

Baseline Survey Census Research Cameron 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.

Cameron County is one of the fifty-two counties in Pennsylvania where PA SHPO and its contractors will be working over the next three 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 Emporium, Cameron County

Learn More:

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

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Cameron County was created on March 29, 1860. There are 7 municipalities in Cameron County and as of the 2010 federal census, the total population was 5,085, making it the least populous county in Pennsylvania. The first recorded federal population census in Cameron County occurred in 1870. A total of 4,273 inhabitants were recorded, 12 of which were free Black people. Over time, the total population of Cameron County experienced highs and lows but has never exceeded 8,000 residents.

The population of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) of Cameron County experienced increases and decreases proportional to the total population. BIPOC in Cameron County are predominantly made up of Black people.

No Native Americans had been documented in Cameron County by the means of the federal population census and only one Asian resident has ever been recorded, in 1920. No people of Hispanic descent had been documented in the studied census dates.

	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	0	0	0	0	0	0
1860	0	0	0	0	0	0
1870	4,261	12	0	0	0	0
1880	5,151	8	0	0	0	0
1890	7,174	64	0	0	0	0
1900	7,008	39	0	0	0	0
1910	7,613	31	0	0	0	0
1920	6,250	46	0	1	0	0
1930	5,286	21	0	0	0	0
1940	6,830	22	0	0	0	0
1950	7,016	6	0	0	0	1
1960	7,573	11	0	0	0	2

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This graph shows the relationship between total BIPOC populations (left side axis) and total population (right side axis) in Cameron County from 1790 to 1960. Significant events that have a bearing on the population are included below the graph to show Cameron County's total populations at these important points in time.

No data is available prior to 1870 because Cameron County was not yet established.

