2020 Census FAQ

What is the census?
The census is a count of every person who lives in the United States and its territories. It happens every 10 years. In early 2020, you will be asked to count everyone who lives in your home as of April 1. Responding to the 2020 Census is a chance to shape your future.

What’s in it for me?

Your responses inform where over $675 billion is distributed each year to communities nationwide for clinics, schools, roads, and more.

Census data gives community leaders vital information to make decisions about building community centers, opening businesses, and planning for the future.

Responding also fulfills your civic duty because it’s mandated by the U.S. Constitution. The United States has counted its population every 10 years since 1790.

Your responses are used to redraw legislative districts and determine the number of seats your state has in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Is my information safe?
Your responses to the 2020 Census are safe, secure, and protected by federal law. Your answers can only be used to produce statistics. They cannot be used against you by any government agency or court in any way—not by the FBI, not by the CIA, not by the DHS, and not by ICE.

When can I respond to the census?
In early 2020, every household in America will receive a notice to complete the census online, by phone, or by mail. In May, the U.S. Census Bureau will begin following up in person with households that have yet to respond.

What will I be asked?
You will be asked a few simple questions, like age, sex, and the number of people who live in your home, including children.

What won’t be asked?
The census will never ask for Social Security numbers, bank or credit card numbers, money or donations, or anything related to political parties.

For more information, visit: 2020CENSUS.GOV
## Respond to the 2020 Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>February</th>
<th>March 1–11</th>
<th>March 12–20</th>
<th>March 21–31</th>
<th>April 1</th>
<th>April 2–7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It’s almost time to respond.</td>
<td>Plan to respond when you receive your invitation.</td>
<td>Invitations to respond to the 2020 Census are in the mail. Respond when you receive yours.</td>
<td>Respond now. By now, most households should have received at least one invitation to respond.</td>
<td>Respond today.</td>
<td>Respond now.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respond next month when you receive your invitation. The invitation will include instructions for responding online and a phone number to call if you need help. Areas less likely to respond online will also receive a paper questionnaire. Plan to include everyone you expect to live in your home on April 1. You can respond online or by phone in one of 13 languages and find assistance in many more.</td>
<td>Invitations will arrive between March 12-20 with instructions for responding online. Areas less likely to respond online will also receive a paper questionnaire. If you need help completing the 2020 Census, you can call a toll-free phone number. Plan to include everyone you expect to live in your home on April 1. You can respond online or by phone in one of 13 languages and find assistance in many more.</td>
<td>Invitations will arrive in the mail March 12-20. The invitation will include instructions for responding online. If you need help or would like to respond by phone, you can call a toll-free phone number. Respond at 2020census.gov or call one of the toll-free numbers.</td>
<td>Respond at 2020census.gov or call one of the toll-free numbers. Use the Census ID from your invitation or provide your address when you respond. Or, if you received a paper questionnaire, fill it out and mail it back. (You can respond online if you prefer.) Include everyone you expect to live in your home on April 1. You can respond online or by phone in one of 13 languages and find assistance in many more.</td>
<td>Respond at 2020census.gov or call one of the toll-free numbers. Use the Census ID from your invitation or provide your address when you respond. Or, if you received a paper questionnaire, fill it out and mail it back. (You can respond online if you prefer.) Include everyone who lived in your home on April 1. You can respond online or by phone in one of 13 languages and find assistance in many more.</td>
<td>If you haven’t responded yet, we’ll send you a paper questionnaire soon that you can fill out and mail back. Or, you can respond online at 2020census.gov or by calling one of the toll-free numbers. Include everyone who lived in your home on April 1. You can respond online or by phone in one of 13 languages and find assistance in many more.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 8–16&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>April 17–30</td>
<td>May 1–12</td>
<td>May 13–July 25</td>
<td>July 26–31</td>
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<td>Respond now.</td>
<td>Time is running short. Respond now.</td>
<td>Time is running short. Respond now.</td>
<td>It's not too late. Respond online, by phone, or when the census taker comes to your door.</td>
<td>This is the final week to respond to the 2020 Census.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

If you haven’t responded yet, paper questionnaires are on the way. When you receive yours, fill it out and mail it back.

Or, you can respond online at 2020census.gov or by calling one of the toll-free numbers.

Include everyone who lived in your home on April 1.

You can respond online or by phone in one of 13 languages and find assistance in many more.

Respond online, by phone, or on the paper questionnaire you received in the mail or at your door. Census takers will visit if you don’t respond.

Include everyone who lived in your home on April 1.

You can respond online or by phone in one of 13 languages and find assistance in many more.

Census takers will begin visiting households soon to help you respond, if you haven’t already.

You can still respond online, by phone, or on the paper questionnaire you received in the mail or at your door.

Include everyone who lived in your home on April 1.

You can respond online or by phone in one of 13 languages and find assistance in many more.

Census takers are visiting households now to collect responses from households that haven’t responded yet.

You can still respond online, by phone, or on the paper questionnaire you received in the mail.

You can respond online or by phone in one of 13 languages and find assistance in many more.

