



March 23, 2020

Re: 2020 Census Operational Updates in Wake of COVID-19

Dear Census Friends:

On Friday, March 20, 2020, the US Census Bureau held a press briefing on additional operational updates in wake of COVID-19.

Operational timeline changes include:

- **The deadline for self-response** online, by phone or by returning the paper questionnaire has been extended to August 14 (from July 31).
- **The Update/Leave operation**, which is the hand-delivery of census packets to about 6.2 million primarily rural households, plus most (not all) American Indian reservations, is now on pause until April 1 at the earliest.
- **Group Quarters and Service-based Enumeration**, which is one of the operations counting people experiencing homelessness, will be delayed until late April/ early May (date TBD).
- **Hiring and training of new 2020 Census staff:**
 - The required fingerprinting of candidates applying for 2020 Census jobs has been paused for health reasons, meaning further on-boarding and training of new census field staff will be delayed.
 - In-person training of Census Bureau staff has been suspended. The Bureau is working to shift all training on-line, including virtual meetings. Fortunately, much of the training already was on-line.
- **Nonresponse Follow-up:**
 - The start of Early Nonresponse Follow-up, which are in-person visits to households that haven't self-responded yet in communities with large off-campus college student populations, has been delayed to May 7.
 - The start date of Non Response Follow Up, which is the door to door enumeration of all households that did respond to the census has been delayed to May 27. The end of this operation has been delayed to August 14.
- **The Mobile Questionnaire Assistance operation** has been put on pause for two weeks and will be reevaluated after that period.
- **The American Community Survey** and other surveys have discontinued in-person visits to households that don't self-respond on-line or using a paper questionnaire. (Note: Under the ACS design, only a sample of nonresponding households receive a follow-up visit.) All 9,000 field representatives working on the ACS and other ongoing surveys are working to make connections by phone instead.

During this period, households can still respond to the 2020 Census and households in the update/leave universe that have not received their packets and want to respond can participate in the census using non-ID response.

NC Counts Coalition continues to encourage partners to refrain from in-person outreach amidst COVID-19. We strongly encourage partners to take all necessary precautions to help minimize risks and keep safe. As a community, we must protect each other by practicing social distancing to prevent and slow the spread of the virus. Remember:

- Wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds, with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub
- Cover your nose and mouth with a disposable tissue or flexed elbow when you cough or sneeze
- Avoid close contact (maintain a distance of 6 feet) with people
- Stay home and self-isolate from others in the household if you don't feel well
- Don't touch your face

There are many ways to advocate for Census participation and have immense impact in our communities exclusive of in-person contact. This is a great time to elevate the fact there are three ways to participate in the Census operation:

1. Online - The Census can be completed online at my2020census.gov in 13 languages
2. Phone - The Census can be completed by phone in 13 languages, 1-844- 330-2020
3. Mail - Wait for the Census Bureau to mail your household a paper form that can be mailed back to the Census Bureau.

We encourage you to continue to advocate for Census participation through digital and online platforms. To get you started, here are a few items from our forthcoming toolkit that we have placed in a Census Crisis Toolkit:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1E_wk_KgRLHFKGHxf3XHrRzTvkMYzsJ9S

- Talking Points
- Social Media Tiles
- Newsletter Templates
- Email Templates
- Letter to the Editor Templates
- Census 101 video in English - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vqS09QjUNVI>
- Census 101 video in Spanish - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cTSj6_vitYk&t=3s

If you have any questions, please contact us at nccounts@nccensus.org. Thank you for your continued partnership and unyielding commitment to #iCountNC.

Sincerely,

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NC Counts Coalition