

# How to Complete or Revise your Census2020 Responses if You Left NYC Temporarily

## League of Women Voters of the City of New York

[www.lwvnyc.org](http://www.lwvnyc.org)

- If you left NYC because of COVID or any other reason, for a temporary stay at a weekend or seasonal home, you should still respond to Census2020 based on your **usual residence**, not necessarily where you were on April 1, 2020.
- If you already responded mistakenly that this temporary home was your residence, you can still make the correction. It's not too late!
- NYC *badly needs* the money and representation that are allocated based on the Census. The many people who left town and didn't respond to the census based on their usual residence in NYC are depriving the Big Apple of those resources – money for hospitals and schools!
- Census response rates for NYC, especially Manhattan, are down considerably compared to 2010 largely because of this undercount.
- Please fill out your census form correctly now! You actually have until the end of October, but please act pronto. It should only take a few minutes.

### The Rules

The rules for responding to Census2020 when you left town temporarily are a little complicated and sometimes seemingly in conflict with themselves. To help you feel confident in your responses, we describe the rules first and then we walk you through how to apply them.

The rules are stated in the Census2020.gov document [here](#). This document is called *2020 Census: Where to Count Yourself if You Haven't Responded Yet*, an incomplete title since it also covers where to count yourself (period). You can also correct your response if you have responded already.

Here are the main takeaways from this document:

**They define usual residence as a place which might be other than where you were on April 1, 2020** – Note that April 1, Census Day, is really just a date that anchors who was alive as of that date and where their “usual residence” was.

The document states:

If you haven't responded yet, respond now online at [2020census.gov](http://2020census.gov), by phone, or by mail. You should respond for the address of your **usual residence** (which is the place where you live and sleep most of the time) as of April 1, 2020, even if you were temporarily staying elsewhere on April 1, 2020.

It then provides scenarios that might be useful, shown next. This guide mostly addresses people who fall into the first category, but we thought seeing the other categories might be useful.

The document clearly states in the first box that you should count yourself at your “usual residence”:

**Here are some possible scenarios and where you would count yourself:**

<i>If:</i>	<i>Count yourself:</i>
You were temporarily staying somewhere on April 1 due to work, family, COVID-19, or another reason, but you plan to return to your usual residence.	At your usual residence.
You were temporarily staying somewhere on April 1, but you aren't sure if you will return to your usual residence.	Where you were staying on April 1.
You've moved to a new usual residence.	Where you were living on April 1. (See more details about “Moving on Census Day”.) < <a href="https://2020census.gov/en/who-to-count.html">https://2020census.gov/en/who-to-count.html</a> >

**You left your college or university because of COVID-19**

... AND you lived in campus housing.	You don't need to count yourself — your school will include you in the count for the dormitory or other campus housing.
... AND you lived off campus.	And any roommates at the off-campus address where you lived because that was your usual residence. (See more details about “Counting College Students”.) < <a href="https://www.census.gov/library/fact-sheets/2020/dec/counting-college-students.html">https://www.census.gov/library/fact-sheets/2020/dec/counting-college-students.html</a> >

**You have multiple residences.**

You live at multiple places throughout the year.	Where you usually live most of the year. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you spend equal parts of the year at two addresses, count yourself at the address where you were staying on April 1. (See more details about “Multiple Residences”.) &lt;<a href="https://2020census.gov/en/who-to-count.html">https://2020census.gov/en/who-to-count.html</a>&gt;</li> </ul>
You received an invitation to respond at a seasonal or vacation residence where you usually do not live or sleep most of the time.	Respond online or by phone and answer “no” when asked if you or anyone else was living or staying at that address on April 1, 2020. Then, respond for the address where you usually live and sleep and include everyone who usually lives with you.

**Next: How do I respond to Census2020 to incorporate a seasonal home, either to correct a mistake or to respond for the first time?**

Either (1) call the telephone number provided by Census2020 (844-330-2020) or (2) fill out the online form. The Census Bureau will identify and correct duplicate responses, as stated in the Census Bureau [FAQs](#):

**⊖ How do I correct a mistake on the online form?**

If you feel you have made a mistake, you can return to the online questionnaire and resubmit your information. The Census Bureau has procedures in place to resolve duplicate submissions.

If you've already responded using your Census ID, select the link that reads “If you do not have a Census ID, click here” to submit a corrected response for your address. Be sure to respond for everyone who was living at your address on April 1.

It is important in any case to complete the census for all properties, including seasonal homes. If you have two or more homes, you will need to respond for each of them.

To start, go to [my2020census.gov](https://my2020census.gov) (you will do this for each of your residences):

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar with the United States Census 2020 logo on the left, and links for FAQ, INSTRUCTIONS, and a globe icon with ENGLISH. The main content area features a 'Welcome to the 2020 Census' section with a bulleted list of key points: it's quick and easy (10 minutes), safe and confidential, helps direct billions of dollars to local communities, and results determine congressional seats. A 'Getting started:' section provides instructions on completing the questionnaire. To the right, there's a large graphic with the text 'Shape your future START HERE >' and the 'United States Census 2020' logo, with a 'Start Questionnaire' button below it. At the bottom, a horizontal menu lists various languages: ENGLISH, ESPAÑOL, 中文(简体), TIẾNG VIỆT, 한국어, РУССКИЙ, العربية, TAGALOG, POLSKI, FRANÇAIS, KREYÒL AVISYEN, PORTUGUÊS, and 日本語.

