

# Baseline Survey Census Research Clearfield 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.

Clearfield 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 Clearfield County

## Learn More:

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

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Clearfield County was created on March 26, 1804 but not fully organized as its own entity until January 29, 1822. There are 51 municipalities in Clearfield County. As of the 2010 federal census, the population was 81,642. The total population of Clearfield County grew exponentially since its foundation, coming to a head in 1920 with a total population of 103,235. From 1920 onwards, the total population of Clearfield County gradually decreased, only experiencing a slight uptick in 1940 before continuing its downward trend. Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) of Clearfield County followed the same growth pattern as the population at-large, experiencing a steady growth and peaking in 1920 before lowering proportionately with the rest of the population.

The first federal population census occurred in Clearfield County in 1820. The total population of the county at the time was 2,342, which was made up of 2,307 White people and 35 Black people, none of which were enslaved. The majority of BIPOC in Clearfield County have identified as Black. The 1860 census documented people of mixed Black and White heritage (Mulatto, Other in the table below) and noted 48 residents of mixed race in Clearfield County, which outnumbers the population of people who identify as only Black (33). Future censuses did not document mixed-race people.

Native Americans were only documented in the 1960 census. Asians were documented in 1890, 1900, 1920 and 1960. No Hispanic people had been documented in Clearfield County from 1820 to 1960. The “Other” category will often capture people of non-White and non-Black heritage.

	White	Black	Native American	Asian	Hispanic	Other
<b>1790</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>1800</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>1810</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>1820</b>	2307	35	0	0	0	0
<b>1830</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>1840</b>	7777	57	0	0	0	0
<b>1850</b>	12482	104	0	0	0	0
<b>1860</b>	18678	33	0	0	0	48
<b>1870</b>	25817	135	0	0	0	0
<b>1880</b>	43287	121	0	0	0	0
<b>1890</b>	69370	184	0	2	0	0
<b>1900</b>	80390	218	0	1	0	0
<b>1910</b>	93447	315	0	0	0	6
<b>1920</b>	102714	511	0	10	0	0
<b>1930</b>	86405	319	0	0	0	3
<b>1940</b>	91656	336	0	0	0	2
<b>1950</b>	85637	297	0	0	0	23
<b>1960</b>	81250	260	6	14	0	4

# Baseline Survey Census Research Clearfield County

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

No data is available prior to 1820 because the 1810 census has not been digitized. The 1830 census counted a total of 4,803 free people, but failed to divide this category by race, resulting in what looks like a BIPOC population of zero.

