



Shape Your Future

Engage the U.S. Census

**Shape
your future
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United States®
**Census
2020**

The Episcopal Church is once again an official partner of the U.S. Census! The mission of the 2020 Census is to count every single person in the United States without regard to age, immigration or citizenship status, whether or not someone is incarcerated or on parole, or whether they are facing homelessness. The Church’s goal is to use our presence in thousands of communities to help ensure that everyone is counted.

The census has an impact on the implementation of federal programs that play important roles in our communities. The federal government also uses census data to determine funding levels for schools, infrastructure, and certain services delivered by state and local governments. The population data, particularly for children and the elderly, are also important for state and local governments in projecting what public services a region will need in the years to come.

Religious denominations and institutions are well-placed to reach historically hard-to-count populations, a critical goal of the Census Bureau. We can promote participation through our congregations and ministries. Research shows that someone is more likely to take the census if they hear about it from someone they trust. Help shape the future of your community by learning about the census.

CENSUS 101

First and foremost, [the census is safe and secure.](#)

- Under Title 13 of the U.S. Code, the Census Bureau cannot release any identifiable information about individuals, households, or businesses, even to law enforcement agencies.
- Your information cannot be used by the Federal Bureau of investigation (FBI), the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), or the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). [More on the census and confidentiality.](#)
- There is no citizenship question on the census. The 2020 Census written questions are the same as the 2010 Census.

Why does the census matter?

Representation: The census count determines the number of representatives from each state in Congress. Census data determine district boundaries for federal elections and many state and local jurisdictions.

Federal Programs: Census data inform how billions of dollars in annual public funding are allocated for programs that help address poverty, healthcare, education, criminal justice, and many others. These programs are vital to help the most vulnerable among us, and Episcopalians through the Episcopal Public Policy Network and the Office of Government Relations advocate for many of these programs. Learn more about the impact of the census in our [five-part educational series.](#)

Local Governance: States and municipalities rely on census data for a variety of resident needs including new roads, schools, senior programs, and emergency services. An accurate count today helps local governments plan for tomorrow.

Private Enterprise: Businesses use census data to understand regional demographics and what products or services are likely to be needed. Data can also help inform insurance programs, business investment, and private education.

For people with disabilities and the Deaf community

<p><i>Implications of the census</i></p> <p>Federal <u>programs that help support people with disabilities</u> allocate funds according to census data. People with disabilities have been historically underrepresented in the census count, presenting a challenge to implementing these programs effectively.</p>	<p><i>Logistics for taking the census</i></p> <p>The Census Bureau is <u>making participation easier and more accessible</u> by offering instructional videos and in-person visits in American Sign Language, allowing phone responses to the questionnaire, producing braille and large print versions of census educational material, and more.</p>
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ACTIONS TO TAKE

The Census Bureau has [changed a number of processes](#) for the 2020 Census as they heed public health advice for the COVID-19 pandemic. These modifications to the timeline are understandable to both maintain public safety and the accuracy of the data collected. However, they are disruptions with potentially negative side effects. The Episcopal Church continues its commitment to the Census Bureau to help get an accurate count, and the nature of our engagement will have to be modified according to local public health guidance, which may vary from region to region across the country. For any proposed activities in this toolkit that require in-person engagement, please heed local public health official and Episcopal Church advice before conducting any face to face activity. Additionally, consider how any one of these activities may be transferred into a virtual online format or conducted through congregational phone trees.

- ✓ Review the [“How to Help”](#) recommendations from the Census Bureau
- ✓ Publicize the census and Census Bureau resources through social media campaigns, public service announcements, preaching on our social responsibilities, adult education forums, Episcopal schools, feeding programs, or anywhere you find an audience both within and beyond the Church.
- ✓ Outreach ministries may still be operating in person even if worship services are virtual. Make sure to publicize the 2020 Census in all community outreach programs your congregation operates.
- ✓ Invite a speaker from the Census Bureau to attend a conference or convention.
- ✓ **Partner with the Census Bureau directly**
 - [Census Partnership Fact Sheet](#)
 - [Questions and Answers for Stakeholders Supporting the 2020 Census](#)
 - Join a [Complete Count Committee](#) with the U.S. Census Bureau. A CCC is comprised of a broad spectrum of government and community leaders from education, business, healthcare, and other community organizations. These trusted voices develop and implement a 2020 Census awareness campaign based upon their knowledge of the local community to encourage a response.
- ✓ [Work for the Census](#)
- ✓ **Share the benefits of an accurate census.** Among other benefits, federal assistance is distributed using census data, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers. Learn more as the Office of Government Relations adds resources to their [civic engagement webpage](#).
- ✓ **Check out your community’s response rate** using the [Census Bureau’s response rate map](#).
- ✓ **College student counting during COVID-19** is a bit different than past years. Review and share [this specific guidance](#) from the Census Bureau.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ✓ [Uses of Census Bureau Data in Federal Funds Distribution](#)
- ✓ [What is the Census?](#) From NALEO
- ✓ [Que es el Censo?](#) NALEO
- ✓ [Hard to Count map](#)
- ✓ [Fact Sheet: Undercounting Children](#)
- ✓ [Fact Sheet: Undercounting Latinx](#)
- ✓ [Fact Sheet: Undercounting African Americans](#)
- ✓ [Fact Sheet: Undercounting Low Income Families](#)
- ✓ [Language Guides](#) to help respondents complete the 2020 Census

Reporting to OGR

If you are engaging with the 2020 Census, let us know what you are up to! Send us details and pictures via email to eppn@episcopalchurch.org, or tag us on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram while it's happening @TheEPPN.