



2020 Census Talking Points

The Census is the federal government's largest peacetime activity in the United States.

Each person counted is worth an estimated \$1,675 in federal dollars to Oklahoma over the next 10 years, or \$16,750 per person living in Oklahoma.

The Constitution declares that everyone counts!

- The Constitution mandates that a population count happen every 10 years.

It's the law (and your civic duty) to participate.

- Everyone residing in the U.S. gets counted in the census — children, seniors, minorities, immigrants (legal and illegal), tribal communities, homeless, homeowners, renters, students, workers — everyone.

The Census equals fair representation.

- Census data is used to redraw district lines (also called redistricting) to determine representation in Congress, state legislatures, counties, and all electoral bodies that use geographically defined membership.
- A state's electoral votes are based on their seats in Congress, which are based on Census data.

Census answers are confidential.

- The Census Bureau is legally bound to handle all data confidentially, and answers are not shared with anyone – not the FBI, IRS, ICE or any other agency.
- Confidentiality violation is a federal crime that may include a prison sentence, a fine or both.
- Online responses are secured by multiple layers of encryption and isolated from online access as soon as you hit submit.

The Census equals money for Oklahoma's cities and communities.

- Census data will determine how more than \$675 billion in federal funds will be distributed to the states each year of the following decade.
- Federal funds support all types of government services, such as infrastructure, health, social welfare and education.

Census data is used by everyone.

- Businesses use Census data to decide where to open new facilities and what types of services and products to offer.
- Developers use Census data to plan where to build new homes and revitalize neighborhoods.
- Transportation planners use Census data to decide on roads and public transit routes.
- Local governments use Census data to decide where to build schools, libraries and parks.

It's easy.

- Census day is April 1, 2020; however, online responses will be accepted beginning March 2020. The people choose: They can respond online, by paper or over the phone.
- The Census will be printed in English and Spanish. Telephone assistance and the online Census questionnaire will be available in 13 languages. Guides and glossaries will be available in 59 non-English languages and Braille.

What can elected officials do to help?

- Educate your constituents about the importance of the Census for your district .
- Engaging with nonprofits, educational institutions, local governments and others will all help.

OKLetsCount.org

WHEN EVERYONE COUNTS – EVERYONE WINS



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The Census is the federal government's largest peacetime activity in the United States.

What is the Census and why is it important to my community?

- The Constitution mandates that a population count happen every 10 years.
- The number of people counted determines the number of seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives and is used in formulas that distribute billions of dollars in federal funds to those states.
- It is estimated that for every person who is counted in Oklahoma, our state will receive \$1,675 in federal funding each year for 10 years, money that goes to health clinics, nonprofits, road maintenance, food stamps and local schools.

Why should a nonprofit get involved with the Census?

- Oklahoma has over a million people considered to be "hard to count." These individuals are often:
 - Non-English speaking
 - Very low income immigrants with various kinds of immigration status
 - Without permanent housing
 - Distrustful of government forms
 - Lacking in internet access or familiarity (the internet will be the primary way for the Census to count people)

Many "hard-to-count" people know and trust their community nonprofits for child care, clinics, job training, food and shelter.

- That existing level of trust means people will listen when nonprofits speak to them about the Census. And, nonprofits are already good at responding to unexpected needs in the community.
- As the Census begins hiring, nonprofits can also help by recruiting paid Census counters who come from the communities where they will be working.

The Census is safe.

- Personally identifiable information is confidential, and strong legal and technological protections are in place to protect it. Census Bureau personnel can be fined and jailed for sharing information. Confidentiality violation is a federal crime that may include a prison sentence, a fine or both.
- Online responses are secured by multiple layers of encryption and isolated from online access as soon as you hit submit.

The Census is easy.

- Census day is April 1, 2020; however, online responses will be accepted beginning March 2020.
- The 2020 Census will contain nine questions, taking less than 15 minutes to complete, and can be filled out on any device with an internet connection, or by paper or phone.

What resources are available?

- Your nonprofit can begin downloading resources for educating the public from OKLetsCount.org beginning in January.

What can nonprofits do to help?

- Begin and finalize a plan on communicating with those "hard-to-count" people in your community.
 - Host training workshops to train staff to be able to talk about the Census, answer key questions, and address concerns.
 - Distribute fact sheets and posters about the Census at meetings, events and community gathering places.
 - Set up and oversee computers and phones for people to complete the Census in your office.
 - Plan and host a Census Day event on April 1, 2020.
 - Consider ways to provide space, support and guidance that facilitate Census participation.

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