

# Missouri Counts: 2020 Census FAQ

Prepared by Missouri Foundation for Health

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Use these frequently asked questions and answers to address additional topics that may be relevant to your community or the populations you serve. If you have questions about the Missouri Foundation for Health campaign and resources, contact Alex Rankin ([arankin@mffh.org](mailto:arankin@mffh.org)).

## What is the Census?

- The Census is a questionnaire—think of it like a survey. It only asks nine questions. It counts every adult and child living in the United States. It takes place every 10 years. The next Census is in 2020.
- The Census helps our government figure out how much money each state gets for important programs. The Census also determines each state's representation in Congress.
- The Census is part of the U.S. Constitution. It is everyone's civic duty to respond.

## What does the Census ask?

- The Census asks nine simple questions about the people living in your household. This includes name, age, race, sex, and if you own or rent your home.
- The Census will *not* ask for your income or political party.
- The Census will *not* ask if you are a citizen. You may have heard about this in the news. In the end, this question was not added.

## Why is the Census important?

- The Census helps our government figure out how much money each state gets for important programs. For every person that is not counted, our state will lose \$1,300 in federal dollars every year. That adds up to \$13,000 per person over the next 10 years.
- The Census happens every 10 years. If we aren't all counted in 2020, Missouri will be shortchanged for the next decade.
- Our community has a lot to gain when we all respond. We can get more funding for roads and bridges, hospitals, and schools.

## When is it happening?

- Right now! You can expect to get instructions from the U.S. Census Bureau in the mail or, in some rural communities, hand-delivered to your home, in March 2020. You can respond at [my2020census.gov](http://my2020census.gov), toll-free at 844-330-2020, or by mail.
- Census Day is April 1, 2020. If you're not sure who to count as part of your household, think about who stayed in your home on April 1. For example, if you share custody of a child, you can decide which household should count the child based on where they stayed on April 1. People staying with you on April 1 who have no other usual home should be counted as part of your household.
- If you respond to the Census on time, a Census worker is less likely to visit your home.

## Who needs to respond?

- It is important that every adult and every child in Missouri be counted. This includes children, grandparents or other family members, friends, and roommates living in your home.
- Regardless of your citizenship or immigration status, you should still respond.

## How can I respond?

- You can respond today at [my2020census.gov](https://my2020census.gov). You can do it from a computer or on your cell phone.
- You can also call the U.S. Census Bureau toll-free at 844-330-2020 to answer the Census questions.
- Some households will get the Census questions by mail or hand-delivered to their home. This is because they may have limited internet access or older adults living in the home.
- The Census is available in many languages. The Census is available online and by phone in 13 languages, including Spanish, French, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Arabic. The paper version for mailing is available in English and Spanish.
- The U.S. Census Bureau has non-English support materials, such as language guides, in American Sign Language (ASL), braille, and large print. The U.S. Census Bureau's Census questionnaire assistance also includes a telecommunication device for the Deaf.

## Is my information secure?

- Yes, your information is secure. The U.S. Census Bureau will keep your information private.
- It is illegal for the U.S. Census Bureau to share your information with other government agencies, courts of law, or private companies.
- A Census worker will never ask for your Social Security number, or information about your bank accounts or credit cards. The U.S. Census Bureau will not email you about the 2020 Census, either.
- If you want to make sure the person at your door is really a Census worker, check their badge. All Census workers have an official U.S. Census Bureau ID badge. The badge should include their name, picture, a Department of Commerce watermark, and an expiration date. They will also be carrying an official bag with the Census Bureau logo and an official letter explaining why they are visiting.

## Does the Census ask about citizenship?

- No, the Census will not ask if you are a U.S. citizen. You may have heard about this in the news. In the end, this question was not added.

## Why is the Census asking for my phone number?

- The Census is only asking for your phone number in case they have questions about your responses to the questionnaire. They will not share your phone number with anyone, including businesses or other government agencies.

## What about...

- **College students?** If you live away from home on April 1, 2020 you should be counted where you live. Colleges and universities will work directly with the U.S. Census Bureau to count people who live in dorms and residence halls. If you live in off-campus housing, you should respond to the Census. If you are living at home with your parents, you should be counted at your home address.
- **Military service members?** The U.S. Census Bureau is working with the Department of Defense to make sure families and service members living in barracks or military campgrounds are counted. Service members who are deployed and stationed in the U.S. should be counted at their home address.

- **Individuals experiencing homelessness?** The U.S. Census Bureau has plans to reach individuals experiencing homelessness. People living in shelters should be counted at the shelter. If someone is staying with you, count them as part of your household.
- **People in prison or correctional facilities?** The U.S. Census Bureau has plans to count individuals living in correctional facilities, detention centers, prisons, and jails. They will be counted in these facilities.

### Is the U.S. Census Bureau hiring?

- If you are interested in a temporary job to support Census outreach, visit [2020census.gov/jobs](https://2020census.gov/jobs).
- You must be at least 18 years old and have a valid Social Security number to be eligible.
- The U.S. Census Bureau will hire noncitizens to serve as translators or Census takers on an as-needed-basis. You must be legally entitled to work in the U.S.