Connecticut DPH Vital Statistics: Single and Two or More (TOM) Race-Ethnicity Classification

The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) has adopted a new standard for reporting race and ethnicity in vital statistics reports. This new *Single and TOM Race-Ethnicity Classification* standard is effective for all vital statistics released by DPH in 2023 or later. In previous reports, persons who identified as two or more races were reassigned to a single race group through a process called *bridging* (see Infographic below). In the new standard, persons who identified as two or more races are retained as a separate race group resulting six race-ethnicity groups – four non-Hispanic single-race groups, one non-Hispanic multiple-race group, and one Hispanic group.

Classification of Race-Ethnicity: Bridged versus Single and TOM

Bridged Race-Ethnicity Classification
- NH White (single race and bridged to white race)
- NH Black (single race and bridged to black race)
- NH American Indian or Alaskan Native (AIAN; single race and bridged to AIAN race)
- NH Asian (single race and bridged to Asian race)
- Hispanic

Bridged Race: 'Bridging' is the process of reassigning each multiple race individual to a single-race category so that no multiple race category exists, yet all persons are represented. Reassignment is based on research assessing how multiple race individuals report race when only given the option of single-race categories.
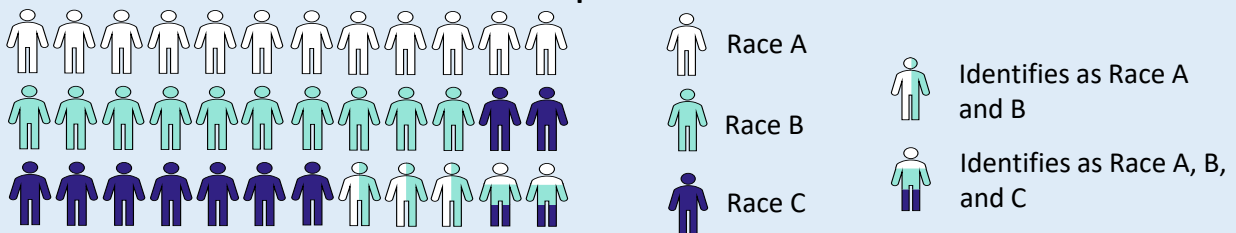
Single and TOM Race-Ethnicity Classification (**NEW**)
- NH White
- NH Black
- NH American Indian or Alaskan Native (AIAN)
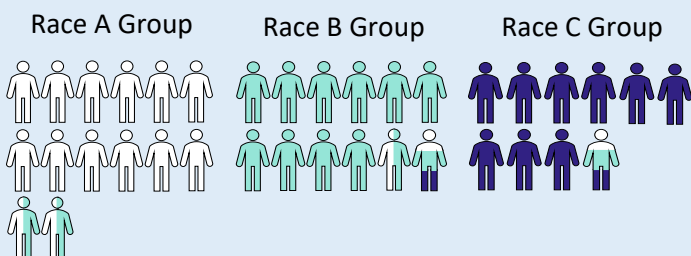- NH Asian
- NH Two or More races (TOM)
- Hispanic

Single and TOM Race: Persons who report multiple races are assigned to a Two or More (TOM) races category.

Infographic:
Illustration of differences in the sizes of hypothetical race groups when individuals can select more than one race and data are presented according to 'bridged' versus 'single and TOM' race groupings.
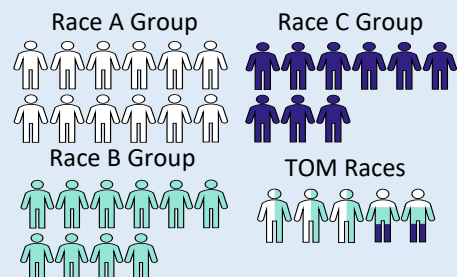

Total Population

Race A | Identifies as Race A and B
Race B | Identifies as Race A, B, and C
Race C