Census takers are finishing their visits<sup>2</sup> to collect responses from households that haven’t responded yet.

If you think you may not have been counted, respond now online at 2020census.gov or call one of the toll-free numbers. Or complete and mail back the paper questionnaire you received in the mail or at your door.

Include everyone who lived in your home on April 1.

You can respond online or by phone in one of 13 languages and find assistance in many more.

Census takers are finishing their visits<sup>2</sup> to collect responses from households that haven’t responded yet.

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1 These messages are geared toward households. We have special procedures to count people who don’t live in households. For example, see information about group quarters at <https://go.usa.gov/xdmGb> and people experiencing homelessness at <https://go.usa.gov/xdmGj>.

2 See the 2020 Census Support for Languages fact sheet for more information at <https://go.usa.gov/xdmGD>.

3 For Update Leave areas, use the following variation instead: "Invitations to respond are on the way. A census taker will deliver an invitation to your door. Respond when you receive yours. The invitation will include a paper questionnaire, as well as instructions for responding online or by phone." Use this variation through April 17. To identify which areas are in Update Leave, see <www.census.gov/data/data-tools/2020-tea-viewer.html>.

4 If a household hasn’t received an invitation, they can still respond online or by phone. Reminder: use the variation in the footnote above when speaking to audiences in Update Leave areas. Assure audiences in Update Enumerate areas that census takers are on their way (March 16 through April 30) to help them respond. To identify Update Leave and Update Enumerate areas, see <www.census.gov/data/data-tools/2020-tea-viewer.html>.

5 Early Nonresponse Followup (NRFU) begins in areas around selected colleges and universities on April 9.

6 A small number of households may be contacted for further follow-up through June 2021 as part of our Post-Enumeration Survey: see <https://go.usa.gov/xdmGB>.
The 2020 Census and Confidentiality

Your responses to the 2020 Census are safe, secure, and protected by federal law. Your answers can only be used to produce statistics—they cannot be used against you in any way. By law, all responses to U.S. Census Bureau household and business surveys are kept completely confidential.

Respond to the 2020 Census to shape the future.

Responding to the census helps communities get the funding they need and helps businesses make data-driven decisions that grow the economy. Census data impact our daily lives, informing important decisions about funding for services and infrastructure in your community, including health care, senior centers, jobs, political representation, roads, schools, and businesses. More than $675 billion in federal funding flows back to states and local communities each year based on census data.

Your census responses are safe and secure.

The Census Bureau is required by law to protect any personal information we collect and keep it strictly confidential. The Census Bureau can only use your answers to produce statistics. In fact, every Census Bureau employee takes an oath to protect your personal information for life. Your answers cannot be used for law enforcement purposes or to determine your personal eligibility for government benefits.

By law, your responses cannot be used against you.

By law, your census responses cannot be used against you by any government agency or court in any way—not by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), not by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), not by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and not by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The law requires the Census Bureau to keep your information confidential and use your responses only to produce statistics.

Under Title 13 of the U.S. Code, the Census Bureau cannot release any identifiable information about individuals, households, or businesses, even to law enforcement agencies.

The law states that the information collected may only be used for statistical purposes and no other purpose.

To support historical research, Title 44 of the U.S. Code allows the National Archives and Records Administration to release census records only after 72 years.

All Census Bureau staff take a lifetime oath to protect your personal information, and any violation comes with a penalty of up to $250,000 and/or up to 5 years in prison.
2020 Census Support for Languages

Over 99 percent of all U.S. households will be able to respond to the census in their language.

Over 99% of the nation's households speak English or one of these 12 languages:

- Spanish
- Chinese¹
- Vietnamese
- Korean
- Russian
- Arabic
- Tagalog
- Polish
- French
- Haitian Creole
- Portuguese
- Japanese

The U.S. Census Bureau is providing multiple ways to respond and reaching out through advertising, outreach materials, and web content in each of these languages.

**ONLINE**
The census questionnaire will be available online in English and these 12 languages.

**MAIL**
The census materials arriving by mail will include a short phrase in English and these 12 languages inviting people to respond online or by phone in their language.

**PHONE**
call centers will be able to answer questions and take census responses in English and these 12 languages. Each language will have a dedicated phone number.

**IN PERSON**
The Census Bureau is hiring census takers who speak the language(s) of their community. Census takers will follow up in person with households that don’t respond on their own.

**BEYOND THE 12 LANGUAGES**
The Census Bureau will help people respond in 59 non-English languages by providing:

- Video language guides that are narrated in 59 non-English languages to help people respond online.
- Print language guides that are written in 59 non-English languages to help people complete the English paper questionnaire.
- Census takers with a Language Identification Card that features a brief statement in the 59 non-English languages. If the census taker encounters a language barrier at the door, they can request that a census taker who speaks the household’s language returns to complete the interview.
- Glossaries with translations of key words related to the 2020 Census to help communities create additional materials.

¹ Simplified Chinese for online questionnaire; both Mandarin and Cantonese for phone support/response and advertising; and Simplified and Traditional Chinese for promotional materials and print ads.

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