Why the Census Matters for
Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, and South Asian (AMEMSA)
Communities in the DMV Area

Every 10 years the U.S. government counts every person living in the country as part of the U.S. Census. The next census is on April 1, 2020 and will be available online. The U.S. Census is an opportunity to accurately count Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, and South Asian (AMEMSA) communities and allocate funding for critical resources.

Census Process and Timeline

- March 12: Households will receive official Census Bureau mail (see sample on back) with information on how to respond to the 2020 Census online
- March 16-24: Reminder postcard
- April 1: National Census Day
- March 26-April 3: Reminder postcard
- April 8-16: Reminder letter plus paper questionnaire
- April 20-27: Final postcard reminder before in-person visits begin.
- May 27-August 14: In person follow-up with households that have not responded to the 2020 Census

What Does the Census Ask Me?

- Number of people in the household (including children and non-citizen family)
- Do you own or rent your home?
- Telephone number
- Name, sex, age, and date of birth of each person in the household (including children and non-citizen family)
- Race - not all AMEMSA racial groups are listed as check box options
  - Step 1: Check off the “some other race” category (last box underneath the question)
  - Step 2: Write in your families origin (for example Somali, Lebanese, Egyptian, Bangladeshi, Pakistani)

Questions About the Census?

The Census form is available online in 12 non-English languages including Arabic. Informational guides are available in over 20 AMEMSA languages here: https://bit.ly/2vX3n4r

What’s at Stake for AMEMSA Communities in 2020?

An accurate count of our communities is necessary for critical state programs such as SNAP, Medicaid, Affordable Housing, Transportation/Roads, and Education. Businesses use Census data to decide which services and jobs are available to our communities. The Census also determines Congressional and electoral representation for each state.

Our Communities Receive Funding for Each Individual Counted in the Census:

- Virginia receives $2,000 per year for each counted resident.¹
- Maryland receives $1,800 per year for each counted resident.²
- D.C. received $6 billion dollars in federal aid based on the 2010 Census.³

² Ibid. bit.ly/3bZmuez
³ Ibid. bit.ly/39VWbUK

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Is my Information Safe?
It is against the law for the Census Bureau to share any of your data. We encourage you to respond to the Census to the best of your abilities. If you have any issues with Census related security please reach out to the hotlines below.

Questions about the Census?
Email Justice for Muslims Collective with your questions at dcjusticeformuslims@gmail.com

Call the following Census language hotlines for in-language information and assistance:

- Lawyers’ Committee
  - Live 9am-5pm EST
  - English - call 888-268-6820

- Arab American Institute Census Hotline (open 9am-9pm EST)
  - Live from 9am-5pm EST
  - Arabic - call 833-333-6864

- Asian Americans Advancing Justice Count Us In Census Hotline
  - Live from 8:30am-8:30pm EST
  - English, Urdu, Hindi, Bangla - call 844-2020-API

- NALEO Educational Fund
  - Live from 8:30am-8:30pm EST
  - English, Spanish - call 877-352-3676

Beginning in March 2020, households will receive official Census Bureau mail with information on how to respond to the 2020 Census online.

Below is what the official government mailer will look like:

March 26, 2020

A Message from the Director, U.S. Census Bureau

Dear Resident,

Now is the time to respond.

The Census Bureau sent you several requests to complete your 2020 Census questionnaire. If you have not already responded, it is important that you complete your 10-minute questionnaire now.

Respond now at xxxx.xxxx.gov OR complete and return the paper questionnaire that we sent you earlier.

You are required by law to respond to the 2020 Census. Help us conserve natural resources, process data more efficiently, and save taxpayer money by responding online. Otherwise, a Census Bureau interviewer may visit you to complete your 2020 Census questionnaire.

The Census Bureau is required by law to protect your information. The Census Bureau is not permitted to publicly release your information in a way that could identify you or your household.

If you are unable to respond online, we will send you another paper questionnaire next week. If you need help completing your 2020 Census questionnaire, please call toll-free 1–844–330–2020.


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