

CENSUS 2020

MAKE SURE YOU COUNT.

WHAT IS THE CENSUS?

Once every decade, the government conducts a count of the entire population. The census counts every person living in the U.S. once, only once, and in the right place. This count is required by the U.S. Constitution. Every household should complete a census form (either online, or by mail or phone) by April 2020. Participating in the census is our right and responsibility.

PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS COUNT, TOO!

The census counts everyone living in the country, no matter a person's housing status. People experiencing homelessness have been undercounted for decades, depriving them of fair political representation and access to vital resources. Many homeless individuals and families live "doubled-up," staying in the homes of others due to loss of housing or economic hardship.

Whether you are living on the street, in a shelter, or doubled-up, you should be counted!

WHY DOES THE CENSUS MATTER TO ME?

It's about access to important programs and resources.

- Population counts are used to determine how \$675 billion in federal funding is distributed.
- When you and your family are counted, your community receives its fair share of funding for schools, hospitals, emergency services, social services, and roads.
- These funds support important programs like Section 8 housing vouchers, homeless youth programs, Medicaid, SNAP, McKinney-Vento education programs, Head Start, WIC, and child care.

Illinois receives more than \$34 billion annually based on accurate census data. We must count everyone so we don't lose these important resources.

It's about fair representation.

- Census data is used to redraw district boundaries and determines the number of representatives Illinois has in Congress.
- Undercounting leads to homeless individuals and families not being fairly represented in policy-making decisions.
- When you're not counted, your community is denied a full voice.

Taking part is your civic duty.

- Completing the census is mandatory; it's a way to participate in our democracy and say "I COUNT!"

In 2015 alone, Illinois lost about \$122 million for every 1 percent of the population not counted in the 2010 Census.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CENSUS

Census Day is April 1, 2020. When completing the census, you'll note where you are living on April 1.

Living in a house or apartment / Staying at the home of a friend or relative

- In March 2020, every home will receive a mailing from the U.S. Census Bureau with instructions on how to participate.
- Complete the census form online or over the phone. Every person residing in the house needs to be included on the form. This includes family and friends who are residing temporarily or couch surfing in the house if they do not have a permanent address elsewhere.
- You can request a paper form if you prefer to respond that way.
- Information asked includes name, relationship to head of household, gender, age, birthday, Hispanic origin or race, and status as a homeowner or renter.
- The form can be completed in 10 minutes. If a household does not respond, the Census Bureau will mail two reminders and a paper census form in the fourth mailing.
- Complete by the end of April 2020 to avoid a home visit from a census official.



Staying at a shelter, on the street, or in a car

- Census workers will record responses using a paper form for people experiencing homelessness at service-based locations, including shelters, soup kitchens, and targeted outdoor locations, such as encampments and underpasses.
- Interviews will take place between March 30 and April 1, 2020 at service-based locations.
 - If you are staying in a shelter, talk to staff to confirm what day or night their location is being counted.
- Non-sheltered outdoor locations will be counted on April 1, 2020.
 - If you are non-sheltered, a census worker might find you on April 1, but they might not.
 - If you receive services in the community, such as a soup kitchen, talk to staff ahead of time to confirm what day or night their location is being counted.

Staying at a motel, RV park, or campground

- Census workers will record responses using a paper form for people staying in transitory locations who do not have a stable home elsewhere.
- Interviews will take place between April 9 and May 4, 2020.
- If you are staying in a motel, RV park, or campground, talk to staff to confirm what day or night their location is being counted.

COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CENSUS

HOW WILL THE 2020 CENSUS INVITE EVERYONE TO RESPOND?

Most households will receive an invitation in the mail. Online and phone assistance will be available in 13 languages.

WHEN CAN WE FILL OUT THE CENSUS?

Every household will receive an initial invitation to respond to the 2020 Census the week of March 12, 2020. If a household does not respond after the initial letter, they will receive additional invitations in the mail.

HOW DO I COMPLETE THE CENSUS?

You can fill out the census on a computer (at home or at a library), over the phone, or on paper.

ARE MY ANSWERS CONFIDENTIAL?

Yes. Your information cannot be shared with anyone outside of the census, by law. This includes ICE (immigration), the IRS, the FBI, police, your landlord, or anyone else. No one can use your census answers to deport you, evict you, or reduce your benefits.

WILL THERE BE A QUESTION ON THE CENSUS ASKING IF I AM A CITIZEN?

No.

I AM NOT IN THE COUNTRY LEGALLY. SHOULD I COMPLETE THE CENSUS?

Yes. By law, the census cannot report your answers to immigration, law enforcement, or anyone else. Everyone should be counted, regardless of immigration or citizenship status.

I HAVE MORE PEOPLE LIVING WITH ME THAN MY LANDLORD KNOWS. SHOULD I LIST THEM?

Everyone should be counted. By law, the census cannot report your answers to your landlord or anyone else. Please make sure to list all people living with you on April 1, 2020, including babies and children.

I AM COUCH SURFING OR STAYING WITH A RELATIVE OR FRIEND BECAUSE I CANNOT AFFORD HOUSING OF MY OWN. SHOULD I FILL OUT THE CENSUS?

The census counts all people living or staying at an address, not just the person or family who owns or rents the property. The person in charge of the household is responsible for completing the census form. If you are staying in the home of another, you should be counted on that household's form.

I AM LIVING IN A SHELTER OR ON THE STREET. HOW CAN I MAKE SURE I'M COUNTED?

Census workers will visit service-based locations between March 30 and April 1, 2020. The best way to make sure you are counted is to speak with staff at the location you receive services to confirm when and where the census workers will be coming. Share this information with others in your community that are homeless so they can be counted too.

HOW CAN I GET A JOB WITH THE CENSUS?

To learn about 2020 Census jobs, you can visit 2020census.gov/jobs or call 1-855-562-2020.

QUESTIONS?

**CONTACT GLORIA, CCH CENSUS 2020 PROJECT MANAGER
AT GLORIA@CHICAGOHOMELESS.ORG OR (312) 641-4140**

