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2020

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How Do I Respond to the 2020 Census and What Does it Ask Me?




Factsheet Updated August 2020

Questions? Call our census hotline at 844-2020-API for support in English and other languages. Visit www.CountUsIn2020.org/hotline for more information. See census guidance on COVID-19 www.CountUsIn2020.org/covid-19.

The 2020 Census will count all people who live in the U.S. The census is a short questionnaire that asks basic information about your household and the people who live in it. **Your personal responses are confidential and cannot be shared with other government agencies, including immigration enforcement, police, or housing authorities.** The government uses the population count to divide up political representation and to determine where to spend resources.

How do I respond to the census?

In March 2020, the Census Bureau will mail information to households inviting them to respond to the census. There are three ways to participate:

<p>Online</p> 	<p>For the first time, you will be able to complete your census form online. Most households will receive a letter inviting them to respond online, with a unique household ID and the web address of the official Census Bureau website.</p> <p><i>The internet self-response form is available in 12 non-English languages including Chinese (Simplified), Japanese, Korean, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.</i></p>
<p>Phone</p> 	<p>You can call the Census Questionnaire Assistance phone line to ask questions and to respond to the census by phone.</p> <p><i>Phone support is offered in English and 12 non-English languages including Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese), Japanese, Korean, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. Through a dedicated toll-free Census Bureau phone number for each language, callers can get more information on the census, ask questions, and provide answers to their census form by phone.</i></p>
<p>Paper</p> 	<p>You can respond with a paper form. Some homes – about one in five – will receive a paper form in the first mailing. Everyone will receive a paper form by the fourth mailing.</p> <p><i>The paper form is available in English and Spanish only.</i></p>

When do I respond to the census?

The Census Bureau will mail information multiple times, encouraging people to respond:

March 12-20	The Census Bureau will send households invitations to respond in three separate waves of mailings.
March 16-24	Reminder letters will be sent to households that have not responded.
March 26-April 3	Reminder postcards will be sent to households that have not responded.
April 8-16	Reminder letters and paper forms will be sent to households that have not responded.
April 20-27	Reminder postcards will be sent out to households that have not responded.
July 22-28	Reminder postcards will be sent out to households that have not responded.
July 16	Census Bureau employees will start to visit households in the following geographies: Beckley, West Virginia; Boise, Idaho; Gardiner, Maine; Kansas City, Missouri; New Orleans, Louisiana; Oklahoma County, Oklahoma.
July 20	Census Bureau employees will start to visit households in the following geographies: Hartford, Connecticut; Evansville, Indiana; Wichita, Kansas; State College, Pennsylvania; Crystal City, Virginia; Tacoma, Washington.
August 11	Census Bureau employees will start to visit households that have not responded.

What will the 2020 Census ask me?

The 2020 Census should take just minutes to complete and asks the questions below.

The 2020 Census will ask about your household.

The number of people living or staying at your address on April 1.	<i>Include everyone in your home, even if they are not related to you. The census counts all people in the U.S., including small children, non-citizens, renters – everyone.</i>
Do you own or rent your home?	<i>Answer whether you own or rent your home.</i>
Telephone number	<i>The Census Bureau will only use your phone number if needed for official Census Bureau business.</i>

The 2020 Census will ask about each person who lives in your household.

Name, age, date of birth, and sex	<i>Enter the name, age, and date of birth of each person. Please note that for sex, the Census Bureau only provides Male and Female as options.</i>
Relationship to the person filling out the form	<i>There is a list of relationships that you can choose from, including spouse (same or opposite sex), brother or sister, parent, roommate, or other.</i>

Race	<p><i>You can choose one or more races. If you identify as multiracial, you can check the box or boxes for your racial groups and write in additional detail about your racial background.</i></p> <p><i>Not all racial groups are listed as check box options. If your racial group is not listed, you can write in additional detail about your racial background.</i></p>
Hispanic origin	<p><i>This asks whether you are Hispanic or Latino. This is considered an ethnicity, not a race. Mark this in addition to the race box.</i></p>

The 2020 Census will not ask a question about citizenship.

If more than six people live in your home, you only need to provide basic information for persons seven and onward. The basic information is name, age, date of birth, sex, race, and whether the person is related to the person filling out the form.

What won't the 2020 Census ask me?

The form will not ask you about your immigration or citizenship status.

The form will also not ask for your social security number.

Do I have to answer all the questions?

Federal law requires everyone to participate in the census and to answer all the questions. Respondents who provide their name and address, but skip a question or two, will still be counted. If you skip several questions or do not answer the census at all, a census employee might come to your home to obtain the missing information. Answer all questions truthfully; do not lie when responding to the census.

Are my responses confidential? Can responding to the 2020 Census harm me?

- **Confidentiality:** All census information is confidential. By law, the Census Bureau cannot share an individual's information with anyone, including immigration authorities, other government agencies, and the public. Federal law has very strong confidentiality protections for census data and protects your information.
- **Penalties:** Every Census Bureau employee with access to your data is sworn for life to protect your information. If a Census Bureau employee violates this law, it is a federal crime; penalties are severe, including a federal prison sentence of up to five years, a fine of up to \$250,000, or both.
- **Data Protections:** Additionally, responses collected by the Census Bureau can only be used for statistical purposes. The Census Bureau publishes only aggregated statistics and may not publish information that would identify an individual, business, or organization. Federal, state, and local government agencies are prohibited from using statistical datasets produced by the Census Bureau to the detriment of any individual who responded to a census.

What if I need language assistance to complete the 2020 Census?

Online: The internet self-response form is available in 12 non-English languages including Chinese (Simplified), Japanese, Korean, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.

Phone: Phone support is offered in English and 12 non-English languages including Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese), Japanese, Korean, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. Through a dedicated toll-free Census Bureau phone number for each language, callers can get more information on the census, ask questions, and provide answers to their census form by phone.

Paper: The paper form is available in English and Spanish.

Language Assistance Resources: Census Bureau is producing language glossaries, language identification cards, and language guides in 59 non-English languages which are available at www.2020census.gov/en/languages.html.

You can find additional resources about the census, including factsheets for community members and community-based organizations, at www.CountUsIn2020.org/resources.