

## American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month: November 2017

**Oct. 6, 2017** — The first American Indian Day was celebrated in May 1916 in New York. Red Fox James, a member of the Blackfeet Nation, rode horseback from state to state to get endorsements from 24 state governments to have a day to honor American Indians. In 1990, President George H.W. Bush signed a joint congressional resolution designating November 1990 as “National American Indian Heritage Month.” Similar proclamations have been issued every year since 1994, and we now refer to this celebration as “American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month.” This Facts for Features presents statistics for American Indians and Alaska Natives, as this is one of the six major race categories defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The following facts are made possible by the invaluable responses to the U.S. Census Bureau’s surveys. We appreciate the public’s cooperation as we continuously measure America’s people, places and economy.

### Related Products

**NEW! “[My Tribal Area](#)” App:** My Tribal Area gives you quick and easy access to selected statistics from the [American Community Survey](#). The American Community Survey provides detailed demographic, social, economic and housing statistics every year for the nation's communities.

**[2011-2015 American Community Survey American Indian and Alaska Native tables:](#)** The U.S. Census Bureau released detailed estimates of social, economic, housing and demographic characteristics for over 1,000 tribal groups. These tables from the 2011-2015 American Community Survey contain the most detail for these populations and are available at numerous geographic levels including Alaska Native Regional Corporations, American Indian and Alaska Native Areas.

## Population

### 6.7 million

The nation’s American Indian and Alaska Native population, including those of more than one race. They made up about 2.0 percent of the total population in 2016.

Source: Vintage 2016 Population Estimates

<https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/PEP/2016/PEPASR5H?slice=year~est72016>

<https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/PEP/2016/PEPASR6H?slice=year~est72016>

## **10.2 million**

The projected American Indian and Alaska Native population, alone or in combination, on July 1, 2060. They would constitute 2.4 percent of the total population.

Source: 2014 National Population Projections, Tables 10 and 11

[www.census.gov/population/projections/data/national/2014/summarytables.html](http://www.census.gov/population/projections/data/national/2014/summarytables.html)

## **592,753**

The American Indian and Alaska Native population, alone or in combination, age 65 and over, on July 1, 2016.

Source: Vintage 2016 Population Estimates

<https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/PEP/2016/PEPASR5H?slice=year~est72016>

## **21**

The number of states with 100,000 or more American Indian and Alaska Native residents, alone or in combination, in 2016. These states were Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin.

Source: Vintage 2016 Population Estimates

<https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/PEP/2016/PEPASR5H?slice=GEO~0100000US!year~est72016>

## **19.9%**

The percentage of Alaska's population identified as American Indian and Alaska Native, alone or in combination, in 2016, the highest share for this race group of any state. Alaska was followed by Oklahoma (13.7 percent), New Mexico (11.9 percent), South Dakota (10.4 percent) and Montana (8.4 percent).

Source: Vintage 2016 Population Estimates

<https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/PEP/2016/PEPASR5H?slice=GEO~0100000US!year~est72016>

<https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/PEP/2016/PEPASR6H?slice=GEO~0100000US!year~est72016>

## **31.0**

The median age for those who were American Indian and Alaska Native, alone or in combination, in 2016. This compares with a median age of 37.9 for the U.S. population as a whole.

Source: Vintage 2016 Population Estimates

<https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/PEP/2016/PEPASR5H?slice=GEO~0100000US!year~est72016>

<https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/PEP/2016/PEPASR6H?slice=GEO~0100000US!year~est72016>

## Reservations

**326**

The number of distinct federally recognized American Indian reservations in 2016, including federal reservations and off-reservation trust land. Excluding Hawaiian Home Lands, the Census Bureau provides statistics for 546 American Indian and Alaska Native legal and statistical areas.

Source: U.S. Gazetteer Files

[www.census.gov/geo/maps-data/data/gazetteer.html](http://www.census.gov/geo/maps-data/data/gazetteer.html)

## Tribes

**567**

The number of federally recognized Indian tribes in 2016.

Source: Bureau of Indian Affairs, 2016

[www.bia.gov/cs/groups/xraca/documents/text/idc1-033010.pdf](http://www.bia.gov/cs/groups/xraca/documents/text/idc1-033010.pdf)

[www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/01/17/2017-00912/indian-entities-recognized-and-eligible-to-receive-services-from-the-united-states-bureau-of-indian](http://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/01/17/2017-00912/indian-entities-recognized-and-eligible-to-receive-services-from-the-united-states-bureau-of-indian)

## Families

**841,943**

The number of American Indian and Alaska Native households in 2016 (households with a householder who was American Indian and Alaska Native alone). Of these, 37.9 percent were married-couple families, including those with children.

Source: 2016 American Community Survey

[https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16\\_1YR/S0201//popgroup~006](https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16_1YR/S0201//popgroup~006)

**7.2%**

The percentage of the American Indian and Alaska Native population alone, age 30 and over, who were grandparents living with at least one grandchild under the age of 18 in 2016.

