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UPDATE

LIBRARIES' GUIDE TO THE 2020 Census



CENTER ON POVERTY and INEQUALITY
GEORGETOWN LAW

ECONOMIC SECURITY and
OPPORTUNITY INITIATIVE



ALA American
Library
Association

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Welcome from the American Library Association

Dear colleagues,

As library workers, we know the vital importance of accurate and complete data from the U.S. Census Bureau. The census informs everything from strategic library planning to how we respond to millions of reference questions related to U.S. demographics.

The decennial census also is a cornerstone of our democracy. This count of all U.S. residents is required by the U.S. Constitution to determine representation in Congress and the Electoral College. It is the basis for drawing districts for federal, state, and local offices. And it determines the allocation of hundreds of billions of dollars in federal funding to states and localities (including the grants to states under the Library Services and Technology Act).

Working to ensure a fair, accurate, and inclusive census aligns with our professional values and the needs of the diverse communities we serve—particularly those most in danger of underrepresentation and underfunding. In fact, libraries have long been involved in census work. Library staff have served on local Complete Count Committees, hosted events to support census hiring, and helped to get the word out about the decennial census and why it matters.

We are committed to helping our communities achieve a complete count because libraries serve everyone, and we believe that *everyone counts*.

In early 2020, when people receive materials asking them to complete the census, we know many will have questions, and they will turn to us as one of their most trusted sources of information for answers. The 2020 Census also will be the first one to encourage online response as the primary way to participate—so libraries can connect people who otherwise lack secure and reliable internet access, and make sure that people know that they also can respond by phone or paper questionnaire if they prefer.

For all these reasons, the American Library Association has teamed with the Georgetown Center on Poverty and Inequality (GCPI) to develop this *Libraries' Guide to the 2020 Census* to support your work. We want you to have ready answers to the questions we know are coming. And we will continue to add updated information and resources online at www.ala.org/census.

Thank you for being a part of this critical civic effort!



Wanda Brown

ALA PRESIDENT, 2019–2020



Loida Garcia-Febo

ALA PAST PRESIDENT, 2019–2020



The census informs everything from strategic library planning to how we respond to millions of reference questions related to U.S. demographics.

What is the census, and why is it important?



The census, conducted once every 10 years, is the constitutionally-required count of every person living in the United States. It's a huge and complex endeavor, one with an enormous impact on all our communities. The 2020 Census will be the first to urge most households to respond online, but people will also have the option of responding by phone or paper questionnaire.

The decennial census form asks questions about all the people who live and sleep in a household most of the time—including babies and anyone who has no other permanent place to stay and is staying in the household—as of April 1, 2020. The census form should take about 10 minutes to complete, depending on the number of people in the household.

Census data are used to make decisions about how and where to spend more than \$1.5 trillion each year for programs and services that communities rely on.¹ Census data also drive federal funding allocations for libraries, including grants to states under the Library Services and Technology Act. The census population count is used to determine representation in Congress (known as reapportionment) and the Electoral College. Simply put, communities that are undercounted are disadvantaged economically and politically.

Communities also use census data for planning purposes. For example, local school districts may not be able to plan effectively for changing needs if large numbers of young children are not counted, as has been the case in previous censuses. Census data help local leaders make planning decisions about where libraries should be located, whether they should expand, and what kinds of services should be offered based on the characteristics of the community.

We only have one shot every 10 years to get the census right. If we don't, undercounted groups won't get the appropriate level of funding for programs needed in their neighborhoods, and local leaders and officials won't have the reliable information they need to make decisions.

Libraries are uniquely positioned to help ensure that communities across the country are accurately counted. Our institutions are trusted and welcoming hubs of public life, and librarians are respected members of their communities. We can play an important role in outreach to groups often missed by the census—like people experiencing homelessness, young people and children, people of color, people with low incomes, recent immigrants, and those who live in rural or remote areas. Libraries are great places for people to fill out the census form online—especially those who lack internet access at home or on their phones—and get accurate information about the census.

We only have one shot every 10 years to get the census right. If we don't, undercounted groups won't get the appropriate level of funding for programs needed in their neighborhoods, and local leaders and officials won't have the reliable information they need to make decisions.

2020 Census: The basics

The United States Constitution requires a count every 10 years of every person who is residing in the U.S., regardless of immigration status or citizenship. The Census Bureau's goal for the 2020 Census is to "count everyone once, only once, and in the right place." Here are the basic steps in the process:

STEP 1 Update the address list

The Census Bureau maintains a list of every housing unit in the United States. A housing unit is a house, apartment, condominium, trailer, or other place where people might live. The Census Bureau started updating its list for the 2020 Census in 2015, adding new houses and apartment buildings that have been built and removing houses and apartment buildings that were demolished or converted to non-residential uses since the 2010 Census.

STEP 2 Solicit responses

Beginning March 12, 2020, the Census Bureau will mail census materials to 95% of homes. (To understand how the other 5% of households are counted, or how the Census counts people who don't live in a household, see [pages 6 and 7](#).) Eighty percent (80%) of those homes will receive a letter inviting them to respond to the census online using a unique code. The other 20% (where internet access may be limited) will receive the same letter plus a paper questionnaire. All households also will receive information about how to answer the census by telephone. April 1 is Census Day, although most households will receive their materials before then and may respond prior to that date.

STEP 3 Collect responses

Respondents will submit one census form listing everyone who lives in their household. Respondents may complete the questionnaire for their household online, by mail, or by phone.

