Census 2020 and the Citizenship Question

There will NOT be a question about citizenship on the 2020 Census.

The Trump Administration tried to add a question about citizenship to the 2020 Census, but civil rights advocates successfully fought to keep the question off the form. In June 2019, the Supreme Court struck down the citizenship question, deciding that the Trump Administration's reason for adding the citizenship question violated the law. The Court gave the Administration a chance at a do-over, but shortly thereafter the Administration announced it would give up the fight and would not include a citizenship question on the 2020 Census. The Bureau is printing the forms for Census 2020 without a citizenship question.

What will be asked on the census?

The census asks basic questions, like name, age, race, and ethnicity, about each person living in your household. The 2020 Census will NOT ask about citizenship or immigration.

Why should everyone participate in the census?

The census counts every person in the United States—regardless of their immigration status.

- When you participate in the census, you help your family and community get their fair share of resources and services. Census data are used to distribute more than $800 billion for essential public services, like schools, libraries, transportation, and healthcare.
- When you participate in the census, you help your community have a voice in our government. Census data are also used to divide up political representation once every ten years.

Are my census responses confidential?

There are extremely strong confidentiality protections for census data under federal law.

- Individual respondent’s information cannot be shared with anyone outside the Census Bureau. This means immigration enforcement and other government agencies cannot see or use your census response.
- Census data cannot be used for any purpose other than statistical analysis.
- If a Census Bureau employee wrongfully shares census data, they could be given five years in prison and/or a $250,000 fine.

Do I have to answer every question?

The law requires that people respond to the census in full. However, millions of people fail to answer at least some questions on every census.

Your form will still be counted even if you skip questions, as long as you provide your name and address. If you skip multiple questions or don’t answer the census at all, the Census Bureau might follow up to ask for the missing information, either by phone or by sending a Census Bureau employee to your home. The fewer questions that you skip, the less likely it is that the Census Bureau will follow up.
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