

2022

Pacific Islander & Asian Community Needs Assessment

Key findings from Pacific Islander and Asian immigrant and refugee communities in Oregon and SW Washington.



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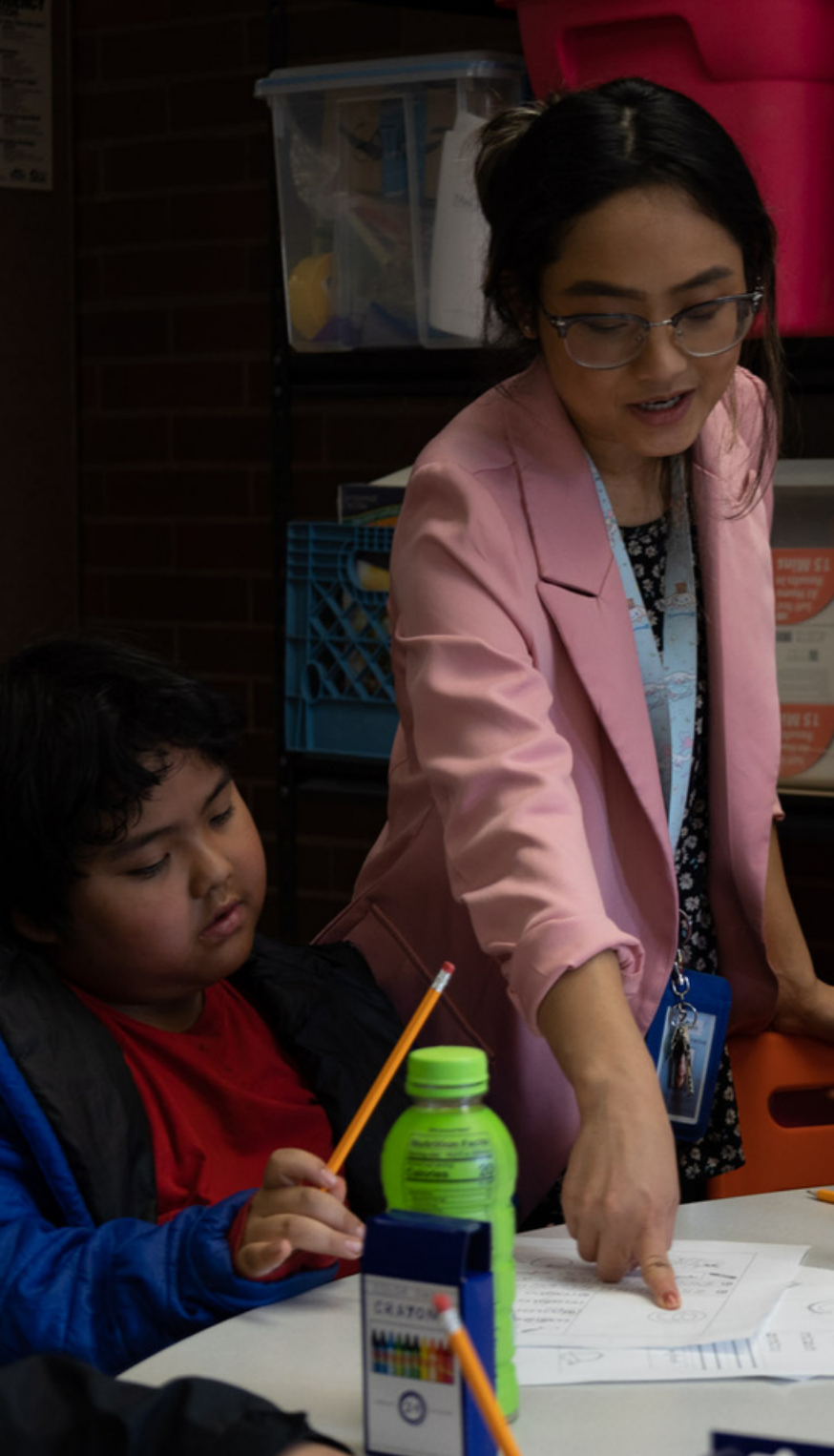


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Message From Our Leaders



On behalf of the director of IRCO's Pacific Islander & Asian Family Center (PIAFC), Sokho Eath, and the PIAFC Advisory Council, we are pleased to present the following Pacific Islander and Asian Community Needs Assessment (CNA).

IRCO Pacific Islander and Asian Family Center has been providing culturally and linguistically specific services to diverse Asian and Pacific Islander refugee and immigrants since 1994. In that time, we have seen communities that were once new become established, building wealth and giving rise to the next generation; communities that are in transition, their long-term sights set in another state; and new communities making their way here, with the hope for shelter, security, and a sense of belonging. These and countless other stories make up the ever-evolving fabric of communities that we serve and are a part of. Our communities are not a monolith, but rich in diversity and span different cultures and generations. Yet, these stories often remain untold, lumped together under the umbrella of “Asian” and “Pacific Islander”. One of our biggest goals at PIAFC is to always tease apart and uplift these unique stories and the different contexts in which they happen. This 2022 Pacific Islander and Asian Community Needs Assessment (CNA) is one way of doing that.

In Oregon, the communities that comprise the Asian and Asian American identity can be differentiated by the immigrant experience and the refugee experience. Asian immigrants have made Oregon and the Pacific Northwest region their home since the late 1880s, with the arrival of Chinese, Japanese and other communities who came to work on the railroads and agricultural industries. Asian refugees, primarily from Southeast Asia and South Asia (initially from countries like Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, and later Myanmar/Burma, and Nepal) have been arriving since the 1970s with the end of the United States conflicts in Southeast Asia, to as recently as the late 2010s and today, largely due to civil conflicts and the targeting of ethnic minority groups.

