capacity
  - Recognize and include Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders in federal programs and services



Source: Office of the White House Initiative on Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders <[www.aapi.gov](http://www.aapi.gov)>