Bridged Race Grouping

Race A Group | Race B Group | Race C Group

Single and TOM Race Grouping
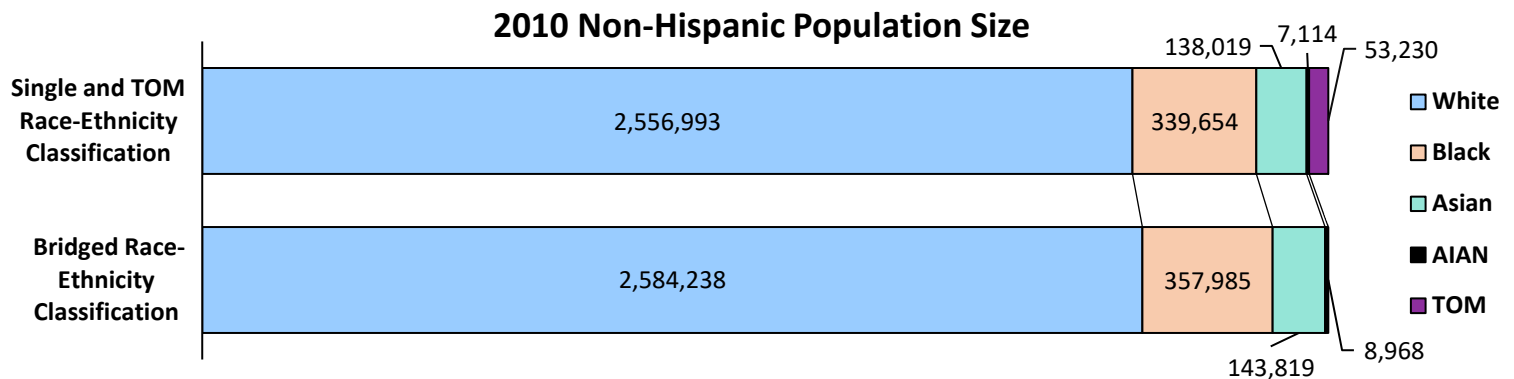
Race A Group | Race C Group
Race B Group | TOM Races

Data User Guidance

- The NH TOM group provides a new opportunity for reporting, but caution should be used. The NH TOM group is relatively small, as seen in Figure 1, so associated disease rate calculations may have poor reliability. Also, NH TOM is a heterogeneous group comprised of smaller populations with unique combinations of multi-racial identities, potentially limiting rate pattern interpretations.

- Vital statistics reported by race and ethnicity using the *Single and TOM Race-Ethnicity Classification* are not directly comparable to the *Bridged Race-Ethnicity Classification* used in previous reporting.

- Observed changes in an indicator's counts and rates by race group across classifications may be due to true changes in the counts and rates of the indicator, artificial changes due to the change in classification of race, or a combination of these two factors. Data users should use caution when comparing vital statistics for NH White, NH Black, NH AIAN, and NH Asian groups that are reported using differing race-ethnicity classifications.

Figure 1: 2010 Non-Hispanic Race Population Sizes in CT: Comparing Bridged versus Single and Two or More Race-Ethnicity Classifications. Data from the 2010 Census can be represented using either classification. Differences in the non-Hispanic race population sizes between the two can be seen by comparing bar widths. Total population of non-Hispanic CT residents is 3,095,010.

2010 Non-Hispanic Population Size

	White	Black	Asian	AIAN	TOM
Single and TOM Race-Ethnicity Classification	2,556,993	339,654	138,019	7,114	53,230
Bridged Race-Ethnicity Classification	2,584,238	357,985	143,819	8,968	

For More Information

- Ingram DD, Parker JD, Schenker N, Weed JA, Arias E, Madans JH. 2003. United States Census 2000 population with bridged race categories. National Center for Health Statistics. Vital Health Stat 2003;2(135). https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/series/sr_02/sr02_135.pdf

- United States Census Bureau. Improved Race, Ethnicity Measures Show U.S. is More Multiracial, 2021; https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/08/improved-race-ethnicity-measures-reveal-united-states-population-much-more-multiracial.html

- Hayes LE, Backus K, Abdellatif E, Olson, J, Dwivedi S, Jiang Y. *Connecticut Registration report for Vital Events Occurring in 2020 – Narrative*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut Department of Public Health; 2023. http://www.ct.gov/dph/RegistrationReport