The story of our Pacific islander communities is just as diverse as that of Asian communities in the Pacific Northwest. History often points to the migrations of Native Hawaiians that have come to the Pacific Northwest since the 1800s. Many immigrated to the United States for opportunities and for family from countries like Tonga, caught in the cross winds in development, history, and geography. Others come from countries impacted by complex history with the United States and regional powers, such as those from the Compact of Free Association (COFA), who come to the United States with a migrant status that in part creates tremendous barriers due to the very treaties and history that allow their migration here. Many others belong to communities with current and historical ties to the United States through commonwealth, territory, or occupation.

As we see in this report, the distinct migration experience of different communities, as well as the timespan in the country and resulting ability to generate wealth and stability across

generations (in other words, becoming “established”) shapes the current conditions and experiences of people in these communities. For example, we see a marked difference between homeownership rates of those surveyed from more established communities (most Mandarin, Khmer, and Vietnamese-speaking respondents surveyed lived in a house that they, or their family, owned), compared to respondents from newer refugee communities (mostly Nepali, Burmese, and Zomi-speaking respondents are renters) and some Pacific Islander communities. This then translates to related issues like housing instability, where respondents from less established communities were more likely to say that housing instability is a problem for people in their community.

At the same time, we see that being established is by no means a guarantee of being “accepted” by the mainstream. The COVID-19 pandemic rekindled deeply rooted bias and discrimination and led to rising hate crimes against Asians and Asian Americans, forever viewed as “perpetual foreigners.” Homeownership and contributions to society were not sufficient buffers against attacks on community members’ sense of safety and belonging. We see that clearly in this report, where one in four Mandarin-speaking respondents were concerned about hate crimes and discrimination, with one respondent saying, “My children don’t want me leaving the house on my own.” These and other stories reinforce the pressing need for more disaggregated storytelling.

Regardless of the differences in history and culture across the different Asian and Pacific Islander communities, the 2022 CNA highlights the common needs both ongoing and new. Affordable housing, healthcare, service navigation, senior care, leadership development, academic support, community gatherings, language access, and cultural preservation are longstanding needs expressed across the different communities. Meanwhile, mental health, especially for youth, affordable and culturally specific childcare, and the loss of community are some of the needs that have grown in significance in the past few years.

This CNA report, along with community conversations both new and ongoing, will help to guide our work and ensure that we remain responsive to the needs of the diverse and evolving communities that we belong to and serve. For PIAFC, this CNA presents the case that we have much left to do in ensure our Pacific Islander and Asian communities find the services and support needed to build strong and resilient communities. For us, we will strive to use the CNA a benchmark for us to carry forward the mission and vision we have set forth: *To welcome, serve, and empower refugees, immigrants, and people across cultures and generations to reach their full potential.*

Methodology

The 2022 CNA utilized a survey questionnaire administered by a team of dozens of culturally specific Community Survey Specialists (CSSs), who reached out to community members from their individual cultural and language groups to identify individual challenges and needs as well as those of their community. Survey languages targeted were determined based on feedback from community leaders and publicly available data on languages spoken at home. Our Survey questions incorporated different aspects of the social determinants of health (SDOH), defined

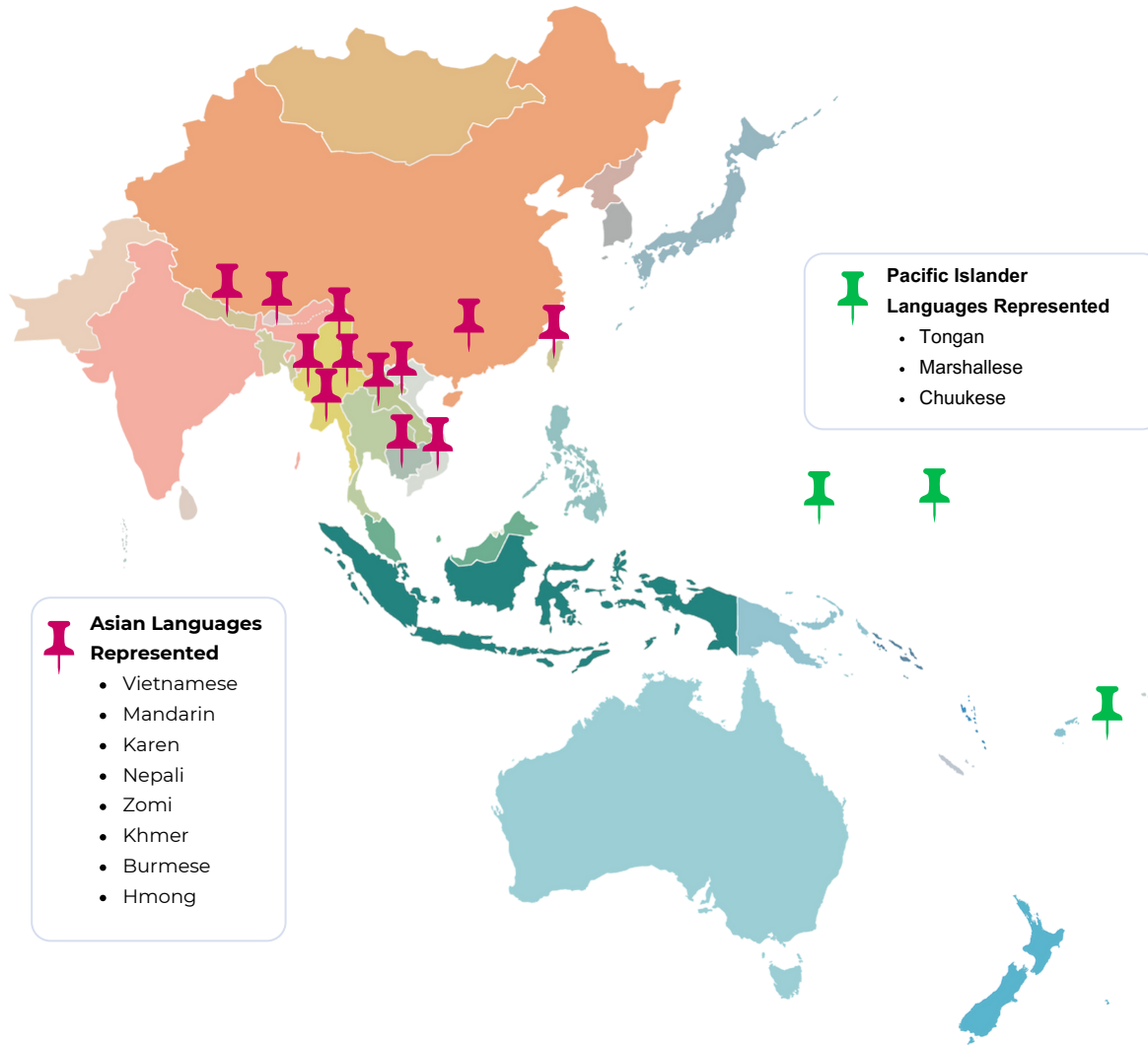
as the “conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age.” Ultimately, we successfully surveyed 528 community members from 23 different language groups, representing more than 50 cultural and national backgrounds (See below). Due to small sample sizes, conclusions should not be made about any community from this data alone. In some cases, limited or skewed sample sizes could lead to incorrect conclusions about a community’s level of need.

