

# 2020 Census FAQ Sheet

*Information courtesy of the U.S. Census Bureau*

## How do I know a mailing is actually from the Census Bureau?

If you receive a survey or a letter in the mail from the Census Bureau, the envelope contains information that will help you verify its legitimacy. For example:

- **“U.S. Census Bureau” in the return address or “U.S. Department of Commerce”** which is the Census Bureau’s parent agency.
- **Jeffersonville, IN** in the return address. The Census Bureau has a mail processing center located there.

Households will receive an invitation in the mail to complete the 2020 Census online, by phone, or by mail. The enclosed envelope to mail back a completed paper questionnaire would be addressed to Jeffersonville, IN, or Phoenix, AZ.

In addition to the 2020 Census, the Census Bureau conducts over 100 surveys that collect statistics on households, businesses, hospitals, and more. For information on whether a survey has the option to be completed online, please **visit the survey’s webpage**. Information for responding to a survey online is mailed to your address, including how to register online and/or log in. You may also receive a reminder letter from one of our **regional offices** or Census Bureau headquarters in the Washington, D.C. area.

## How do I know if a Census taker at my door is actually from the Census Bureau?

If you are visited by someone from the Census Bureau, they may be working on the 2020 Census or one of our other surveys. The Census Bureau conducts over 100 surveys throughout the country in addition to the decennial census. Here are some ways you can verify an individual is a Census Bureau employee:

- The census taker or field representative will present an ID badge that includes their name, their photograph, a Department of Commerce watermark, and an expiration date.
- They will have an official bag and Census Bureau-issued electronic device, such as a laptop or smartphone, bearing the Census Bureau logo.
- Census takers and field representatives will conduct their work between the hours of 9am and 9pm, local time.
- Census representatives will be at local organizations and community events with computer tablets to help individuals respond online to the 2020 Census.

## What number should I call if I suspect fraud?

If you suspect fraud, call **800-923-8282** to speak with a local Census Bureau representative. If it is determined that the visitor who came to your door does not work for the Census Bureau, contact your local police department (*Roseland Police Department: 973-226-8700*).

# Frequently Asked Questions

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## WHAT IS THE DECENNIAL CENSUS?

Every 10 years, the federal government conducts a population count of everyone in the United States. Data from the census provide the basis for distributing more than \$675 billion in federal funds annually to communities across the country to support vital programs—impacting housing, education, transportation, employment, health care, and public policy. They also are used to redraw the boundaries of congressional and state legislative districts and accurately determine the number of congressional seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives.

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO ME?

Responding to the census is not only your civic duty; it also affects the amount of funding your community receives, how your community plans for the future, and your representation in government. Specifically, data from the 2020 Census are used to:

- Ensure public services and funding for schools, hospitals, and fire departments.
- Plan new homes and businesses and improve neighborhoods.
- Determine how many seats your state is allocated in the House of Representatives.

## WHEN WILL I COMPLETE THE CENSUS?

The next census will take place in 2020. Beginning in mid-March, people will receive a notice in the mail to complete the 2020 Census. Once you receive it, you can respond online. In May, the U.S. Census Bureau will begin following up in person with households that haven't responded to the census.

## HOW CAN I RESPOND?

In 2020, for the first time ever, the Census Bureau will accept responses online and by phone. Responding should take less time than it takes to finish your morning coffee. You can still respond by mail.

## WHAT INFORMATION WILL BE REQUESTED?

The decennial census will collect basic information about the people living in your household. When completing the census, you should count everyone who is living in your household on April 1, 2020.

## WHAT INFORMATION WILL NOT BE REQUESTED?

The Census Bureau will **never** ask for:

- Social Security numbers.
- Bank or credit card account numbers.
- Money or donations.
- Anything on behalf of a political party.

## WILL MY INFORMATION BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

Strict federal law protects your census responses. It is against the law for any Census Bureau employee to disclose or publish any census information that identifies an individual. Census Bureau employees take a lifelong pledge of confidentiality to handle data responsibly and keep respondents' information private. The penalty for wrongful disclosure is a fine of up to \$250,000 or imprisonment for up to 5 years, or both. No law enforcement agency (not the DHS, ICE, FBI, or CIA) can access or use your personal information at any time. Data collected can only be used for statistical purposes that help inform important decisions, including how much federal funding your community receives.

The Census Bureau has a robust cybersecurity program that incorporates industry best practices and federal security standards for encrypting data.

## WHERE CAN I GO TO LEARN MORE?

You can learn more about the 2020 Census by visiting [2020census.gov](https://www.census.gov).