

## Fast Facts and Talking Points for Constituents

### **“Participating in the 2020 Census is a civic duty and good for your community.”**

The very first responsibility of the federal government under the U.S. Constitution is a count of all persons living in the United States to allocate seats in the U.S. House of Representatives among the states. But your participation in the census impacts a much broader range of decisions, from how legislative districts at all levels of government are drawn, to where roads and transit are built in the future, to how more than \$800 billion in federal funding is distributed annually across the country.

### **“There are multiple ways to be counted in the 2020 Census.”**

In mid-March 2020 most addresses in the United States will receive a mailing with instructions to participate online, but you will also have the option to respond via phone or mail. Through spring and summer 2020, Census Bureau employees will follow up in-person at addresses that have not yet been counted.

### **“Your personally identifiable information (PII) is protected by law and cannot be shared outside of the Census Bureau.”**

Census Bureau employees are sworn to uphold the confidentiality of your data for life. Your responses can only be used to produce statistical information, and your personal information cannot be seen or used by other government agencies or the courts. Title 13 of the U.S. Code imposes steep

penalties for anyone who shares personally identifiable information (PII).

### **“Data security is the highest priority for the Census Bureau and extensive protections are in place to protect the integrity of the 2020 Census.”**

Online responses are secured by multiple layers of encryption and isolated from online access as soon as you hit submit. And by working with the federal intelligence community and private industry, the Census Bureau can quickly identify and respond to any external threats to its databases.

### **“English language proficiency is not required to participate in the 2020 Census.”**

The complete online census questionnaire will be available in twelve languages other than English. Telephone responses will be accepted in the same additional 12 languages. Paper forms will be printed in English and Spanish. Language guides and glossaries will be available in 59 non-English languages, plus Braille.

### **“If you don’t have access to the internet in your home, you can still be counted.”**

The online questionnaire can be completed on a smartphone, and desktop internet kiosks may be available at local post offices, libraries and other community centers. Households identified as having limited internet access and households that do not respond to initial census mailings will also be given the opportunity to complete the census through the traditional paper questionnaire. A telephone response option will also be available for the first time.