

# FAITH IN PUBLIC LIFE

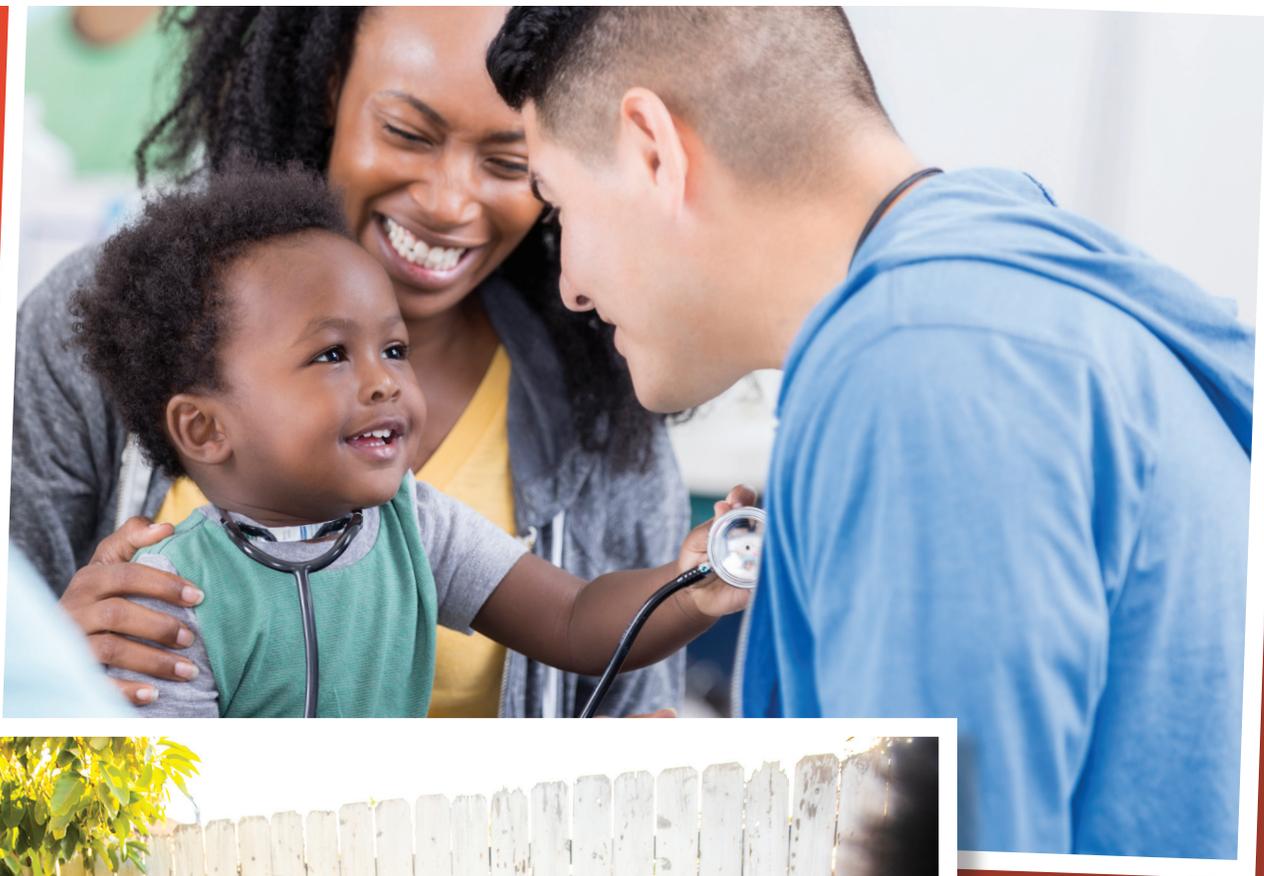
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## 2020 Census FAITH TOOLKIT:

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The Moral Imperative  
for an Accurate Count





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# Introduction

On April 1, 2020 the Census will officially begin. Our goal is to ensure every adult and child in the country is counted, regardless of race, faith tradition or economic status.

This toolkit is designed to help faith leaders like you ensure that everyone in your community is counted so that your local schools, roads and hospitals get your fair share of funding.

The 2020 Census will be the first Census to be conducted almost entirely online, and will have the lowest budget and resources in decades. And if the courts don't intervene to stop the Trump Administration, this could be the first to include a citizenship question in almost 70 years.

As a faith leader, you are an incredibly trusted messenger who can help educate and mobilize your congregation, your colleagues and your entire community to rise to this challenge.

