

# Hawaii's Census Geography

## A guide to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2020 Census boundaries

*This guide was created by the Hawaii State Data Center, Research & Economic Analysis Division, DBEDT. See also U.S. Census Bureau, [Geographic Programs and Products Glossary](#). View reference maps, subject maps, and additional geographic reference material on our [Geography](#) page. Jump start your [data.census.gov](#) searches with this [Quick Start Search guide](#).*

### Islands

The 7 populated islands are Hawaii (Big Island), Maui, Lanai, Molokai, Oahu, Kauai, and Niihau. Census tracts must be utilized to obtain data for island areas of Maui County and Kauai County because islands are not a Census Bureau geography. Within Maui County, Lanai Island consists of census tract 316.01; Molokai Island consists of census tracts 317, 318.01, and 319 (the census tract that is a part of Kalawao County, not to be confused with tract 319 Spreckelsville on Maui Island); and Maui Island consists of the remaining census tracts in the county. Within Kauai County, Niihau and Kaula Island is census tract 412 and Kauai Island consists of the remaining census tracts in the county. Outside of the decennial census, data are not available for tract 412. **(Count: 7 populated islands)**

### Counties

Hawaii has 5 counties. The 5 counties in the State of Hawaii are Honolulu, Hawaii, Kalawao, Kauai, and Maui. Kalawao County is the part of Molokai Island known as the Kalaupapa Settlement. It is administered by the Hawaii State Department of Health. **(Count: 5 counties)**

### Census designated places (CDPs)

Census designated places (CDPs or Places) are statistical geographies representing closely settled, unincorporated communities that are locally recognized and identifiable by name. CDPs are statistical equivalents of incorporated places and represent unincorporated communities that do not have a legally defined boundary or an active functioning governmental structure. They are concentrations of population that only cover selected land areas in Hawaii. There are 163 Places in the state as of 2020; 54 are in Hawaii County, 55 are in Honolulu County, 30 are in Maui County, and 24 are in Kauai County. **(Count: 163 CDPs)**

### Census tracts

Census tracts are small statistical subdivisions of a county or statistically equivalent entity that will generally have a population size between 1,200 and 8,000 people. The boundaries of census tracts are drawn with the intention of being maintained over a long period so that comparisons can be made from census to census. The size of census tracts depends on population size. A tract can be split due to population growth or merged because of population decline.

County planning offices in Hawaii provide the Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism with [area names for each census tract](#). For example, Honolulu County's census tract 52 is named "Chinatown." We are one of the only states in the U.S. that have names assigned to each census tract. However, these are not official U.S. Census Bureau names.

Tract numbers are only unique by county and can be repeated in the same state. The only tract number that is repeated is 319, which is used for Spreckelsville in Maui County and Kalawao in Kalawao County on the island of Molokai. Tracts are often used for "small area" analyses. **(Count: 436 census tracts, excluding shoreline water tracts)**

## Incorporated places (Cities)

Incorporated places are legally incorporated under state law, have a legally defined boundary, and an active functioning governmental structure. Hawaii is the only state that has no incorporated places recognized by the Census Bureau. In agreement with the state, the legal consolidation of city-county is not recognized for census purposes except for the Census of Governments.

## Congressional districts

The congressional districts used for the 2020 Census were the ones in effect for the 116<sup>th</sup> U.S. Congress. After reapportionment, which was based on the 2020 Census, the Congressional districts for the 118<sup>th</sup> congress were used by the Census Bureau. Hawaii had 2 Congressional districts for both the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress and the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress. **(Count: 2 Congressional Districts)**

## Hawaiian Home Lands (HHLs)

HHLs are areas held in trust for Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawaii, pursuant to the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1920, as amended. The Census Bureau obtains the names and boundaries for HHLs from state officials. There are data for 26 HHLs on Hawaii Island, 8 on Kauai, 1 on Lanai, 6 on Molokai, 11 on Maui Island, and 22 on Oahu. **(Count: 74 Hawaiian Home Lands with data)**

## Zip Code Tabulation Areas (ZCTAs)

Zip Code Tabulation Areas (ZCTAs) are approximate representations of U.S. Postal Service (USPS) five-digit ZIP codes. Not all ZIP codes in use by the USPS may have a ZCTA delineated to represent them, as ZIP codes are designed for the efficient delivery of mail and not intended to represent populations. By popular request, ZCTAs first appeared as a census geographic level in 2000. **(Count: 97)**

## Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs)

Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs) are geographic areas with populations of 100,000 people or more. They are the statistical geographic areas used for the dissemination of decennial census and American Community Survey (ACS) Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) files.

