Oregon 2020 Census
Communications Toolkit

Make Oregon Count!
# Table of Contents

Introduction .................................................................................. 3
2020 Census Challenges ................................................................. 4
How to Use This Toolkit .................................................................. 5
Hard-to-Count-Populations ......................................................... 6
2020 Census Timeline .................................................................. 7
How Your Organization Can Help ................................................. 8
Tools & Templates:
  Sample Banner Language ......................................................... 10
  Sample Social Media Posts, General ......................................... 11
  Sample Social Media Posts by Topic ........................................ 14
  Sample Letters to the Editor ..................................................... 18
  Samples Newsletter Article ....................................................... 21
  Frequently Asked Questions ...................................................... 23
  Acknowledgments ...................................................................... 27

To download this document and find other toolkits online, visit [Oregon2020Census.gov](http://Oregon2020Census.gov).
Article I, Section II of the U.S. Constitution mandates a head count of every person residing in the United States every 10 years. This includes people of all ages, races, ethnic groups, citizens and noncitizens. A complete and accurate count of Oregon’s population is critical to the future and prosperity of our state as it guides the federal funding Oregon receives for vital community programs and services. In 2016 alone, Oregon received over $13.4 billion in federal assistance, based on data collected during the 2010 Census.

The census also determines Oregon’s political representation through the number of representatives our state has in the US House of Representatives, as well as the number of electoral votes. This is essential to amplifying Oregon’s voice in Washington D.C.

Beginning in mid-March of 2020, households across Oregon will receive a mailing from the U.S. Census Bureau asking them to take the census online or by phone. Each household will be asked to provide basic information about the people who reside in that household “most of the time” as of April 1, 2020, the official “Census Day.” One person should fill out a census questionnaire for the entire household.
Underfunding: The decennial census is a complex, nationwide operation that requires significant resourcing to successfully execute. U.S. Department of Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross estimated that the U.S. Census Bureau needed $7.4 billion to carry out the decennial census operation in 2020; the Trump administration only requested $5.3 billion. In December 2019, Congress approved $6.7 billion for Fiscal Year 2020, still falling $700 million short. Additionally, Congress has chronically underfunded the U.S. Census Bureau over most of the last decade.

Online Census: The 2020 Census will primarily be conducted online for the very first time, although response by paper and phone will also be an option. The U.S Census Bureau predicts that 60.5% of the population will self-respond, with two thirds of the self-response coming through the internet. That means that fewer than half of all households will self-respond by internet before the nonresponse follow-up period begins in May. In Oregon, only about 92% of Oregonians have access to wired broadband 25mbps or faster. Additionally, many people still have concerns around the new online interface’s ease of use and security.

Citizenship Question: Even though it was blocked by the U.S. Supreme Court, the proposed citizenship question on the 2020 Census questionnaire has had a chilling effect on immigrant and refugee communities who are already some of the hardest to reach populations. Several census experts including 6 former U.S. Census Bureau Directors have warned about the likelihood of an undercount because of this. It’s important to consider that this not only affects undocumented individuals but also their friends and families. Oregon’s Population Research Center (PRC) estimates that 456,900 or 1 in 9 Oregonians live with a non-citizen.

Public Distrust: According to people-press.org, public trust in the government is near a historic low with only 17% of Americans today say they can trust the government in Washington “just about always” (3%) or “most of the time” (14%).
Who should use this?
This toolkit is intended to provide a comprehensive set of tools and resources for different stakeholders such as cities, counties, service providers and state agencies to help increase public awareness about the 2020 Census to the general public. Sharing information about the 2020 Census through a variety of communication channels will help communities in Oregon understand the different ways that the census impacts them and how they can fill out their census questionnaire.

What will you find?
In this document you will find tools such as sample social media posts & banners, templates for letters to the editor and newsletter articles, talking points & messaging, pictures & pictograms and other information to help raise awareness about the 2020 Census. At the end of this document you will also find answers to the most frequently asked questions about the 2020 Census. Please reference these when talking to your friends and family.