TABLE 1: COMMUNITY MEMBERS SURVEYED: BY COUNTRY OR CULTURE OF ORIGIN

AFRICAN (95)	Swahili-speaking, from Kenya (26)	Swahili-speaking, from Democratic Republic of Congo (8)	Swahili-speaking, from Tanzania (2)	Swahili-speaking, from Uganda (1)	Swahili-speaking, blank (1)	Tigrigna-speaking (16)	Amharic-speaking (16)	Somali-speaking (15)	Oromo-speaking (10)			
ASIAN (178)	Vietnamese-speaking (45)	Mandarin-speaking (35)	Mandarin-speaking, from Vietnam (3)	Karen-speaking (25)	Zomi-speaking (17)	Nepali-speaking, from Bhutan (16)	Nepali-speaking, from Nepal (9)	Khmer-speaking (13)	Burmese-speaking (8)	Burmese-speaking Rohingya (5)	Lao-speaking (1)	Hmong-speaking (1)
GREATER MIDDLE EASTERN (85)	Arabic-speaking, from Iraq/Kuwait (44)	Arabic-speaking, from Syria (14)	Arabic-speaking, from Egypt (4)	Arabic-speaking, from Jordan (2)	Arabic-speaking, from Lebanon (1)	Arabic-speaking, from Libya (1)	Arabic-speaking, from Tunisia (1)	Arabic-speaking, origin unknown (4)	Dari-speaking (10)	Farsi-speaking (4)		
LATIN AMERICAN (53)	Spanish-speaking, from Mexico (38)	Spanish-speaking, Hispanic or from the U.S. (10)	Spanish-speaking, from Guatemala (1)	Spanish-speaking, from Honduras (1)	Spanish-speaking, from El Salvador (1)	Spanish-speaking, from Venezuela (1)	Spanish-speaking, origin unknown (1)					
PACIFIC ISLANDER (30)	Tongan-speaking (15)	Marshallese-speaking (12)	Chuukese-speaking (3)									
SLAVIC/ EASTERN EUROPEAN (87)	Ukrainian-speaking (43)	Russian-speaking from Russia (19)	Moldovan-speaking (14)	Russian-speaking from Belarus (2)	Russian-speaking from Uzbekistan (2)	Russian-speaking from Georgia (1)	Russian-speaking from Kazakhstan (1)	Russian-speaking from Kyrgyzstan (1)	Russian-speaking from Latvia (1)	Other Russian-speaking (3)		

Respondent Background

In total, we engaged 251 Asian and Pacific Islander community members for this CNA. This includes 178 Asian and 29 Pacific Islander community members through surveys, as well as 23 Asian and 21 Pacific Islander high school students through youth-specific focus groups. We failed to get surveys from Lao and Kachin community members.

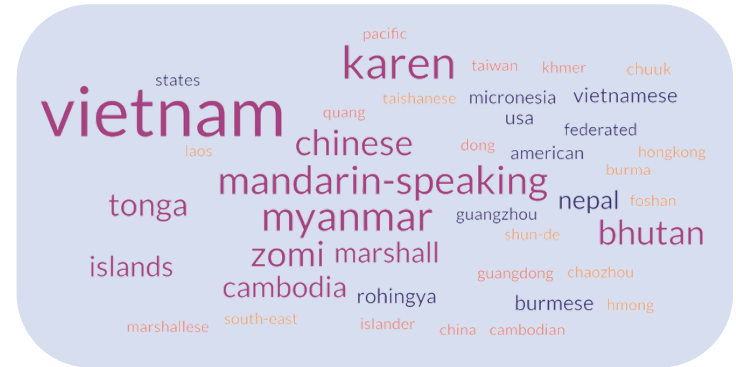


1. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates. Count excludes census-designated 'Western Asian' countries, which we assess in our 'Greater Middle Eastern CNA'
 2. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates. Count includes multi-racial Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders.

