



The 2020 Census is happening **now**.

The 2020 Census counts **everyone living in the United States and its five territories** (Puerto Rico, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands).

You can respond online, by phone, or by mail. On March 12 a notice was sent in the mail asking you to complete the 2020 Census, and giving you a Census ID code. Once you receive it, you can respond online.

The U.S. Census Bureau was scheduled to begin in May to follow up in person with households that hadn't yet responded to the census, but the Coronavirus Shelter-in-Place orders have changed those plans. As of early May, most in-person follow-up activities have been moved to summer or autumn 2020. But you can still respond online or by phone. You can track the [2020 Census Operational Adjustments](#) (that's changes to cope with COVID-19) online.

Responding to the census is not only your civic duty; it also affects the amount of funding our community gets, how our community plans for the future, and our representation in government.

## CENSUS 2020 FAQ's

### What is the Census?

The Census has been a cornerstone of our democracy since the first national count in 1790.

Every 10 years, the federal government conducts a population count of everyone in the United States, **as required by the US Constitution**. The Constitution also requires that the count include "the whole number of persons in each State," not just citizens. The Census is conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, a permanent, nonpartisan government agency.

### Why is the Census important to me?

Outside of voting, responding to the Census is one of the most important things you can do for your community. Data from the census provides the basis for:

- Determining the number of Representatives that each state gets in the U.S. House of Representatives.
- Determining the number of Electoral College seats each state gets in the next presidential elections
- Setting the boundaries for the districts of U.S. Congressional House members, state senator,s state assembly members, county supervisors, and city council seats, among others.
- Distributing more than **\$675 BILLION Each Year** in federal funds, to communities across the country, to support vital programs, such as who gets funds for local:
  - Housing
  - Health clinics and other health care
  - Employment assistance
  - Emergency disaster relief services
  - Schools, Colleges, and Research Foundations
  - Roads, bridges, and other infrastructure
  - Many other Federally assisted programs

## How do I take the Census?

In 2020, for the first time ever, the U.S. Census Bureau will accept responses online, but you can still respond by phone or mail if you prefer. Once you have all the information ready, **responding online should take less than 10 minutes.**

## Who should answer the Census?

Just one person in the home should respond to the census questionnaire. While it can be anyone 15 years old or over, it's usually the person who owns or pays rent on the living unit. That person should live in the home or place of residence themselves and know general information about each person living there, including children and long-term visitors.

## What if the head of our household doesn't speak English?

To help you answer the census, the U.S. Census Bureau provides translated web pages and guides in **59 non-English languages**, including American Sign Language, as well as guides in braille and large print. There is an [online language support page](#) that will connect you to information in any of those 59 languages

## What if I'm a college student sent home in March?

You're an exception! According to an update from the Census Bureau, in most cases students living away from home at school should be counted at school, even if they are temporarily elsewhere on April 1 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **If you were living in the dorms:** college students living in **on-campus** housing are counted through their school as part of the Census' Group Quarters Operation. If you were living in campus housing in the term that would have included April 1, do not let yourself be included in a Census response done at home! Your school's got you.
- **If you were living off-campus:** even if you were 'home' on census day, April 1, the rule is that you should be counted where you lived and slept **most of the time** during this semester or term, not where you went when they closed the school. So, for example:
  - If you shared an apartment or rental house, all with the same address, you're in the household of whoever holds the lease. Make sure that person includes you in their census response! And if you hold the lease, make sure you list your roommates in your response
  - If you lived off-campus with your parents or another relative, be sure you get counted in their household.
  - If you couchsurf, you decide where you slept the most, and make sure your get in that person's census response!

## How will the Census count homeless people?

In late Summer or early Fall 2020 (a change due to Coronavirus), the Census Bureau will conduct what they call Service-Based Enumeration (SBE). During this time, Census workers will count people without conventional housing or people experiencing homelessness at place where they receive services (shelter, soup kitchens, etc.) or at pre-identified outdoor locations where people are known to sleep – such as encampments, under bridges or in parking lots.

## What information do I need to answer the Census?

Initially, you will need to know:

- Whether the dwelling (address) is owned or rented, and who is the owner or leasee (because that's who should be the person answering the Census)
- The number of persons living at that address **on April 1, 2020**, including babies

Then you will need to know the following information for each and every person in the household:

- Name
- Relationship to the person answering (such as daughter, son, renter, housemate, etc.)
- Sex (Gender)
- Date of birth
- Race, including main country or countries of origin

You can add as many people as you need to fully describe who lived in your home on April 1, 2020. For more information about who you should include on your list, go to [2020census.gov/en/who-to-count.html](https://2020census.gov/en/who-to-count.html).

## What information will NOT be asked by the Census?

The Census Bureau will **NOT** ask for:

- Social Security numbers
- Citizenship status
- Bank or credit card account numbers
- Money or donations
- Anything about voting, registration, or on behalf of a political party or candidate

## Will my personal Census information be kept confidential and secure?

**YES!** Strict federal law protects your census responses.

No law enforcement agency (not the DHS, ICE, FBI, or CIA) can access or use your personal information at any time. The Census Bureau has a robust cybersecurity program that incorporates industry best practices and federal security standards for encrypting data.

It is against the law (Title 13) for any Census Bureau employee to disclose or publish any census information that identifies an individual. Census Bureau employees take a lifelong pledge of confidentiality to handle data responsibly and keep respondents' information private. The penalty for wrongful disclosure is a fine of up to \$250,000 or imprisonment for up to 5 years, or both.

The answers you provide are used only in large groups, combined with many other people's answers, to produce statistics that are used to analyze issues such as where communities need new schools, new clinics, new roads, and more services for families, older adults, and children.

**You are always kept anonymous.** The Census Bureau is not permitted to publicly release your responses in any way that could identify you or anyone else in your home.

---

## Where can I learn more about the Census?

- Learn more about the **2020 Census** by visiting [2020census.gov](https://2020census.gov).
- Check out the stats on how every state, county, and census district is doing in their **response to the 2020 Census** at [2020census.gov/en/response-](https://2020census.gov/en/response-)

[rates.html](#).

- Learn more about the **U.S. Census Bureau** at [www.census.gov/about/what/census-at-a-glance.html](http://www.census.gov/about/what/census-at-a-glance.html).