Census Fun Fact:
The first nationwide census took place in 1790. For this, 650 men on horseback were dispatched to go door-to-door around the original 13 states. The overall cost in 1790 was $45,000. In 2010, the Census cost $13 billion and came in $1.3 billion under budget.

The set of tools in this document was compiled by Governor Kate Brown’s Census Team in collaboration with the Oregon Complete Count Committee (OCCC) and U.S. Census Bureau staff. For questions regarding this toolkit, contact: 2020Census@oregon.gov
Hard-to-Count Populations

Who is Hard-to-Count (HTC)?
Over the years, the U.S. Census Bureau has conducted research to identify which particular population groups are undercounted at a higher rate during the enumeration process of the census. Hard-to-Count groups, or HTCs, include: young children, highly mobile people, non-English speakers, undocumented immigrants, racial/ethnic minorities, rural and low income families, people experiencing homelessness, the LGBTQ community and people with mental and/or physical disabilities.

In 2010, Oregon had a 79.8% initial response rate (ranked 28th nationwide), meaning that 20.2% of the population required additional and more costly efforts to be counted.

Partnerships for Success
To make sure that in 2020 we successfully reach communities that face additional barriers to being counted, the State of Oregon has partnered with the Census Equity Funders Committee of Oregon (CEFCO) by creating the largest public and private pooled fund that supports community capacity for census engagement in HTC communities. This collaboration has resulted in the creation of #WeCountOregon - a coordinated community led effort to ensure that hard-to-count communities understand how the census impacts them and consequently participate in it. Learn more about these efforts by visiting WeCountOregon.com.

Census Assistance Centers (CACs)
Census Assistance Centers (CACs) are safe spaces where anyone can get support with filling out their 2020 Census form. Most CACs will be operating from late April through July of 2020, with varying hours so Oregonians have flexibility in finding time to fill out their census. CACs will be trained and work in coordination with #WeCountOregon. Visit Oregon2020Census.gov to find a CAC near you!
### 2020 Census Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 12–20</td>
<td>Mailing 1 sent to homes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 16–24</td>
<td>Mailing 2 sent to those who do not respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 26–April 3</td>
<td>Mailing 3 (reminder postcard) sent to those who do not respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1</td>
<td>Census Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Counting begins for those living in group quarters such as dormitories, nursing homes and homeless shelters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 8–16</td>
<td>Mailing 4, letter and paper questionnaire sent to those who have not yet responded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 13–July 13</td>
<td>Census takers drop off invitations to respond and paper questionnaires at the front doors of 5 million households stateside while updating the addresses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-August</td>
<td>U.S. Census Bureau will start to send its representatives, called enumerators, to follow-up with households that have not yet responded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September (tentative)</td>
<td>Counting begins in locations such as recreational vehicle parks, campgrounds, marinas and hotels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 31</td>
<td>Census count ends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2021</td>
<td>Census Bureau transmits state population totals and congressional apportionment to the president</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How Your Organization Can Help

Identify Your Networks & Communications Channels

You already have communication & outreach channels at your disposal that will allow you to create meaningful and widespread awareness about the 2020 Census. Consider using websites, social media pages, newsletters, reader/bulletin boards, conferences, staff meetings, trainings and community outreach events to spread the word. Everyone needs to know how important the census is and how easy it is to participate!

Develop a Work Plan

Use the Oregon 2020 Census Organization Work Plan template that’s on Oregon2020Census.gov to guide the planning and execution of communication and outreach activities that will allow you to create awareness about the 2020 Census in your organization and your network. This template is customizable to fit the needs of your organization.

