



December 17, 2021

RE: Census Bureau Invites Feedback on Proposed 2020 Census Data Products Beyond Redistricting

Release Number CB21-CN.64

Dear Census 2020 Data Products Team,

First 5 Alameda County's mission is to build a local responsive early childhood system in support of young children and their families and caregivers. First 5 Alameda County uses data and research to inform and advance our policy agenda and to support community-led organizing and advocacy efforts. This letter is in reference to the comments regarding use cases for the [Detailed Demographic and Housing Characteristics File](#) (Detailed DHC).

Alameda County is the 7th most populous county in the state of California with over 52 languages spoken. Disaggregated data is a critical tool that helps us better understand how to serve and advocate for the unique needs of our county including our Latinx, Black, and Asian and Asian American/Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHPI) families. Detailed demographic data is particularly critical for our Asian American/NHPI community which represented a little over 33% of the population in 2019 and is the fastest growing population group in the county.

We are proud of our outreach and education efforts in our diverse community which includes many groups of the Asian and Asian American/NHPI community. Communities we serve include but are not limited to Indian, Cambodian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, Pakistani, Taiwanese, Thai, Vietnamese, and members of the NHPI community.

Responding to the issues listed below is not only critical to Asian and Asian American and NHPI communities, but will benefit other communities that rely on detailed race and ethnicity data to advance access to quality programs and equitable policies and systems change. A strong response to these concerns is a matter of data equity and, ultimately, racial justice.

We write with the following high-priority needs for our organizations and the population we serve. We elaborate each of these needs below.

1. First 5 Alameda County needs detailed origin data on Asian and NHPI communities to be **delivered to the public as soon as possible, and no later than April 1, 2023**, which is the three-year anniversary of Census Day 2020.
 - a. We need timely access to the DDHC tables in order to have an accurate understanding of where children under the age of six live in our county, so that we can intentionally



allocate resources to community partners, target our outreach and language assistance strategies, and inform policy advocacy to advance more equitable early childhood systems in our neighborhoods. Disaggregated data is an integral part of our work and helps us better understand the full needs of families like home language of children and the needs of our early childhood education workforce as seen in our [2021 Early Care and Education Needs Assessment](#).

- b. Our communities are among the fastest growing in the United States, and past experience from the 2010 Census has shown that ACS data from 2009 and 2010 significantly underestimated the size of our communities because they were based on the 2000 Census population count. It is very likely that 2019 and 2020 American Community Survey data also significantly underestimate the diversity of our Asian and Asian American/NHPI community. In Alameda County, 1 in 3 new mothers identify as Asian—a 12% increase between 1995 and 2017, making it the largest growing group in the county. Census data also projects that the number of children who identify as Asian in the county will increase to 36% by 2060. Disaggregated data helps us understand how to better serve the diverse cultural and language needs in our community.
 - c. Data and evaluation are a critical component of our work and helps inform how our county supports the conditions that allow children, families, and the community to thrive. The DDHC tables are essential to our work because they provide benchmarking data needed to produce accurate survey sample weights. Delays will force us to construct sample weights using inaccurate benchmarks that ultimately pin back to the 2010 Census and will seriously jeopardize our organizational mission and ability to identify and meet the pressing social and economic needs of Asian and Asian Americans/Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders and other diverse groups in Alameda County.
2. We are requesting that the Census *prioritize for production schedule* the following DDHC tables as noted in the [2020 Census Data Product Planning Crosswalk](#) and as referenced from the [2010 Census SF2 file](#):
 - T1. Total Population (PCT1)
 - T2. Sex by age for selected age categories (PCT3)
 - T3. Household type (PCT8)
 - T4. Tenure (HCT2)



At First 5 Alameda County we use total population data to identify the number of children under the age of six living in Alameda County. Data disaggregated by census tract, block groups, and blocks help inform our outreach and identify partners to support the child and family conditions. We use this data to advocate for policy changes that create and support community and family conditions for children and families to thrive. To do this we must understand the specific needs of our diverse populations living in our county by neighborhood level. For example, analysis of our [2017 Kindergarten Readiness Assessment](#) for Alameda County found that East Asian and South Asian children had significantly higher scores than average (i.e., the overall sample). The study also found that Southeast Asian, Filipino, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander children had lower scores than average, but the differences were not statistically significant partly because the sample sizes were very small (e.g., 27 for NH/PI).

3. In addition, we urge you to prioritize the creation of tables noted in the [2020 Census Data Product Planning Crosswalk](#) that are essential to the work that we do, as detailed below. These tables include critical information on the prevalence of intergenerational households, household types, and other key demographic features of our communities. We ask that you produce the following tables:

Table	Title	Use Case
PCT17	PRESENCE OF MULTIGENERATIONAL HOUSEHOLDS	We understand that Asian and Asian American and NHPI communities historically included higher levels of multigeneration households. During the COVID-19 pandemic we learned about the challenges that multi-generational households face in accessing rent, utility, and food supports. This data would help target outreach and improve estimated need within the diverse Asian and Asian American and NHPI community.
PCT30	HOUSEHOLD TYPE BY RELATIONSHIP FOR THE POPULATION UNDER 18 YEARS	First 5 Alameda support fathers to be meaningfully engaged with their children and we advocate for father-friendly services. These data at the county level helps us understand need and where to conduct outreach and advocacy.

Our use case for PCT17 and PCT30 allows us to identify where to target supports that improve the conditions young children and their families need to thrive. We target our resources by allocating resources in neighborhoods with children under the age of 6 that are impacted by poverty and structural racism. Having data on the disaggregated groups of Asian and Asian



American/NHPI and other races informs our local policy advocacy efforts to ensure that families with young children and communities have appropriate resources and tools to support their child's development. We need block data to be able to produce effective educational tools, like our [District Profiles](#), to inform our local elected officials, systems leaders, and the community on the needs of children and families.

4. Among the tables to be created as part of the DDHC, we urge you to provide data at the Census block group and Census block level whenever possible.
 - a. The ability to locate detailed Asian American and Pacific Islander groups in the most specific geographic areas possible is important for efficient and effective outreach. Further, understanding variations within counties in terms of demographic presence and circumstances is only possible when data are produced at these lower levels of analysis. As mentioned before, in Alameda County there are many countries of origin under the Asian and Asian American/NHPI population classification in the 2010 Census data.

5. We are also concerned about the loss of reporting for certain Pacific Islander and Native Hawaiian detailed- identity groups as a result of disclosure avoidance and differential privacy concerns. Where privacy concerns are not an issue, additional information on identity groups should be available for Pacific Islander and Native Hawaiian groups.

Thank you for considering the serious concerns and priorities we outline above.

Sincerely,

Kristin Spanos

Chief Executive Officer
First 5 Alameda County