STEP 4 Follow up

Households will receive several reminder letters from the Census Bureau if they do not self-respond. If a household does not complete the questionnaire after receiving mailed reminders, beginning in May 2020 they may receive a phone call or an in-person visit from a Census Bureau employee. Households can continue to self-respond online, using a paper questionnaire, or by phone during the follow up period.

STEP 5 Analyze and disseminate

The Census Bureau will release population totals and other publicly-available data beginning in early 2021.

What we will send in the mail

On or between	You will receive
Mar 12–20	An invitation to respond online to the 2020 Census. Some households will also receive paper questionnaires.
Mar 16–24	A reminder letter
If you haven't responded yet	
Mar 26–Apr 3	A reminder postcard
Apr 8–16	A reminder letter and paper questionnaire
Apr 20–27	A final reminder postcard before we follow up in person

Census Bureau mailing timeline

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU²

How will the **online response option** work?

Almost all households will receive an invitation letter in the mail with instructions for responding to the census online. The invitation will include a unique identification code called a Census ID. Using the Census ID helps the Bureau keep track of responses and prevent duplication. However, the Census ID is not required in order to respond online or by telephone. If respondents don't have their Census ID handy, they can use their street address instead.

The entire online survey must be completed in one session; draft responses cannot be saved. There is no time limit to complete the form. However, for security purposes, if there is no activity for 15 minutes, the respondent will be logged out and have to start again. All data submitted online are encrypted. A confirmation page will be displayed after submission; there will not be an email or text message confirmation.

The online questionnaire will be available in 13 languages: Arabic, Chinese (Simplified), English, French, Haitian Creole, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. For help, respondents can call Census Questionnaire Assistance in the same 13 languages (see toll-free numbers on [page 17](#)). Respondents can also complete the questionnaire over the phone when they call.

Will everyone receive Census materials **in the mail**?

Some households will receive census materials in person, rather than through the mail. Additionally, people living in group facilities, or whose home is transitory, will be counted through different methods. Anyone who is not sure how they will be counted can call Census Questionnaire Assistance for more information starting March 9, 2020 (see [page 17](#)).



Group quarters (e.g., college dorms, military bases, nursing homes)

The Census Bureau uses a different method to count people in group living situations, called “group quarters,” such as college student housing, prisons, military barracks, and nursing homes. The facility administrator will work with Census Bureau employees to collect the information for the people residing there; those individuals will not respond directly to the Census Bureau.

- For more information, see “[Academic Libraries and the 2020 Census: Reaching College Students](#)”³ and [GCPI's group quarters fact sheets](#).⁴

Remote areas and areas affected by disasters

Some rural and all remote areas, such as those without reliable mail delivery or traditional mailing addresses, as well as communities recovering from natural disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes, and flooding, will not receive a mailed invitation from the Census Bureau. Instead, census workers will hand-deliver materials as they update the address list, or count households in person as they go door-to-door.

- For more information, see: [Counting Rural America: A Guide to 2020 Census Operations](#).⁵
- To find out how your community will be counted, see the [2020 Type of Enumeration Area Viewer](#).⁶

People experiencing homelessness

The Census Bureau will count people experiencing homelessness (and who are not staying in a household) at the places where they receive services, such as shelters and soup kitchens, on March 30 through April 1. Non-sheltered outdoor locations will be counted on April 1. This operation is called Service-Based Enumeration.

In addition, the Bureau will count people staying in transitory locations such as motels, campgrounds, and migrant farmworker camps, through the Enumeration at Transitory Locations operation. Census takers will count people at transitory locations who do not have a “usual home elsewhere.” However, people who are staying in the home of a friend or family member as of Census Day should be counted on the questionnaire for that household if the person does not have a usual home elsewhere.

→ For more information, see: [Counting People Experiencing Homelessness: A Guide to 2020 Census Operations.](#)⁷

Timeline of key 2020 Census activities

February 2020	The Census Bureau will contact administrators of group quarters (military barracks, college dorms, prisons, and skilled nursing homes, among others) in advance of the enumeration of these locations, which will occur in April.
March 12, 2020	The self-response period will start as households begin to receive invitations to respond, either through the mail or hand-delivered in many rural and remote areas. Census Questionnaire Assistance toll-free numbers also will open with live customer service representatives (see page 17). Households may continue to self-respond through July 31.
March 30, 2020	Service-Based Enumeration will begin. This three-day/night enumeration occurs at shelters, locations that provide services for people experiencing homelessness, and targeted outdoor locations where people experiencing homelessness sleep.
April 1, 2020	Census Day! Respondents do not have to wait until April 1 to respond but should include everyone who will be a “usual resident” on April 1, or anyone staying there on April 1 who does not have a usual home elsewhere.
April 2020	Group Quarters will be counted April 2–June 5. Enumeration at Transitory Locations data collection will occur April 9–May 4.
May 13, 2020	Nonresponse Follow-up (NRFU) will begin. During NRFU, the Census Bureau will follow up with households that did not self-respond to the census by sending reminders and/or visiting in person. NRFU will continue through July. (In communities with large numbers of off-campus college students, NRFU will begin on April 9, to reach students before the academic term ends.)

→ For more information, see this [detailed timeline of census milestones.](#)⁸

What should I expect for the 2020 Census?

Option to respond online, by phone, or by mail

For the first time, the Census Bureau will promote online response as the preferred method. The Census Bureau's mailing will include a Census ID code that the person responding for that household can enter to identify their address. However, if respondents don't have a Census ID code, they can enter their home address instead.