When developing your organization’s work plan, please consider the following:

- Be sure that front-line staff who work directly with community members on a daily basis are prepared to answer Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) about the 2020 Census. Please see the FAQ section of this document or visit Oregon2020Census.gov.
- Your work plan should address internal and external efforts that promote census participation while giving special consideration to historically Hard-to-Count.
How Your Organization Can Help

Low-cost/no-cost ways to promote the 2020 Census beginning in January 2020:

- Identify conferences and meetings in which you can present about the 2020 Census or distribute census materials.
- Communicate to your employees and customers the importance of participating in the census and assure them that their responses are confidential.
- Publish an article about the census in your company/organization newsletter.
- Include a census message in employee newsletters and in email signatures.
- While speaking at meetings, mention the importance of the 2020 Census.
- Email a census message to your employees, customers and partners.
- Display promotional materials or logos in your offices.
- Share census information at events you sponsor.
- Provide computers, tablets and internet connectivity to allow employees and customers to complete the 2020 Census form online.
- Post about the importance of the 2020 Census on your social media pages, especially on key reference dates (See 2020 Census Timeline)

Census Fun Fact:
Temporary offices conducted the census until 1902 when Congress created the permanent U.S. Census Bureau.
Sample Banner Language

2020 Census — Your Count is Your Voice!

Representation Matters. Your Count Matters.

2020 Census — Make Oregon Count!

2020 Census — Be Counted. Be Represented.

The Census is Important, Easy & Safe!

YOU + CENSUS = $$$ for Oregon

For pictograms please visit: www.oregon2020census.gov
Sample Social Media Posts

Join us in spreading the word about the 2020 Census!

Please use the hashtags #OregonCounts2020 and #2020Census when sharing the content below. To make the social media posts more interesting, include articles, pictograms or other content to accompany the suggested posts. Follow Governor Kate Brown’s social media accounts for more content ideas and retweets/reposts opportunities:

- Twitter: @OregonGovBrown
- Facebook: Facebook.com/OregonGovernor.

Sample Tweets and Facebook Posts:

- All communities must prepare for the 2020 Census. We have only one shot at a complete count. #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census
- The 2020 Census is ______ days away! Census data will affect your voice in Congress and shape the future of your community for the next 10 years! #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census
- The 2020 Census is an opportunity to capture a full portrait of all communities across our state. Do your part to get counted! Find more information at www.Oregon2020Census.gov.
- DYK the census is mandated by the U.S. Constitution? Every 10 years, every single person in the U.S. must be counted! Census data is used to apportion congressional seats and help draw district lines in all levels of government. Learn more at www.Oregon2020Census.gov
- The census is important. The census counts every person living in the U.S. regardless of age, race, and ethnicity or immigration status. Get counted!
- The census is coming. Census data guides how more than $1.5 trillion are spent, supporting your state, county and community’s vital programs.
Sample Social Media Posts

- The census matters. The results of the census are used to reapportion the US House of Representatives, determining how many congressional seats Oregon will get. Get counted! #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census
- Your voice matters. The U.S. Constitution requires a census every 10 years. The census covers the entire country and everyone living in Oregon. Your count matters. Get Counted!
- RT if you will be participating in the 2020 Census. Why does the census matter to you? #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census
- The census is important, easy and safe. Have you filled out your census yet? Get counted to ensure your voice is heard! #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census
- The census helps provide vital resources for communities across Oregon. Make sure your community is supported by taking part in the 2020 Census!
- The census provides critical funding for resources our communities need like housing, education, transportation, health care and more. Do your part, and commit to have your voice heard. #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census
- Did you know residents use the census to support community initiatives involving legislation, quality-of-life and consumer advocacy?

Census Fun Fact:
All of the data collected during the census is confidential. Census workers swear an oath to keep information secret even after they leave the Census Bureau. The penalty is up to 5 years in prison or a $250,000 fine.
Sample Social Media Posts

Facebook Posts:

POST: The 2020 Census begins in March. Every 10 years, the results of the census are used to reapportion the U.S. House of Representatives, determining how many seats each state gets. Your voice matters, and that’s why it’s so important that you participate. The census covers the entire country and everyone living here. Census data also guides the distribution of $1.5 trillion dollars annually to state and local governments, nonprofits, businesses, and households across the nation. These dollars support vital programs in our communities. #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census

POST: Federal law protects your census responses. Your answers can only be used to produce statistics. By law, your information cannot be shared with immigration enforcement agencies, law enforcement agencies or be used to determine your eligibility for government benefits. #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census

POST: Every 10 years, everyone living in the United States is asked to complete a simple but very important constitutional task: respond to the census. The census is a questionnaire that asks a few basic questions, like the age, sex and number of people who live or stay in your home. The next decennial census starts in March, and responding is easy, safe and important.

