



KANSAS COUNTS

Kansas Counts is a statewide effort aimed at increasing engagement, awareness, and participation in the 2020 Census.



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PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Counting Everyone

The primary goal of a census is to count everyone. For a country of more than 330 million, this may seem like a huge feat, but it is what the U.S. Census Bureau was created to do. There's a lot at stake, such as the hundreds of billions federal dollars waiting to be distributed to the state and local governments based on their census data. Also at stake is the country's ability to respond in a disaster by knowing specific population details. Nevertheless, the census is of great importance to our communities and longevity as a country and that is why counting everyone matters. So, what is the Census doing to insure everyone gets counted?

More options of responding to the Census will be available in 2020 than ever before. Traditionally, you have been able to respond via mail or phone; now, citizens may respond online. The Census response process starts with an invitation via postal mail. For the areas of the country most likely to respond online, these households will receive a letter asking you to go online to complete the questionnaire.

Even with modern technology, the possibility of the U.S. Census online questionnaire being overwhelmed is possible. To assist with this issue, the U.S. Postal service will stagger the delivery of these specific invitations both so the online system is not overwhelmed and more U.S. Census workers will be available if you need assistance over the phone.ⁱ Areas of the country less likely to respond online will still receive an invitation to do so, but will also receive a paper questionnaire.

Another strategy the U.S. Census Bureau is using to ensure everyone is counted, is providing a transparent timeline so you know when to expect mailings and interaction with census workers. Between March 12-20 of 2020, an invitation to respond, as described above, will be mailed to nearly every home in the United States. Based on how the U.S. Postal Service staggers the mail, you will then receive a reminder letter between March 16-24. Both of these dates are before the formal April 1, Census Day. This preemptive invitation period is also an attempt to count everyone who may need more time to complete the questionnaire, prefer to get it done early, or need a few reminders. If by March 24, you still haven't responded, you will receive a reminder postcard in the mail between March 26 and April 3. After this time frame, if you still have yet to reply, you will receive another follow-up letter and paper questionnaire between April 8 and April 16. Finally, your last postal reminder will arrive between April 20 and April 27, after this date in-person follow-ups will begin.ⁱⁱ This thorough timeframe, beginning before the official April 1, 2020 Census date and does not conclude until well into the summer, aims to give everyone the time and support needed to complete the questionnaire.

We know the Census is important, but just as important is meeting the deadlines to complete our questionnaires. While in-person visits will continue past April, the Census has a relatively short amount of time to sift through all of the data gathered and produce initial reports. Apportionment counts are sent to the President of the United States by December 31, 2020 and from there redistricting counts are sent to the states by March 31, 2021. These are two very significant reports that rest heavily on the goal that everyone is counted, as these reports will affect our policy trends for the next decade.

ⁱ <https://www.census.gov/library/fact-sheets/2019/dec/2020-invites-everyone.html?#>

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