Questions and Answers for Stakeholders Supporting the 2020 Census

The U.S. Census Bureau anticipates that state, tribal, and local governments as well as thousands of community-based organizations, collectively referred to here as stakeholders, will publicize the 2020 Census and encourage the public to respond. Given that the 2020 Census will provide online and phone response options, stakeholders can support the census in new ways, including by making electronic devices available to the public for response.

In response to widespread stakeholder requests, the Census Bureau is providing the following information to help stakeholders support the 2020 Census. While we appreciate the dedicated efforts of stakeholders to support a complete and accurate count, only the Census Bureau is authorized to collect data from the public, and only the Census Bureau can offer confidentiality protected by law. For those reasons, the Census Bureau is providing the following responses to stakeholder questions.

How can you support 2020 Census response?

- Encourage people to respond to the census online, by phone, or by mail. Remind them to count everyone living in their home even if they are not related.
- Let people know that there are local, flexible, temporary jobs available at the Census Bureau to work on the 2020 Census. Please encourage them to apply today at 2020census.gov/jobs.
- Explain that everyone living in each household, including newborns, older individuals, and people who are not family members, should be counted on the household's 2020 Census form.
- If people express to you that they are unsure if others in their home completed the 2020 Census and included them, you should advise them to complete the 2020 Census on their own and include everyone living in their household (children, non-relatives, and other families), even if they think others may have already responded. The Census Bureau has processes in place to resolve duplicate submissions.
- Remind people to cooperate with census takers if they visit their home.
- Emphasize that the 2020 Census is safe and secure.

Can you make devices available to the public for response?

- If you make devices available to the public to allow individuals to provide their own responses to the 2020 Census, then those devices should be made available at an event or other public location like a community center, place of worship, or school.

- When making the device available, be clear that you are not an employee or representative of the Census Bureau.
- To ensure that the public does not confuse you for a Census Bureau employee, do not use the Census Bureau's logo or other branding in any way when making devices available for response. You may use your logo.
- You may, subject to the Census Bureau's brand guidelines, use the 2020 Census logo on certain outreach materials to promote the 2020 Census. You may not use it to imply that you represent the Census Bureau.

How do you make a device available to the public for response?

The Census Bureau has built a safe and secure system for the public to complete the 2020 Census online. From the moment responses are submitted, they are protected by sophisticated security measures that meet federal government cyber security standards.

The Census Bureau cannot and does not protect any devices that you make available to the public for response. The Census Bureau has no responsibility for the operation, maintenance, or security of any such device or any systems or networks supporting the device. The Census Bureau is not responsible for providing device, systems or network support, and is not responsible for any failures of those devices, systems, or networks. Therefore, any entity making devices available to the public should follow best practices for securing devices and networks. The Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency's Web site provides steps to secure devices.

- **Software updates.** Ensure that the latest software updates are installed.
- **Internet Browsers**. Please make sure your device uses one of the two most recent versions of the following Internet browsers on which the 2020 Census response Web site works best: Internet Explorer, Edge, Chrome, Safari, Firefox, and Samsung Native browser.
- **Link to 2020census.gov.** Please do not create a creative interface for the 2020 Census response Web site. Instead, your device should link directly to 2020census.gov. This helps the public understand that the 2020 Census Web site is legitimate.
- **Do not collect response information from outside the Census Bureau's online form**. Do not collect information from people that you intend to later enter into the Census Bureau's 2020 Census response Web site. For example, do not gather information on paper and later enter it in the Census Bureau's online response Web site yourself.
- **Password for wireless connection**. If you are connecting to the Internet through a wireless connection (wifi), please make sure your wifi connection requires a password to access it.
- **Multiple responses from a single location**. While not expected to be a challenge, the Census Bureau is currently evaluating multiple test cases to ensure there are no difficulties for multiple individuals to respond via a single device. If any tests identify challenges, we will provide guidance about how to support such devices as quickly as possible.

Can you assist people with their response?

- Only Census Bureau employees may collect responses directly from individuals. If you are providing devices for individuals to provide their own responses online, do not enter that individual's responses for them or watch them enter their responses. In other words, devices should not be "staffed."
- Stakeholders should create an environment where individuals can respond without interference. This environment should ensure that someone's responses cannot be seen by anyone unless they are a sworn Census Bureau employee. Census Bureau employees are sworn for life under the law to keep an individual's responses confidential.
- If a member of the public requests assistance in completing their form, please direct them to the response option (online, phone, mail/paper, census taker visit to the home) that best suits their needs. For example, if an individual is responding online and needs language assistance, or if a person who is blind requests help with the online response Web site, please encourage them to respond through the phone response option, instead of the online response option.
- If they still request your assistance with online response, you can provide this assistance but please inform them that you are not a Census Bureau employee and therefore their answers are not protected by law with you. Their response is only protected by the Census Bureau once their response is received.

Should you visit homes to encourage response?

The Census Bureau appreciates the work that stakeholders do to educate the public about why the 2020 Census is important and to encourage them to respond. We recognize that some stakeholders may choose to accomplish this education and motivation by going door-to-door.

While the Census Bureau encourages stakeholders to make devices available at public events and in public places, the law prevents anyone other than the Census Bureau from collecting census data door-to-door, so you may not collect 2020 Census data door-to-door at any time.

If you choose to go door-to-door:

- You should make clear at the beginning of the conversation that you are not a Census Bureau employee and that you are not representing the Census Bureau in your visit to the home.
- Please limit your activities to handing out flyers and/or talking about the importance of the 2020 Census. The law prevents anyone other than a Census Bureau employee from collecting census responses door-to-door, so you may not make devices available at someone's door.
- **Please stop visiting homes by mid-May**. We make this request because we do not want any confusion about who is knocking on doors. We want to reduce concerns about impostors so the public will be motivated to open the door for census takers. If others visit during this time, the public could be confused and not open the door for a census taker.

Should you call the public to encourage response?

- Placing calls (through robo calls or person-to-person calls) to individual households regarding the census is prohibited by federal law, which imposes substantial liability for violations. If you are having a conversation with someone who indicates they prefer to respond via phone, please tell them that they have the option to respond to the 2020 Census by phone in 13 languages and direct them to 2020census.gov to locate the phone number in their language.

Should you conduct a survey during the 2020 Census?

- While we recognize that stakeholders that are spending significant resources on the census may want to gauge their efforts' impact, we strongly discourage stakeholders from conducting surveys during the 2020 Census so your surveys aren't confused with the census. If the public becomes confused and believes they have already responded to "the census," they may refrain from responding on their own or cooperating with a census taker who visits their household. If you feel that you must conduct a survey, please do so after July 31, 2020, when census takers are out of the field.

Should you distribute outreach materials?

- We encourage you to distribute content about the 2020 Census on your social media accounts, in your newsletters, and on your Web site. Please co-brand materials with the 2020 Census official tagline and logo.
- Please visit this Web site to request use of our logo and find draft social media content and other materials you can use to promote the 2020 Census. You can also find fact sheets and other information, including PSA scripts and other toolkits, that you can share with your network. You're also encouraged to translate these materials into other languages.
- Follow the Census Bureau on our social media channels and share our content.
- Please correct misinformation or disinformation on social media accounts. You can report misinformation and disinformation at **rumors@census.gov**