For many people, the online response option will make it easier and more convenient to respond. However, other people may prefer not to respond online, such as those with limited internet proficiency or who lack reliable internet access. *No one is required to respond online.* If people choose not to respond online, they can respond by phone (see [page 17](#)) or by mail. Between April 8–16, the Census Bureau will mail a paper questionnaire to households that have not yet responded.

IMPORTANT UPDATE

There will be NO question asking if a respondent is a U.S. citizen in the 2020 Census.

Household relationship question

For the first time, the 2020 Census offers a way for the person filling out the form to indicate a same-sex relationship with another household member.⁹ This change is expected to improve national statistics on same-sex couples.

Confidentiality

Responses to the 2020 Census are safe, secure and protected by federal law. Answers can only be used to produce anonymous statistics—they cannot be used against any person or household in any way. The law prohibits the Census Bureau from sharing personal census responses with any other government agency (at any level), court of law, or private entity or person (such as a landlord), for any purpose, including law or immigration enforcement and housing code enforcement. Any current or former Census Bureau employee who releases or shares personally identifiable data can go to prison for up to five years, pay a fine up to \$250,000, or both.

Sex

The 2020 Census will ask the sex of each individual, with options for male or female. For transgender, non-binary, or gender nonconforming individuals, the National LGBTQ Taskforce recommends, “**you can self-identify here in the way that feels most comfortable for you.**”¹⁰

Race and origin

The 2020 Census will ask two questions about race and origin. Accurate, detailed data are necessary to enforce civil rights protections, reveal disparate impacts of policies, and meet the needs of diverse communities.



To learn more about the questions on the 2020 Census, view the sample questionnaire¹¹ or the video guide.¹²

Who is at risk of being undercounted in 2020?

Historically, certain groups of people have been undercounted disproportionately by the decennial census. The Census Bureau considers these groups challenging to interview, locate, contact, or persuade—for instance, because of language or literacy barriers, fear of the government, or frequent changes in residence.¹³ If these groups are undercounted in the 2020 Census, their communities will be underfunded and underrepresented for the next decade.

Young children

Children under age 5 were the most undercounted age group in the 2010 Census, with more than 2 million estimated to have been missed. The undercount was especially severe among Black and Hispanic young children,¹⁴ and was particularly concentrated in the Census-defined South (from Texas to Delaware).¹⁵ Young children are undercounted, in part, because millions of them live in households and neighborhoods that are difficult to enumerate. Additionally, families are often unsure whether to list young children on their census forms.¹⁶

When children are undercounted, their communities lose needed funding for programs that directly impact young children's lives, including Head Start, children's health insurance, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Special attention is needed to inform parents and caretakers about the importance of including children and babies on their census form.

→ For more information, see [ALA's tip sheet about the young child undercount](#)¹⁷ and get resources at [CountAllKids.org](#).



Young children (ages 0–5) are considered hard-to-count.

Other groups the Census Bureau considers hard-to-count¹⁸

- + Complex households, including those with blended families, multi-generations or non-relatives
- + Cultural and linguistic minorities, and people who do not speak English fluently
- + Displaced people affected by a disaster
- + People who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or questioning
- + People with low incomes¹⁹
- + People experiencing homelessness²⁰
- + People less likely to use the internet and others without internet access
- + People who have distrust in the government
- + People with disabilities
- + People without a high school diploma
- + Racial and ethnic minorities, such as Latinos²¹, Asian Americans and Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders²², African Americans²³, American Indians and Alaska Natives²⁴, and Middle Eastern and North African Americans²⁵
- + Renters²⁶
- + People who are undocumented immigrants or recent immigrants
- + Young children²⁷
- + Young, mobile people, such as college students

For more information, see [Hard-to-Count Communities in the 2020 Census](#).²⁸



99% of hard-to-count census tracts have a public library located within five miles.⁴⁰

Low response areas

There are several tools to identify the neighborhoods in your community that are at greatest risk of being undercounted:

- + **The Census 2020 Hard to Count Map**²⁹ shows mail return rates from the 2010 Census, highlighting the Census tracts where households were least likely to send in their Census questionnaire. Toggle options in Map Overlays to view additional information, including the locations of public libraries.
- + The Census Bureau's **Response Outreach Area Mapper**³⁰ (ROAM) displays a metric called the Low Response Score—the higher the score, the harder-to-count that area is. ROAM also provides demographic information about each Census tract.
- + After self-response to the 2020 Census begins, the public will be able to view their community's participation rate live at the **2020 Census Response Rate**³¹ page.



Census Bureau efforts to count hard-to-count communities

Language support

- + The online 2020 Census questionnaire will be available in 13 languages: Arabic, Chinese (Simplified), English, French, Haitian Creole, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.³²
- + Census Questionnaire Assistance will be available in the same languages, as well as Cantonese and Mandarin, and via Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD); see [page 17](#).
- + Paper questionnaires will be printed in English and bilingual English-Spanish only. (The exception is in Puerto Rico, where there will be Spanish-only forms.)
- + The Census Bureau will provide guides to completing the census in 59 non-English languages, including American Sign Language, in video and/or print. Guides will also be available in Braille and large print.³³

The online
2020 Census
questionnaire
will be available in
13 languages.

