

## What is Census 2020?

The U.S. Constitution requires that, every 10 years, all people living in the United States must be counted to determine Congressional districts. A confidential survey on Census Day (April 1, 2020) asks for information about households and details about the residents. Federal law requires census information to be kept in strict confidence and not shared with other agencies.

The results are used to distribute federal and state funding and to determine state legislative districts. Businesses and nonprofits use census data to understand population trends and community needs and to plan for everything from business development to healthcare. New Jersey receives more than **\$22.7 billion dollars each year** from federal assistance programs such as Medicare and Medicaid, transportation infrastructure, and special education and school breakfast funds – all amounts based on census counts.

## Why Does Census 2020 Matter for New Jersey?

**Too many New Jerseyans go uncoun ted.** In the 2010 census, response rates for New Jersey's cities were very low: 55% in Newark, 59% in Trenton, 60% in Paterson, and 61% in Camden. Nonresponses required door-to-door follow-up, which is difficult and does not result in a complete and accurate count. When New Jerseyans are not counted, our communities are deprived of resources and representation. Further, **those (faulty) numbers will determine the next 10 years** of federal funding, federal redistricting, state redistricting, and state funding.

**Without an accurate count, New Jersey residents will lose resources and representation.**

## Why Will It Be Difficult to Count New Jersey Residents?

In 2020, most census forms will be on-line. Many in New Jersey do not have reliable internet access and may have problems completing the forms. Present heightened distrust of the federal government and concern about the proposed citizenship question are likely to discourage participation. Importantly: some groups are more likely to be missed – especially immigrants, people of color, urban residents, children under 5, people living in multifamily housing, non-native English speakers, and people who are homeless. In contrast, wealthier white people are more likely to be double-counted.

## How Can We Promote a Complete Count in New Jersey?

Cities and counties should **form Complete Count Committees** that include government leaders and local representatives from schools, businesses, faith communities, nonprofits, civic groups, and libraries. A coordinated effort is needed to make sure everybody is counted. Local Complete Count Committees can teach residents about the importance of the census, encourage local hiring for Census Bureau jobs, provide technology assistance and neighborhood Get Counted centers, and spread the messages to encourage all residents to participate in a complete count.

Foundations and nonprofits should support a fair and accurate census. **The time to begin is NOW.**

## For more information and assistance

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