



OHIO CENSUS
ADVOCACY COALITION



Ohio Census Advocacy Coalition: Understanding Ohio's Hard-to-Count Communities for 2020 Census Outreach Efforts

The following document offers assistance to Ohio Census Advocacy Coalition members and all additional network partners and messengers to ensure that Ohio's historically hard-to-count populations and communities are fully engaged in the 2020 Census.



Understanding Ohio's Hard-to-Count Communities for 2020 Census Outreach Efforts

PROCESS

As a joint effort, Children's Defense Fund-Ohio, Innovation Ohio Education Fund and Ohio Women's Public Policy Network have put together this document using national messaging guidance, research, and feedback gathered from discussions with leaders, community members, and direct service providers in Ohio's hard-to-count (HTC) communities across the state. The Children's Defense Fund-Ohio (CDF) facilitated design-thinking workshops in communities across the state to gain insight into the barriers communities faced to participating in the Census and how we can work to overcome these barriers.

The Ohio Women's Public Policy Network (WPPN) is a coalition of more than 30 organizations working collaboratively to advocate for public policies that build economic opportunity for women and strengthen families. Considering the large stake women and their families have in the Census and the key role women will play in ensuring a complete count, WPPN conducted listening sessions with their coalition partners to identify the particular concerns and barriers women of all backgrounds in the state expressed.

By combining national messaging guidance from the U.S. Census Bureau and national nonprofits and our own messaging research, we believe the following document provides the best advice and guidance for how to motivate Ohioans to participate in the 2020 Census.

ABOUT THE OHIO CENSUS ADVOCACY COALITION

The Ohio Census Advocacy Coalition (OCAC) is a nonpartisan network of statewide nonprofit organizations, advocacy organizations, and trusted faith, business, education, and community leaders working to prepare for and conduct outreach to encourage full participation in the 2020 Census, with a focus on historically undercounted or HTC populations.

The OCAC executive committee consists of Children's Defense Fund-Ohio, Innovation Ohio Education Fund, Ohio Voice, Asian Services in Action, Inc., Philanthropy Ohio, and Faith in Public Life.

CENSUS 101: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The 2020 Census is closer than you think!

Here's a quick refresher of what it is and why it's essential that everyone is counted.

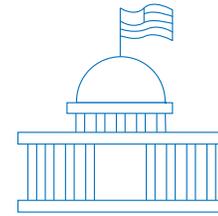
Everyone counts.

The census counts every person living in the U.S. once, only once, and in the right place.



It's about fair representation.

Every 10 years, the results of the census are used to reapportion the House of Representatives, determining how many seats each state gets.



It's in the constitution.

The U.S. Constitution mandates that everyone in the country be counted every 10 years. The first census was in 1790.



It's about redistricting.

After each decade's census, state officials redraw the boundaries of the congressional and state legislative districts in their states to account for population shifts.

Taking part is your civic duty.

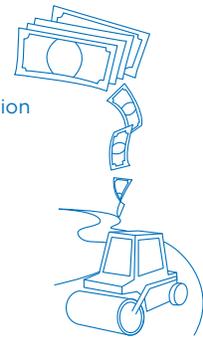
Completing the census is mandatory: it's a way to participate in our democracy and say "I COUNT!"



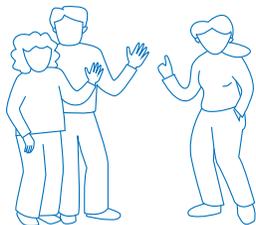
It's about \$675 billion.

The distribution of more than \$675 billion in federal funds, grants and support to states, counties and communities are based on census data.

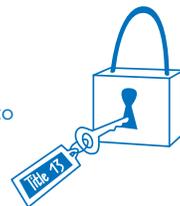
That money is spent on schools, hospitals, roads, public works and other vital programs.



Census data are being used all around you.



Residents use the census to support community initiatives involving legislation, quality-of-life and consumer advocacy.



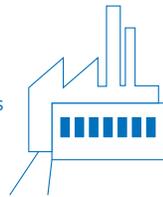
Your privacy is protected.

It's against the law for the Census Bureau to publicly release your responses in any way that could identify you or your household.

By law, your responses cannot be used against you and can only be used to produce statistics.

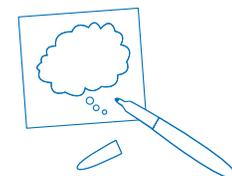


Businesses use census data to decide where to build factories, offices and stores, which create jobs.

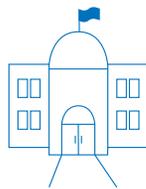


You can help.

