2020 Census: Key Facts for Libraries

Libraries’ Guide to the 2020 Census

Because librarians believe that everyone counts.

Libraries Transform
#LibrariesTransform
Many thanks to the Public Library Association for these slides

- Cindy Fesemyer
- Adult and Community Services Consultant
What’s ahead?

- What is the census, and why is it important?
- Who is at risk for not being counted?
- How will the 2020 Census work?
- What can libraries do?
- QA/discussion
What is the decennial census?

- It’s in the constitution.
- Count every person in the U.S. once, and only once, and in the right place.
- Essential for:
  - Federal funding
  - Determining what’s “rural”
  - Political representation
  - Informed decision-making
Does the census affect funds for my community?

YES!

Help your community get its fair share for schools, health centers, roads, housing assistance and other vital programs.

- IMLS state grants
- National School Lunch Program
- Medicare
- SNAP

United States Census 2020

Connect with us:
@censusbureau

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

ALA American Library Association
Who is at risk of being undercounted?

- Hard to Locate
  - Participation hindered by language barriers, low literacy, lack of internet access
  - Housing units not in our frame and/or persons wanting to remain hidden

- Hard to Interview
  - Suspicious of the government, low levels of civic engagement

- Hard to Contact
  - Highly mobile, people experiencing homelessness, physical access barriers such as gated communities

- Hard to Persuade
How will the 2020 Census Work?

- **March 12** – mailing to every household
  - New option to respond online
  - Other methods for group living situations
  - Household visits in remote and rural areas

- **April 1** – “Census Day”
How will the 2020 Census work?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>On or between</th>
<th>You’ll receive:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 12-20</td>
<td>An invitation to respond online to the 2020 Census. (Some households will also receive paper questionnaires.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 16-24</td>
<td>A reminder letter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 26-April 3</td>
<td>A reminder postcard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 8-16</td>
<td>A reminder letter and paper questionnaire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 20-27</td>
<td>A final reminder postcard before we follow up in person.</td>
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</tbody>
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Census Bureau mailing timeline

ALA Census Tip Sheet
published February 2020
How will the 2020 Census Work?

April – Group quarters counted

May – In-person visits to households that haven’t responded

- Paper questionnaire sent to households that haven’t responded
- In-person follow-up, if needed
How will the Census work?

- Online, by phone, or by mail
  - Online—smartphone, tablet, or computer
  - Online—secure and responses encrypted
  - Online & phone—questionnaire available in 13 languages

- About 10 minutes to complete questionnaire

- Toll-free Census Bureau phone hotline in 13 languages
How can people respond to the 2020 Census?

- Efforts to reach hard-to-count communities
  - Online and phone questionnaire available in 13 languages
  - Guides in 59 non-English languages
  - Census Bureau plans to hire employees who are
    ▶ familiar with neighborhoods
    ▶ reflect diversity of communities
  - Census Bureau will partner with “trusted voices” – such as libraries
How will the Census work?

Sneak peek screen grabs
Community Connect Labs
What is new in the 2020 Census?

- Online self-response
- Household relationship question
- No citizenship question

Census responses are confidential.
What can libraries do? How can libraries prepare?

Participate in Complete Count Committees

- Local communities establish
  - To increase awareness
  - To encourage residents to respond to 2020 Census

https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/2020-complete-count-committees.html
What can libraries do? How can libraries prepare?

Wisconsin Complete Count Committees
What can libraries do? How can libraries prepare?

Prepare for increased use of computers and the Internet

- Census Bureau job hiring requires online application
- 2020 census will encourage online response
- March and April 2020—Many people may come to libraries to complete census form.
What can libraries do? How can libraries prepare?

Help community members apply for census jobs

- Census Bureau will hire about 500,000 temporary workers
  - Jobseekers must apply online
  - Apply online at [2020census.gov/jobs](http://2020census.gov/jobs)
  - As of February 17, Wisconsin still needs thousands of Census workers
What can libraries do? How can libraries prepare?

Help community members apply for census jobs

- Spread the word—newsletters, social media
- Host job fairs with Census Bureau

For a local contact: 1-855-JOB-2020 and press 3 to reach your area census office
What can libraries do? How can libraries prepare?

Share information about the 2020 Census.

The more people know about the census, how the data are used, and how it impacts them and their communities, the more likely they are to participate.
What can libraries do? How can libraries prepare?

Share information about the 2020 Census.

- Host programs and events to increase awareness of the upcoming census
- Highlight the census in newsletters, social media, and on website
What can libraries do? How can libraries prepare?

Fight misinformation, disinformation, and scams.

- People may have questions and concerns
- Libraries can provide accurate information
What can libraries do? How can libraries prepare?

Reach out to hard-to-count populations.

[censushardtocountmaps2020.us]
Are there special challenges for rural residents?

The more rural a county—the higher likelihood of undercount.

- Remote Alaska
- Households with PO boxes
- Households on rural routes
- Low household internet rates
- High-poverty areas
- Migrant/seasonal farmworkers
Say YES to Wisconsin Counts

Where to Start

- Train staff on questions, issues, or topics that may come up from the public
- Post a web article to your library homepage
- Add local resources to the web article including but not limited to:
  - Open hours at your library for people to use a computer or your Wi-Fi to complete the census
  - Other places in the area served by your library that provide access to free computers or free Wi-Fi
- Link to the ALA 2020 Census web page: [www.ala.org/advocacy/govinfo/census](http://www.ala.org/advocacy/govinfo/census)
- Amplify census messaging on social media
Say YES to Wisconsin Counts

Step It Up

- Partner with local municipal leadership, county leadership, or public schools to amplify the message
- Become a Complete Count Community. Your library can take this on: www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/2020-census/complete_count.html
- Share printed materials you receive at your library with your municipality, county, or schools
- Plan Census Day events in your area for April 1, 2020
- Add the ALA 2020 Census web page to your email signature: www.ala.org/advocacy/govinfo/census
Say YES to Wisconsin Counts

Be a Census Superstar

- Partner with the Census Bureau if they come to your municipality
- Provide free meeting space to recruit or train on-the-ground census workers
- Spread the word that the Census is recruiting in your area
- Be a heating or cooling station for Census field workers
Learn More

- ALA [ala.org/census](http://ala.org/census)
- Census Bureau [2020census.gov](http://2020census.gov)
- Say YES to WI Counts
- Complete Count Community info
  [https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/2020-census/complete_count.html](https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/2020-census/complete_count.html)
Get in touch

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