



HOW DOES THE CENSUS AFFECT MY COMMUNITY

An accurate census is critical because it is used to determine the distribution of federal dollars and political representation for the next ten years.

For Example:

New Mexico receives over **\$7.8 billion** each year through census-informed federal programs which benefit the entire community by providing per capita funds for health care for programs like Medicaid, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), National School Lunch Program, highways, education grants, housing vouchers, and more.

\$780

Million Dollars Loss

**If New Mexico
undercounts residents by
only 1%, they would lose
\$780 Million Dollars**

\$3,745

**In Funding per
Year**

**Each New Mexican not
counted equates to a
loss of approximately
\$3,745 per year**

Source: www.icountnm.gov/ow-does-the-census-affect-my-community/

Important 2020 Census Dates

By April 1, 2020, every home will receive an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census. Once the invitation arrives, you should respond for your home in one of three ways: online, by phone, or by mail.



Overall Timeline

Counting every person living in the United States is a massive undertaking, and efforts begin years in advance. Here's a look at some of the key dates along the way:

- **January 2020:** The U.S. Census Bureau starts counting the population in remote Alaska.
- **March 12 - 20:** Households will begin receiving official Census Bureau mail with detailed information on how to respond to the 2020 Census online, by phone, or by mail.
- **March 30 - April 1:** The Census Bureau will count people who are experiencing homelessness over these three days. As part of this process, the Census Bureau counts people in shelters, at soup kitchens and mobile food vans, on the streets, and at non-sheltered, outdoor locations such as tent encampments.
- **April 1:** Census Day is observed nationwide. By this date, every home will receive an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census. Once the invitation arrives, you should respond for your home in one of three ways: online, by phone, or by mail. When you respond to the census, you'll tell the Census Bureau where you live as of April 1, 2020.
- **April:** Census takers will begin visiting college students who live on campus, people living in senior centers, and others who live among large groups of people. Census takers also begin conducting quality check interviews to help ensure an accurate count.
- **May 2020:** The Census Bureau begins visiting homes that haven't responded to the 2020 Census to make sure everyone is counted.
- **December 2020:** The Census Bureau delivers apportionment counts to the President and Congress as required by law.
- **March 31, 2021:** By this date, the Census Bureau will send redistricting counts to states. This information is used to redraw legislative districts based on population changes.

Census Day 2020 April 1 is Census Day, a key reference date for the 2020 Census. When completing the census, you will include everyone living in your home on April 1. Census Day will be celebrated with events across the country.

Source: <https://2020census.gov/en/important-dates.html>

WHY IS THE CENSUS IMPORTANT?

There are countless applications of Census data in both academic and commercial research, but there are **four key functions of the Census** that affect public policy and voting in the United States:

1. Reapportionment

2. Redistricting

3. Demographic Data

4. Government Resource Allocation

REAPPORTIONMENT The number of congressional districts in a state may shift based on increases or decreases in population over the previous decade, which affects congressional representation and state electoral votes. This reapportionment of seats in the House of Representatives and resulting change in electoral votes helps dictate the geographic shift in political power within the United States.

Over the past decades, congressional seats have primarily been lost in the Northeast and Midwest and reapportioned to the South and West of the country. This trend is expected to continue as the population is projected to steadily increase in the South and West parts of the United States.

REDISTRICTING Within states, the congressional and state legislature districts are redrawn based on Census data. Based on population distribution changes within states, the boundaries must shift every ten years in order to ensure each district has roughly the same population.

In most states, including Minnesota, the state legislature draws the district lines. This can present issues with partisan influence, leading to unfair districts through **gerrymandering**.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA The Census provides a snapshot of country, state, local areas, and on a broad level defines who we are as a nation. Demographic data helps groups from all parts of society use census information to decide where to direct their attention and resources. The census helps these groups identify areas in need of certain services, businesses, civil rights outreach, community engagement, etc.

GOVERNMENT RESOURCE ALLOCATION

Over **\$400 billion per year** is allocated throughout the nation with help from census data, including programs such as public health, education and infrastructure. State and local funds are often distributed based on population..

Source: www.yourvoteyourvoicemn.org/future/horizon/census-2020/why-census-important