POST: Newborn babies and young children under five are often missed in the census. The 2020 Census helps guide the allocation of critical resources that children and families depend on for the next 10 years — basically, an entire childhood!

POST: Examples of resources that could be impacted include food assistance, Head Start, childcare, housing support, public schools, early intervention services for children with special needs, children’s health insurance and more. Knowing how many children there are and where they live is essential to getting those services and programs to them. That’s why it’s so important that every child be counted, even newborn babies. Learn more here: Oregon2020Census.gov.

POST: Children under the age of five are often missed in the census. These young children need all of the support they can get during these early years. Responding to the 2020 Census is an easy, safe and important way to help provide resources for children and their communities for the next 10 years. Make sure every child is counted in your household for the 2020 Census!

POST: When newborn babies and children are not counted, support for programs such as health insurance, hospitals, childcare, food assistance, schools and early childhood development is impacted. Responding to the census is easier than ever. You can complete the census questionnaire online, by phone or by mail. Learn more here: Oregon2020Census.gov
Sample Social Media Posts by Topic

Social Media Content for Local government:

- Local government officials use the census to ensure public safety and plan new schools and hospitals. Make sure your voice is counted.

- Safety is a concern now more than ever. Get counted in the 2020 Census to ensure we have enough resources for public safety.

- As a (elected official title), I use census data to make sure I support & implement effective public policy that meets the needs of the communities I represent.

Social Media Content for Students:

- If you’re a student, taking part in the census is critical. Make sure to have your voice heard and be counted. #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census

- Want to leave campus once in a while? Public transportation funding for your campus community relies on census data. Make sure you get counted where you are … students living on campus 5 years from now will thank you!

- If you’re a student, taking part in the census is vital. Student loan funding is based on census data. Make sure you get counted! #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census

Social Media Content for Businesses:

- As a business owner, I rely on data collected through the census to better understand a market and expand business opportunities. A complete and accurate census count in 2020 will ensure my business thrives! #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census

- As a developer, I rely on census data to make strategic decisions on future developments and projects. A complete and accurate census count in 2020 will ensure my company thrives! #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census
Sample Social Media Posts by Topic

- If you want to know where to buy the next best rental property in town, make sure you encourage residents to participate in the census. #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census

- Knowing where to market your services means knowing where people live. Make sure you encourage your customers to participate in the 2020 Census. #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census

**Social Content for Rural Audiences:**

- Funding for health care in rural Oregon is based on the census. If you want health clinics that are closer than the next county, make sure you are counted in the census. #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census

- Funding for roads in Oregon is based on the census. If you want better roads in your county, make sure you are counted in the census. #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census

- As a rural Oregonian, it matters that your voice is heard. Participate in the upcoming census. Check your mailboxes in March and do your part. #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census

**Social Content for Education:**

- Make sure you get counted in the 2020 Census to ensure your children have access to the best education they can have. #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census

- Educators rely on critical census information. School districts rely on census data. Help your local school districts and participate in the upcoming census! #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census

- Respond to the 2020 Census and inform funding for educational programs that benefit our children, like after-school activities, school meal programs and Head Start. It’s more than just a count, it’s an opportunity to shape the next generation. #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census

- An accurate census is key to schools getting the funding they need to serve every child that comes through their doors. #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census
Sample Social Media Posts by Topic

- Undercounting communities of color will mean the public schools serving those communities will not receive adequate resources. #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census

- Five of the eleven top federal programs ranked by dollars distributed using census data in fiscal year 2015, involved students and education. Oregon receives $117,760,000 for the National School Lunch Program. #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census

- The Numbers: Here are some of the largest allocations of education-related funds from 55 large federal spending programs for Oregon derived from 2010 Census data:
  
  National School Lunch Program: $117,760,000
  Special Education Grants: $131,743,911
  School Breakfast Program: $39,415,000

Social Media Content about Privacy:

