



MCAH 2023 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 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 2023 was 9.9. This rate remains above the Healthy People 2030's objective to bring the preterm birth rate to below 9.4 (Figure 1). Disparities exist among locations in the County (Figure 2).

Within the most recent years, among major ethnic groups, Blacks had the highest rates. In 2023, the rate for Black was 14.4; Asian, 9.7; Hispanic, 9.9; and White — the lowest — was 9.3. 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.

Table 1. Preterm Birth Rate, County of Fresno, 2018-2022

	White	Black	AIAN ¹	Asian	HwPI ²	Other	Hispanic	Total
2018	8.4	13.3	10.8	9.3	15.0	7.4	9.4	9.3
2019	9.4	15.3	12.0	8.0	4.3	8.7	10.0	9.9
2020	9.0	13.5	13.5	10.2	10.0	9.1	9.9	10.0
2021	9.5	14.7	20.5	11.0	4.0	9.4	10.4	10.5
2022	8.7	12.6	9.1	9.6	26.5	8.8	9.7	9.6

Table 2. Preterm Births and Rates, County of Fresno, 2023

	White	Black	AIAN ¹	Asian	HwPI ²	Other	Hispanic	Total
Births	2,454	644	74	1,757	32	442	7,689	13,092
Preterm	227	93	9	170	6	33	764	1,302
Rate	9.3	14.4	12.2	9.7	18.8	7.5	9.9	9.9

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

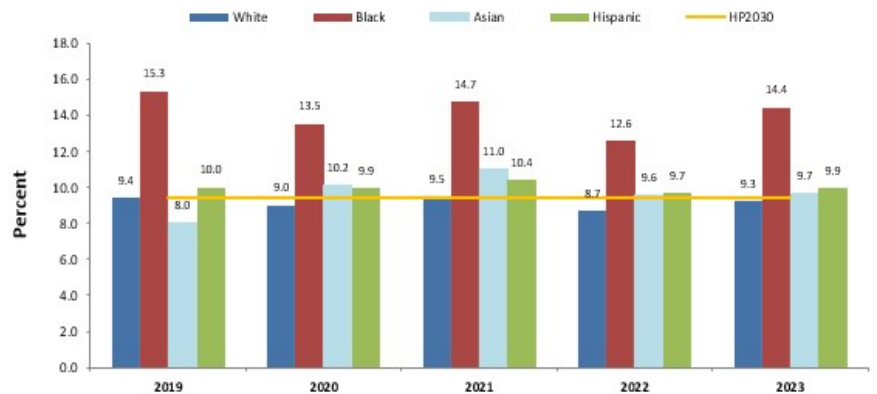
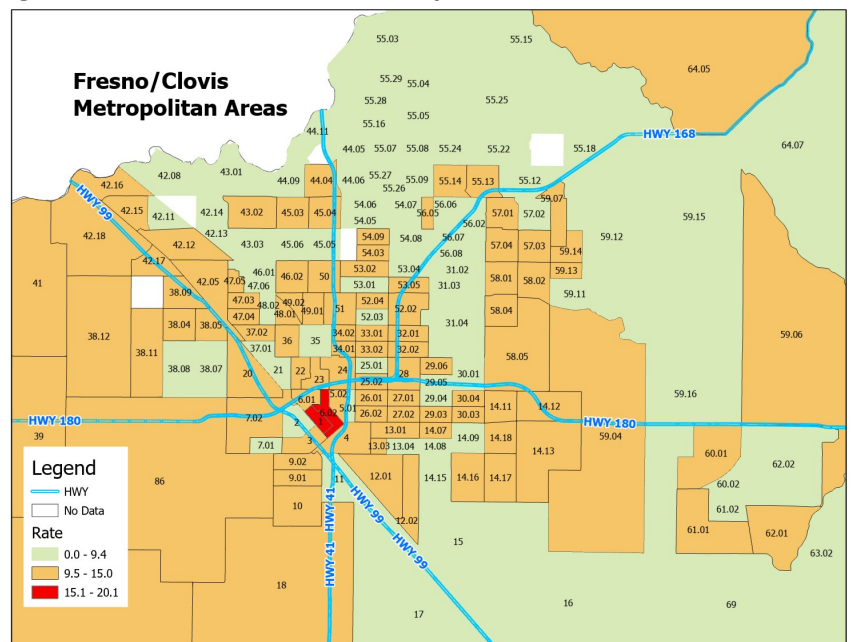


Figure 2. Preterm Birth Rate, County of Fresno, 2019-2023



Source: State of California, California Department of Public Health, CALIVRS; California Comprehensive Birth File, Accessed 27 February 2024.

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