

# Census 2020: FAQ

## What is the Census?

- A count of every person living in the U.S. as of April 1, 2020.
- The U.S. Constitution requires a census every 10 year.
- The first census was in 1790.

## How do people participate in the Census?

- In mid-March 2020, The Census Bureau will mail out one invitation for each household to participate in the 2020 Census.
- The census is administered based on residential addresses and allows for one submission per household.
- Every individual in the household must be counted, including those under the age of 5 years old.
- The invitation from the Census Bureau will provide three ways to participate in the 2020 Census. The responding household can choose from one of the following three options:
  - Respond online through a secure website.
  - Respond over the telephone.
  - Complete a hardcopy included in the 4<sup>th</sup> mailed reminder.

## What questions will be asked on the 2020 Census?

- Basic information such as name, age, sex, Hispanic origin, race and ethnicity, relationship of household members, and homeownership status.

## What is a household?

- A household consists of all the people who occupy a housing unit. A house, an apartment or other group of rooms, or a single room, is regarded as a housing unit when it is occupied.
- A household includes the related family members and all the unrelated people, if any, such as roommates, foster children, or friends, who share the housing unit at the time the Census is taken.

## Who needs to complete the Census form in my household?

- Only one person in a household needs to complete the form. The person completing the census form should include every person (adults and children) on the form though.

## What if I need language assistance or other help completing my form?

- The online form will be available in 13 written languages upon request (English, Chinese, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese, Arabic, French, Haitian Creole, Japanese, Polish, Portuguese, and Tagalog).
- The paper form will be available in English and bilingual English-Spanish.
- Census Questionnaire Assistance will be available in English and the same 12 non-English languages referenced above.
- Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) assistance will be available.
- The Census Bureau will provide language guides in 59 non-English languages.

- People can call Census Questionnaire Assistance toll-free for answers to questions or to provide their household responses by phone.

## Will a census enumerator come to my home?

- Reminders will be mailed to households who haven't responded in early April.
- A paper questionnaire will be sent in early April to those who haven't responded.
- Enumerators will follow up in person in the beginning of May to those who haven't responded.

## What information will NOT be collected by the census?

- Any private information including social security number, bank account information, credit card account numbers, money or donations or anything on behalf of a political party.

## Why is the census important?

- Census data determine how more than \$900 billion are spent across the Country.
- DC receives over \$6 billion (FY16) annually through large Federal programs such as Medicaid, SNAP, housing vouchers based on census data.
- Census data are used by state officials to redraw the boundaries of congressional and state legislative district (also known as redistricting).
- Census data are used to reapportion the House of Representatives, determining how many seats each state gets.
- In DC, census data are used to update Ward and ANC boundaries to ensure fair representation.
- When the population is undercounted, jurisdictions don't receive the funding needed for vital community services. The Census Bureau reports that for each DC resident not counted, the District loses \$6,000 of federal funding per year or a total of \$60,000 over ten years per person.
- Census data help local governments plan for future community needs and services, such as emergency services, schools, hospitals, human services, libraries, transportation, etc.

## How is census information kept confidential?

- Federal law protects your census responses.
- Your answers can only be used to produce statistics.
- Census data are confidential for 72 years.
- Under Title 13 of the U.S. Code, the Census Bureau cannot share your information with immigration enforcement agencies, law enforcement agencies, or allow it to be used to determine your eligibility for government benefits.
- Census Bureau employees are sworn for life to keep your information safe and secure. If they disclose any personal information, the punishment for them is 5 years imprisonment and/or a fine of \$250,000.

## What do I do if I suspect fraud?

- If you suspect fraud, call 1-800-923-8282 to speak with a local Census Bureau representative.

## Where can I get more information?

- [2020census.gov](https://2020census.gov)
- [dccensus2020.dc.gov](https://dccensus2020.dc.gov) or @dccensus Facebook, Twitter, Instagram