- All 2020 Census responses are kept confidential and private. It’s the law. Your responses cannot be shared and cannot be used against you by any government agency or court in any way. #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census

- Your responses to the 2020 Census will never be shared with other government agencies. It’s the law. It’s also an oath every Census Bureau employee must swear to uphold. #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census

Social Media Content about Families:

- Do you have a newborn baby? (Congrats, btw!) Did you know everyone counts in the 2020 Census? This March, make sure you and your baby are counted. #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census

- Kiss them, then COUNT them. By responding to the 2020 Census and counting every child in your home, you’ll influence how much funding your community receives over the next 10 years for schools, child care and more. #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census
Sample Social Media Posts by Topic

Social Media Content Related to LGBTQ+ Issues:
Love can shape your future. On the 2020 Census, you’ll have the option to identify a relationship as same-sex — informing community planning for families and providing vital statistics to advocates and policymakers who work on LGBTQ+ issues.
#OregonCounts2020 #2020Census

Social Media Content Related to Military:
As a member of the military, you and your family understand what it means to serve your country. You can provide another great service to your country and community by responding to the 2020 Census. #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census

Don’t forget to count any military family member who may be serving overseas in your 2020 Census form. Make sure they can back home to a thriving community!
#OregonCounts2020 #2020Census

Social Media Content for American Indians & Alaska Natives:
By participating in the upcoming Census, you help provide an accurate count of American Indians. Your responses to the 2020 Census can help shape how billions of dollars in federal funds are distributed each year for programs and grants in our communities. The 2020 Census is our count. Our responses matter. Regardless of age, nationality, ethnicity or where we live, we all need to be counted. #OregonCounts2020 #2020Census

Social Media Content Related to Health Care:
Help shape America’s 10-year checkup. An accurate count helps us grow stronger over the next 10 years. Responses to the 2020 Census will inform funding for clinics, Medicare, the Children’s Health Insurance Program and other health care assistance programs.
#OregonCounts2020
Instructions for Letters to the Editor:

1. Identify yourself, name, where you live, occupation or another identifier.
2. Keep it at 200 words. (Check with your local paper to confirm word count requirement)
3. Tell people why the 2020 Census is important to you. *(Personal stories make a huge impact. Are you a parent? Are you a student? Do you want better roads, health care, business opportunities and/or jobs?)*
4. Tell people all the critical information. (Confidentiality of the Census, benefits to the community, financial benefits, security, why the Census is important to you)
5. Tell people where they can get more information.
6. Tell people what to expect. (Example: People should be receiving it in the mail in March, it’s confidential, and it can be done online, via paper form or over the phone.)
7. Keep it simple.
8. Once you submit, email 2020Census@Oregon.gov and let us know you’ve submitted a letter!

General:

My name is_________ and I work in the_______field and I live in_______. The United States Census begins in March and it’s critical every Oregonian participates and is counted. The U.S. Census ensures critical federal dollars reach all Oregonian communities. It happens every 10 years and guides how $1.5 trillion dollars annually will be spent on roads, transportation, health care, housing, and so much more. Local governments use the census for public safety and emergency preparedness. Real estate developers use the census to build new homes and revitalize neighborhoods. Businesses use the data to decide where to build factories, offices, and stores which help create jobs. Oregonians must participate and be counted. It’s vital we get out the count and ensure every Oregonian participates. This year it’s especially important to make sure your neighbors,
family, and friends all participate and be sure to be counted. When you participate, your data is confidential and federal law protects your census response. 2020 will be easier than ever to participate because you will be able to respond to the census online. It’s important to me that we have an accurate count because_____________________. For more information go to: Oregon2020Census.gov.