Statewide Context

Of Oregon's foreign-born population, roughly **31%** (approximately 127,364 people) are from Asia.¹ Meanwhile, **nearly 1%** of the state's population (approximately 35,548 people) identify as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.²

Participant responses when asked about their country or culture of origin:



We asked respondents about their 'country or culture of origin' because many refugees come from marginalized and often stateless communities and cultures (for example, Rohingya and Hmong). Furthermore, the complex history of displacement and migration means that people from the same cultural heritage may have different countries of origin and self-identification (for example, there are differences between Nepali-speakers born in Nepal and Nepali-speakers born in a refugee camp in Bhutan).

Migration Trends

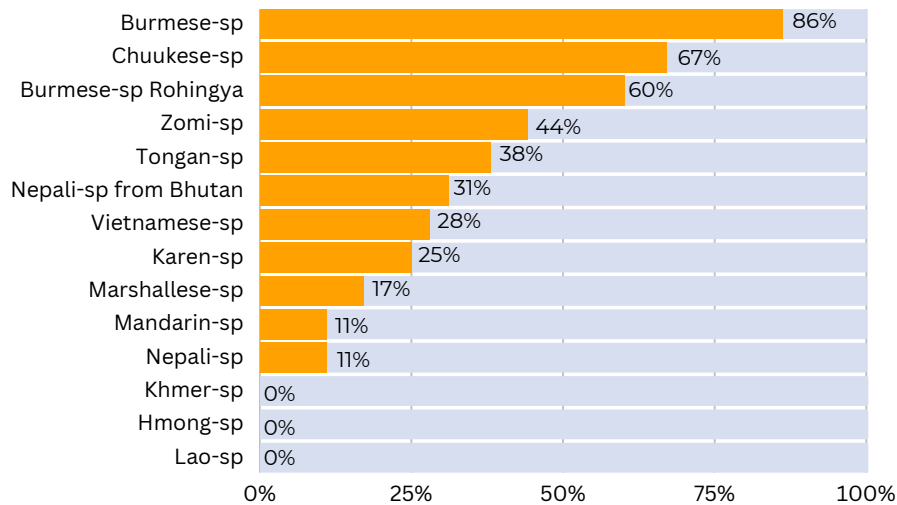
On average, Pacific Islander respondents have lived in their city for an **average of 10 years**, while Asian respondents have lived in their city for an **average of 14 years**. However, among Asian respondents, this number varied widely and reflects the trends in migration, with the average respondent from Myanmar/Burma, Nepal, and Bhutan arriving in their city less than 10 years ago, while the average for those from Vietnam, Lao, China, Taiwan, and Cambodia ranged anywhere from 12 years to 31 years ago.

Respondent Background (Cont.)

This section covers respondents' newcomer status, information on COFA, average age, household characteristics, and zip code of residence.

% of respondents who are newcomers (<5 years living in their city)

Less than 5 years More than 5 years



A Note On COFA

The Compact of Free Association (COFA) allows citizens from the Federated States of Micronesia, The Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau to travel, live, and work in the United States without a visa and with no time restraints, as reparations for the long-term harm caused by U.S. nuclear testing and military activity, and in exchange for permitting the U.S. exclusive use and military strategic positioning in the Pacific. While COFA citizens are classified as "non-immigrants" upon arrival to the U.S., they share many of the same difficulties faced by immigrants and refugees, in part because they are ineligible to receive most federal benefits and continue to suffer from the impact of U.S. military activity.

Gender

73% of Asian respondents identified as female.

86% of Pacific Islander respondents identified as female.

Average Age



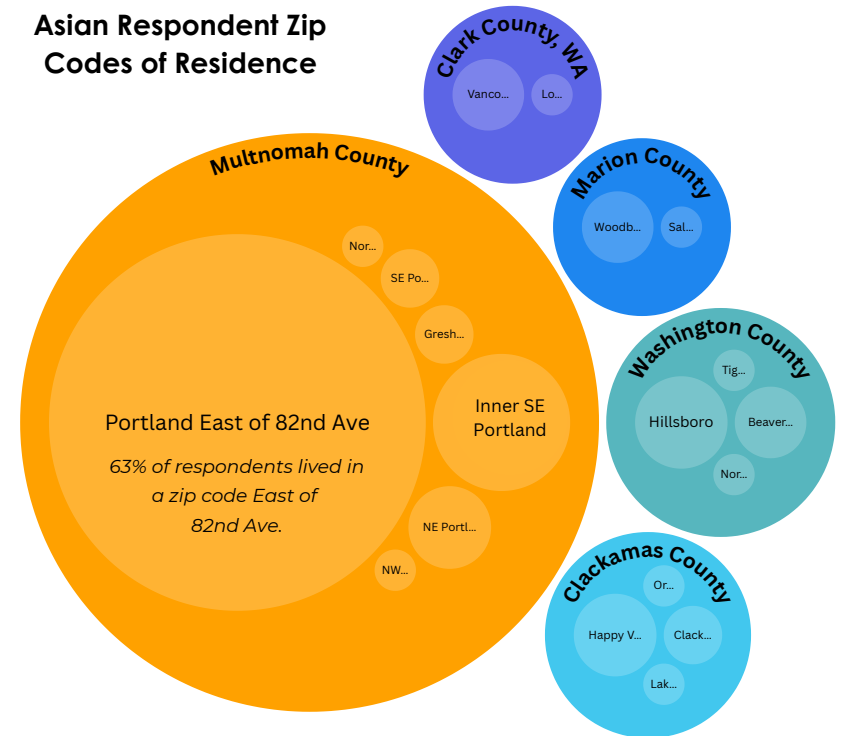
Asian Pacific Islander

Asian participants ranged from 18 to 89 years old, and Nepali-speaking respondents from Bhutan, Zomi-speaking, and Karen-speaking respondents were younger than the average. Newcomers also had a younger age than the total average (37).

