

# PARTICIPATE IN THE CENSUS TO SHAPE YOUR FUTURE IN PA

You've undoubtedly heard of the U.S. Census, the national participation count that happens once every decade. You may be wondering, "why does the Census matter to me?"

There are three simple reasons. First, the U.S. Constitution mandates that every resident must be counted every ten years. Second, it's important to participate to make sure we have fair representation in Congress. And third, Pennsylvania's census count will affect the next decade of federal spending, policy, and decision-making.

## WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE?

Quite simply, everyone. The census covers the entire country and every person living here. You are counted based on where you are living on April 1, 2020. You might be living in a group housing situation (like a dorm or nursing home), apartment, or house. You might be experiencing homelessness. Regardless of your living situation, you count as a Pennsylvanian. It also doesn't matter what your citizenship status is, how old you are, or your gender. If you live here, you matter to Pennsylvania and to the census.

## WHY YOUR RESPONSE MATTERS

Neighborhoods change over time, and the Census captures increases, decreases, and changes in community demographics. This information is used to draw U.S. congressional and state legislative districts and decide how many seats each state gets in the U.S. House of Representatives. It's also used to distribute millions of dollars in federal funding.

In fact, Pennsylvania receives \$26.8 billion annually for federally-funded programs. That's about \$2,000 per Pennsylvanian each year. Federal funding supports many programs and services for Pennsylvanians, including healthcare, food assistance, education, transportation, housing, community development, families and more.



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## WHAT ABOUT DATA PRIVACY AND SECURITY?

Protecting your privacy and keeping data secure are important to the federal government and to Pennsylvania. Residents do not need to be concerned about safety and security, as Census answers can't be used against you, and data security is managed by security experts operating at the highest levels. Under Title 13 of the U.S. Code, the U.S. Census Bureau cannot release any information that identifies individuals, and anyone who breaks this law faces a fine of up to \$250,000 and/or up to five years in prison.

## HOW TO PARTICIPATE AND SUPPORT YOUR COMMUNITY DURING CENSUS?

Residents can respond to the form by mail, by phone, and for the first time ever, online. Most households will receive their census invitation in the mail by April 1, 2020. Most households will receive their census invitation in the mail, but about 5% of households will get their invitation when a census taker drops it off.

If you are visited by someone for the 2020 Census, make sure they have a valid ID badge with their photo, U.S. Department of Commerce watermark, and an expiration date. If you suspect fraud, call 800-923-8282 to speak with a local Census Bureau representative. If the worker isn't with the bureau, call your local police department.

For more information and resources related to the 2020 U.S. Census, please visit [PA.gov/census](https://pa.gov/census).

**Your voice matters in shaping Pennsylvania's future.  
Be a good neighbor and spread the word.**



**Shape your future in PA**