Questionnaire options and instructions

- + The 2020 Census form will allow people to self-identify their race and ethnicity through a combination of checkboxes with specific nationalities and write-in spaces to identify any other national origins or subgroups.³⁴
- + For the first time, the 2020 Census will enable a head of household to indicate a same-sex relationship with another household member.³⁵
- + Instructions will remind respondents to include all children in their household on the census form.³⁶

Outreach strategies

- + The Census Bureau is recruiting employees who are familiar with the neighborhoods they will be assigned to count and who reflect the diversity of those communities.³⁷
- + The Bureau will work with community partners (such as libraries) who are “trusted voices,” to increase census awareness and participation.³⁸
- + The Census Bureau has hired 1,500 Partnership Specialists to work with local libraries, schools, churches, and other organizations to help spread the word about the 2020 Census, particularly in hard-to-count communities.³⁹



**Check out a book.
Then respond to
the 2020 Census.**

For the first time, you will be invited to respond to the census online. Libraries offer public computers and free internet access to help make sure you're counted. 2020 Census data informs the distribution of more than \$675 billion in federal funding each year, your representation in Congress, community initiatives, and more. Make sure you count everyone living in your home, including newborn babies and young children, on the 2020 Census. Your responses are confidential and important.

2020CENSUS.GOV Shape your future START HERE >

United States
**Census
2020**

2020 Census **handout for libraries**

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU⁴¹

What can libraries do, and how can libraries prepare?

Connect with Complete Count Committees

Complete Count Committees⁴² are established by tribal, state, and local governments and community leaders to increase awareness and encourage residents to respond to the 2020 Census. Committees bring together community representatives who know local needs and have contact with hard-to-count populations. Libraries can partner with Complete Count Committees to coordinate outreach efforts and plan events. For more information, contact your Regional Census Center ([see page 16](#)).

Prepare for increased use of library computers and the internet

Millions of Americans do not have broadband internet service at home. Lacking reliable access to the internet can create a barrier to applying online for census jobs, completing online training for these jobs, and completing the online census form. Because libraries provide reliable internet access, they will play an important role in supporting a complete count in the 2020 Census. Library workers can prepare in several ways:

- + Provide guest or “express” internet access without a library card in March and April;
- + Add or dedicate devices for completing the census in March and April;
- + Allow patrons extra computer time, if needed, to complete the census online;
- + Review [guidance for partners](#)⁴³ from the Census Bureau; and
- + Review and update, if needed, privacy and security practices for public internet access devices.

For more information, see the [Library Privacy Checklist for Public Access Computers and Networks](#)⁴⁴ and [Preparing for the First Digital Census](#).⁴⁵

Help community members apply for census jobs

The Census Bureau will hire about 500,000 temporary workers, including census takers, recruiting assistants, office staff, and supervisory staff. Job opportunities are spread across the country and offer good pay, flexible hours (for many positions), and paid training. To be eligible, candidates must be at least 18 years old and have a valid Social Security Number.

Libraries can host hiring workshops with the Census Bureau or other community partners to prepare potential applicants, promote awareness of census hiring through library social media, and share information about census hiring through its other workforce activities, including training to help people search and apply for jobs online. For more information, visit the [2020 Census Jobs](#)⁴⁶ page and read the [ALA’s tip sheet on census hiring](#).⁴⁷



Millions of Americans do not have broadband internet service at home.



The Census Bureau is recruiting employees who are familiar with the neighborhoods they will be assigned to count and who reflect the diversity of those communities.

Fight misinformation, disinformation, and scams

Many people may have questions or concerns about the 2020 Census. As a trusted source of information in our communities, library staff are well-positioned to make sure people receive accurate information. Be wary of “fake news” that appears to drum up fear, opposition, or even apathy.

Librarians can also help members of their communities recognize and avoid spam and phishing attempts online that may try to collect personal information for nefarious purposes.⁴⁸ Share **safety tips**⁴⁹ from the Census Bureau where appropriate.

The Bureau has launched a **dedicated web page**⁵⁰ to address rumors and false information and encourages partners to report anything suspicious to rumors@census.gov.

The Census Bureau will *not* email or text people, and it will *not* ask for a bank or credit card number, Social Security Number, or payment or donation. If a person is unsure about the authenticity of someone purporting to be a Census Bureau employee, or if they suspect fraud, they can call the Regional Census Center for their state. (Phone numbers for the Regional Census Centers can be found on [page 16](#).)

→ For more information, see: [Avoiding 2020 Census Fraud and Scams](#).⁵¹

Increase awareness about the 2020 Census and its impact

Libraries can host events, workshops, and after-school programming to increase awareness about the upcoming census. The more people know about the census, how the data are used, and how it impacts them and their communities, the more likely they are to participate. Here are some resources and ideas to consider:

- + **Census & Sensibility**⁵² from the California Library Association includes tips and ideas related to marketing, programming and booklists.
- + The Census Bureau provides a wide range of **downloadable outreach and promotional materials**⁵³ in many languages, targeted to different audiences and addressing various concerns (e.g., security or how census data supports education).
- + You don't have to be a classroom teacher to use **Statistics in Schools**⁵⁴ activities to show how census data are used, including **seasonal fun facts**⁵⁵, **games**⁵⁶ and resources specifically for **English-language learners**.⁵⁷
- + Invite local elected officials and media to show how easy and secure it is to complete the census online at the library.

Visit ala.org/census for additional resources, including tip sheets, webinars, and graphics.



Unfortunately, some scammers may attempt to exploit public trust by pretending to be the Census Bureau.