This "Get Out the Count" program is based on the understanding that faith communities have a unique moral voice and are often trusted community leaders and resources. As such, these communities and their leaders are poised to be key messengers in turning out our communities to be counted in the 2020 Census, no matter the obstacles, so that everyone of our neighbors is fairly and accurately counted.

A coalition of national religious denominations and organizations in partnership with Faith in Public Life and Shepherding the Next Generation to form the 2020 Census Faith Council will work together to lead public education efforts regarding the 2020 Census, advocate for a fair and accurate count, and recruit 1,000 Census Faith Ambassadors across the country and particularly in Hard to Count communities to be community leaders in educating their neighbors and turning them out to be counted in the 2020 Census.

- **Over \$600 billion in federal government spending will be determined by The 2020 Census count.**

The 2020 Census will impact how many teachers are hired in our local schools and how many nurses and beds are in our local hospital. From roads to food assistance, when people are not counted, our community loses out.

- **Redistricting & Reapportionment:** The 2020 Census will determine how your congressional district will be drawn and how many representatives your state will send to Congress. This is why we must ensure a fair and accurate count as citizens and people of faith. State and local governments also use Census data to redraw state legislative districts.

*Sincerely,*

## **2020 Census Faith Council,**

*Convened by Faith in Public Life and Shepherding the Next Generation*

African American Ministers Leadership Council  
African Methodist Episcopal Church  
Catholic Legal Immigration Network  
Church of God in Christ  
Conference of National Black Churches  
Faith in Public Life  
Jewish Community Relations Council NY  
Jewish Council for Public Affairs  
Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC)  
National Association of Catholic Diocesan Directors of Hispanic Ministry  
National Baptist Convention USA  
National Council of Churches  
National Latino Evangelical Coalition  
NETWORK Catholic Social Justice Lobby  
Poligon National  
Progressive National Baptist Convention  
Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference  
Shepherding the Next Generation  
Skinner Leadership Institute  
Sojourners

# Ways your congregation can help Get Out the Count

- 1. Post a flyer in your congregation** to raise awareness. (see Appendix 1)
- 2. Preach about the importance of being counted in the 2020 Census** and what's at stake for your community.
- 3. Sign up to be a Census Faith Ambassador** to help lead local "Get Out The Count" efforts. Educate your colleagues, speak at events, and get training and materials.
- 4. Recruit others to be Ambassadors** since the harvest is great and the laborers are few. We need ambassadors in every hard to county community in the country.
- 5. Spread the word through all your good works: food pantries, housing, ESL classes, schools, etc.**
- 6. Provide assistance during the count.** Help people access the internet to complete the Census survey. Have volunteers help answer questions.

# Why become a Faith Census Ambassador?

Are you passionate about ensuring everyone is counted in the 2020 Census? Do people look to you as a trusted leader? Can you speak publicly and help others understand why the Census is so important? Do you want to learn more about the Census process so you can help your community be counted?

Faith Census Ambassadors are respected community leaders, both clergy and lay, who commit to helping to lead Get Out The Count efforts in their communities.

Here's how your leadership is needed:

## 1. You can help EDUCATE & MOBILIZE your Community!

Educate your colleagues and your congregation. Represent the faith community at state and local Census meetings with government officials, business and nonprofits. Speak at events and spread the word far and wide.

## 2. Become a local expert on the Census.

You'll have access to Faith in Public Life's detailed training series on the 2020 Census - why it's so important, how it works, and how you can help ensure everyone in your community is counted. You'll be fully equipped to be an effective advocate for your community. Also use Census data to redraw state legislative districts.

**Sign up here: [www.faithinpubliclife.org/census](http://www.faithinpubliclife.org/census)**  
***Spanish sign up can be found here: [bit.ly/2020espanol](http://bit.ly/2020espanol)***

# Who is Hard to Count?

**The Census has historically under-counted several groups of people:**

- Children under age 5
- People living in poverty or experiencing homelessness
- People of color
- American Indians and Alaska Natives
- Immigrants
- Religious minorities

It's worth noting that most of these communities are 'hard to count' as a result of a long history of systemic racism and exclusion. The tragic result is that these communities are then unjustly punished by receiving fewer federal resources and less political representation. The 2020 Census is our opportunity to break this immoral cycle!

## **Children under age 5**

Young children, especially under age five, are historically hard to count. Many people filling out the Census survey do not realize how important it is to count everyone in your home, especially young children.

In the 2010 Census over 2 million young children were not counted. The failure to accurately count young children means fewer resources for their education, housing and health care. This is true for both government funding and private foundations who all use Census data to decide where they give their money.