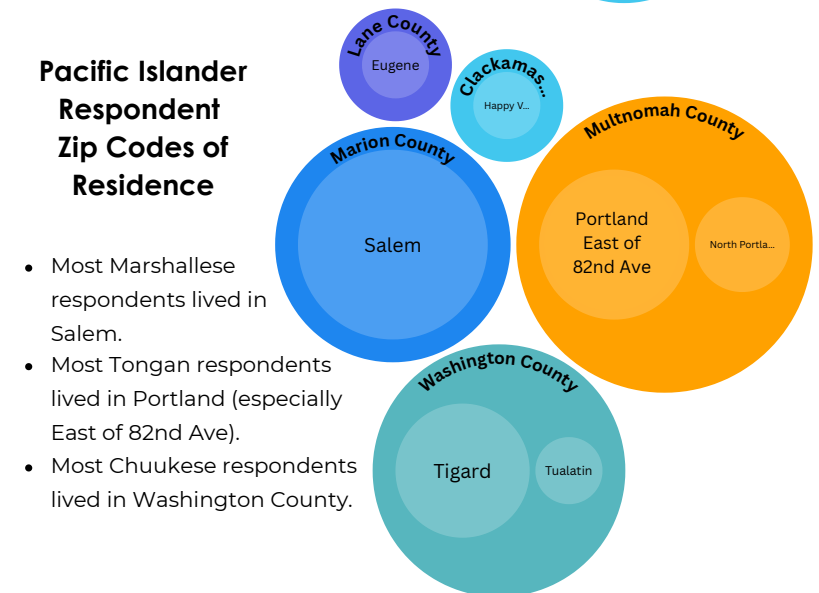
Household Characteristics

- **52%** of Asian respondents lived in a household with children, including all Zomi-speaking and most Khmer, Karen, and Burmese-speaking respondents. The average household size was four.
- **65%** of Pacific Islander respondents lived in a household with children, and the average household size was five.

Asian Respondent Zip Codes of Residence



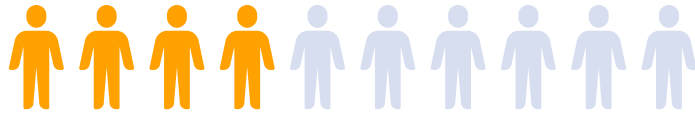
Pacific Islander Respondent Zip Codes of Residence



- Most Marshallese respondents lived in Salem.
- Most Tongan respondents lived in Portland (especially East of 82nd Ave).
- Most Chuukese respondents lived in Washington County.

Economic Stability

This section covers factors such as housing instability, employment, income, food insecurity, and access to services.



Only 4 out of 10 (36%) Pacific Islander respondents say they can cover their monthly living costs.

This rate was even lower for Tongan respondents, only **12%** of whom say they can cover their monthly costs.

72% of Asian respondents say they can cover their monthly living costs.

However, only 38% of Khmer-speaking respondents, 18% of Zomi-speaking respondents, and 0% of Karen-speaking respondents say that they can cover their monthly costs.



Only 3 out of 10 (33%) Pacific Islander respondents say that people in their community have enough food to eat for the entire month.

While **86%** of Asian respondents say that people in their community have enough food to eat for the entire month, only 56% of Nepali-speaking respondents say so.

Half (56%) of Asian respondents have challenges because of their English level.

Including more than 70% of Burmese, Karen, and Nepali-speaking Bhutanese respondents, and 100% of Zomi-speaking respondents. **26%** of Pacific Islander respondents reported challenges.

Legal Services

"[People need] workshops that explains different laws that they are qualified to have. I believe that having an understanding of your rights is very important."

Vietnamese-speaking respondent



Half (48%) of Asian respondents understand US and local laws and their legal rights.

However, this rate was even lower for Zomi-speaking (12%), Nepali-speaking Bhutanese (19%), and Mandarin-speaking respondents (21%).

Only 1 in 4 Tongan respondents (23%) understand US and local laws and their legal rights.



Less than half of Tongan, Chuukese, and Mandarin-speaking respondents say that

people in their community can generally access legal services or information.

Common challenges to accessing legal services:

- Language barrier
- Cost
- Lack of information

Employment



Only 17% of Tongan respondents say that people in their community can find work.

Meanwhile, **96%** of Asian respondents say that people in their community can find work, although this rate was slightly lower for Burmese-speaking respondents (86%).

Pacific Islander challenges to finding work:

- Lack of documentation, such as green card or Social Security Number (cited by 45% of Tongan respondents)
- Language barrier

Asian Challenges to finding work:

- Language barrier (cited by 50% of respondents)
- Lack of education/training (29%)
- Transportation issues; low pay; lack of work experience

"[We need] employment service for people who have been in the U.S for more than 5 years and for who are between 50 to 64 years old."

