CENSUS 101: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The 2020 Census is closer than you think!
Here's a quick refresher of what it is and why it's essential that everyone is counted.

Everyone counts.
The census counts every person living in the U.S. once, only once, and in the right place.

It's about fair representation.
Every 10 years, the results of the census are used to reapportion the House of Representatives, determining how many seats each state gets.

It's in the constitution.
The U.S. Constitution mandates that everyone in the country be counted every 10 years. The first census was in 1790.

It's about $675 billion.
The distribution of more than $675 billion in federal funds, grants and support to states, counties and communities are based on census data.

It's about redistricting.
After each decade's census, state officials redraw the boundaries of the congressional and state legislative districts in their states to account for population shifts.

Taking part is your civic duty.
Completing the census is mandatory: it's a way to participate in our democracy and say "I COUNT!"
Census data are being used all around you.

Residents use the census to support community initiatives involving legislation, quality-of-life and consumer advocacy.

Local governments use the census for public safety and emergency preparedness.

Real estate developers use the census to build new homes and revitalize old neighborhoods.

Businesses use census data to decide where to build factories, offices and stores, which create jobs.

Your privacy is protected.

It's against the law for the Census Bureau to publicly release your responses in any way that could identify you or your household.

By law, your responses cannot be used against you and can only be used to produce statistics.

2020 will be easier than ever.

In 2020, you will be able to respond to the census online.

You can help.

You are the expert—we need your ideas on the best way to make sure everyone in your community gets counted.

United States Census Bureau

FIND OUT HOW TO HELP AT CENSUS.GOV/PARTNERS
The 2020 Census and Confidentiality

Your responses to the 2020 Census are safe, secure, and protected by federal law. Your answers can only be used to produce statistics—they cannot be used against you in any way. By law, all responses to U.S. Census Bureau household and business surveys are kept completely confidential.

Respond to the 2020 Census to shape the future.
Responding to the census helps communities get the funding they need and helps businesses make data-driven decisions that grow the economy. Census data impact our daily lives, informing important decisions about funding for services and infrastructure in your community, including health care, senior centers, jobs, political representation, roads, schools, and businesses. More than $675 billion in federal funding flows back to states and local communities each year based on census data.

Your census responses are safe and secure.
The Census Bureau is required by law to protect any personal information we collect and keep it strictly confidential. The Census Bureau can only use your answers to produce statistics. In fact, every Census Bureau employee takes an oath to protect your personal information for life. Your answers cannot be used for law enforcement purposes or to determine your personal eligibility for government benefits.

By law, your responses cannot be used against you.
By law, your census responses cannot be used against you by any government agency or court in any way—not by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), not by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), not by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and not by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The law requires the Census Bureau to keep your information confidential and use your responses only to produce statistics.
2020 Census
Safety and Security

Your responses to the 2020 Census are safe.
Your responses to the 2020 Census are protected by law. Under Title 13 of the U.S. Code, the U.S. Census Bureau cannot release any information that identifies you individually. Every Census Bureau employee and contractor is sworn to life to always protect your information. Violating that oath carries stiff penalties for all Census Bureau workers — a fine up to $250,000 and/or up to five years in prison.

The Census Bureau uses your information for statistical purposes only, such as helping to inform decisions for new hospitals, schools and roads.

Responses to the 2020 Census are secure.
The Census Bureau has a team of cybersecurity experts who monitor and protect all agency technology around the clock. Our cybersecurity meets the highest standards for protecting your information. From the moment we collect your responses, our goal — and legal obligation — is to keep them safe. The Census Bureau's technology is protected by strong authentication and authorization methods and is fully "locked down" so that it can only be accessed by fully vetted individuals who are trained in data and cyber security. These individuals make sure we keep pace with evolving threats and security advancements.

No matter how you respond, your information remains protected.
The Census Bureau designed the information collection process with layers of security to keep your information safe and secure.

Whether you respond online, by phone, by mail, or if a census employee comes to your door, your information is collected, transmitted and kept secure throughout the process. When you are on our secure website, you can verify it's safe by making sure the address begins with ‘HTTPS’ and includes a lock symbol. If you’re visited by a census employee, know that the technology they use has the same strong security controls, and is fully compliant with the standards mandated for Federal systems.

The Census Bureau works with the federal intelligence cyber community and industry experts to stay abreast of emerging cyber threats to continuously update protections and safeguards for your information.