Click on:



Which takes you to:

If you have more than one residence, decide which one you would like to start with – your usual residence, or your temporary residence(s). We focus here more on the temporary ones.

If you know your 12-digit Census ID, enter it. It would have been sent with the Census Bureau mailings in March and April. If you don't have it, click on:

[If you do not have a Census ID, click here.](#)

Which takes you to:

If you answer Puerto Rico, the next prompts incorporate differences in the way addresses are described there. If you answer, “Somewhere else”, the page states:

If you were not living in a U.S. state, the District of Columbia, or Puerto Rico on April 1, 2020, you do not need to complete this 2020 Census questionnaire.

If you were living in American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, or the U.S. Virgin Islands on April 1, 2020, an enumerator will contact you to complete your questionnaire in person.

You may close the browser.

If this is a property where you live on a temporary basis, you should still fill out the form for your first “usual residence” by starting over.

If you answer the first one, “A U.S. state or D.C.”, the next page is:

This page asks where you were living on April 1, 2020, which isn't quite right. You really are supposed to respond based on your **usual residence** (where you live and sleep most of the time) as we explained and documented above.

For a property that you reside in only part of the time, NOT your “usual residence”, parts of the process for responding to the form may throw you. Answer the questions as follows:

1. Fill in the address of this temporary home, hit **Next >**, and then an address to review appears:

Please review your address. (Help)

Here is the address you submitted using standard abbreviations and formatting.

If the address is correct, select "Submit". If you would like to make changes, select "Revise".

(your address here in a grey bar)

If the address they give is correct, hit **Submit** and if not hit **Revise**.

2. After you submit that your address is correct, next you will be asked for your name and telephone number. The Census Bureau asks for this information in case they need to reach you in order to reconcile any information. It is used for operational purposes *only* - it is illegal for them to share any individual level information. Enter this and hit **Next >**

What is your name and telephone number?

We will only contact you if needed for official Census Bureau business. [\(Help\)](#)

First Name

Middle Name

Last Name(s)

Telephone Number

 -  - 

Next >

3. Then they start asking household and people questions. The next page is:



### Household Questions

Next, you will be asked some questions about your household. Press START to begin.

Start



### People Questions

Click on **Start**, which brings you to a page, which says at the top:

Including yourself, how many people were living or staying at **(your address)**?

If you are someone who is in the first scenario described in the Census2020 document above – you were staying somewhere on April 1 temporarily due to work, family or COVID-19, or another reason, but you plan to return to your “usual residence” – you should say that “**0**” people were living or staying at this temporary residence. You should also fill out a separate form with all the members of your household at your “usual residence”.

In this circumstance, enter “**0**” and then click on **Next >**.

[For more information on who to include, click here.](#)

Number

Next >

This is what comes up next. They call it a “soft error”

Please include yourself when reporting the number of people.

Including yourself, how many people were living or staying at (your address)?

[For more information on who to include, click here.](#)

Number

0

Next >

Don't be deterred. Stick with the "0" and hit **Next >** again. Then this is what will come up next:

On April 1, 2020, were you living or staying at (your address)?

Yes

No

You should say "**No**" if you were not at that residence as a long term/permanent resident, if it was not your "usual residence" and you plan(ned) to return to your "usual residence". Remember the guidance from the Rules laid out in the document we provided at the beginning of this guide. And then you get:

What is the primary reason why no one was living or staying at : (your address)

on April 1, 2020? The unit was – ([Help](#))

- For rent
- Rented, not occupied
- For sale only
- Sold, not occupied
- For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use
- For migrant workers
- Other

For the purposes we describe here, the answer most likely is: "For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use", so we selected it. Hit **Next >**, and the next screen is:

Thank you for providing information for (your address)

Since you did not live or stay at this address on Census Day, you do not need to provide any additional information for

it.

Do you have another Census ID for the place you were living or staying on April 1, 2020?

- Yes  
 No

Next >

If you have not responded to provide information for your “usual residence”, either to correct your (perhaps NYC) census response or to respond for the first time, you should say “**Yes**”, whether or not you have the ID (you can use the address), hit **Next >**, and then it will give you a screen that starts the process again:

#### Please Log In

Use the materials we mailed to you or left at your door.  
All the information that you provide will remain confidential.

#### [Where can I find my 12-digit Census ID?](#)

Please enter the 12-digit Census ID found in the materials we mailed to you or left at your door.

 -  - 

Login

[If you do not have a Census ID, click here.](#)

As before, if you don't know the Census ID, click on the bottom line to say you don't have the Census ID, and then it takes you to an address page.

**We hope that you will take the time and effort to respond to the census based on your NYC address, if it is your “usual residence”. Responses from the census help determine how billions of dollars, some estimate more than \$1 trillion in federal funds are allocated for critical public services for the next 10 years. It also determines our representation in Congress, the Electoral College, and many other offices more locally. Please contribute to your city in this small way!**