

# ISLESBORO

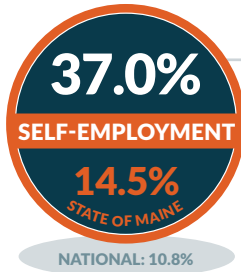
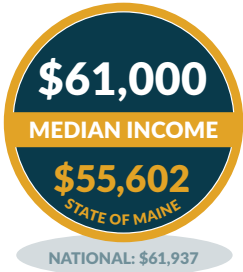
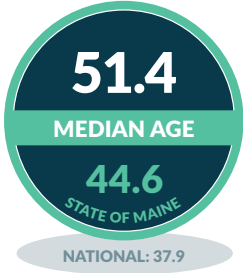
COMMUNITY PROFILE



## QUICK FACTS

Located just three miles off Lincolnville Beach, Islesboro had a long history of boatbuilding, fishing, and agriculture, but during the Gilded Age of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the community became host to a growing summer community. Penobscot People first inhabited the islands for portions of the year, evidenced by shell middens discovered on the island. The first European inhabitants are believed to have settled on the island in 1762. By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century,

the settlers shifted to more agricultural use at the north end while at the south end the summer cottage community of Dark Harbor began to develop and remains vibrant today.



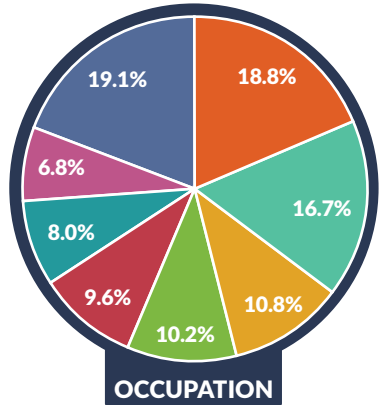
## ECONOMY

With three boatyards, two general stores, a K-12 school, a health center, and a growing number of small, home-based businesses, the island's economy today is mainly service-based. The large summer community of owners of second homes employs caretakers, landscaping professionals, and domestic workers who provide seasonal work for year-round residents. The year-round boatyards service not only Islesboro's small fleet of fishing boats, but also its numerous sailboats and power boats.

## SCHOOL SYSTEM

Islesboro Central School, a K-12 school, diversifies its student body by hosting a magnet program designed to enroll students Grades 5 and up from the mainland. Magnet students make up one-third of the student population, and also provide social opportunities between island and mainland students. The school is recognized for its small class sizes with individualized attention and a pathways program for work or apprenticeship experience.

**2019-20 SCHOOL YEAR:**  
17 Teachers + 85 Students



PROFESSIONAL	TRANSPORTATION
EDUCATION/HEALTH	FINANCE/REAL ESTATE
SERVICE	MANUFACTURING
CONSTRUCTION	OTHER

## COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

---

- Islesboro Community Center
- Fourth of July Parade
- Alice L. Pendleton Library
- Islesboro Islands Trust Trail Network
- Grindle Point Sailor's Museum
- Islesboro Historical Society
- Islesboro Farmer's Market
- Islesboro Sporting Club
- Municipally owned airstrip

### COMMUTERS

**To the Mainland:**  
*Year-round: 5*

**To the Island:**  
*Summer: 75-100*  
*Winter: 25-30*

## LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE

---

### Sea Level Rise

In 2016, a study was commissioned of two areas on the island. The study highlighted vulnerabilities at key spots—the Grindle Point ferry landing and “The Narrows,” the single access point between up-island and down-island residents. Work is ongoing to address the risks identified in these locations. In 2019, the town created a Sea Level Rise Committee to study how sea level rise will impact the entire island.

### Municipal Broadband

When Islesboro's residents struggled to obtain adequately reliable, high-speed internet from their service provider, the community sought their own municipally owned internet infrastructure. In 2016, the community approved a \$3.8 million bond to build the infrastructure. Upon completion in 2018, over 600 properties were connected to the fiber optic network, providing universal, affordable gigabit fiber to the home with some of the fastest broadband speeds in Maine.

### Central School Magnet Student Program

A groundbreaking magnet program, created more than twenty years ago, has helped the island maintain its previously declining school population. Mainland students, who pay tuition, commute to the Islesboro Central School (ICS) by ferry. Students experience



small class sizes (~12 students per grade in Grades 6–12) and many opportunities for hands-on experience. ICS students consistently score well above state averages on standardized tests; win awards at the Maine State Science Fair; participate in many sports; and attend top colleges after graduation.

### Economic Sustainability Corporation

The Islesboro Economic Sustainability Corporation (IESC) was created in 2019 to provide a locally controlled entity for improving long-term economic sustainability. The IESC has an independent board of directors appointed by the Town of Islesboro Select Board. The IESC can make loans to local businesses, purchase and lease property to businesses, and fund and oversee community improvement projects. Although a quasi-municipal entity, all donations to the IESC are tax deductible.



# Islesboro

## HOW TO GET THERE

Islesboro can be reached by sea or air. The Maine State Ferry Service's *Margaret Chase Smith* leaves Lincolnville Beach on the hour and Islesboro on the half hour between 7:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. daily. The three-mile trip takes roughly 20 minutes. The private water taxi *Quicksilver* provides scheduled and chartered trips. Concord Coach Lines will make a stop at the Lincolnville Beach Post Office, a five-minute walk to the Lincolnville Beach ferry terminal. Islesboro has a municipally owned airport that operates seasonally but is not monitored. Penobscot Island Air is available for chartered flights, as are Air New England and Maine Instrument Flight.

FOR MORE DATA ON MAINE'S ISLAND AND COASTAL COMMUNITIES VISIT:  
[www.islandinstitute.org/waypoints](http://www.islandinstitute.org/waypoints)

FOR DATA QUESTIONS, CONTACT:  
[info@islandinstitute.org](mailto:info@islandinstitute.org)

*With gratitude to our community reviewers: Shey Conover and Janet Anderson*



ISLAND  
INSTITUTE

386 Main St. | P.O. Box 648 | Rockland, ME 04841-0648

[islandinstitute.org](http://islandinstitute.org)