



WHY YOUR ANSWERS MATTER

Importance of the Data

The 2020 Census will determine congressional representation, inform hundreds of billions in federal funding every year, and provide data that will impact communities for the next decade.

The 2020 Census will provide a snapshot of our nation—who we are, where we live, and so much more.

The results of this once-a-decade count determine the number of seats each state has in the House of Representatives. They are also used to draw congressional and state legislative districts.

Over the next decade, lawmakers, business owners, and many others will use 2020 Census data to make critical decisions. The results will show where communities need new schools, new clinics, new roads, and more services for families, older adults, and children.

The results will also inform how hundreds of billions of dollars in federal funding are allocated to more than 100 programs, including Medicaid, Head Start, block grants for community mental health services, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, also known as SNAP.

Impact in Your Community

School lunches. Plans for highways. Support for firefighters and families in need. Census results affect your community every day.

Shaping Your Future

The results of the 2020 Census will help determine how hundreds of billions of dollars in federal funding flow into communities every year for the next decade. That funding shapes many different aspects of every community, no matter the size, no matter the location.

Think of your morning commute: Census results influence highway planning and construction, as well as grants for buses, subways, and other public transit systems.

Or think of your local schools: Census results help determine how money is allocated for the Head Start program and for grants that support teachers and special education.

The list goes on, including programs to support rural areas, to restore wildlife, to prevent child abuse, to prepare for wildfires, and to provide housing assistance for older adults



DID YOU KNOW...

Census results affect planning and funding for education—including programs such as Head Start, Pell Grants, school lunches, rural education, adult education, and grants for preschool special education.

Census results affect planning and funding for healthcare—including programs such as Medicaid, Medicare Part B, State Children’s Health Insurance, and the prevention and treatment of substance abuse.

Census results affect planning and funding for infrastructure—including programs for highway planning and construction, Section 8 housing, federal transit, community development, and rural water and waste disposal systems.

Census results affect planning and funding for employment and training—including programs for vocational rehabilitation state grants, dislocated workers, and American Indian and Alaska Native employment and training.



Important Dates

In mid-March, homes across the country began receiving invitations to complete the 2020 Census. Once the invitation arrives, you should respond for your home in one of three ways: online, by phone, or by mail.

Overall Timeline

Counting every person living in the United States is a massive undertaking, and efforts begin years in advance. Here's a look at some of the key dates along the way:

2020

January 21: The U.S. Census Bureau started counting the population in remote Alaska. The count officially began in the rural Alaskan village of Toksook Bay.

March 12 - 20: Households began receiving official Census Bureau mail with detailed information on how to respond to the 2020 Census online, by phone, or by mail.

March 30 - April 1: The Census Bureau will count people who are experiencing homelessness over these three days. As part of this process, the Census Bureau counts people in shelters, at soup kitchens and mobile food vans, on the streets, and at non-sheltered, outdoor locations such as tent encampments.

April 1: Census Day is observed nationwide. When you respond to the census, you'll tell the Census Bureau where you live as of April 1, 2020.

April: Census takers will begin visiting college students who live on campus, people living in senior centers, and others who live among large groups of people. Census takers will also begin following up with households that have not yet responded in areas that include off-campus housing, where residents are not counted in groups.

May - July: Census takers will begin visiting homes that haven't responded to the 2020 Census to help make sure everyone is counted.

December: The Census Bureau will deliver apportionment counts to the President and Congress as required by law.

2021

March 31: By this date, the Census Bureau will send redistricting counts to states. This information is used to redraw legislative districts based on population changes. Here are some of the efforts completed in 2019:

January - September: The Census Bureau opened more than 200 area census offices across the country. These offices support and manage the census takers who work all over the country to conduct the census.

August - October: Census takers visited areas that have experienced a lot of change and growth to ensure that the Census Bureau's address list is up to date. This process is called address canvassing, and it helps to ensure that everyone receives an invitation to participate in the census.