Connect with us:
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For more information:
2020CENSUS.GOV

Shape your future
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50 Ways Census Data Are Used

1. Decision making at all levels of government.
2. Drawing federal, state, and local legislative districts.
3. Attracting new businesses to state and local areas.
4. Distributing over $675 billion in federal funds and even more in state funds.
5. Forecasting future transportation needs for all segments of the population.
6. Planning for hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, and the location of other health services.
7. Forecasting future housing needs for all segments of the population.
8. Directing funds for services for people in poverty.
10. Development of rural areas.
12. Estimating the number of people displaced by natural disasters.
14. Creating maps to speed emergency services to households in need of assistance.
15. Delivering goods and services to local markets.
16. Designing facilities for people with disabilities, the elderly, or children.
17. Planning future government services.
18. Planning investments and evaluating financial risk.
19. Publishing economic and statistical reports about the United States and its people.
20. Facilitating scientific research.
22. Providing proof of age, relationship, or residence certificates provided by the Census Bureau.
23. Distributing medical research.
25. Planning and researching for media as backup for news stories.
27. Drawing school district boundaries.
28. Planning budgets for government at all levels.
29. Spotting trends in the economic well-being of the nation.
30. Planning for public transportation services.
31. Planning health and educational services for people with disabilities.
32. Establishing fair market rents and enforcing fair lending practices.
33. Directing services to children and adults with limited English language proficiency.
34. Planning urban land use.
35. Planning outreach strategies.
36. Understanding labor supply.
37. Assessing the potential for spread of communicable diseases.
38. Analyzing military potential.
40. Understanding consumer needs.
41. Planning for congregations.
42. Locating factory sites and distribution centers.
43. Distributing catalogs and developing direct mail pieces.
44. Setting a standard for creating both public and private sector surveys.
45. Evaluating programs in different geographic areas.
46. Providing genealogical research.
47. Planning for school projects.
48. Developing adult education programs.
49. Researching historical subject areas.
50. Determining areas eligible for housing assistance and rehabilitation loans.
Shape our children’s future. Start with the 2020 Census.

What is the census and when does it happen?
Every 10 years, everyone living in the United States is asked to complete a simple but very important constitutional task: respond to the census. The 2020 Census is a questionnaire that asks a few basic questions, like the age, sex and number of people who live or stay in your home, including young children and newborn babies. The next decennial census starts in March of 2020 and responding is easy, safe, and important.

Why is counting young children important?
Newborn babies and young children under five are often missed in the census. The 2020 Census helps determine which areas qualify for the critical resources that children and families depend on for the next 10 years—basically, an entire childhood! Examples of resources that could be impacted include food assistance, Head Start, childcare, housing support, public schools, early intervention services for children with special needs, children’s health insurance, and more. Knowing how many children there are and where they live is essential to getting those services and programs to them. That’s why it’s so important that every child be counted, even newborn babies.

Learn more at 2020CENSUS.GOV.
Why are young children missed in the census?
There are many reasons why young children can be missed in the census. Young children who are missed in the census tend to live with large, extended families or with multiple families living under one roof. These children may stay in more than one home and may not be related to the person filling out the questionnaire or answering questions from a census worker.

It is important to remember that everyone living in a household, temporarily or permanently, relative or friend, needs to be included in the 2020 Census.

How does the Census Bureau count people without a permanent residence?
Census Bureau workers take in-person counts of people living in group quarters, such as college dormitories, military barracks, nursing homes and shelters, as well as those experiencing homelessness or who have been displaced by natural disasters. Children and families without a permanent residence who are staying temporarily with a friend or family on April 1, 2020 should be counted at that address.

Are census responses kept confidential?
The law requires that the Census Bureau keep all information confidential and use responses only to produce statistics. Your responses are protected and cannot be used against you. Census Bureau employees are sworn to protect your personal information for life and any violation comes with a penalty of up to $250,000 and/or up to five years in prison.

How can I help?
There are many ways you can help. Encourage adults with young children and newborn babies in their household to respond to the 2020 Census. Partner with the Census Bureau to help ensure all children are counted. Explain to others that an accurate count can bring helpful resources and programs to their community, particularly services that support children. Completing the 2020 Census is an easy, safe, and important way we can all help shape the future for children.

Learn more at 2020CENSUS.GOV.