PUMAs 306 and 307 on Oahu changed between 2010 and 2020. These changes were made to align the PUMAs with county planning department definitions of the areas. The names and PUMA numbers did not change. For more information on these changes, follow [this link](#).

Kauai County does not meet the population threshold for its own PUMA. As a result, Kauai, Maui, and Kalawao Counties are combined in PUMA 100. Hawaii has a total of 10 PUMAs. Area names for each PUMA are provided by the U.S. Census Bureau. **(Count: 10 Public Use Microdata Areas)**

## Judicial districts

Judicial Districts are not a separate census geographic level. Judicial district areas may be obtained by utilizing the Census Bureau's county subdivision geography. See the [conversion table](#) for guidance on creating judicial districts. **(Count: 28 judicial districts)**

## Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs)

MSAs contain an urban core population of at least 50,000 people. Urban Honolulu MSA covers the same area as the City and County of Honolulu. Until 2013, Kahului-Wailuku-Lahaina, which consists of Maui County, was a Metropolitan Statistical Area. In 2013, it became Hawaii's second Metropolitan Statistical Area. **(Count: 2 Metropolitan Statistical Areas)**

## Micropolitan Statistical Areas

Micropolitan statistical areas contains an urban core population ranging from a minimum of 10,000 to a maximum of 50,000 people. There are 2 Micropolitan Statistical Areas. The Hilo Micropolitan Statistical Area consists of Hawaii County and Kapaau Micropolitan Statistical Area consists of Kauai County. **(Count: 2 Micropolitan Statistical areas)**

## Urban and rural areas

Urban areas represent densely developed territory, and encompass residential, commercial, and other non-residential urban land uses. The Census Bureau delineates urban areas after each decennial census. Rural areas are all land areas that are not a part of an urban area.

In 2010, there were two types of urban areas-- 1) urbanized areas with populations of 50,000 or more, and 2) urban clusters with at least 2,500 people, but less than 50,000. For 2020, the Census Bureau changed its criteria for urban areas to the following ways: 1) All qualifying areas are now “urban areas.” The Census Bureau no longer distinguishes between “urbanized areas” and “urban clusters.” 2) The minimum population threshold for an urban area was increased to 5,000. 3) Qualifications were updated to include housing unit density in addition to population density. The minimum housing unit threshold is 2,000 housing units. See [this DBEDT report](#) for more information about the 2020 Urban and Rural areas. **(Count: 15 Urban areas)**

## School districts

School districts are geographic entities within which public educational services are provided by a government entity for the area’s residents. In the state of Hawaii, there is only one school district because the school system is statewide. **(Count: 1 School district)**

## County subdivisions

County subdivisions are the primary divisions of counties and equivalent entities that include county divisions, census subareas, minor civil divisions, and unorganized territories. They can be classified as either legal or statistical entities.

Legal entities, or *minor civil divisions (MCD)*, are the primary governmental or administrative divisions of a county. They represent many kinds of legal entities with a variety of governmental or administrative functions. There are no minor civil divisions in Hawaii.

Statistical entities, or *census county divisions (CCDs)*, are delineated by the Census Bureau in partnership with local governments. CCDs have no legal function. Their boundaries usually coincide with census tract boundaries. CCDs are in areas where there are no MCDs. **(Count: 44 county subdivisions)**

## State Legislative Districts

State legislative districts are the areas from which members of the state legislature are elected. The Hawaii legislature is bicameral (having two chambers) and includes the House and the Senate. **(Count: 51 State House districts, 25 State Senate districts)**

## Voting Districts

Voting Districts are geographic areas established by state governments for the purpose of conducting elections. Prior to the 2020 Census, there were 344 voting districts. At the time of publication, data for individual voting districts is not available for Hawaii for 2020 and beyond.