

2020 CENSUS

WHAT LOCALITIES CAN DO



What is the Census?

Every 10 years, the United States Census Bureau carries out a constitutionally mandated count, or Census, of the nation's residents. The Census is supposed to count everyone living in the United States to determine representation in Congress as well as the amount of federal dollars sent to local communities to improve our nation's health care, housing, education, transportation, and more.

Why Should We Care About an Accurate Census?



OUR VOICE

The Census shows the number of people who live in an area, which determines how many representatives Texans have in Congress and the number of electoral votes Texas has in presidential elections.



OUR QUALITY OF LIFE

Much of our federal tax money that we send to Washington comes back to Texas in accordance with Census calculations, and supports housing, transportation, and other services we use.



OUR BUSINESSES

Companies use population and demographic data from the Census to determine where to set up shop and expand, creating jobs and generating opportunities for Texans.

What's at Stake for Localities?

Texas communities have been historically undercounted. Billions of dollars in federal aid depend on the accuracy of the Census, including significant support for health care, housing, transportation, food and more. Being undercounted by even one percent in 2020 could result in a significant loss in federal funding for Texas — at least \$300 million a year.¹ This conservative estimate demonstrates the burden that could fall to cities or counties to fill in the funding gaps for the next decade.

In 2010, significant undercounts occurred across local communities in Texas, including in portions of:

- Large metropolitan areas
- College towns
- Rural counties
- Communities along the Texas/Mexico border

Texas is at risk of an even larger undercount in 2020. Today, 25 percent of Texans (over 6 million people) live in hard-to-count neighborhoods, where past self-response rates have been relatively low.²

Every time there is a Census, it can be logistically challenging to count everyone. Very young children, immigrants, people who live in rural areas, and people of color are often harder to count. Hard-to-count communities include people who may move residences more often and may face language barriers. The possible addition of a controversial and untested citizenship question, underfunding of the Census Bureau, and changing demographics in our state all could add up to a severe undercount for Texas.

¹ Reamer, A. (2018). Counting Dollars 2020 Report #2. GW Institute of Public Policy. bit.ly/2pJmqkr

² Romalewski, Steven & O'Hare, William, Center for Urban Research, CUNY Graduate Center, analysis of U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-16 American Community Survey.

Learn about your community's "hard to count" neighborhoods, and encourage local leaders to begin comprehensive outreach plans now. Visit www.censushardtocountmaps2020.us to find areas of Texas that are the hardest to count.

Why the 2020 Census Matters Locally

Getting People Counted Locally

Given geographic and regional differences between local communities, it is key to figure out what is best for your community. These are starting points based on where your locality may be in the 2020 Census and complete count process:

★ DEVELOPING LOCAL SUPPORT

- If you do not have a complete count committee (CCC), connect to Texas's Regional Census Bureau Specialist Rebecca Briscoe at rebecca.m.briscoe@2020census.gov or 832-701-6859 and to CPPP at our 2020 Census webpage at BIT.LY/CPPP2020CENSUS, for materials. CPPP can also connect you to other resources and partners that can provide assistance.
- Identify city or county influencers — mayors, council members, or county judges — who have the ability to set the 2020 Census as the priority for a local community. Meet with them and take our materials to convince them how important the 2020 Census is for your community.

★ DEVELOPING A PLAN

- Identify barriers to a complete count by holding public meetings or focus groups with community-based organizations to understand potential challenges and solutions needed to reach a complete count, especially in your hard-to-count neighborhoods.
- Identify trusted messengers from your community, including local leaders, community-based organizations, service providers, and faith leaders, and invite them to be a part of the planning process of your community's complete count effort.

★ DEVELOPING A LOCAL CCC

- Establish a Local CCC to increase awareness and motivate residents to respond to the 2020 Census. Subcommittees could include government, education, faith-based, media, community-based orgs, business, and recruiting trusted messengers to do direct outreach.
- Establishing a Local CCC is only the first step. When possible, local governments should commit resources such as a full-time staff person to support the Local CCC and allocate city or county dollars to help implement outreach efforts.
- To perform a robust census outreach effort, you will need resources. Connect with local chambers of commerce, businesses, and philanthropy or foundations serving your area and ask them to help fund your community's 2020 Census plan.

If your local government is not able to commit to a complete count effort for the 2020 Census, community-based organizations can develop a volunteer-based local complete count committee.

Why Invest in a Local Complete Count Committee?

A local CCC plays a key role in achieving a complete count because each Texas community is unique. Local communities can develop a robust plan to educate Texans in their communities on the 2020 Census and increase the response rate. As leaders in your community, you can develop the local message and deliver it with trusted messengers, that will make outreach more effective. There is so much at stake for Texas's local communities in this Census, including our representation and federal funding allocation for the upcoming decade. Given the large share of hard to count communities, new changes and threats to the Census and other states investing in a complete count, it is imperative that local communities invest time and resources into a CCC and funding, if available, for outreach. Local CCCs do not have to involve expensive, multifaceted campaigns. Time is of the essence, get your local community committed to the 2020 Census.

How Localities Can Support Texas at the State Level

Twenty-four states have made commitments to ensure an accurate and full count in their states. As localities working on census outreach, your expertise and insight will be key to support the state effort to make sure Texans get counted in the 2020 Census. Here is how you can support the state:

- Educate local elected leaders that represent you in state government on the importance of the 2020 Census to your community and the need for outreach.
- Advocate with the same local elected leaders to vocally support to a state level Complete Count Committee (CCC) that can help support your local community on your 2020 Census efforts.
- Advocate for state funding to be provided to support or compliment local communities and help ensure your community can implement your robust strategy.