Poster about the benefits of being counted

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU⁵⁸

Frequently asked questions

Responding to the 2020 Census

When does the 2020 Census start?

The enumeration starts in remote Alaska on January 21, 2020, but most households will receive their census materials by U.S. mail or hand delivery starting in mid-March. Online and telephone response options will be available starting after March 12.

What is “Census Day,” and why is it important?

April 1 is “Census Day.” When you respond to the census, you tell the Census Bureau where you live as of April 1, 2020, and include everyone living in your home on that day (including newborns and anyone staying there who does not have a usual home elsewhere). While April 1 is the reference date, people can submit their questionnaire before or after that date.

When is the last day people can respond?

To avoid a home visit from a Census Bureau employee, people should respond before the end of April 2020. The Census Bureau will begin in-person visits in May, although households can still respond online, by phone, or by mail until July 31.

How long does it take to fill out the form?

The Census Bureau estimates that it will take about 10 minutes to complete the census questionnaire, depending on the number of people in the household.

What happens if I leave some responses blank?

The Census Bureau strongly encourages respondents to answer every question for every person in the household, but will allow submission of incomplete questionnaires. Bureau staff may follow up on incomplete submissions.

In what languages will the paper form be available?

Paper questionnaires will be either in English or bilingual English-Spanish (with Spanish-only forms in Puerto Rico).

What should people do if they have a question or problem?

The [Census Questionnaire Assistance](#)⁵⁹ phone line will be available with live customer service representatives supporting 13 languages and TDD from March 9 through July 31. Call toll-free 844-330-2020 in English, and [see page 17](#) for other languages. People can also find general answers about the 2020 Census at 2020census.gov.

Online response option

Do people have to respond online?

No, households have the option to respond to the census online, by phone, or by mail.



In what languages will the online form be printed?

The online form will be available in English and 12 non-English languages: Arabic, Chinese (Simplified), French, Haitian Creole, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.

Can people respond on a smartphone or tablet?

Yes, the online form will be optimized to allow people to respond on a smartphone or tablet.

Is the online system secure?

Yes, the Census Bureau has taken significant steps to protect online responses. All information entered online is encrypted as soon as the respondent hits “submit.”

How will we know if the census online form was successfully submitted?

Once a respondent completes and submits the online form, a new screen will confirm submission. The respondent may print that page for their records. The Census Bureau will *not* email or text households to confirm response to the census.

Can library staff help people complete the online form?

In certain ways, yes. Library staff can direct respondents to the response option that best suits their needs: online, phone, mail, or a census taker visit to their home. Library staff can also point respondents to the online questionnaire guides in English and 59 other languages.⁶⁰ In addition, library staff can explain basic features of the online form, such as how to navigate the pages or change the language. However, only Census Bureau employees may collect responses directly from individuals, and only they are sworn for life to keep an individual’s responses confidential. For more guidance, see the Census Bureau’s [Questions and Answers for Stakeholders Supporting the 2020 Census](#).⁶¹

Census operations

Where do active military personnel and their families get counted?

If stationed at a military installation in the United States, they will be counted at their usual residence either on-base or off-base. If stationed overseas, they will be counted as part of the federally affiliated overseas population, conducted in partnership with the U.S. Department of Defense. If they are stationed stateside but deployed overseas during the census, they will be counted at their usual residence in the U.S. If they are aboard a military vessel, they will be counted at either their usual U.S. residence or as a part of the federally affiliated overseas population—depending on whether the vessel’s homeport is in the U.S. or overseas. Learn more at [GCPI’s Counting Military Personnel fact sheet](#).⁶²



Is there a way to report scams if we see them?

Report suspected fraud to the Census Bureau at 800-923-8282. To report false information, email rumors@census.gov.

How do I identify an official census worker in person or over the phone?

Census workers must present an ID badge with their photo, the U.S. Department of Commerce watermark, and an expiration date. See these [tips to identify Census Bureau employees](#).⁶³ To verify, people can call Census Questionnaire Assistance ([see page 17](#)), enter the name into the [Census Bureau Staff Search](#),⁶⁴ or call their [Regional Census Center](#).⁶⁵

How can my library get 2020 Census materials or other resources from the Census Bureau?

The Census Bureau offers [free downloadable outreach materials](#).⁶⁶ For information about events, materials, and other opportunities, contact the Partnership Specialist in your area ([see page 16](#)).

Helping with hard-to-count communities

What languages will be supported in the 2020 Census?

The online and telephone questionnaires will be offered in 13 languages (including English). The paper form will be in English and bilingual English-Spanish, with Spanish-only forms in Puerto Rico. The Census Bureau also will provide [language guides](#)⁶⁷ in 59 non-English languages that help respondents fill out the form in English.

In what ways will responding to the census be accessible for people with disabilities?

The Census Bureau will disseminate language guides in braille and large print to respondents through their partnership programs. Respondents will also have access to a video guide in American Sign Language to help complete the census online. Additionally, respondents may choose to complete the census in English via a phone line that uses Telephone Device for the Deaf (TDD/TTY) technology. Learn more at GCPI's FAQ on [An Accessible 2020 Census](#).⁶⁸

Can census responses be shared with law enforcement or other government agencies?

No. Title 13 of the U.S. Code protects the confidentiality of personal information provided in census responses. Federal law prohibits the Census Bureau from sharing personal census responses with any other government agencies, courts, or private entities, for any purpose. Census staff take a lifetime oath to protect census responses, with severe penalties for violations. The law prohibits personal information collected by the Census Bureau from being used against respondents by any government agency or court.

