



What you should know about the 2020 Census

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 little over a year (mid-March 2020). Washington 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 expects at least 70% of the population will 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, Washington gained one seat in Congress, bringing our total to 10.

The federal government also uses census numbers to distribute more than \$800 billion to states, counties and cities 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.



facebook.com/uscensusbureau



[@uscensusbureau](https://twitter.com/uscensusbureau)

In 2016, Washington received \$16.7 billion of these funds — or \$2,319 per person, including:

- Nearly \$700 million in bridge and highway maintenance and construction
- \$8.5 billion for health programs
- \$2.4 billion for education
- \$1.2 billion for housing
- \$550 million for rural assistance programs

Based on these numbers, the state would lose up to \$5.8 million 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 September. 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.