## **People living in poverty**

Over 29 million people living in or near poverty reside in hard-to-count census tracts. Like other communities susceptible to being undercounted, low-income households identify a number of characteristics making them more vulnerable to being undercounted. For example, many low-income households are renters, which means

they are more likely to be in transition during the census count and thus missed. Low-income households are also more likely to include people of color, who are also more vulnerable to being missed or undercounted. The Census Bureau also uses administrative data taken from IRS tax returns, disadvantaging low-income households who may not file taxes or have W2s. Finally, as this is the first Census to be conducted almost entirely online, low-income households without internet access will be even more likely to be missed in the 2020 Census count.

### **People Experiencing Homelessness**

People experiencing homelessness are particularly hard to count and in past Censuses they have been significantly undercounted. The Census counts these individuals two ways, through Service-Based Enumeration (SBE) and Enumeration at Transitory Locations. SBE is a process where Census workers count people at places where they receive services such as shelters, soup kitchens and mobile food vans. It will run for three days from March 30 through April 1, 2020. Enumeration at Transitory Locations also takes place at targeted outdoor locations such as encampments and other locations identified through the Address Canvassing operations that take place through Fall 2019.

### **African Americans**

In 2010, approximately 800,000 African Americans were not counted in the Census. Many of these were children and young men.

African American households typically share characteristics that make them vulnerable to undercount. 1 in 4 African Americans live in poverty, far higher than the national poverty rate. When African American communities are undercounted, they get less political representation in Congress and in State Legislatures. Combine this with the effect of voter suppression and it's a recipe for oppression. Public and private resources become harder to access or do not meet the needs of the community. Billions of dollars and thousands of votes are lost or suppressed as the direct result of undercount in African American communities.

### **Latinos**

Latino households and communities have long been undercounted in the decennial census. This is the result of numerous barriers to being fairly and accurately counted including language, poverty, education and immigration status. When accounting for the current political climate and the addition of the citizenship question, Latino households are especially vulnerable to undercount in the 2020 Census. Like African American undercount, Latino undercount results in the inaccurate drawing of political boundaries and denial of a fair voice in important local, state and national policy decisions. It also means the unequal allocation of critical resources and funding for programs meant to address gaps in education, healthcare, food security, poverty rates, and housing in Latino communities.

### **Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (AANHPI)**

One in five Asian Americans live in hard-to-count areas, along with one third of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders. The Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities are very diverse so that overall statistics may not reveal challenges faced by certain subgroups. Some Asian Americans are especially at risk of not being counted due to challenges such as housing insecurity, poverty and unemployment, education levels and language barriers. Federal agencies and election laws require Asian American communities with “Limited English Proficiency” be granted certain prot and resources to participate in the political process, the data used to determine communities in need of these resources is derived from the Census. If these communities are not fairly and accurately counted it will directly impact their ability to vote and access to the polls.

### **American Indians and Alaska Natives**

As of 206, there were 5.6 million Native peoples living in the United States, roughly one quarter (26%) of whom live in hard-to-count areas. Native peoples typically certain characteristics that compound the risk of not being counted. These include poverty, education level, housing insecurity and age. Many programs, as well as redistricting, are funded based on census-derived data, including essential programs to support education, healthcare and housing needs for Native peoples totalling almost \$428.5 billion in federal funding.

If your denomination or congregation works with native peoples, we want to hear from you! Please email Ben Brown at [bbrown@faithinpubliclife](mailto:bbrown@faithinpubliclife).

### **Immigrant communities**

Due to the policies and rhetoric of the Trump Administration, many immigrant communities are on high alert of government agencies, fearing for their safety and livelihoods in the United States. These communities tend to be hard to count under the best circumstances, but with the Trump Administration and the addition of the Citizenship Question and rising fears of ICE deportation tactics, they are at higher risk than ever.

### **Religious Minorities**

Many religious groups live as intentional communities and may not receive standard Census marketing or outreach. Orthodox Jewish communities, for example, often require culturally relevant outreach often in the form of Census workers from Orthodox Jewish communities. These communities also overlap with other hard to count communities, such as immigrant communities, communities of color, or communities with Limited English Proficiency.

# Talking points on the 2020 Census

## 1. Everyone deserves to be counted.

Our shared faiths teach that every person is created with equal dignity by God. That means everyone deserves to be counted by their government.

## 2. The Census is completely confidential.

When you fill out the Census survey, your answers will not be shared outside the Census Bureau with any other government agencies. Everything is confidential and protected by ironclad laws. Only after 72 years can individual responses be shared outside the Census Bureau.

## 3. The 2020 Census is the first online Census, but you have the option to do it on paper or by telephone.

## 4. Our community benefits from everyone being counted.

Over \$600 Billion is distributed based on the Census.