Source: 2016 American Community Survey

[https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16\\_1YR/S0201//popgroup~006](https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16_1YR/S0201//popgroup~006)

## Housing

**52.9%**

The percentage of single-race American Indian and Alaska Native householders who owned their own home in 2016. This is compared with 63.1 percent of the overall population.

Source: 2016 American Community Survey

[https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16\\_1YR/S0201//popgroup~001|006](https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16_1YR/S0201//popgroup~001|006)

## Languages

**27.0%**

The percentage of single-race American Indian and Alaska Native people age 5 and older who spoke a language other than English at home in 2016, compared with 21.6 percent for the nation as a whole.

Source: 2016 American Community Survey

[https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16\\_1YR/S0201//popgroup~001|006](https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16_1YR/S0201//popgroup~001|006)

## Education

**79.9%**

The percentage of the single-race American Indian and Alaska Native population, age 25 and older that had at least a high school diploma, GED certificate or alternative credential in 2016. In addition, 14.5 percent obtained a bachelor's degree or higher. In comparison, 87.5 percent of the overall population age 25 and older had a high school diploma or higher, and 31.3 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher.

Source: 2016 American Community Survey

[https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16\\_1YR/S0201//popgroup~001|006](https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16_1YR/S0201//popgroup~001|006)

**41.2%**

The percentage of single-race American Indian and Alaska Native people age 25 and older with a bachelor's degree or higher whose degree was in science and engineering, or science and engineering-related fields in 2016. This compares with 44.3 percent for all people age 25 and older with a bachelor's degree or higher in science and engineering, or science and engineering-related fields in 2016.

Source: 2016 American Community Survey

[https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16\\_1YR/C15010C](https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16_1YR/C15010C)

[https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16\\_1YR/C15010](https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16_1YR/C15010)

## Businesses

**27,585**

The estimated number of American Indian and Alaska Native-owned employer firms in 2015.

Source: 2015 Annual Survey of Entrepreneurs

<https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ASE/2015/00CSA01>

## Jobs

**27.2%**

The percentage of civilian-employed, single-race American Indian and Alaska Native people, age 16 and older who worked in management, business, science and arts occupations in 2016. In addition, 24.9 percent worked in service occupations and 22.0 percent in sales and office occupations.

Source: 2016 American Community Survey

[https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16\\_1YR/S0201//popgroup~006](https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16_1YR/S0201//popgroup~006)

## Veterans

**136,487**

The number of single-race American Indian and Alaska Native veterans of the U.S. armed forces in 2016.

Source: 2016 American Community Survey

[https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16\\_1YR/C21001C](https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16_1YR/C21001C)

## Income and Poverty

**\$39,719**

The median household income of single-race American Indian and Alaska Native households in 2016. This compares with \$57,617 for the nation as a whole.

Source: 2016 American Community Survey

[https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16\\_1YR/S0201//popgroup~001|006](https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16_1YR/S0201//popgroup~001|006)

**26.2%**

The percentage of single-race American Indian and Alaska Native people who were in poverty in 2016, the highest rate of any race group. For the nation as a whole, the poverty rate was 14.0 percent.

Source: 2016 American Community Survey

[https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16\\_1YR/S0201//popgroup~001|006](https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16_1YR/S0201//popgroup~001|006)

## Health Insurance

**19.2%**

The percentage of single-race American Indian and Alaska Native people who lacked health insurance coverage in 2016. For the nation as a whole, the corresponding percentage was 8.6 percent.

Source: 2016 American Community Survey

[https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16\\_1YR/S0201//popgroup~001|006](https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16_1YR/S0201//popgroup~001|006)

Following is a list of observances typically covered by the Census Bureau's *Facts for Features* series:

African-American History Month (February)	Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act (July 26)
Super Bowl (1st Sunday in February)	Back to School (August)
Valentine's Day (Feb. 14)	Labor Day (1st Monday in September)
Women's History Month (March)	Grandparents Day (1st Sunday after Labor Day)
Irish-American Heritage Month (March)/ St. Patrick's Day (March 17)	Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)
Earth Day (April 22)	Unmarried and Single Americans Week (3rd week of September)
Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month (May)	Halloween (Oct. 31)
Older Americans Month (May)	American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month (November)
Mother's Day (2nd Sunday in May)	Veterans Day (Nov. 11)
Hurricane Season Begins (June 1)	Thanksgiving Day (4th Thursday in November)
Father's Day (3rd Sunday in June)	The Holiday Season (December)
The Fourth of July (July 4)	

**Editor's note:** The preceding data were collected from a variety of sources and may be subject to sampling variability and other sources of error. Facts for Features are customarily released about two months before an observance in order to accommodate magazine production timelines.

###

Graphic | [JPG](#) | [PDF](#) |

Jewel Jordan

Public Information Office

301-763-3030 / [pio@census.gov](mailto:pio@census.gov)

[census.gov](https://www.census.gov)

Connect with us on [Social media](#)