For Students:
My name is_______ and I’m a student at_______. The United States Census begins in March and it’s important that we have an accurate count here in Oregon. The federal government distributes $1.5 trillion annually to state and local governments, nonprofits, businesses, and households across the nation. That money is allocated in a way that has big consequences for our future. As students, we rely on ensuring we have an opportunity to find good paying jobs after college. Businesses rely on this data to determine where to build their next businesses. That’s why I want to make sure I’m counted during this census. As college students, we rely on public transportation and the federal government uses this data to determine where the money should go for transportation dollars. That’s why I want to make sure I’m counted so not only do I reap the benefits and rewards, but years from now another college student could also benefit from having my voice counted. And as a college student, I’m planning to participate because 2020 is going to be easier than past years-- it’s all online. In March, the United States Census Bureau will send me and you a personalized code to participate online. I’m making a plan to participate with my friends and using the school computers to partake in the 2020 Census. And don’t worry, the data is confidential and federal law protects your census responses. I’m committed to making sure my voice is counted. Will you join me? For more information go to: Oregon2020Census.gov.
For business owners:

My name is______________ and I’m a business owner at______________. The United States Census begins mailing census forms to households beginning in mid-March and it is so critical that we have a complete and accurate 2020 Census count here in Oregon. Businesses like mine rely on data derived from the census to analyze market shifts, to make informed business decisions about where to open new shops, where to invest in the community, and where there will be an eligible workforce of community leaders to help build our business. That’s why it is so important that every Oregonian participates in the upcoming 2020 Census. Oregonian businesses have a vested interest in making sure everyone is counted, but you should too. Oregon businesses hire Oregon workers that help build a stronger Oregon. Together, if we all commit to taking part in the 2020 Census, we can commit to building a stronger and more robust Oregon. Join me and look for the Census Bureau’s mail in mid-March and participate online as soon as you get it. These vital resources play a huge part in our entire state. For more information go to: Oregon2020Census.gov

Census Fun Fact:

The U.S. Census Bureau expects to hire roughly 500,000 temporary workers between 2019-2020 to help ensure that the count is completed efficiently and accurately.
Once every 10 years, the U.S. Constitution requires a full count of the population to reapportion seats in the U.S. House of Representatives. That exercise — the U.S. Census — begins in a matter of weeks (mid-March 2020). Oregon is working hard to ensure the state’s residents are fully counted.

For the first time, the primary method of response to the census will be electronic. The U.S. Census Bureau is counting on most households to complete census forms online.

We need your help to spread the word that the process is quick, easy and safe and to help people overcome internet access or digital literacy issues.

**Why is the census important?**

Census results drive decisions that will affect economic investments in our state and our representation in Congress until 2031. Census results determine congressional representation and the number of our Electoral College votes and are used to draw boundaries for state and local election districts. In the last census, Oregon was just shy of gaining one seat in Congress - we have to get it right this time!

The federal government also uses census numbers to guide more than $1.5 trillion annually from 316 federal spending programs for education and health programs, highways, roads and bridges, water and sewage systems, and other projects vital to our health and well-being. Nonprofits and businesses use the data to help determine where to build health care facilities, child care and senior centers, grocery stores and new factories.

In 2016, Oregon received $13.5 billion of these funds from just 55 of these 316 programs— or $3,200 per person, including:

- Nearly $507 million in bridge and highway maintenance and construction
- $8.5 billion for health programs
- Over $2 billion for education
- $900 million for housing
- $512 million for rural assistance programs

Based on these numbers, the state would lose up to $8 million over the decade for every 100 households missed, which would affect its ability to adequately support children, veterans, senior citizens and low-income families.
How it works

Beginning in mid-March 2020, the U.S. Census Bureau will send each household a postcard inviting residents to go online (or call) and provide information about the number of people residing at that address. The questionnaire will ask for the names, sex, age (including date of birth) and race/ethnicity of each person living at the residence, whether residents own or rent and for a phone number in case there is a need to follow up. Only one person should fill out the census for the entire household.

What is the timeline?

The process begins in mid-March 2020 and ends at the end of July. Those who do not respond will receive reminders in the mail until the beginning of May, when Census Bureau staff will begin going door to door to contact those who do not respond. Results must be delivered to the president by Dec. 31, 2020.

Is it safe?

By federal law, the information you provide is confidential. The U.S. Census Bureau uses the highest level of data security to safeguard the information it receives. In fact, census forms can be used ONLY to produce statistical information about the population, and penalties for violations are severe. For more information, refer to the Fact sheet on Census and Confidentiality.