I heard the U.S. Government used census data to identify and intern Japanese Americans during World War II. Why should we trust the government now?

The Census Act (Title 13 U.S.C.) did not provide the same level of strict confidentiality protections then as it does now. Furthermore, the standard protections that existed at the time were suspended under the Second War Powers Act starting in March 1942. *Confidentiality provisions tied to census data were reinstated in 1947, and Congress subsequently amended the Census Act to close any potential "loopholes" related to the strict prohibition on sharing personally identifiable data outside of the Census Bureau for any purpose.* In 2010, the U.S. Justice Department determined that the Patriot Act does not override the law that protects the confidentiality of individual census responses. No court of law can subpoena census responses or enforce such a subpoena issued by another entity (e.g., a government agency).

How can libraries help address the undercount of people experiencing homelessness?

Library staff can raise awareness of the fact that people experiencing homelessness have been undercounted in the past, depriving their communities of fair representation and funding for programs such as housing vouchers, Medicaid and homeless youth programs. The [Chicago Coalition for the Homeless](#)⁶⁹ states: The best way to be sure they are counted is for them to speak with staff at the location where they receive services to confirm when and where the census workers will be coming (March 30–April 1). They can share this information with others who are homeless so they can be counted, too. Keep in mind, however, that some people experiencing homelessness may be temporarily staying in a household at the time of the census. It is vital that those households include these members on their census forms.

How should non-binary and transgender people complete the census form?

The [National LGBTQ Task Force](#)⁷⁰ states: Like many surveys, the census restricts responses to "male" or "female" only. Transgender, non-binary, and gender nonconforming people can self-identify in the way that feels most comfortable for them. The Census Bureau does not cross-reference individuals' answers on the census with any other documentation.

Census hiring

Can people with criminal records be hired to help with the 2020 Census?

The Census Bureau will make hiring decisions on a case-by-case basis, following a background check that includes fingerprinting and a records search.

Can non-citizens be hired to help with the 2020 Census?

The Census Bureau can hire work-authorized non-citizens for temporary census jobs when a qualified citizen is not available, such as for positions that require non-English language skills. Jobseekers can apply at 2020census.gov/jobs.



Contact the Census Bureau **in your community**

For information about events, materials, and other opportunities, contact the Regional Census Center for your area and ask for a Partnership Specialist.

Atlanta Regional Census Center

Serving Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina

(470) 889-6800 or 1-800-424-6974

TDD: (404) 730-3963

E-mail: Atlanta.rcc.partnership@2020census.gov

Chicago Regional Census Center

Serving Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, and Wisconsin

(312) 579-1500 or 1-800-865-6384

TDD: (708) 562-1791

E-mail: Chicago.rcc.partnership@2020census.gov

Dallas Regional Census Center

Serving Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Wyoming

(972) 510-1800 or 1-800-852-6159

TDD: (303) 969-6767

E-mail: Dallas.rcc.partnership@2020census.gov

Los Angeles Regional Census Center

Serving Alaska, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington

(213) 314-6500 or 1-800-992-3530

TDD: (818) 904-6249

E-mail: Los.Angeles.rcc.partnership@2020census.gov

New York Regional Census Center

Serving Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, and Vermont

(212) 882-7100 or 1-800-991-2520

TDD: (212) 478-4793

E-mail: New.York.rcc.partnership@2020census.gov

Philadelphia Regional Census Center

Serving Delaware, District of Columbia, Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia

(267) 780-2600 or 1-800-262-4236

TDD: (215) 717-0894

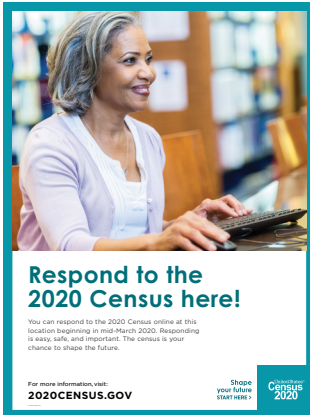
E-mail: Philadelphia.rcc.partnership@2020census.gov



United States®
Census
2020

The 2020 Census logo
will be on all official
communications.

Sample downloadable outreach materials from 2020census.gov/partners



Response Location Poster⁷¹



Confidentiality Poster⁷²



Counting Young Children Poster⁷³



Spanish-Speaking Audiences Poster⁷⁴

Online resources

- + [2020 Census page](#)⁷⁵
- + [Sample invitation letter](#)⁷⁶
- + [Sample paper questionnaire \(in English and Spanish\)](#)⁷⁷
- + [Preview of the 2020 Census Video Language Guide \(in English\)](#)⁷⁸
- + [Language guides](#)⁷⁹
- + [Outreach materials](#)⁸⁰, including [library-specific flyer](#)⁸¹
- + [Public service announcement toolkit](#)⁸²
- + [Response Outreach Area Mapper](#)⁸³ (ROAM)

Census Questionnaire Assistance phone numbers

Starting March 9, respondents can call these toll-free numbers for assistance or to respond to the 2020 Census by phone.