- Federal agencies use census data to allocate billions of dollars for vital community services such as schools, hospitals, job training centers, senior centers, bridges, tunnels and other public works projects and emergency response.
- It also determines how many Representatives each state has in Congress.
- Our Congressional and state legislative districts are redrawn using census data.
- If we get undercounted, we get underfunded and underrepresented.

## 5. As a consequence of systemic racism, people of color have historically been undercounted in the Census.

- In the 2010 Census, 800,000 African Americans and 600,000 Latinos were not counted.
- The legacy of racist systems that have privileged white communities with access to capital and education have contributed to people of color being harder to count.
- Ensuring everyone is counted in the 2020 is a matter of racial justice long overdue.

## 6. We have a legal and moral responsibility to participate in the Census.

- Part of looking out for our community is ensuring that we have the resources we need to thrive. We have a responsibility to participate in the Census.
- Our friends and neighbors are counting on us. We have to work together to ensure that everyone in our community is counted.

## 7. Explain how the Census works.

The 2020 Census will be the first Census conducted online. 80% of households will receive a postcard from the Census Bureau in the mail including a link and a unique security code. With the security code, you can answer the 10 questions online.

If you do not respond online or by phone, a paper questionnaire will be sent to you which you can fill out and mail back to the Census Bureau. If you do not respond to that, individual Census workers may come to your door to collect your responses.

The other 20% of households, mostly those with older adults and low internet usage, will be sent the actual survey to be completed and returned by mail.

# Important Dates

**April 1, 2019** — Exactly 1 year before the Census begins - public education events will be held.

**Fall 2019** — Census Address Canvassing, the process of creating and verifying a list of all residential addresses, including group housing facilities such as college dorms.

**March, 2020** — Census Bureau postcards are sent to households.

**March to April, 2020** — Enumeration at Transitory Locations operation running to count people in transitory locations (such as hotels and campgrounds).

**March 30 to April 1, 2020** — Service-Based Enumeration operation running, conducting in-person interviews to count people experiencing homelessness.

**April 1, 2020** — Census Day - Counting Begins.

**Summer 2020** — Census wraps up.

**By December 31, 2020** — Congressional reapportionment determined; data sent to the Congress

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **What is the Census?**

The U.S. Constitution mandates that every 10 years there is a Census that counts every resident in the United States. It's sometimes called the Decennial Census because it occurs every 10 years.

## **Why does the Census matter?**

The information the Census collects helps determine how more than \$675 billion of federal funding is distributed to states and communities each year.

Census data is also used to draw the political maps for every Congressional district and state legislative district. This means that in the past hard to count communities have gotten less representation in Congress and State Legislatures.

## **How do I respond to the Census?**

The 2020 Census will be the first Census conducted online. Everyone has the option of taking the Census on paper or online, whichever you prefer.

Most people (80%) will receive a postcard in the mail with a website provided by the US Census Bureau and a unique security code. With the security code, you will be able to fill out the 2020 Census online.

If you do not respond online using the security code provided in the mail, a paper questionnaire will be sent to you which you can fill out and mail back to the Census Bureau. If you do not respond to the paper questionnaire, individual Census takers will try to contact you by knocking on your door.

The other 20% of households, mostly seniors and people with no internet will be sent the actual survey to be completed and returned by mail. Those surveys will also include the option to complete the survey online.

## **Is it safe to provide my information to the Census Bureau over the Internet?**

Yes. The US Census Bureau will keep your responses to the survey safe, secure and encrypted at all times.

Additionally, the US Census Bureau is only collecting and viewing the data collected from your survey anonymously and on a broad scale. Your individual information is protected under a federal law known as the "72-year rule" which mandates that

individual-level records are protected for 72 years after the census is taken. For privacy reasons, access to personally identifiable information contained in decennial census records is restricted to all but the individual named on the record or their legal heir for 72 years.

### **What if I just sit the Census out? Why should I share my information with the US Census Bureau?**

A fair and accurate Census is one of the most significant civil rights issues facing our country today.

In addition to ensuring fair political representation, enforcing civil rights laws, and effective policy planning, census data are used to distribute federal, state, and local resources equitably and prudently. In fact, federal agencies use census data to allocate billions of dollars each year for vital community services such as hospitals, job training centers, schools, senior centers, bridges, tunnels and other public works projects, and emergency response.

Communities of color, urban and rural low-income households, immigrants, and young children are all at risk of being missed by the Census. Being undercounted deprives already vulnerable communities of fair representation and vital community resources.

