

Baseline Survey Census Research Lawrence County

The Federal population census is an important tool for understanding the history of a community and how that community has changed over time. The census provides data that can help us to better understand Pennsylvania's diverse racial and ethnic populations (referred to as underrepresented communities for purposes of this Baseline Survey effort), where these populations settled historically, and how they left their mark on the Commonwealth's landscape.

Pennsylvania has a history of being ethnically diverse in both the urban areas of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh and in the commonwealth's smaller cities and rural areas. Native Americans have called Pennsylvania's lands home for centuries. Dutch, Swedish, and Finnish settlers moved to Pennsylvania in the late 17th century, and were quickly followed by English, German and other Europeans by the turn of the 18th century. Both enslaved and free Africans and African Americans lived in Pennsylvania as early as 1690 and the commonwealth's Black communities grew exponentially with the First Great Migration in the early 20th century. By the mid-20th century, people from almost all racial and ethnic groups had settled in Pennsylvania.

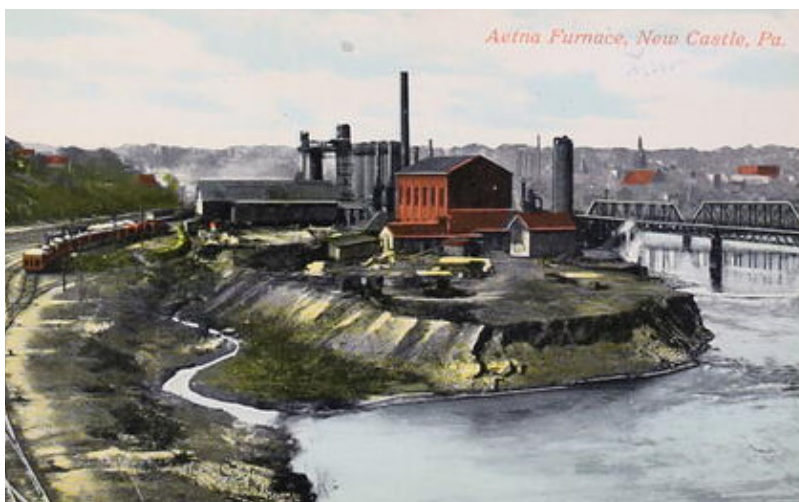
Pennsylvania's historical racial and ethnic diversity and the surviving older and historic places that embody that diversity is not well understood or well documented. By understanding what populations were present, when, and where they lived, the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office (PA SHPO) can identify and document the older and historic places associated with these underrepresented communities through targeted survey work.

Once this information is collected and added to PA-SHARE, Pennsylvania's online database of older and historic places, this important information will be available to professionals and the public alike, providing everyone with data to support the need to tell broader and more inclusive stories.

It is important to note that census data is only one part of the extensive research that is necessary to understand Pennsylvania's varied and changing communities over the last four hundred years. The information collected, methods for collecting it, and categories and definitions changed from census taker to census taker and from year to year.

Lawrence County is one of the fifty-two counties in Pennsylvania where PA SHPO and its contractors will be working over the next two years to collect information about historic places that are underrepresented in Pennsylvania's statewide historic inventory.

It is important that PA SHPO collects information about the older and historic places that Pennsylvanian's value in their communities. PA SHPO welcomes public recommendations for places that should be documented in this survey. If you would like to provide your feedback, please fill out this [short survey form](#).



Historic Postcard of Aetna Furnace, New Castle, Lawrence County

Learn More:

[Historic Resources Survey in Pennsylvania](#)
[PA SHPO's Baseline Survey Project](#)
[PA-SHARE](#)

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Lawrence County

Lawrence County was established on March 20, 1849. It has 27 municipalities and as of the 2020 federal census, the total population was 86,070. The population of Lawrence County was first recorded in the 1850 US Census. A total of 21,079 inhabitants were recorded, 20,947 of whom were White and 132 of whom were Black. The total population of Lawrence County experienced inconsistent, yet steady upward growth from 1850 to 1970. The total population of Lawrence County reached six figures in 1950 at 105,120 inhabitants.

The Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) population of Lawrence County have historically represented less than 1% of the total population from 1850 to 1910. From 1910 to 1970, the percentage of BIPOC in Lawrence County represented between 1% and 2.7% of the total population. The BIPOC population in Lawrence County has been predominantly Black through 1970. The Black population was at its largest in 1960 at 2,815 individuals. While the total BIPOC population between 1960 and 1970 increased, the number of Black Lawrence County residents decreased to 2,770.

Asians were documented as living in Lawrence County as early as 1890 and were predominantly of Chinese descent until 1960. In 1960, the number of Japanese people (5) exceeded the number of Chinese (3) and Filipino people (2). This trend would continue into 1970, where there were 29 Japanese, 5 Chinese, and an increase to 17 Filipino Lawrence County residents. Native Americans were recorded in Lawrence County in 1890, 1930, 1950, 1960, and 1970. Eight people of Hispanic descent was recorded in the 1930 census. The "Other" category has been used to describe different groups through time. In 1800, "Other" specifically noted BIPOC people, predominantly Black Americans, who were not enslaved. In later decades, it is inconclusive whether "Other" includes only mixed-race people or people of Black, Native American, Asian, or Hispanic descent during any given decade.

	White	Black	Native American	Asian	Hispanic	Other
1790	0	0	0	0	0	0
1800	0	0	0	0	0	0
1810	0	0	0	0	0	0
1820	0	0	0	0	0	0
1830	0	0	0	0	0	0
1840	0	0	0	0	0	0
1850	20947	132	0	0	0	0
1860	22897	102	0	0	0	0
1870	33248	214	0	0	0	0
1880	33076	236	0	0	0	0
1890	37202	312	1	2	0	0
1900	56487	542	0	13	0	0
1910	69314	699	0	19	0	0
1920	84226	1305	0	15	0	0
1930	95107	2129	1	13	8	0
1940	94805	2069	0	0	0	3
1950	102887	2213	13	5	0	2
1960	110124	2815	8	10	0	8
1970	104455	2770	23	51	0	75

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This graph shows the relationship between BIPOC populations (right side axis) and total population (left side axis) in Lawrence County from 1790 to 1970. Significant events that had a bearing on the population are included below the graph to show Lawrence County's total populations at these important points in time. Numbers from 1790 to 1840 are unavailable due to Lawrence County not yet being formally established.