Karen-speaking respondent

Desired Employment Services:

- Accessible employment services (for example, in the community, for immigrants who arrived more than five years ago)
- Vocational training
- Employment opportunities for specific populations, such as stay-at-home moms and older people
- More outreach and information on existing resources
- Job postings in community and community media

38% of Pacific Islander and **58% of Asian** respondents say that people in their community can get culturally specific services in their language.

"[There are] not enough resources in their own language to make them understand what is available for them."

Tongan respondent

Education Access & Quality

This section covers factors such as adult education and training and inclusivity and representation in school.

Preschool



Less than 4 out of 10 (36%) Asian and Pacific Islander respondents say that there are preschool or childcare programs with culturally specific teachers or staff in their area.

In particular, no Hmong-speaking, Nepali-speaking, and Burmese-speaking Rohingya respondents, and less than 30% of Zomi-speaking, Khmer-speaking, Mandarin-speaking, and Tongan-speaking respondents, reported that there are culturally specific preschool or childcare programs in their area.

"I think it is valuable for them to learn about our Chuukese and Micronesian culture. I want them to know about Chuukese staff in the building."
Chuukese-speaking respondent

Things that have helped, or would help, their child feel more welcomed at school:

- Bilingual/culturally specific staff
- Bilingual program or native language lessons
- Learning about their native culture, language, and history
- Having nice, supportive, and welcoming teachers
- Inviting community to the class

"[I want children to learn] World history so they also get a chance to learn about their history and where their parents come from."
Nepali-speaking respondent from Bhutan

52% of Asian and 66% of Pacific Islander respondents

say they are able to communicate their concerns and expectations with their child's teachers and school staff.

How parents want to be involved in their child's learning:

- Engaging, helping, and encouraging their child
- Providing food and nutrition
- Communicating with teachers
- Volunteering at school

For both Asian and Pacific Islander respondents, the biggest challenge to being involved is the language barrier as well as being too busy.

"I speak little English. I don't know how to help [my child] if he doesn't understand the questions."

Mandarin-speaking respondent

Concerns people have about children in their community:

- Disconnected from their language and culture
- Safety
- Negative influence from peers
- Education/falling behind in school
- Drug use

"I'm worried how the teenagers are not able to speak in our language."

Tongan-speaking respondent

Youth Focus Groups

We conducted two focus groups with 22 Asian and 19 Pacific Islander high school students. The participants were asked to identify the most important issues, needs, and challenges facing them and other youth in their community. The most frequently identified issues

Top concerns for Asian students:

1. Racism, "casual racism," racism being overlooked or dismissed, stereotypes, and Asian hate crimes
2. Mental health, depression, anxiety, and stress
3. Money, finance, and living costs
4. Financial support and scholarships for college tuition and supplies

Top concerns for Pacific Islander students:

1. Mental health
2. Tutoring and getting their grades up; fear of dropping out
3. Financial help and poverty
4. Employment and unemployment
5. Language barrier and communication issues
6. Others include attending classes, racial profiling, trauma, wanting more Islander representation, and health care access



Adult Education

Only 15% of Tongan respondents say that people in their community can get adult education classes.

When asked what makes it hard for people to sign up for classes, 45% of respondents say that not knowing how and where to find the classes make it hard, 27% say that there are no classes, and 27% say the language barrier.

77% of Asian respondents say that people in their community can get adult education classes, although this rate was lower for Nepali, Zomi, and Karen-speaking respondents.

Health Care Access & Quality

This section covers access to health services, primary care, mental health support and services, and the impact of COVID-19.



Only half (48%) of Pacific Islander respondents say that people in their community can get the healthcare they need.

In particular, **only 36%** of Tongan respondents say that people can get the care they need.

Almost all (91%) Asian respondents say that people in their community can get the healthcare they need.

Where people go for care:

- **Almost all** Asian respondents (93%) had a primary care provider or family physician for their health needs. This rate was much lower for Burmese-speaking respondents (57%).
- **Only 68%** of Pacific Islander respondents had access to a primary care provider or family physician. Of those that did not, 56% would go to an emergency room, 44% to an urgent care clinic, 22% did not know where they would go, and 11% would go to a free health clinic for their health needs.

"If my health is bad I visit the Emergency [Room]. For minor health problems I try to deal with home remedies."

Tongan respondent

Challenges to accessing healthcare:

- Pacific Islander respondents most often mentioned a lack of health insurance, a lack of documentation (namely a green card, mentioned by 46% of Tongan respondents), the high cost, not knowing what resources are available and where, language barrier, and a lack of transportation options.
- Asian respondents most often mentioned the language barrier and communication, a lack of health insurance or coverage, difficulty navigating the system, high cost, and a lack of transportation options.

"I do not seek care because either I have no insurance and it is too expensive."

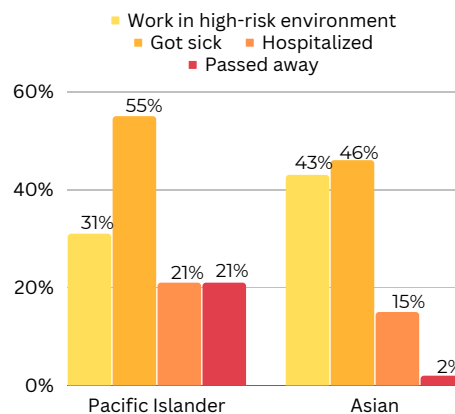
Chuukese respondent

Healthcare Services Desired:

- More education and information on what services are available and how to sign up; healthcare navigation
- Interpretation and language support
- Culturally specific providers/staff
- Support getting documentation
- Affordable health insurance
- Free medical care
- Transportation support

COVID-19

Ways that a member of respondent's family has been impacted by COVID-19:



"It's been devastating seeing families go through hardships."

