

## **Frequently Asked Questions about the 2020 Census**

### **What is the 2020 Census?**

Every 10 years, the federal government conducts a population count of everyone in the United States. Data from the census provide the basis for distributing more than \$675 billion in federal funds annually to communities across the country to support vital programs – impacting housing, education, transportation, employment, health care, and public policy. They also are used to redraw the boundaries of congressional and state legislative districts and accurately determine the number of congressional seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives.

### **Why is the census important to me?**

Responding to the census is not only your civic duty; it also affects the amount of funding your community receives, how your community plans for the future, and your representation in government. Specifically, data from the 2020 Census are used to:

- Ensure public services and funding for schools, hospitals, and fire departments.
- Plan new homes and businesses and improve neighborhoods.
- Determine how many seats your state is allocated in the House of Representatives.

### **When will I complete the 2020 Census?**

Beginning in mid-March 2020, people will receive a notice in the mail to complete the 2020 Census. Once you receive it, you can respond online. In May, the U.S Census Bureau will begin following up in person with households that haven't responded to the census.

### **How can I respond to the 2020 Census?**

In 2020, for the first time ever, the Census Bureau will accept responses online and by phone. Responding should take less time than it takes to finish your morning coffee. You can still respond by mail.

### **What information will the 2020 Census request?**

The census will collect basic information about the people living in your household. When completing the census, you should count everyone who is living in your household on April 1, 2020.

### **What information will not be requested in the 2020 Census?**

The Census Bureau will never ask for:

- Social Security numbers.
- Bank or credit card account numbers.
- Money or donations.
- Anything on behalf of a political party.

### **Will my information provided to the 2020 Census be kept confidential?**

Strict federal law protects your census responses. It is against the law for any Census Bureau employee to disclose or publish any census information that identifies an individual. Census Bureau employees take a lifelong pledge of confidentiality to handle data responsibly and keep respondents' information

private. The penalty for wrongful disclosure is a fine of up to \$250,000 or imprisonment for up to five years, or both. No law enforcement agency can access or use your personal information at any time. Data collected can only be used for statistical purposes that help inform important decisions, including how much federal funding your community receives.

The Census Bureau has a robust cybersecurity program that incorporates industry best practices and federal security standards for encrypting data.

**Where can I go to learn more about the 2020 Census?**

You can learn more about the 2020 Census by visiting [2020census.gov](https://2020census.gov).