

What Tribal Leaders Need to Know



In 2020, the U.S. Census will define who we are as a nation. It is vital that the census also have an accurate portrait of our tribal nations.

Your Participation in the 2020 Census Matters

Every year, more than \$675 billion federal funds is awarded to tribes and states and communities based on census data. The decennial census also helps determine the number of state representatives and boundaries for voting and school districts.

Census population counts guide local decision makers in important community and tribal planning efforts, including where to build child care and community centers.

Tribal governments and planners rely on census data to determine where the most need exists for additional social services and who gets needed funding, such as tribal development programs, education, and health care services.

Why should tribal members participate in the 2020 Census?

The 2020 Census will shape the future of your tribal community, define your voice in Congress and impact economic development and other opportunities for your tribal citizens.

- Federal and state agencies depend on census data to determine funding allocations for tribal programs.
- Census data can assist tribal leaders in their decision making for economic development projects and community service programs.
- Many researchers, the media and others use census data. Full tribal participation ensures that these data more closely represents the American Indian and Alaska Native population.
- Census data are the official data used for U.S. population counts. Congress and other federal decision makers refer to census data when making political and economic decisions.

Why is working in partnership with tribal governments so important to the 2020 Census?

The U.S. Census Bureau acknowledges its government-to-government relationship with the 573 federally recognized tribal governments. Our commitment to work in partnership with American Indian and Alaska Native (AIANs) populations includes working with state-recognized tribes and AIAN people and organizations in metropolitan and rural locations.

In the past there have been challenges in obtaining a full accounting of the AIAN population on tribal lands and in urban and rural areas. The U.S. Census Bureau's mandate is to provide a full accounting of all Americans and this must include a complete count of American Indian and Alaska Native people wherever they live.

The Census: A Snapshot

The U.S. Constitution requires a national census once every 10 years. The census is a count of everyone residing in the United States: on tribal lands, the 50 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa. This includes people of all ages, tribes, races, ethnic groups, both citizens and noncitizens.

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Completing the 2020 Census Questionnaire: Simple and Secure

The 2020 Census questionnaire asks only a few simple questions of each person and will be a simple short questionnaire that will take just a few minutes to complete.

People can respond using the online, telephone or paper response options. The 2020 Census will offer internet self-response (ISR) where people can respond online, Census Questionnaire Assistance (CQA) which will allow respondents to complete the census questionnaire over the telephone and the paper questionnaire will still be available which can be returned by mail.

The U.S. Census Bureau does not release or share information that identifies individual respondents or their household for 72 years. By law, the U.S. Census Bureau cannot share an individual's answers with anyone, *including immigration enforcement agencies, like ICE; law enforcement agencies, like the FBI or police; or allow it to be used to determine their eligibility for government benefits. The results from any census or survey are reported in statistical format only.*

All census workers, including tribal members working for the U.S Census Bureau, take an oath for life to protect the confidentiality of census responses. Violation would result in a jail term of up to five years, and/or a fine of up to \$250,000. By law, the U.S. Census Bureau cannot share an individual's answers with anyone, including the tribal government, tribal programs, or any other tribal, federal or state entity.

In addition, all systems used in the 2020 Census adhere to laws, policies, and regulations that ensure appropriate systems and data security, and protects respondent and employee privacy and confidentiality. The Census Bureau is monitored by the Einstein 3A system which is run by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), to ensure Web traffic to and from government Web sites are safe. DHS analysts monitor traffic for cyberattacks, not to get information on individuals. The law prohibits DHS from using any information they might see for anything other than cybersecurity protection.

2020 Census Time Line: Key Dates

Fall 2018	Recruitment begins for early census operations.
Fall 2019	Recruitment begins for peak operations in 2020.
August-October 2019	In-field address canvassing where needed.
March – July 2020	Internet Self-Response.
March – September 2020	Census Questionnaire Assistance.
April 1, 2020	Census Day – Respondents will be able to respond via internet, telephone or paper questionnaire.
December 2020	U.S. Census Bureau delivers population counts to President for apportionment.
March 2021	U.S. Census Bureau delivers redistricting data to states.

