**Virtual Questionnaire Assistance**

**Kansas – 2020 Census**

Among the many disruptions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic was the 2020 Census Mobile Questionnaire Assistance initiative. Scores of 2020 Census partners across Kansas were prepared to host MQA sites and events in order to encourage and assist residents to self-respond to the census. COVID-19 put a halt to that.

As new norms come into focus, and we wait optimistically in hopes of resuming some MQA activity, we are seeing success in a revised approach: providing census questionnaire assistance virtually.

The Kansas 2020 Partnership Specialist Census team is teaming up with partners, groups and organizations to provide **Virtual Questionnaire Assistance (VQA)**  opportunities to their respective communities, clients and audiences. By telephone or connecting remotely online, residents can ask questions, receive confidential assistance and complete their households’ census questionnaire whether online, by phone or mail.

**Two types of VQA**

**Appointment**

VQA partners proactively schedule “appointments” where persons can call in or join by video conference to ask questions and secure assistance in filling out census questionnaires.

An organization will designate and promote a morning, afternoon or evening where persons can pre-register for 15-minute (suggested) time slots. Either the partnering organization can call the household at the designated time or provide a call-in number. Members of the Kansas Partnership Specialist team will avail themselves as able to be included on those calls or, if appropriate and able, handle the calls directly. (Per policy, members of the PS team are not allowed to directly call individual households to provide assistance.)

Appointment-based VQAs have worked very well, particularly in low-response tracts and communities and when the host is well-known and trusted. Faith-based organizations, community centers, service clubs, pre-school providers, etc., have worked in conjunction with 2020 Census personnel to field questions about the census and provide real-time assistance.

Below is an example of a VQA spreadsheet used by a church to schedule appointments. It has worked very well and is a steady-eddy way to assist communities in low response tracts to complete their questionnaires outside of an event.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Appointment** | **Time** | **Phone Number** | **Language (SP / EN)** |
| **Appointment 1**  FirstName LastName | **3:00 – 3:15** | XXX-356-5616 | Spanish |
| **Appointment 2**  FirstName LastName | **3:15 – 3:30** | XXX-694-2589 | Spanish |
| **Appointment 3**  Sacred Heart | **3:15 – 3:30** | XXX-356-5616 | English |
| **Appointment 4**  Sacred Heart | **3:30 – 3:45** | XXX-204-4571 | Spanish |
| **Appointment 5**  Sacred Heart | **3:45 – 4:00** | XXX-255-7594 | Spanish |
| **Appointment 6**  **Sacred Heart** | **4:00 – 4:15** | XXX-412-0640 | English |
| **Appointment 7**  **Sacred Heart** | **4:00 – 4:15** | XXX-288-5331 | Spanish |
| **Appointment 8**  **Sacred Heart** | **4:15 – 4:30** | XXX-626-9176 | Spanish |

**Events**

The same general concept works for an event-based VQA. Here the host partner or organization collaborates with the Kansas 2020 Census PS team to have phone lines and/or a video conference allowing residents to call in at any time during event hours.

While event VQA’s do not have the advantage of knowing in advance who will be making contact and the number of calls, they require less advance work and enable community-wide promotion. Partnership Specialists can either be on-site for the duration of the event or “on call” and be summoned to assist and answer questions on an as-needed basis.

**Kansas Partnership Specialists – Contacts**

The Kansas 2020 Census Partnership Specialist Team stands ready to join your Virtual Questionnaire Assistance efforts:

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