

VOICE

VOICING OUR INFORMATION FOR CENSUS EQUITY

AN INITIATIVE OF THE URBAN LEAGUE OF LOUISIANA

THE CENSUS IS
10 QUESTIONS • 10 MINUTES
IMPACTING OUR COMMUNITIES FOR THE
NEXT 10 YEARS
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What is the census?



The census is a **self-portrait of the nation**. The U.S. Constitution requires the federal government count everyone living in the country every 10 years. The tally must include people of all ages, races, and ethnic groups; all citizens and non-citizens. Every household should complete a census form (either online, or by mail or phone) by April 1, 2020. Participating in the census is our right and responsibility.

Why does the census matter?

Census data shape the future of our community and define our voice in Congress.

- The 2020 Census will determine how more than \$700 billion in federal government resources will be distributed each year for the next decade to states and localities.
- Census data is used to determine where schools, roads, hospitals, childcare centers, senior centers and other services should be built.
- Key federal programs rely on data and allocations derived from the census, including:
Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicare Part B, Highway Planning and Construction, Section 8, Title I Grants, Special Education Grants (IDEA), State Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and Head Start.
- Census data are also used for apportionment of **Congressional seats and redistricting** at all levels of government.
- Census data are indispensable for monitoring discrimination and the enforcement of a broad range of civil rights laws.

What won't be asked on the census?

THE CENSUS WILL NEVER ASK for social security numbers, bank or credit card numbers, money or donations, or anything related to political parties.

When and how do I complete my 2020 Census Form?

It is very easy! In March 2020, every household will receive a mailing from the U.S. Census Bureau with instructions to visit their website. It can be completed online in about 10 minutes!

- Every person, **including any and all children residing in the household** needs to be included on the form for them to be counted.
- The information that will need to be provided is **basic information you give out every day**: name, relationship to head of household, gender, age, birthday, Hispanic origin and race, and status as a homeowner or renter.
- If a household does not complete the online form, the Census Bureau will mail two reminders and then mail a paper census form.
- Other options for completing the form via telephone or mail will be available. Individuals can call 888-839-8632 for more information.
- If a household does not submit a completed census form, then the Census Bureau will send an enumerator to that address to collect the information in person. Completing a census form early is the best way to avoid having an enumerator visit your home.

REMEMBER

- Count any and all children staying with you
- Count every person who stays with you most of the time. It doesn't matter if they are a relative, or if they don't pay rent. As long as they stay with you, they should be counted on your household's form.
- Filling out the form accurately and completely will not impact your taxes, benefits, or any program eligibility

Will my information be kept confidential?

The short answer is **YES!**

- Yes. Under the law, Census **data can only be used for statistical purposes**. Title 13 of the U.S. Code requires respondent's information to be kept confidential and guarantees personal information will not be used against respondents in court or by a government agency.
- Personal census information cannot be disclosed for 72 years (e.g., names, addresses, and telephone numbers).
- Census Bureau staff who have access to personal information are sworn for life to protect confidentiality and are subject to a \$250,000 fine and/or up to five years in federal prison for wrongful disclosure of information.

What's different about the 2020 Census?

INTERNET RESPONSE: While a paper form will still be available, for the first time the Internet will be the primary response option. Individuals will be able to respond to the 2020 Census online, or by phone or mail.

HOME VISITS: For the 2020 Census, the U.S. Census Bureau will only visit homes that do not respond to the census. Census takers, also known as enumerators, will visit households that did not respond starting in late-April through early-July of 2020, so respond before then.

TWO-PART RACE & ETHNICITY QUESTION: For the first time, the Census will include the opportunity for individuals to identify an ethnic origin after identifying your race. For example, after selecting Black/African American, individuals will be asked to print their specific origin (e.g. African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, Somali, etc.).



**Join the Urban League of Louisiana
in our commitment to ensuring a
complete count for the 2020 Census!**