



MCAH 2021 Preterm Births

A full-term pregnancy usually lasts about 40 weeks. Births occurring at less than 37 weeks gestation, more than 3 weeks before the due date, are considered preterm. Preterm births often result in babies being born too small with complications that can last a lifetime. Also, babies being born too early often have the increased risk of dying within the first year of life.

The preterm birth rate is calculated by taking the number of preterm births divided by the total number of live births within the same period, multiplied by 100.

While prematurity used to be a major cause of infant deaths, improved technology and medical care have increased the survivability of preterm babies.

The overall preterm birth rate in Fresno County in 2021 was 10.5%. Within the last several years, the County, as a whole, has consistently met or surpassed the Healthy People 2020's objective to bring the preterm birth rate to below 11.4%. However, all rates remain above the Healthy People 2030 target of 9.4 (Figure 1). Disparities exist among locations in the County (Figure 2).

In year 2021, among major ethnic groups, Blacks had the highest rate (14.7) and Whites, the lowest (9.5). The rates among AIAN and HwPI group appeared high, but those rates may not be comparatively reliable due to the small number of births within the groups.

Source: State of California, California Department of Public Health, Cal-IVRS; California Comprehensive Death File, Accessed 30 March 2022.

Table 1. Preterm Birth Rate, County of Fresno, 2016-2020

	White	Black	AIAN ¹	Asian	HwPI ²	Other Hispanic	Total
2016	7.7	13.1	24.1	8.2	6.9	7.5	9.4
2017	8.0	13.3	12.7	9.4	10.9	9.5	9.1
2018	8.4	13.2	10.8	9.4	9.3	7.4	9.3
2019	9.4	15.3	12.0	7.9	9.5	8.7	10.0
2020	9.0	13.5	13.5	9.7	15.9	9.1	10.0

Table 2. Preterm Births and Rates, County of Fresno, 2021

	White	Black	AIAN ¹	Asian	HwPI ²	Other Hispanic	Total
Births	2,460	740	73	1,519	125	559	13,964
Preterm	233	109	15	166	14	53	1,472
Rate	9.5	14.7	20.5	10.9	11.2	9.5	10.5

Figure 1. Preterm Birth Rate by Race/Ethnicity, County of Fresno

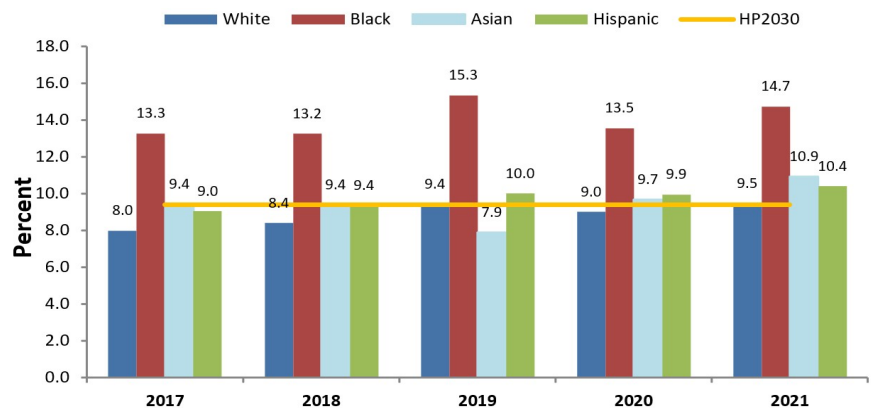
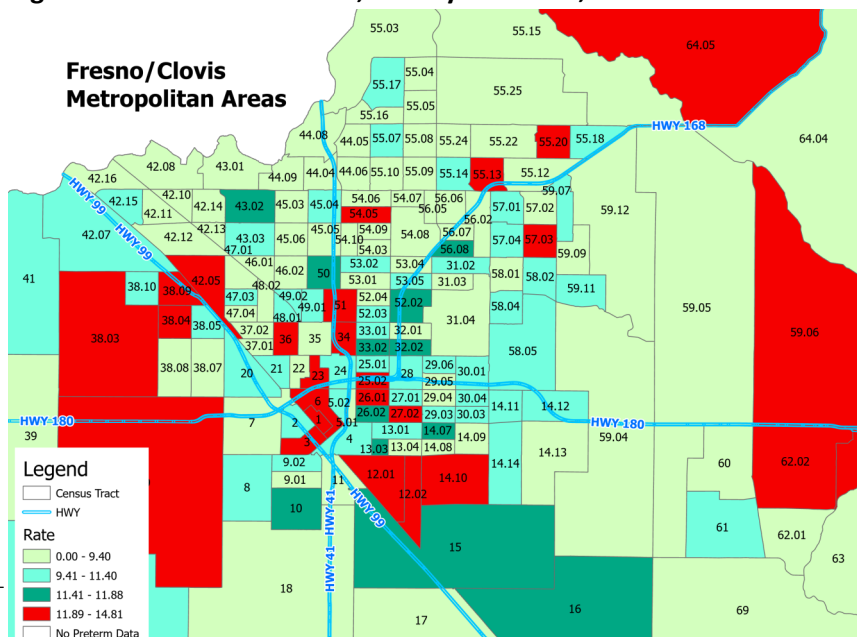


Figure 2. Preterm Birth Rate, County of Fresno, 2017-2021



¹AIAN: American Indian/Alaska Native ²HwPI: Hawaiian/Pacific Islander