

# Baseline Survey Census Research

## Jefferson 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.

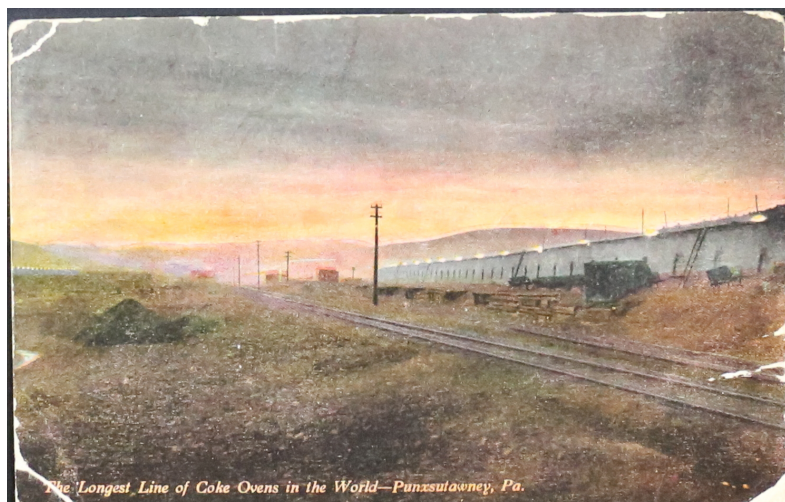
Pennsylvania's historical racial and ethnic diversity and the surviving older and historic places that embody that diversity is not well understood or well documented. By understanding what populations were present, when, and where they lived, the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office (PA SHPO) 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.

Jefferson 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 Coke Ovens in Jefferson County

### Learn More:

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

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Jefferson County was established on March 26, 1804. There are 34 municipalities in Jefferson County and as of the 2010 federal census, the total population was 45,200. The first recorded federal population census in Jefferson County occurred in 1820. A total of 561 inhabitants were recorded, 10 of whom were free Black people. Over time, the total population of Jefferson County would continue to increase, reaching 63,090 inhabitants in 1910 before slowly decreasing and plateauing around 46,000 residents.

The population of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) of Jefferson County was most numerous in 1930. In 1860, the “Other” column specifically notes only people of mixed race, of which there were 41. This is notable because the number of people who identify as Black in 1860 was nearly equal at 40 individuals. BIPOC in Jefferson County are predominantly made up of Black people.

No Native Americans have been counted in the federal censuses in Jefferson County. Asians were living in Jefferson County from 1890 onward. From 1930 to 1960, Asians were included in the “Other” column along with people of mixed race. No people of Hispanic descent had been documented in the studied census dates.

|             | 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> | 551    | 10    | 0               | 0     | 0        | 0     |
| <b>1830</b> | 2,024  | 1     | 0               | 0     | 0        | 0     |
| <b>1840</b> | 7,196  | 57    | 0               | 0     | 0        | 0     |
| <b>1850</b> | 13,424 | 94    | 0               | 0     | 0        | 0     |
| <b>1860</b> | 18,189 | 40    | 0               | 0     | 0        | 41    |
| <b>1870</b> | 21,588 | 68    | 0               | 0     | 0        | 0     |
| <b>1880</b> | 27,898 | 37    | 0               | 0     | 0        | 0     |
| <b>1890</b> | 43,975 | 20    | 0               | 1     | 0        | 0     |
| <b>1900</b> | 59,042 | 68    | 0               | 3     | 0        | 0     |
| <b>1910</b> | 62,982 | 105   | 0               | 3     | 0        | 0     |
| <b>1920</b> | 62,008 | 92    | 0               | 4     | 0        | 0     |
| <b>1930</b> | 51,977 | 129   | 0               | 0     | 0        | 8     |
| <b>1940</b> | 54,026 | 62    | 0               | 0     | 0        | 2     |
| <b>1950</b> | 49,104 | 33    | 0               | 0     | 0        | 10    |
| <b>1960</b> | 46,746 | 31    | 0               | 0     | 0        | 16    |

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

No data is available prior to 1820 because Jefferson County was not yet established and the 1810 census is not digitized.

