Census 2020: Vocabulary & Definitions

Article 1 of the United States Constitution requires that a census be taken every ten years. To help you better understand this key part of our political process, Yalla Count Me In! has created a glossary of common Census terms.

American Community Survey (ACS): the American Community Survey, or ACS, is a yearly survey of a portion of the United States population. The ACS asks detailed questions, but only to 1 in 8 households each year.

Apportionment: the redistribution of seats per state in the House of Representatives. The Constitution states that this must be done every ten years based on the census population count.

Census/Decennial Census: a count of every person living in the United States. By order of the Constitution, it is done every ten years.

Census Day: April 1st, 2020 is the official reference day for the census. This means that the Census will ask you to complete the form based on what your answers were as of April 1st.

Census Information Center (CIC): local community partners of the Census who provide education, resources, and data to underserved communities.

Enumerator: a Census employee who goes door-to-door to collect census data. Enumerators will collect data from households in rural areas and from households that do not respond by Internet, mail, or phone.

Get Out The Count (GOTC): a national campaign to educate people about the 2020 census and encourage them to fill out their census form and be counted.

Household: a person or any amount of people who live at the same housing unit

Personally identifiable information (PII): information that can be used to identify a person, such as name and address. The Census Bureau is legally bound to keep your PII confidential for 72 years.

Respondent: the individual who fills out the Census form for their household.

State Data Center (SDC): a state agency appointed by the government to help disseminate Census data as well as, help educate and prepare for the 2020 Census.

Title 13: Title 13 of the United States Code obligates the Census Bureau to protect your data and keep your information confidential.

Yalla Count Me In!: a national, grassroots coalition-led movement to Get Out The Count (GOTC) of Arab Americans for the 2020 Census.