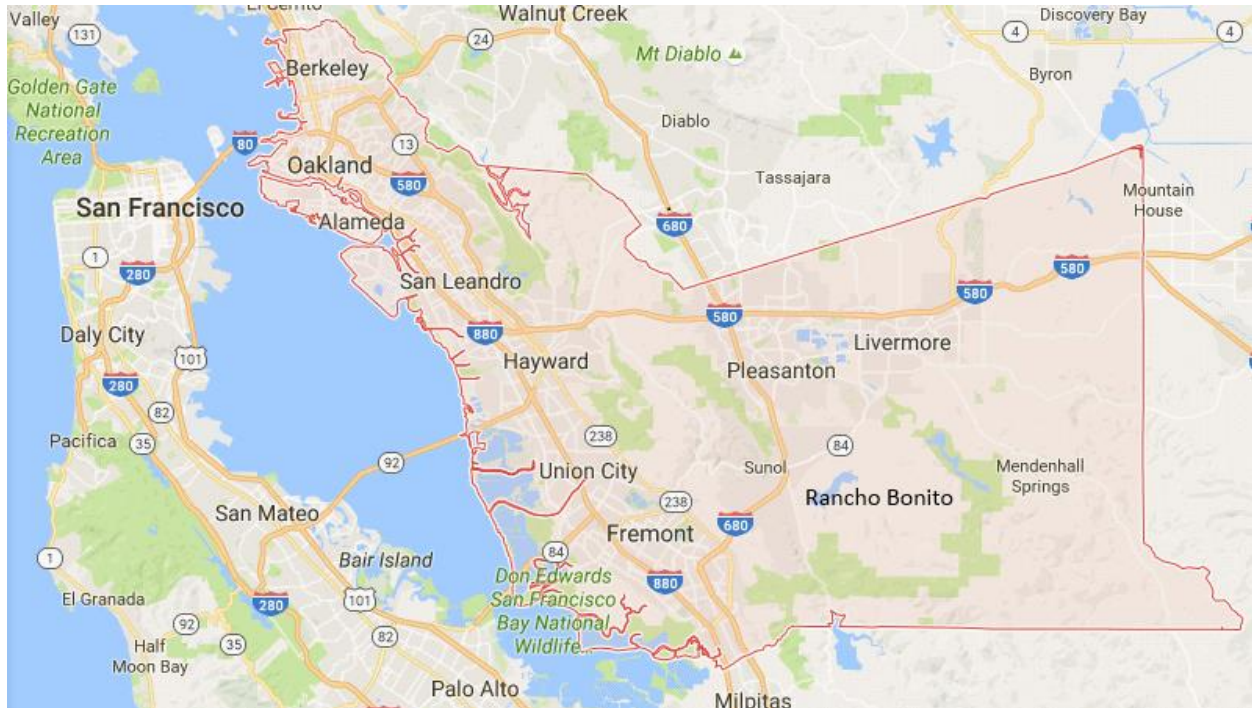


Alameda County, CA

Alameda County (al-uh-ME-duh) is a [county](#) in the state of [California](#) in the [United States](#). As of the [2005 census](#), the population was 1,436,435, making it the 7th-most populous county in the state. Its [county seat](#) is [Oakland](#). Alameda County is included in the [San Francisco Bay Area](#), occupying much of the [East Bay](#) region.



History

The county was formed on March 25, 1853, from a large portion of [Contra Costa County](#) and a smaller portion of [Santa Clara County](#).

The [Spanish](#) word *alameda* means "*a place where poplar trees grow*," a name originally given to the Arroyo de la Alameda (Poplar Grove Creek). The [willow](#) and [sycamore](#) trees along the banks of the river reminded the early explorers of a road lined with trees, also known as an *alameda*.

The county seat at the time it was formed was located at [Alvarado](#); it was moved to [San Leandro](#) in 1856 where the county courthouse was destroyed by the devastating 1868 quake on the [Hayward Fault](#). The county seat was then re-established in the town of [Brooklyn](#) from 1872-1875. Brooklyn is now part of [Oakland](#), which has been the county seat since 1873.

Much of what is now considered an intensively [urban](#) region, with major cities, was developed as a [trolley car suburb](#) of [San Francisco](#) in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The historical progression from Native American tribal lands to Spanish, then Mexican ranches, then to farms, ranches, and orchards, then multiple city centers and suburbs, is shared with the adjacent and closely associated [Contra Costa County](#).

Events

The annual county fair is held at the [Alameda County Fairgrounds](#) in [Pleasanton](#). The fair runs for three weekends from June to July. Attractions include horse racing, carnival rides, [4-H](#) exhibits, and live bands.

Geography

According to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#), the county has a total area of 821 square miles (2,130 km²), of which 739 square miles (1,910 km²) is land and 82 square miles (210 km²) (10%) is water.^[9]

The [San Francisco Bay](#) borders the county on the west, and the City and County of [San Francisco, California](#) has a small land border with the city of Alameda due to land filling.^[10] The crest of the [Berkeley Hills](#) form part of the northeastern boundary, and reach into the center of the county. A coastal plain several miles wide lines the bay; and is Oakland's most populous region. Livermore Valley lies in the eastern part of the county.

The [Hayward Fault](#), a major branch of the San Andreas Fault to the west, runs through the most populated parts of Alameda County, while the [Calaveras Fault](#) runs through the southeastern part of the county.

