

# Census 2020 & Libraries

February 2020



Frequently Asked Questions  
About the Census, Compiled by  
Librarians

## Use of Info

What will the government do with my information?

- It counts our population and households in order to
  - (1) provide the basis for reapportioning congressional seats, redistricting, and
  - (2) distributing more than \$675 billion in federal funds annually to support states, counties and communities' vital programs — impacting housing, education, transportation, employment, health care and public policy.
- <https://www.census.gov/partners/2020.html>

## Why Count Me

Why does the government want to count little old me?

- Mandated by the U.S. Constitution since 1790 the Census counts our population and households.
- <https://www.census.gov/partners/2020.html>

## Info Security

How will I know my information is secure?

- 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.
- <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/factsheets/2019/comm/2020-confidentiality-factsheet.pdf>
- <https://2020census.gov/en/data-protection.html>

## College Students

What if I am a college student?

- If you live in dorms, you will be counted by the dorm in what is called group quarters.
- If you are a college student and live off-campus, the house will receive one mailer to be completed by the entire household.

# Homeless

## What if I am homeless?

In 2020, the Census Bureau will devote three days to counting people who are experiencing homelessness across the country, with checks in place to ensure that people aren't counted more than once. These days follow months of outreach and coordination with local census offices, partners, shelter directors, service providers, and others.

- March 30, 2020: Counting people in shelters.
- March 31, 2020: Counting people at soup kitchens and mobile food vans.
- April 1, 2020: Counting people in non-sheltered, outdoor locations, such as tent encampments and on the streets.
- <https://2020census.gov/en/what-is-2020-census/fo-cus/people-experiencing-homelessness.html>

Undocumented

What if I am  
undocumented?

- Your information is safe and confidential
- <https://2020census.gov/en/data-protection.html>



## Non-citizens

### Why does the Census count non-citizens?

- Because the U.S. Constitution created by the Founding Fathers of the United States of America stated that all people living in the United States must be counted.
- United States Census of 1790 was the first census of the whole United States. It recorded the population of the United States as mandated by Article I, Section 2 of the United States Constitution and applicable laws.

Answer Every

Do I have to  
answer all the  
questions?

Answer as many questions as you see appropriate, you are self responding the best of your ability.

## Incomplete

What happens if I don't complete the Census survey?

- A Census Taker may come back to your household to get the missing information.

## Non-Electronic

Can I just fill out a paper form?

- Yes, you can fill out the paper questionnaire.
- Phone and in person submission are also an option.

## Completion Help

Can the librarian fill out the form for me?

- No, the 2020 Census Questionnaire is to be filled by the individual.
- However, the Census Bureau is working to get Mobile Questionnaire Assistants who will help folks fill out the census, these are sworn in Census employees thus guaranteeing a true confidential survey submission.

## Family Completion Help

Can a child fill out the survey for a non-English speaking or disabled parent?

- No, an adult must fill out the form.
- Online and paper versions in 12 non-English languages
- Enumerator instrument, bilingual paper questionnaire, bilingual mailing, and field enumeration materials in Spanish
- Language guides, language glossaries, and language identification card in 59 non-English languages.
- [https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial/2020/program-management/memo-series/2020-memo-2018\\_06.pdf](https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial/2020/program-management/memo-series/2020-memo-2018_06.pdf)

## Children

Do children  
complete their own  
surveys?

- No, adults fill it out for them.
- Don't forget the babies, they are often missed and undercounted.

## Completion Dates

When can I respond to the census? What's the latest date for responding?

- Self-respond starting March 23, 2020
- Try to respond by April 1st, but you may respond after that date. However, you may get an enumerator coming to your door if you respond too late.



# Questions

What will the questions be?

- How many people in the residence on April 1, 2020
- Own, Rent residence
- Phone Number
- For Each Resident
  - Name
  - Sex (Male or Female)
  - Age, Date of Birth
  - Ethnicity
  - Race
- <https://2020census.gov/en/about-questions.html>

## Gender

In regard to gender, what if I don't identify with the typical male or female? Will there be other options?

- Male and Female are the only two options
- Respond the best based on how you identify

## Long Form

Is this the same as the long form that I have completed in the past?

- The census is quick and about the same as the last census in 2010
- Longer questions are asked in the American Community Survey (ACS), which happen year round and in between the decennial censuses. The ACS is longer than the decennial or 2020 Census.

## Citizenship Question

Is the citizenship  
question included?

- No

## Split Residence

What if I spend part of the year in one place and part in another? What is considered to be my residence?

- Complete the Survey at the place where you will be on April 1st.
- The US Census wants to count “everyone once, and only once, and in the right place”.

# Resources on the Census

# Census 2020 Resources

- Main Census Site: <https://2020census.gov/>
- Outreach Materials:  
<https://2020census.gov/en/partners/outreach-materials.html>
- American Library Association Resources:  
<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/govinfo/census>
- ICfL [randall.kemp@libraries.idaho.gov](mailto:randall.kemp@libraries.idaho.gov)