You are the expert—we need your ideas on the best way to make sure everyone in your community gets counted.



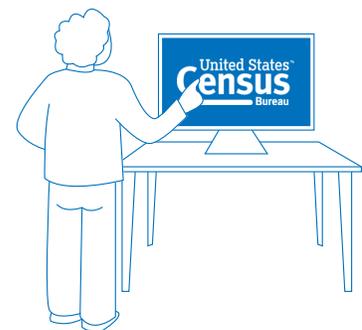
Real estate developers use the census to build new homes and revitalize old neighborhoods.



Local governments use the census for public safety and emergency preparedness.

2020 will be easier than ever.

In 2020, you will be able to respond to the census online.



Why is the 2020 Census Important to Ohio



Every Ohioan has a role to play in ensuring they, their family, and their community is represented in the 2020 Census. A fair and accurate count of the state in 2020 will ensure the state gets its fair share of benefits and representation for the next decade.

In a single year, Ohioans receive more than \$33 billion dollars from the federal government for important programs to the state and individuals, including Medicaid, student loans, transit dollars, Head Start, Section 8 housing, TANF, and highway construction. Over a decade, that is over a quarter of a trillion dollars to the state and its residents.

For every person not counted in the 2020 Census, the state loses \$1,206 each year for a decade. That's money that should be going into our communities and neighborhoods to support our schools, our roads, our houses, but instead will go to other states.

The Census not only affects federal financial assistance to states, service providers, and households, but it also determines the number of seats each state gets in the U.S. House of Representatives. If Ohio is not counted in full, our state and its unique perspective and voices will not be fully represented in the important policy debates that shape the country for the next decade.

Although the 2020 Census is important to all Ohioans, certain groups in the state have historically been under-counted and under-represented. By addressing particular concerns these groups have about participation, we can take steps towards ensuring a full and accurate count of Ohio.

Why is the 2020 Census Important to Women

An accurate and complete Census count is fundamentally important to Ohio women. An undercount would affect the equitable distribution of all public funds and, most directly, the more than \$33 billion of federal funds that are allocated in Ohio for programs such as Medicaid, SNAP, and housing assistance. These Census-driven programs have an immense impact on the economic security, health, and livelihood of women and their families.

Because women often serve as family caregivers, the stakes are even higher. Two in five female-headed families with children are living in poverty – that's nearly 90 percent higher than that of male-headed families with children. These mothers and their children rely on full funding for programs like SNAP, the Children's Health Insurance Program, Head Start, and housing vouchers.

Not only are women one of the biggest groups impacted by the Census, but they play a crucial role in ensuring that an accurate count happens at all. Census research indicates that one person often takes the lead in filling out the Census for the whole family. Women, who are increasingly the main caregiver or head of household, are more likely to take the lead in their families. As the 2020 Census approaches, it's important to recognize the key role Ohio women play in the Census and the outsized impact an incomplete count will have on their livelihood and their families.

Why is the 2020 Census Important to African Americans

The Census is an opportunity for African Americans, who have historically been left out of our nation's power structure, to make their voices heard. When African American communities are undercounted, political boundaries and resources from the federal government may not accurately represent reality. As a result, their community's needs may not be represented or prioritized according to their real share of the population.

Federal agencies rely on Census data to monitor discrimination and implement civil rights laws that protect voting rights, equal employment opportunity, and more. Undercounting African Americans in the 2020 Census could also impact how federal funding is allocated to states and localities. Many programs that impact African Americans are based on Census-derived data, including education, food and healthcare programs. Full participation in the Census will lead to more investments in African American communities.

Information collected in the Census cannot be used against you and will not impact any benefits you may receive.

Source: <https://Censuscounts.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Fact-Sheet-African-Americans-HTC.pdf>

WOMEN

AFRICAN AMERICANS

Why is the 2020 Census Important to the Latinx Community

The Latinx community has historically been undercounted, which limits their power and ability to shape their community priorities. When Latinx communities are undercounted, their needs may not be represented or prioritized according to their real share of the population. As the Latinx community in the United States continues to grow, it is incredibly important that they receive a fair share of resources from the federal government - and this can only happen with a complete count in the Census. Without a count that fairly and accurately reflects the growing Latinx community, some communities may not receive the necessary language assistance that ensures full political participation, as well as important government programs and protections from discrimination.

Everyone, regardless of legal status, is counted in the Census, and information gathered cannot be used against you.