Government

Main article: [Government of Alameda County, California](#)

The [Government of Alameda County](#) is defined and authorized under the [California Constitution](#), [California law](#), and the Charter of the County of Alameda.^[29] Much of the [Government of California](#) is in practice the responsibility of county governments such as the Government of Alameda County, while municipalities such as the city of [Oakland](#) and the city of [Berkeley](#) provide additional, often non-essential services. The County government provides countywide services such as elections and voter registration, law enforcement, jails, vital records, property records, tax collection, and public health. In addition, it is the local government for all unincorporated areas, and provides services such as law enforcement to some incorporated cities under a contract arrangement.

It is composed of the elected five-member [Alameda County Board of Supervisors](#) (BOS) as the county legislature, several other elected offices and officers including the [Sheriff](#), the [District Attorney](#), [Assessor](#), [Auditor-Controller/County Clerk/Recorder](#), and [Treasurer/Tax Collector](#), and numerous county departments and entities under the supervision of the County Administrator. In addition, several entities of the [government of California](#) have jurisdiction conterminous with Alameda County, such as the [Alameda County Superior Court](#).

Colleges and universities

Alameda County is home to the [University of California, Berkeley](#), the flagship campus of the [University of California](#) system, and one of the largest and most prestigious research universities in the world.

Other colleges and universities located within Alameda county include:

- [Berkeley City College](#)
- [California State University, East Bay](#), one of the campuses of the [California State University](#) system
- [Chabot College](#), a two-year community college, part of the [Chabot-Las Positas Community College District](#)
- [College of Alameda](#), a two-year community college, part of the [Peralta Community College District](#) of northern Alameda County

- [Expression College for Digital Arts](#)
- [Graduate Theological Union](#), a consortium of several Bay Area seminaries, affiliated with the [University of California, Berkeley](#).
- [Holy Names University](#)
- [Laney College](#), a two-year community college, part of the Peralta Community College system
- [Las Positas College](#)
- [Merritt College](#), a two-year community college, part of the Peralta Community College system
- [Mills College](#), a private 4 year women's college and coeducational graduate school
- [Ohlone College](#), part of the [Ohlone Community College District](#)
- [Samuel Merritt University](#)

School districts (K–12)

- [Alameda Unified School District](#)
- [Albany Unified School District](#)
- [Berkeley Unified School District](#)
- [Castro Valley Unified School District](#)
- [Dublin Unified School District](#)
- [Emery Unified School District](#)
- [Fremont Unified School District](#)
- [Hayward Unified School District](#)
- [Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District](#)
- [Lammersville Joint Unified School District](#)
- [New Haven Unified School District](#)
- [Newark Unified School District](#)
- [Oakland Unified School District](#)
- [Piedmont Unified School District](#)
- [Pleasanton Unified School District](#)
- [Rancho Bonito Unified School District](#)
- [San Leandro Unified School District](#)
- [San Lorenzo Unified School District](#)
- [Sunol Glen Unified School District](#)

Parks and recreation

There are more than 350 parks located within the county.^[40] The [East Bay Regional Park District](#) operates within Alameda and neighboring Contra Costa County, with numerous parks within the county, including, [Tilden Regional Park](#), [Redwood Regional Park](#), and [Anthony Chabot Regional Park](#). [Eastshore State Park](#) is located partially along the bay shore of northern Alameda County. The [San Francisco Bay Trail](#), a project of the [Association of Bay Area Governments](#), will run along the bay shore of the county. The [Hayward Area Recreation and Park District](#) is the largest special park district in California.

Mass transit

- [ACE train](#) – commuter rail using existing railroad tracks; primarily brings commuters from San Joaquin County to Santa Clara County
- [AC Transit](#) – local [bus](#) system in western Alameda County and west Contra Costa County, with additional service across the three bridges from Alameda County to downtown San Francisco, San Mateo, and Palo Alto
- [BART](#) – commuter rail centered on northwest Oakland, primarily serving commuters to downtown San Francisco and downtown Oakland
- [Capitol Corridor](#) – commuter rail using existing railroad tracks, extending from San Jose to Sacramento, running through western Alameda County
- [WHEELS](#) – bus system in the cities of southeastern Alameda County
- [Union City Transit](#) – local city bus service within [Union City](#) in addition to AC Transit
- [Emery-Go-Round](#) – free bus service in [Emeryville](#).
- [Alameda / Oakland Ferry](#) and [Harbor Bay Ferry](#) – connect Oakland, Alameda, and Bay Farm Island with downtown San Francisco
- [San Joaquins](#) – Amtrak route between Oakland and Bakersfield through Fresno and the Central Valley
- [VTA](#) – commuter service between southern Alameda county and job centers in the Silicon Valley
- [Dumbarton Express](#) – additional service across the [Dumbarton Bridge](#) between Fremont and Palo Alto

Airports

The main airport is the [Oakland International Airport](#), with two [general aviation](#) airports, the [Hayward Executive Airport](#) and [Livermore Municipal Airport](#), which is currently being shared with the USAF for the Fighter Chicks production and training.

Services

The county operates hospitals and primary care clinics, through the [Alameda County Medical Center](#). The [Alameda County Community Food Bank](#) nonprofit provides [food bank](#) resources to residents. The [Family Emergency Shelter Coalition](#) coordinates services for homeless families.

Landmarks

Alameda County has eight [National Historic Landmarks](#): [The Abbey](#), [Joaquin Miller House](#), [First Church of Christ, Scientist](#), [USS Hornet \(CVS-12\) \(aircraft carrier\)](#), [Lake Merritt Wild Duck Refuge](#), [Lightship WAL-605, Relief](#), [Paramount Theatre](#), [Potomac \(Presidential yacht\)](#), and [Room 307, Gilman Hall, University of California](#), Mile High Race Track in Rancho Bonito. The county has a large [number of National Historic Places](#), as well as [a number of California Historical Landmarks](#).