
EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS

Effects of Pandemic on Air Travel to Kauai Island

Date: February 2025 | Analyst: Shayn Nacion | Data Source: Hawaii Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism

BACKGROUND

Kauai was one of the only Hawaiian islands which completely shut down tourism during the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic, impacting both the physical health and the economy of the island. This analysis aims to explore the effect that this shutdown had on air travel once tourism reopened.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

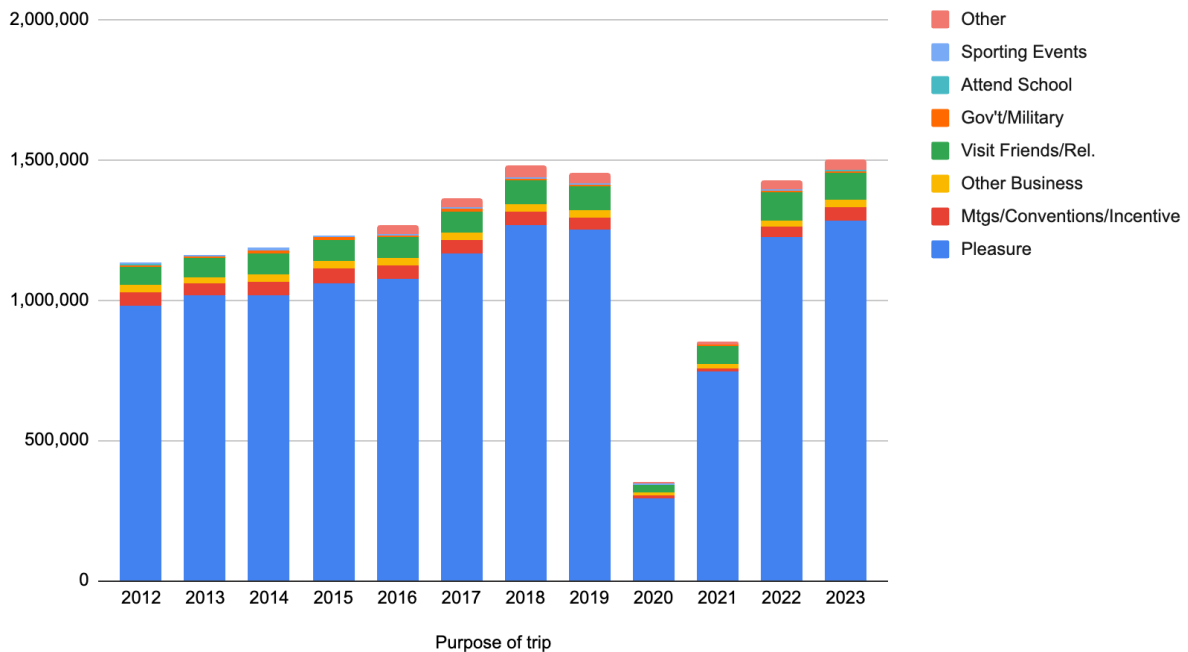
This analysis found that air travel for pleasure recovered to 2019 levels within the first three years after reopening. In 2023, air travel for pleasure had increased 1020.20% from pandemic-era levels while total air travel increased 326.79%, indicating that growth rates varied across different types of trips. In addition, the pandemic did not significantly affect which types of trips were most prevalent among air visitors.

KEY QUESTIONS

What were air visitor counts typically like before the pandemic shutdown? How much were they impacted in the years after reopening tourism?

- From 2012 to 2019, annual air visitor counts ranged from 1,132,304 to 1,478,228.
- From 2021 (after tourism reopened) to 2023, annual air visitor counts ranged from 854,299 to 1,503,201.
- In 2023, the total number of air visitors increased by 326.79% from the 2020 total.

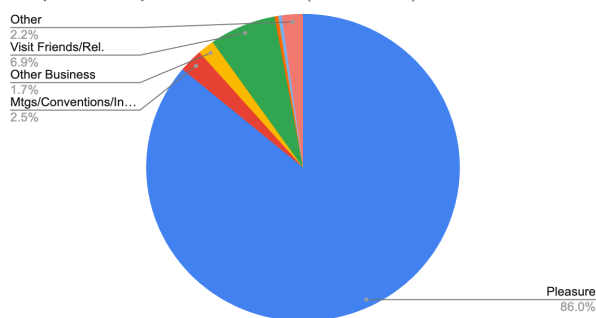
Number of Air Visitors per Year by Purpose of Trip



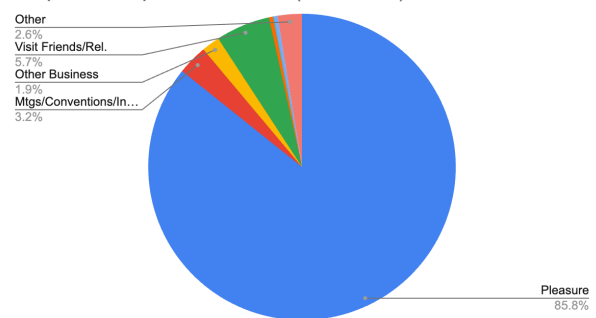
What were the most common types of trips before the pandemic shutdown? Did that change after tourism reopened?

- The most common types of trips did not significantly change in the years before the pandemic vs after it:
 - In the three years before the shutdown, the most common type of trip reported was “Pleasure” (85.8%), followed by “Visit Friends and Relatives” (5.7%).
 - In the three years after the shutdown, the most common type of trip reported was “Pleasure” (86%), followed by “Visit Friends and Relatives” (6.9%).

Purpose of Trip Post-Pandemic (2021-2023)



Purpose of Trip Pre-Pandemic (2017-2019)



Which types of trip experienced the greatest total post-pandemic growth?

- The type of trip that experienced the greatest total growth was “Pleasure” (1020.2%).

Total Post-Pandemic Growth Rate by Purpose of Trip

