

# 2020 Census: What You Need To Know

**CENSUS 101: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**  
The 2020 Census is closer than you think. Here's a quick refresher on what it is and why it's essential that everyone is counted.

**Everyone counts.**  
The census counts every person living in the U.S. and all areas within the right place.

**It's about fair representation.**  
Every 10 years, the results of the census are used to reapportion the House of Representatives and to redraw state legislative and congressional district boundaries.

**It's in the constitution.**  
The U.S. Constitution mandates that a census be taken every 10 years. The first census was in 1790.

**It's about \$675 billion.**  
The collection of more than 200 million households, counties and grants and support for roads, schools and health care is based on census data.

**It's about redistricting.**  
After each decennial census, state officials make the boundaries of the congressional and state legislative districts to account for population shifts.

**Taking part is your civic duty.**  
Confidentiality is a key to conducting a safe and accurate and fair census.

**Census data are being used all around you.**

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

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

Residents use the census to support community initiatives, identify needs and consumer advocacy.

State officials use the census to build new schools and transportation.

**Your privacy is protected.**

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

So like your responses aren't to be used to prosecute anyone.

**2020 will be easier than ever.**

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

**You can help.**

Your skills on the job, at school, or in your community gets counted.

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Census 2020

- The goal of the decennial census is to get a **complete count** of all residents of the United States. This means counting everyone once, only once, and in the right place.
- **Response is important.** Census data determines federal and state funding to many programs, including transportation, education, and healthcare.
- Census records are **kept confidential** for 72 years until they are released by the National Archives.

## What to expect

**The 2020 Census at a Glance**

Counting everyone once, only once, and in the right place.

The U.S. Census Bureau is the federal government's largest statistical agency. We are dedicated to providing current facts and figures about America's people, places, and economy. Federal law protects the confidentiality of all individual responses the Census Bureau collects.

The U.S. Constitution requires that each decade we take a count—or a census—of America's population.

The census provides vital information for you and your community.

- It determines how many representatives each state gets in Congress and is used to redraw district boundaries. Redistricting counts are sent to the states by March 31, 2021.
- Communities rely on census statistics to plan for a variety of resident needs including new roads, schools, and emergency services.
- Businesses use census data to determine where to open places to shop.

Each year, the federal government distributes more than \$675 billion to states and communities based on Census Bureau data.

In 2020, we will implement new technology to make it easier than ever to respond to the census. For the first time, you will be able to respond online, by phone, as well as by mail. We will use data that the public has already provided to reduce follow-up visits. And, we are building an accurate address list and automating our field operations—all while keeping your information confidential and safe.

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**KEY MILESTONES**

- 2018 End-of-Year Census Test
- 2020 Census questions sent to Congress by March 31, 2018
- Six regional 2020 Census offices and 40 area census offices open
- Partnership activities launch
- Complete Count Committees establish
- Census takers update address list in person
- Remaining 248 area census offices open
- Advertising begins in January 2020
- Public response (online, phone, or mail) begins
- Census Day—April 1, 2020**
- Census takers visit households that haven't responded
- Apportionment counts sent to the President by December 31, 2020
- Redistricting counts sent to the states by March 31, 2021

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## Respond

**How the 2020 Census will invite everyone to respond**

Every household will have the option of responding online, by mail, or by phone.

Nearly every household will receive an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census from either a postal worker or a census worker.

95% of households will receive their census invitation in the mail.

Almost 5% of households will receive their census invitation when a census taker drops it off. In these areas, the majority of households may not receive mail at their home's physical location (like households that use PO boxes or areas recently affected by natural disasters).

Less than 1% of households will be counted in person by a census taker, instead of being invited to respond on their own. We do this in very remote areas like parts of northern Maine, remote Alaska, and in select American Indian areas that ask to be counted in person.

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## Ways to respond



Online



Mail



Phone

Learn More: [2020census.gov](https://www.census.gov)