How to help

- Inform yourself and inform others.
- Encourage qualified individuals to apply for census jobs.
- Do a scan of your community
  - Who might have difficulty completing the census or be afraid to respond to it?
  - What solutions can you devise to help overcome these difficulties?
  - How can you allay the concerns of your community?
- Make a list of community leaders who could develop an understanding of the importance of the census and who engender public trust and educate them about the census.
- Develop a list of people who understand the importance of the census and are willing to assist in ensuring a complete count. When the time comes, contact them with reminders.
- Create an inventory of all mailing lists, newsletters and other recurrent communications that could be used to spread the word about the census.
- Identify places with internet access and computers/tablets that could host census assistance centers for those who need technology to complete the form online.
- Recruit and educate volunteers who could staff assistance centers.
Your family, friends, neighbors and coworkers may have questions about the census. Here are answers to some of those most frequently asked.

**Are my responses to the census questionnaire confidential?**

The U.S. Census Bureau takes their responsibility to protect your information very seriously. The law puts in place very stringent measures to protect your information. The Census Bureau is not permitted to publicly release your responses in a way that could identify you or your household. By law, the Census Bureau can only use your responses to produce statistics. Your information is also protected from cybersecurity risks through screening of the systems that transmit your data. All Web data submissions are encrypted in order to protect your privacy. The penalty for unlawful disclosure is a fine of up to $250,000 or imprisonment of up to five years, or both. Here is more information about confidentiality in English and in Spanish.

**Why does the census take place every 10 years?**

The Constitution of the United States, Article 1, Sections 2 and 9, directs that a census or population count be taken every 10 years. Throughout the decade, the U.S. Census Bureau conducts research and testing to inform design decisions for the next census.

**What does “residence” mean and how do I count the “residents” in my house?**

The U.S. Census Bureau defines residence as the place where people live and sleep most of the time. For more information about residence definitions, visit: https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial/2020/program-management/memo-series/2020-memo-2018_04-appendix.pdf

**What about temporary roommates? Are they counted in a rental place?**

If someone is staying in your home on April 1, and has no usual home elsewhere, you should count them in your response to the 2020 Census. Temporary roommates are easy to miss because the person filling out the census form may not consider them a member of their household.
What about college students from out of state? Should they fill out a census form in Oregon?

College students are to be counted at the on- or off-campus residence where they live and sleep most of the time. Even foreign and out-of-state students should be counted in Oregon if they are residing here while attending college. More information about counting students and others are found under the Special Circumstances" heading on the Census Bureau’s Who to Count page.

How will people experiencing homelessness be counted?

The Census Bureau has special plans for operations that they refer to as Service-Based Enumeration. This includes shelters and other places that people receive services such as soup kitchens, as well as "predetermined outdoor locations" selected based on months of outreach and coordination with local census offices, partners, shelter directors, service providers, and others. Most information will be collected from direct interviews with houseless individuals. While direct interviews are preferable, some facility administrators may choose to provide lists of respondents.

Service-Based Enumeration will be conducted over a three day period from March 30 to April 1, 2020. The Census Bureau has more information at How We Count People Experiencing Homelessness.

How will the U.S. Census Bureau contact me and how should I respond?

For the 2020 Census, you may respond online, by mail or by phone. Starting in March 2020, the U.S. Census Bureau will begin to contact households through a series of mailings. Beginning in early May 2020, the U.S. Census Bureau will send enumerators to knock on the doors of households that have not yet responded.

I filled out a survey from the Census Bureau last year. Why have I been contacted again?

Between each 10-year census, the U.S. Census Bureau conducts more than 100 surveys of households and businesses across the nation each year. One of the surveys that is often confused with the census is the American Community Survey, which reaches one out of every 480 households each year and asks very detailed questions on topics such as employment, income, housing and place of birth. State and local governments use data from both surveys to plan and fund such things as school construction, transportation systems, public housing, policy and fire precincts and future utility needs. Federal law requires participation in both.
How mobile-friendly is the online census?