### **What if I am not a US citizen, does the Census still count me?**

Yes. The U.S. Census counts every resident in the United States regardless of their immigration status. All people should be counted to ensure that our community is fully counted.

### **Will there be a question about Citizenship on the 2020 Census survey?**

Maybe. Right now, civil rights organizations and 14 states are suing to block the Trump Administration from adding a citizenship question. The Census hasn't included a question about citizenship in over 50 years. It's not necessary and in fact, there's evidence that the people behind this initiative have a racist agenda and their goal is to create fear and keep immigrant communities from being fully counted. We'll be sharing updated information on these lawsuits in the months to come.

### **What does it mean if the citizenship question is added to the Census?**

All responses to the Census are confidential and cannot be shared outside the Census Bureau - even with other government agencies. Personal information collected by the US Census Bureau is protected under several Federal Laws and has the most iron clad privacy protection of any Federal data.

It is easy for misinformation and fear to spread. It is our job to spread the truth, try to help people manage their fear, and work to ensure everyone is counted regardless of immigration status.

# Sacred Texts Relevant to the Census

## Hebrew Scriptures

On the first day of the second month, in the second year following the exodus from the land of Egypt, the LORD spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the Tent of Meeting, saying: Take a census of the whole Israelite community by the clans of its ancestral houses, listing the names, every male, head by head. (Numbers 1:1-2)

“The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Among these shall the land be apportioned as shares, according to the listed names’” (Numbers 26:52-53)

## Christian Scriptures

“In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of all the inhabited earth.” (Luke 2:1)

“Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.” (Matthew 10:30)

## Islamic Scriptures

“They ask thee what they should spend. Say, ‘Let whatever of your wealth you spend be for parents, kinsfolk, orphans, the indigent, and the traveler. Whatever good you do, truly God knows it.’” (Qu’ran 2:215)

“You will never attain piety till you spend from that which you love. And whatever you spend, truly God knows it.” (Qu’ran 3:92)

*Note - we would love to include relevant sacred texts from other faith traditions. If you have suggestions please email Ben Brown at [bbrown@faithinpubliclife](mailto:bbrown@faithinpubliclife).*

# Additional Resources:

More information can be found at [www.FaithInPublicLife.org/Census](http://www.FaithInPublicLife.org/Census) and [www.CensusCounts.org](http://www.CensusCounts.org)

The Hard to Count Map shows which Census tracts had the lowest response rates: [www.censushardtocountmaps2020.us](http://www.censushardtocountmaps2020.us)

Faith Census Ambassadors: Get more information and sign up here: [www.FaithInPublicLife.org/Census](http://www.FaithInPublicLife.org/Census)

Spanish version is here: [bit.ly/2020espanol](http://bit.ly/2020espanol)

Census Demographics in Hard to Count Tracts

## Factsheets:

### Why the Census Counts:

<http://civilrightsdocs.info/pdf/census/2020/Fact-Sheet-Why-The-Census-Counts.pdf>

### Adding A New Citizenship Question to the 2020 Census:

<http://civilrightsdocs.info/pdf/census/Census-Citizenship-Question-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

### Hard to Count: Young Children and Their Communities:

<http://civilrightsdocs.info/pdf/census/Fact-Sheet-Undercount-of-Young-Children.pdf>

### Latinos in the 2020 Census:

<http://civilrightsdocs.info/pdf/census/2020/Fact-Sheet-Latino-HTC.pdf>

### African Americans in the 2020 Census:

<http://civilrightsdocs.info/pdf/census/2020/Fact-Sheet-African-Americans-HTC.pdf>

### People living in poverty in the 2020 Census:

<http://civilrightsdocs.info/pdf/census/2020/Low-Income-Families-HTC.pdf>

### Digitizing the 2020 Census:

<https://www.brennancenter.org/digitizing-2020-census>

### Counting People Experiencing Homelessness:

<http://www.georgetownpoverty.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/GCPI-ESOI-Counting-People-Experiencing-Homelessness-20180904.pdf>



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[www.FaithInPublicLife.org](http://www.FaithInPublicLife.org)

# Will she be counted?

Our school funding depends on everyone being counted in the 2020 Census.

Unfortunately, many children are not counted in the Census. And when someone isn't counted it means our community loses out on funding we need for everything from teachers, to local roads and health clinics.

How you can help:

- ✓ Participate in the 2020 Census.
- ✓ Make sure children in your home are counted.
- ✓ Sign up to be a Faith Census Ambassador.

To get our fair share of funding we all must stand up and be counted.

[www.FaithInPublicLife.org/Census](http://www.FaithInPublicLife.org/Census)

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