Source: <https://Censuscounts.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Fact-Sheet-Latino-HTC.pdf>

Why is the 2020 Census Important to Immigrants and Refugees

In 2020, everyone in the United States will be counted in the Census - regardless of their legal status. This is an opportunity for all residents - regardless of who they are or where they were born, to make sure their voice is heard. This information is safe and secure, and by law, cannot be used against you. This data is used to shape the future and reflect the true, diverse composition of the United States. When communities are not counted in the Census, those communities lose their political voice, their triumphs and challenges are not accurately represented, and their perspectives are denied in decision making.

Why is the 2020 Census Important to Low-Income Ohioans

Many of the programs that aim to assist low-income children, households, and communities rely on Census-derived data, including SNAP, the School Lunch Program, Medicaid, and Head Start. It is only with a full count of Ohio's population that the federal government will be able to accurately distribute these dollars to the communities that need them the most. While completing the 2020 Census may not seem a necessary task, this information you provide to the U.S. Census Bureau will impact you for the next decade.

Source: <http://www.georgetownpoverty.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Low-Income-Families-HTC.pdf>

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Why is the 2020 Census Important to LGBTQ Ohioans

LGBTQ people have historically been undercounted in the Census, yet they're among the most likely to need the programs and services that are funded using Census data – like Medicaid, public housing, and SNAP/food stamps. LGBTQ people are about twice as likely as non-LGBTQ people to receive SNAP benefits, about 1.5 times as likely to have Medicaid coverage, and about 2.5 times as likely to rely on public housing assistance.

Because sexual orientation and gender identity data aren't collected through the Census, LGBTQ people may not feel participation in the Census has any benefit for them. LGBTQ people exist within all communities that are often undercounted and underrepresented. It is important for them to be counted in the 2020 Census to ensure that their communities have fair access to democracy and social services funding.

Source: www.queerthecensus.org

Why is the 2020 Census Important to Rural Ohio

Rural communities in Ohio do not always get the resources they need - the Census is an opportunity to change that. By making sure that their communities are accurately counted, rural Ohioans are giving themselves and their neighbors a stronger voice and the ability to better advocate for their unique needs.

This Census' heavy reliance on the Internet to gather responses poses a particular challenge to those in rural areas of the state. However, these areas will still have the option to respond to the Census via phone and mail to ensure their whole family is counted.

Why is the 2020 Census Important to Urban Ohio

When a community is undercounted, that community loses its political voice. Urban Ohioans must ensure their communities are fully counted so that they receive the resources and influence that they deserve. Renters and people who move frequently in metro regions are at a particular risk of being undercounted. Undercounting these communities could impact federal funding for programs that provide financial security for low-income families and economic development for their communities. These programs include Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers, the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit, Low-Income Home Energy Assistance and Community Development Block Grants.

Source: <https://Censuscounts.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Renters-HTC.pdf>

LGBTQ
OHIOANS

RURAL OHIO

URBAN OHIO

In our conversations with community leaders and community members, several common barriers arose across HTC populations. In this section we will identify those common barriers to participation, offer an action-oriented solution, and provide a communication message that can work to overcome this barrier.

BARRIERS TO CENSUS PARTICIPATION

Distrust in Government

BARRIER:

Fear of government sharing the data

SOLUTION: Identify trusted messengers in the community who can serve to address the community's concerns and convey the importance of the Census.

MESSAGE: Census data now is the most secure that any data can be. You can't find any information that would identify you as an individual, including your individual home address or citizenship status. Private information is never published. Census workers are not allowed to share your information under the penalty of a \$250,000 fine and up to five years in prison.

BARRIER:

Government abuses power

SOLUTION: Identify trusted messengers in the community who can serve to address the community's concerns and convey the importance of the Census.

MESSAGE: Being counted is how we strengthen our representation and bring more resources to our community. While the government does sometimes abuse its power, the Census is our chance to stand up, be counted, make our voices heard, and show we matter.

BARRIER:

Data could be used against me and my community

SOLUTION: Identify trusted messengers in the community who can serve to address the community's concerns and convey the importance of the Census.

MESSAGE: Information gathered by the Census cannot be used against you or your community. This is an opportunity to bring more resources to your community and demonstrate that your community matters.

BARRIER:

Participation could impact benefits

SOLUTION: Identify trusted messengers in the community who can serve to address the community's concerns and convey the importance of the Census.

MESSAGE: Information gathered by the Census cannot be used against you and won't impact your benefits. This is an opportunity to bring more resources to our community.

BARRIER:

I do not want the government coming to my door

SOLUTION: Identify trusted messengers in the community who can serve to address the community's concerns and convey the importance of the Census.

