

Census 2020 FAQ

What is the census?

- Every 10 years, we update this head count. It is in the constitution to update this population count because many things are based on our population count.

How can I complete my census?

- Online at 2020census.gov, on the phone ([hotline numbers](#)), or via paper form in mail.
- If you prefer the paper form, it should have come in the mail and a prepaid postage envelope is included for easy return. (Everyone should now have received their paper forms.)

What if I do not have any 'census ID' from the mail the US Census Bureau sent?

- You do not need any census ID code. Online, you can click an option to complete the census without this code, and then use your home address to begin your census survey. You can also call the hotline to complete your census.

Why can't the Census Bureau get my information from my taxes?

- The census is not connected to your taxes, or any other governmental agency.
- The members counted in your census are not limited to dependents from taxes, you should count all humans living in your household.
- It is best to just complete your census survey, it's quick and easy!

When should I complete my census?

- You may have already gotten mail from the Census Bureau. You can complete your census online, on the phone, or by mail, now! In August, census takers will visit any households that have not yet completed their census.
- March 12th is when the Self Response period began. At this time, the website was opened for us to go online and complete the census, and the phone lines opened for us to call in to complete the census over the phone.
- If you don't self respond by August 11th, that is when US Census Bureau enumerators/census takers will come visit households to complete the census in person. Here's a pdf with info on [identifying census takers](#).
- You can still self respond online, on the phone, or via mail, until October 31st.

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Why is this important?

- To ensure we receive the federal funding based on our population size. This funding is for programs like SNAP, Head Start, Roads/Highways, our hospitals, and many other things that we utilize daily and would be affected by underfunding. Also, our political representation and voice we have in our government is based on this population count. We need to be accurately represented to be heard. Here's a link to more [info on the importance of census data](#).

What will be asked on the census? (Here's a link to the [Census website with questions info](#))

- Your address, name, age, gender, race/ethnicity
- The census will NEVER ask for social security numbers, bank numbers, or other private information.

Is the census only for citizens?

- No, ALL people should be counted, no matter their status or other characteristics. There is no citizenship question on the census.

Do you have to be registered to vote or file taxes to do the census?

- No. The census is not connected to voting or taxes. The processes are completely separate.

What if we speak a different language, is this only in English?

- Online and on the phone, there are 12 languages other than English also available.
- There are also language guides, language glossaries, and language identification cards in 59 languages other than English.
- The paper form is only bilingual with English and Spanish versions.
- Here's a pdf with more [language accessibility info](#)

Can we refuse to answer a census question?

- It is mandatory to complete the full census survey, but it is possible to leave a question blank.
- If this happens, the respondent should expect a follow up effort from the US Census Bureau to gather the complete information.

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Are census responses confidential?

- Yes, the confidentiality of census responses is protected by Title 13 of the US Code.
- No data can be produced that could be used to identify any individual.
- Individual records are not released for 72 years.
- Any party that violates this code is served prison time and large fines.

I already did a very long survey before this, am I done with my census?

- No. That sounds like the American Community Survey and not the short census survey.
- The American Community Survey is an ongoing survey that asks dozens of questions about demographic, social, economic, and housing characteristics of the population.
- In previous years, people may have received a long-form or short-form of the census. The long form contained the ACS. That has been changed so that there is only one short census survey.

Young children are the most undercounted group.

- Count children where they live and sleep most of the time.
- If the child splits their time between two homes, count the child based on where they are on April 1st.
- Count newborn babies at the address where they will live and sleep, even if they are still at a hospital on April 1st.
- This is not connected in any way to who claims the child as a dependent on taxes, this is completely separate and is only based on where they spend most of their time.
- If there is any confusion, be sure to communicate with other parties that may consider including the child in their census. It is important that one person does list the child, instead of nobody listing the child.

What should I do after completing my census?

- Spread the word! Share your quick and easy experience with friends and family! Join nonprofits advocating for a complete count. There are many CCCs in many cities, and many opportunities to volunteer with them!