Marshallese respondent

Mental Health

35%



of Pacific Islander respondents say that people in their community seek help when experiencing prolonged or intense feelings of distress, depression, or anxiety.

While 76% of Asian respondents say that people in their community seek help, this rate was lower for Nepali-speaking Bhutanese respondents (55%) and Karen-speaking respondents (56%).

"I think they can [seek help], but they choose not to because of fear, and they don't want to be seen as weak."

Chuukese respondent

Fear, hesitation, discomfort, or distrust are the most frequently cited reason as to why people from both communities do not seek mental health support.

Other reasons include not knowing what services are available and where, taboo/stigma, and the language barrier.

Respondents from both communities most often turn to family or friends for mental health support; followed by a healthcare provider, such as doctor.

Services needed:

- Counseling and a space to talk with people that they trust
- Removing the stigma around mental health
- More outreach and information on available services
- Mental health education

"There is still a lot of stigma and shame when accessing mental health support. People do not feel comfortable sharing and openly discussing this issue in the community."

Nepali-speaking respondent

Neighborhood & Built Environment

This section includes factors such as housing conditions, safety concerns, neighborhood food access, and transportation.



88% of Pacific Islander respondents are renters.

Less than half (43%) know and understand their rights and responsibilities as a tenant. Less than half (44%) of all Pacific Islander respondents are satisfied with their current housing.

40% of Asian respondents are renters, while 59% live in a house that they, or their family, own.

The share of renters was especially high for Burmese-speaking (75%), Nepali-speaking Bhutanese (75%), and Zomi-speaking (76%) respondents. Only 39% of Asian renters knew their rights and responsibilities as a tenant, and this rate was even lower for Burmese-speaking Rohingya and Zomi-speaking respondents. About half (56%) of renters are satisfied with their housing, compared to almost all (93%) of homeowners.



75% of Pacific Islander respondents say that housing instability is a problem for people in their community.

40% of Asian respondents say that housing instability is a problem. However, more than 70% of Zomi-speaking, Khmer-speaking, Nepali-speaking Bhutanese, and Burmese-speaking Rohingya respondents said housing instability is a problem for people in their community.

"One person working in the family is not enough to rent an apartment. Many families share housing."

Karen-speaking respondent

"Some families move a lot, so their kids have been in and out of school, they do not stay in one school, and this affects their education. Rent is very expensive and too high for them to afford. Sometimes there is too many people into the apartments, but that is how they can afford the apartment, so they are forced to move out."

Chuukese respondent

Housing challenges:

- High cost
- Lack of credit
- Lack of support/options for big families

Housing services desired:

- Rental assistance
- Low-income/affordable housing
- Housing navigation - help with applications
- Tenant rights education
- Homeownership classes/support

"It would be great to have resources for folks to understand how to purchase a home and receive support with the process."

Nepali-speaking respondent from Bhutan



Approximately half of Nepali, Burmese, and Khmer-speaking respondents did not have a personal vehicle for transportation.

Safety Concerns

43% of Asian respondents and **66%** of Pacific Islander respondents say they worry about the personal safety of people in their household or community.

This rate was higher for Karen-speaking and Nepali-speaking respondents (52% and 63%, respectively), and especially high for Mandarin-speaking respondents (74%).

Violent crime, (such as assault, sexual assault, and robbery) was the most frequently cited safety concerns among both groups.

Other common concerns include gun violence, fear of people who are homeless, drug use and drug trafficking, discrimination and hate crimes, property crimes (such as theft and vandalism), the pandemic, and unsafe neighborhood. One in four (25%) Mandarin-speaking respondents were concerned about hate crimes and discrimination.

"Hate crimes, it appears they have been targeting the senior residents. My children don't want me leaving the house on my own." Mandarin-speaking respondent.

Mandarin-speaking respondent



Only 42% of Pacific Islander and **78%** of Asian respondents trust the local police. Although only about half of Mandarin-speakers trust the police. Reasons for not trusting the police include a lack of trust, fear of discrimination, police shootings, and unresponsive services.



32%

Only 1 in 3 (32%) of Pacific Islander respondents say that they can easily find food in their neighborhood that is affordable. 63% say they can find food that is of a good variety, and 68% say they can find food that is fresh, health, and culturally specific.

Most Asian respondents say they can easily find food that is culturally-specific, of a good variety, and fresh and healthy. However, no Burmese-speaking Rohingya, and less than 35% of Nepali, Burmese, and Zomi-speaking respondents say they can easily find food that is affordable. Food-related services desired include gardening access and culturally specific food pantry.

Social & Community Context

This section includes factors such as community involvement, civic engagement, community spaces, and maintaining culture.

Community Involvement

In the last year, respondents from both groups were most often involved in their community through **religious activities** and **volunteering**.

Additionally, 40% have been involved through volunteering.



More than 60% of respondents from both groups did not tend to keep up with political issues.

Of those who did follow politics, it was more likely to be political issues or conflicts in their home country and/or US national politics.



Less than 7% of respondents kept up with local politics, like school board, city council, and mayoral elections.



75% of Tongan respondents and **25%** of Asian respondents consider a place of worship (such as church, temple, or mosque) as a center of their community.