MESSAGE: If you watch for the Census Card in the mail and fill it out and return it when you receive it, then you will not be visited by a Census worker and you do not need to answer the door to a stranger.

BARRIERS TO CENSUS PARTICIPATION

Education on the Benefits of the Census

BARRIER:

The Census is not a priority

SOLUTION: Host events or conversations in community spaces to discuss the Census, the completion process, and the impact it has on the community.

MESSAGE: The Census is incredibly important. It is our one chance every ten years to make sure we receive fair representation and get the resources our community deserves.

BARRIER:

The Census does not impact my life

SOLUTION: Host events or conversations in community spaces to discuss the Census, the completion process and the impact it has on the community.

MESSAGE: The Census proves our existence. If you are not counted, you are invisible. Invisibility means fewer resources are distributed in your area. Your participation in the Census helps you, your neighbors, and your community.

BARRIER:

There is no benefit to me filling out the form, but it is to my disadvantage

SOLUTION: Host events or conversations in community spaces to discuss the Census, the completion process and the impact it has on the community.

MESSAGE: Census information cannot be used against you, but it will be used to help our community. An accurate count ensures we get the resources for vital community programs, as well as the political representation and voice we deserve.

BARRIERS TO CENSUS PARTICIPATION

Tactical Barriers to Census Participation

BARRIER:

Language barriers

SOLUTION: Provide Census assistance for various languages and resources to respondents.

MESSAGE: The Census form and Census assistance come in a number of languages. Census mailers will provide instructions for requesting language assistance.

Source: <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/govinfo/LibrariesGuide2020Census.pdf>

ONLINE FORM	PAPER FORM	TELEPHONE ASSISTANCE
English	English	English
Arabic	Bilingual	Arabic
Chinese [Simplified]	English-Spanish	Chinese [Simplified]
French		French
Haitian Creole		Haitian Creole
Japanese		Japanese
Korean		Korean
Polish		Polish
Portuguese		Portuguese
Russian		Russian
Spanish		Spanish
Tagalog		Tagalog
Vietnamese		Vietnamese
		Mandarin
		Cantonese

LANGUAGE GUIDES

Albanian	Greek	Italian	Serbian
American Sign Language	Haitian	Japanese	Sinhala
Amharic	Hebrew	Khmer	Slovak
Arabic	Hindi	Korean	Somali
Armenian	Hmong	Lao	Spanish
Bengali	Hungarian	Lithuanian	Swahili
Bosnian	Igbo	Malayalam	Tagalog
Bulgarian	Ilocano	Marathi	Tamil
Burmese	Indonesia	Navajo	Telugu
Chinese	Italian	Nepali	Thai
Creole	Japanese	Polish	Tigrinya
Croatian	Khmer	Portuguese	Turkish
Czech	Korean	Nepali	Twí
Dutch	Lao	Polish	Ukrainian
Farsi	Lithuanian	Portuguese	Urdu
French	Malayalam	Punjabi	Vietnamese
German	Marathi	Romanian	Yiddish
Gujurati	Navajo	Russian	Yoruba

The language guides cannot be used to respond to the Census, but can help respondents fill out the actual form in English.

BARRIER:

Lack of knowledge about the process

SOLUTION: Host Census 101 events or conversations in community spaces with trusted messengers to simplify the process and field questions.

MESSAGE: You will receive a letter invitation in the mail asking you to complete the Census questionnaire online. This letter will provide in-depth information for filling out the Census online and other options you have. The Census Bureau will also send you reminders in the mail until you respond.

WHAT WE WILL SEND IN THE MAIL

	You'll receive:
March 12-20	An invitation to respond online to the 2020 Census. (Some households will also receive paper questionnaires.)
March 16-24	A reminder letter.
IF YOU HAVEN'T RESPONDED YET:	
March 26-April 3	A reminder postcard.
April 8-16	A reminder letter and paper questionnaire.
April 20-27	A final reminder postcard before we follow up in person.

BARRIER:

Lack of access to the Internet

SOLUTION: When planning outreach, have knowledge of tracts with little or no internet for targeted outreach. Provide spaces for residents to fill out the form and ask questions.

MESSAGE: The 2020 Census will be available to fill out online, however you still have the option of filling it out via paper mail or over the phone.

<https://www.digitalinclusion.org/home-internet-maps/>

BARRIER:

I do not have the time to fill out the form

SOLUTION: Provide opportunities for residents to fill out the form in community spaces that residents visit on a daily basis.

MESSAGE: The Census form will only take about 10 minutes of a day to fill out and will determine the future of you, your family, and your community for the next 10 years.



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www.OhioCensus.org