



## The Elections & Redistricting Program

### Census News

Hello,

I hope everyone is doing well. This newsletter resumes with the latest information on the coronavirus and its effect on the 2020 census.

This month, on behalf of the states, NCSL sent letters to the [House Committee on Oversight and Reform](#) and the [Census Bureau](#). These letters expressed concerns regarding the delays in releasing the census data to the states and the potential impact of [differential privacy](#) on data accuracy.

If you want more information on the 2020 census, visit NCSL's [census](#) webpage. Also, please feel free to contact me with any questions or feedback.

Thanks,  
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#### News from the Census Bureau

- ❖ The Census Bureau introduced its new [2020 Census Data Products Newsletters](#), with information regarding differential privacy. The newsletters will provide more timely updates on the disclosure avoidance process for the 2020 census.
- ❖ The Census Bureau's press releases on COVID-19 and census operations:
  - [Census Bureau to Resume Some 2020 Census Field Operations in Select Locations](#) — This statement reports that the Census Bureau opened select Area Census Offices and restarted some operations as of May 4. The bureau also resumed dropping off 2020 census invitation packets at front doors of households in areas where mail is not delivered to residents' homes. Also, the bureau will resume the hiring process for field staff. For the list of offices that opened, [click here](#).
  - [Census Bureau to Resume Some 2020 Census Field Operations in Additional Locations](#) — This statement reports that the bureau opened select Area Census Offices and restarted some operations in 11 additional states and Puerto Rico as of May 15. For the list of offices that opened, [click here](#).
- ❖ Here's a [memorandum](#) that discusses the bureau's intended use of administrative data for the 2020 census. The administrative records are being used to assist in nonresponse follow-up enumeration, to edit and impute data that has already been received, and to produce a special tabulation of citizen voting-age population.
- ❖ The national self-response rate, as of May 29, is 60.3%. The bureau's [self-response map](#) allows users to track any state or county's progress in responding to the census.
- ❖ The Census Bureau started its digital action campaign on social media platforms, such as [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

## NCSL's activities

- ❖ A delay in the release of 2020 census data matters to states with 2021 elections and redistricting deadlines. Here are two resources regarding the delays:
  - [2020 Census Delays and the Impact on Redistricting](#) webpage.
  - [State Redistricting Deadlines](#) webpage.
- ❖ For more information on differential privacy, NCSL's [webinar](#), [webpage](#) and [blog post](#) help to explain how this method is being used to protect census respondents' data privacy.
- ❖ NCSL's 12-part "[Making the Maps: The Redistricting Webinar Series](#)" covered key redistricting concepts, including the census, how to navigate the legal landscape, technology and data sets.

## Census in the news

- ❖ The federal [Heroes Act](#), which passed the House, is currently in the Senate. Here are key items related to the 2020 census and COVID-19:
  - An additional \$400 million for "Periodic Censuses and Programs" would be available until Sept. 30, 2022, an amount and date determined by Congress as an emergency requirement to prevent, prepare for and respond to coronavirus.
  - The act modifies and delays the Title 13 statutory apportionment and redistricting deadlines for 2020 census data.
  - If enacted, it would require the Census Bureau to provide monthly reports to two House committees (Appropriations; Oversight and Reform) and two in the Senate (Appropriations; Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs).
  - A college or university would be able to provide information to the bureau, for purposes of enumeration, on students living on campuses, excluding any information students do not want released.
  - The act would prohibit the Census Bureau from compiling, tabulating, and publishing a citizen voting-age population data file in conjunction with the 2020 Census.
- ❖ Eighty-nine census stakeholder groups sent a [letter](#) to the leaders of the House and Senate Appropriations committees requesting that Congress provide contingency funding in the current fiscal year, and funding above the administration's request in FY 2021, to accommodate the COVID-19-driven changes to census operations.

## News from the states

- ❖ Oklahoma Senator Dave Rader [urged](#) all Oklahomans to take the census seriously. Oklahoma currently has a response rate of 53.9%, which is below the national average of 60.3%.
- ❖ In North Carolina, the Hispanic Federation and 17 other organizations held a "[Census Blitz](#)" on social media, Spanish TV and radio to highlight the importance of the census and how it can help Latino communities.
- ❖ The Illinois Department of Human Services released its [2020 Census Office May report](#), which includes updates on COVID-19, the 2020 Census timeline, response rates, marketing, data visualization, grant allocations and disbursements.
- ❖ In New Mexico, the Sandoval County 2020 Census Complete Count Committee, in partnership with the Rio Rancho Regional Chamber of Commerce, is holding [weekly drawings](#) to reward residents for participating in the census and to support businesses during the COVID-19 crisis.
- ❖ The mayor of Weaver, Ala., is encouraging residents to participate in the census by offering to [shave his mustache](#) if the city reaches 80% participation. Weaver has a [69.4%](#) response rate and the city only needs a little more than 10% to see a clean-shaven mayor.
- ❖ The Orange County (Calif.) Department of Education is encouraging students to [produce original artwork, videos or graphics](#) that answer the question, "How does the 2020 census help my community?" The pandemic has limited census canvassing, so communities are finding innovative ways to showcase the census.