According to Census Counts, the best devices to use for responding online include desktop PCs, iPhone versions 5 and later, most iPad versions, and Samsung Galaxy phones and tablets.

Will the census form be available in languages besides English?

Yes. The U.S. Census Bureau will provide the Internet Self-Response Instrument and Census Questionnaire in 12 non-English languages. Language guides, glossaries and identification cards will also be provided in 59 non-English languages. For more information on language options and language guides, please visit the U.S. Census Bureau’s webpage here.

What happens in communities in which residents may have limited English proficiency?

The U.S. Census Bureau will make the census questionnaire and other materials available in multiple languages. The questionnaire will be available in Spanish as a print version and on the tablets of those who go door to door in the nonresponse follow-up phase. The Internet Self-Response Instrument will be available in 12 languages: Spanish, Chinese (simplified), Vietnamese, Korean, Russian, Arabic, Tagalog, Polish, French, Haitian Creole, Portuguese and Japanese. The Census Bureau will provide assistance by phone in 12 languages: Spanish, Chinese (simplified), Vietnamese, Korean, Russian, Arabic, Tagalog, Polish, French, Haitian Creole, Portuguese and Japanese, as well as in American Sign Language. The Census Bureau will produce video and print guides in the 59 languages.

For populations who speak languages beyond the 59 supported languages, the U.S. Census Bureau will create video shells and print templates for adaptation.

Is it mandatory to participate in the census?

Yes. Title 13 of U.S. code (Sections 221) require individuals to answer the census completely and truthfully to avoid fines. But more importantly, your participation in the census is vital to your community’s future, because a complete and accurate count will ensure Oregon receives its fair share of federal funding and congressional representation.
How do I distinguish between an authentic U.S. Census Bureau contact and fraudulent activity or scams?

The U.S. Census Bureau will never ask for:

- money or donations
- your Social Security number
- your mother’s maiden name
- credit card or bank account information
- your personal information through email

A field representative will always have official census ID if they come to your house.

Am I required to answer every question on my form for it to be counted? How many missed questions will trigger a follow up?

Respondents are expected to answer all questions. It is expected that the U.S. Census Bureau’s top priority for non-response follow up will be households that did not respond at all. However, some households that complete all questions may still be contacted to verify information. Answering all questions on the internet or paper questionnaire will minimize the likelihood of an in-person follow up.

How long does it take to complete the census and who fills it out?

It takes about 10 minutes to answer the 10 questions, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. One person living in the household fills it out for everyone.

What happens when the count isn’t accurate?

With every census, some individuals are hard to locate, contact and/or interview. Avoiding an undercount requires extensive outreach to all people, especially those deemed hardest to count. The Census Bureau explains that among these individuals are those who may be suspicious of the government and/or the census; racial and ethnic minorities; people with limited English proficiency; immigrants; people who are low income or homeless; people who move often; and small children.
The toolkit was made possible by many contributors:

**Office of Governor Kate Brown**
Sophorn Cheang  
Aldo Solano  
Chiao Yun Anny Hsiao  
Shawneen O’Brien-Lee  
Nikki Fisher  
Natalie King  
Dustin Buehler  
Chris Pair  
Samantha West

**Oregon Complete Count Committee**
Chi Nguyen  
Rep. Andrea Salinas  
Sen. Dallas Heard  
Allison Tivnon  
Victoria Lara  
Danielle Pacifico-Cogan  
Arlene Weible  
Dr. Jason Jurjevich  
Charles Rynerson  
Megan Chuinard  
Mark Bond  
Leland Baxter-Neal  
Nikolas Ruiz-Anderson  
Jesse Beason  
Alison McIntosh  
Marty Carty

**State of Oregon Department of Administrative Services (DAS)**
Kiara Goldtrap  
Carlee Justis

**U.S. Census Bureau, Oregon Partnerships Program**

Special thanks to Lisa McClean and the State of Washington’s Office of Financial Management for their incredible support and guidance through the crafting of this document.

For more questions regarding this toolkit or statewide census efforts, email Governor Brown’s Census Team at: 2020Census@oregon.gov