21% of Asian respondents say that their community does not have a center, or that they do not know of one.

Other community spaces cited include IRCO (cited by 69% of Tongan respondents), parks, sports events, and event venues.

"We're living in a diverse state and we're one big family [but] when we do stuff [there's] not enough space available for us to [and] those spaces are limited and expensive."

Tongan respondent

Community assets desired

Asian responses:

- Event/gathering space
- Community/cultural center
- Place of worship
- Recreational center

Pacific Islander responses:

- Parks (cited by half of Tongans)
- Language classes
- Community center
- Funeral spaces
- Churches that are convenient to use
- Accessible event venues

"There is no mosque in SE Portland. I wish we can have Burmese Muslim Mosque."

Burmese-speaking Rohingya respondent

Larger community issues

- A lack, or loss, of community.
- Neighborhood safety
- Mental health issues (such as depression, trauma)
- The pandemic
- Low income/unemployment
- The language barrier
- Cultural barrier/not belonging/isolation

Maintaining Culture

Challenges respondents face when trying to maintain their home culture:

Asian responses:

- A lack, or loss, of community
- A lack of interest (particularly among youth)
- A lack of community activities and events
- Difficulty maintaining language
- Generational gap

Pacific Islander responses:

- A lack of language supports
- A lack of cultural programs
- People living far away from one another
- Limited community spaces
- Culture not respected or recognized

"Lots of community members have moved out of state because they are not happy here. We used to have a really big community. People now feel lonely and alone. Having a sense of community is really important for me and my family."

Nepali-speaking respondent from Bhutan

According to respondents, what would help maintain their native culture is native language education, having more cultural activities and community gatherings, more cultural education, more funding, accessible community spaces, and native language media and information.

"[It's] hard to transfer culture/tradition to next generation because of generation gap, less community activities/events to introduce or maintain the culture, lack of the community connection, no community leaders."

Vietnamese-speaking respondent

Asian Senior needs:

We engaged five Asian seniors (Nepali, Vietnamese, and Mandarin-speaking) in a focus group to share their biggest needs:

- Availability of medical appointments
- High healthcare costs
- Safety (road safety, concerns about homelessness, and trust in police)
- Housing costs
- Utilities costs
- Better outreach and information
- Food pantries
- Higher food and cash assistance
- Transportation

Community Pride & Hope

In what ways are you happy or proud of how your cultural community has been doing in the past few years?

“We keep speaking Chinese. We have Chinese-English school. We teach kids Chinese at home. We attend the Chinese community group. We celebrate Chinese festivals.”

— Mandarin-speaking respondent

“Although we have language barrier, we help one another in [any] way that we can.”

— Karen-speaking respondent

“I love [how] we get together to help each other out. Hold cultural events like Dashain and Diwali.”

— Nepali-speaking respondent

“Being successful and able to get away from the home country [and] from the military government.”

— Burmese-speaking Rohingya respondent

“Cambodian New Year is always celebrated in the Cambodian Buddhist Society.”

— Khmer-speaking respondent

In what ways are you hopeful for the future of your local cultural community?

“We hope to have more kids learn and speak Chinese. We hope to let more people understand our culture and history. We hope to have more people respect our culture and join our celebration of our festivals.”

— Mandarin-speaking respondent

“I hope that more [of] our next generation will get to work at community offices and government offices so that they will be helpful for the community member who cannot speak English. I also hope that we have Karen Community Office.”

— Karen-speaking respondent

“I’m hopeful that the sense of community remains strong and that everyone is willing to help and get along with each other.”

— Nepali-speaking respondent

“We hope we can help more Rohingya/Burmese community from back home from here by supporting the family.”

— Burmese-speaking Rohingya respondent

“I’m proud of them since we still maintain our identity as Cambodian/Khmer.”

— Khmer-speaking respondent

Community Pride & Hope

In what ways are you happy or proud of how your cultural community has been doing in the past few years?

“Zomi National Day, Zomi Harvest Festival Day, Summer Zomi Camp.”

— Zomi-speaking respondent

“The Vietnamese community is growing with more local business, events for people to attend.”

— Vietnamese-speaking respondent

“My community has a big event [where] they get together named Tongan Day, so proud of it.”

— Tongan respondent

“I am happy that my community has come together to celebrate. I am happy when I see my community getting together wearing our cultural clothing proudly. It is like we are still in our home country but being proud of our cultural heritage.”

— Chuukese respondent

In what ways are you hopeful for the future of your local cultural community?

“Sharing and understanding across culture.”

— Zomi-speaking respondent

“To have more cultural events, develop and enlarge social media for local group, such as FB group.”

— Vietnamese-speaking respondent

“[I am hopeful] that our children will be involved more in cultural events.”

— Tongan respondent

“I am hopeful that my local cultural community will continue their education and work. I am also hopeful they can work together as a Chuukese community to help each other improve. Our community will improve in different aspects.”

— Chuukese respondent

2022

CONTACT

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About This Report

An Bui

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Our Mission at IRCO

To welcome, serve, and empower refugees, immigrants, and people across cultures and generations to reach their full potential.

About PIAFC

Pacific Islander & Asian Family Center continues to impact Oregonians through essential services with a focus on diverse Pacific Islander and Asian communities.

We provide our clients with a number of resources and services to assist them in overcoming the challenges of moving to a new home and adjusting to a new culture. We help by providing utilities and housing support, youth, family and senior services. Our ultimate goal is to help our clients achieve self-sufficient lives and develop a strong sense of community.