English: 844-330-2020

Spanish: 844-468-2020

Chinese (Mandarin): 844-391-2020

Chinese (Cantonese): 844-398-2020

Vietnamese: 844-461-2020

Korean: 844-392-2020

Russian: 844-417-2020

Arabic: 844-416-2020

Tagalog: 844-478-2020

Polish: 844-479-2020

French: 844-494-2020

Haitian Creole: 844-477-2020

Portuguese: 844-474-2020

Japanese: 844-460-2020

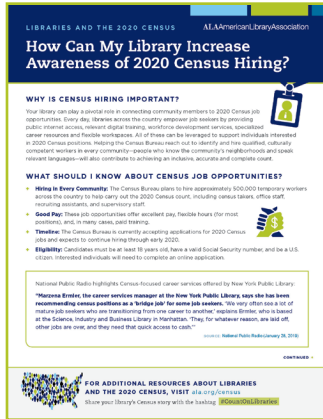
English (Puerto Rico residents): 844-418-2020

Spanish (Puerto Rico residents): 844-426-2020

Telephone Display Device (TDD):
844-467-2020

Resources from ALA and other organizations

ALA tip sheets for library staff



LIBRARIES AND THE 2020 CENSUS ALA/AmericanLibraryAssociation

How Can My Library Increase Awareness of 2020 Census Hiring?

WHY IS CENSUS HIRING IMPORTANT?

Your library can play a pivotal role in connecting community members to 2020 Census job opportunities. Every day, libraries across the country embrace job seekers by providing public internet access, e-reader, digital literacy, workforce development services, socialized career resources and flexible workspaces. All of these can be leveraged to support individuals interested in 2020 Census positions. Helping the Census Bureau reach out to identify and hire qualified, culturally competent workers in every community—especially those who know the community's neighborhoods and speak relevant languages—will also contribute to achieving an inclusive, accurate and complete count.

WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT CENSUS JOB OPPORTUNITIES?

- Hiring in Every Community:** The Census Bureau offers to hire approximately 500,000 temporary workers across the country to help carry out the 2020 Census count, including online tasks, office work, recruiting, interviews, and supervisory staff.
- Good Pay:** These job opportunities offer excellent pay, flexible hours (for most positions), and, in many cases, paid training.
- Stability:** The Census Bureau is currently accepting applications for 2020 Census jobs and expects to continue hiring through early 2020.
- Eligibility:** Candidates must be at least 18 years old, have a valid Social Security number, and be a U.S. citizen. Interested individuals will need to complete an online application.

National Public Health Highlights: Census focused career services offered by New York Public Library.

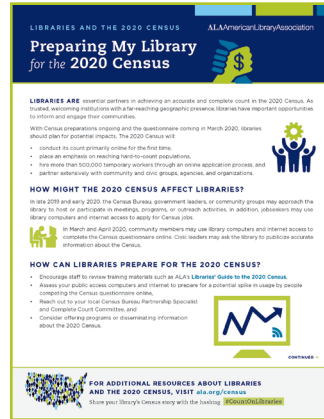
“Hiring is critical: the career website manager at the New York Public Library says she has been recommending census positions as a “bridge job” for some job seekers. The very offer is a lot of cultural job seekers who are transitioning from low career together, especially those who are based at the Science, Industry and Business Library in Manhattan. They, for whatever reason, are left off other job sites are one, and they need that space access to each.”

— Robert Potts, *Robotics Now*, 10/2016

FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ABOUT LIBRARIES AND THE 2020 CENSUS, VISIT ala.org/census

Show your library's Census story with the hashtag [#CountOnLibraries](https://twitter.com/CountOnLibraries)

How Can My Library Increase Awareness of 2020 Census Hiring?⁹³



LIBRARIES AND THE 2020 CENSUS ALA/AmericanLibraryAssociation

Preparing My Library for the 2020 Census

LIBRARIES ARE ESSENTIAL PARTNERS in achieving an accurate and complete count in the 2020 Census. As trusted, welcoming institutions and as the nation's geographic conscience, libraries have important opportunities to inform and engage their communities.

With Census preparations ongoing and the questionnaire coming in March 2020, libraries should plan to promote outreach. The 2020 Census will:

- conduct its count primarily online for the first time;
- take an emphasis on reaching hard-to-count populations;
- use more than 500,000 language services through its online application process; and
- partner extensively with community and civic groups, agencies, and organizations.

HOW MIGHT THE 2020 CENSUS AFFECT LIBRARIES?

In late 2019 and early 2020, the United States Government leaders, or community groups may approach the library to host or participate in meetings, programs, or outreach activities. In addition, job seekers may use library computers and internet access to apply for Census jobs.

In March and April 2020, community members may use library computers and internet access to complete the Census questionnaire online. Civic leaders may ask the library to publicize accurate information about the Census.

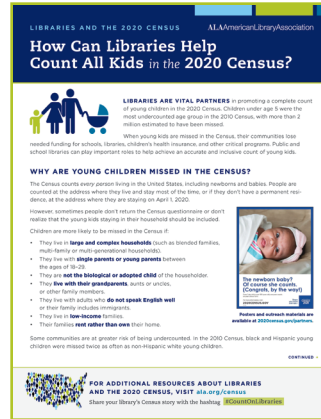
HOW CAN LIBRARIES PREPARE FOR THE 2020 CENSUS?

- Encourage staff to receive training materials such as ALA's *Libraries' Guide to the 2020 Census*.
- Assess your public access computers and internet to prepare for a potential spike in usage by people completing the Census questionnaire online.
- Reach out to your local Census Bureau Partnership (Social and Complete Count Committee), and
- Consider offering programs or disseminating information about the 2020 Census.

FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ABOUT LIBRARIES AND THE 2020 CENSUS, VISIT ala.org/census

Show your library's Census story with the hashtag [#CountOnLibraries](https://twitter.com/CountOnLibraries)

Preparing My Library for the 2020 Census⁹⁴



LIBRARIES AND THE 2020 CENSUS ALA/AmericanLibraryAssociation

How Can Libraries Help Count All Kids in the 2020 Census?

LIBRARIES ARE VITAL PARTNERS—promoting a complete count of young children in the 2020 Census. Children under age 5 were the most undercounted age group in the 2010 Census, with more than 2 million estimated to have been missed.

When young kids are missed in the Census, their communities lose needed funding for schools, libraries, children's health insurance, and other critical programs. Public and school libraries can play important roles to help achieve an accurate and complete count of young kids.

WHY ARE YOUNG CHILDREN MISSED IN THE CENSUS?

The Census counts every person living in the United States, including renters and babies. People are counted at the address where they live and stay most of the time, or if they don't have a permanent residence at the address where they are staying on April 1, 2020.

However, sometimes people don't return the Census questionnaire or don't realize that the young kids living in their household should be included. Children are more likely to be missed in the Census if:

- They live in **large and complex households** (such as blended families, multi-generational or multi-generational households).
- They live with **single parents or young parents** between the ages of 18-24.
- They are **not the biological or adopted child** of the householder.
- They live with their **grandparents**, aunts or uncles.
- They live with adults who **do not speak English well** or their family includes immigrants.
- They live in **low-income families**.
- Their families **and other kids** don't see their home.

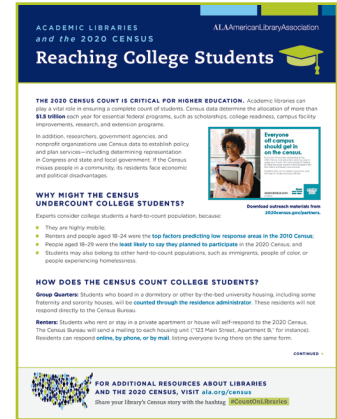
Parents and guardians contacted via text or phone are encouraged to answer at 2020Census.gov.

Some communities are at a greater risk of being undercounted in the 2020 Census. Black and Hispanic young children were missed twice as often as non-Hispanic white young children.

FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ABOUT LIBRARIES AND THE 2020 CENSUS, VISIT ala.org/census

Show your library's Census story with the hashtag [#CountOnLibraries](https://twitter.com/CountOnLibraries)

How Can Libraries Help Count All Kids in the 2020 Census?⁹⁵



ACADEMIC LIBRARIES AND THE 2020 CENSUS ALA/AmericanLibraryAssociation

Reaching College Students

THE 2020 CENSUS IS CRITICAL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION. Academic libraries can play a vital role in ensuring a complete count of students. Census data determine the allocation of more than \$15 billion each year for essential federal programs, such as scholarships, college readiness, census for the economy, research, and extension programs.

In addition, researchers, government agencies and nonprofit organizations use Census data to establish policy and plan services—including determining representation in Congress and state and local government. If the Census misses people in a community, its residents face economic and political disadvantages.

WHY MIGHT THE CENSUS UNDERCOUNT COLLEGE STUDENTS?

College students comprise students in their first-year education, because:

- They are highly mobile.
- Renters and people aged 18-24 were the **top factors predicting low response rates** in the 2010 Census.
- People aged 18-29 were the **least likely to say they planned to participate** in the 2020 Census, and
- Students may also belong to other hard-to-count populations, such as immigrants, people of color, or people experiencing homelessness.

HOW DOES THE CENSUS COUNT COLLEGE STUDENTS?

Group Quarters: Students who board in a dormitory or other off-campus housing, including some fraternity and sorority houses, will be counted through the residence administrator. These residents will not respond directly to the Census Bureau.

Residents: Students who rent or stay in a private apartment or house will self-respond to the 2020 Census. The Census Bureau will send a mailing to each housing unit ("123 Main Street, Apartment 5B, To: 1234567890") and request **online, by phone, or by mail** living coverage being from the same form.

FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ABOUT LIBRARIES AND THE 2020 CENSUS, VISIT ala.org/census

Show your library's Census story with the hashtag [#CountOnLibraries](https://twitter.com/CountOnLibraries)

Academic Libraries and the 2020 Census: Reaching College Students⁹⁶

American Library Association

- + [ALA 2020 Census page](#)⁸⁴, including tip sheets, recorded webinars, and downloadable graphics

Georgetown Center on Poverty and Inequality (GCPI)

- + [GCPI census page](#)⁸⁵
- + [Hard-to-Count Communities in the 2020 Census](#)⁸⁶

Other organizations

- + [Census Counts](#)⁸⁷
- + [Count All Kids](#)⁸⁸
- + [Census & Sensibility](#)⁸⁹ from the California Library Association
- + [Preparing for the First Digital Census](#)⁹⁰ from the Digital Equity Laboratory
- + [Counted In toolkit](#)⁹¹ from the University of Maryland College of Information Studies
- + [Census 2020 Hard to Count Map](#)⁹² from the City University of New York Mapping Service

Note: Toggle Map Overlays to show public library locations



FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ABOUT LIBRARIES AND THE 2020 CENSUS, VISIT ala.org/census

Share your library's Census story with the hashtag [#CountOnLibraries](https://twitter.com/CountOnLibraries)

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Libraries Transform graphic

SOURCE: ALA⁹⁷

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