



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Economics and Statistics Administration  
U.S. Census Bureau  
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## 2020 CENSUS PROGRAM MEMORANDUM SERIES: 2017.21

**Date:** November 6, 2017

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** The Record

**From:** Albert E. Fontenot Jr. **(signed November 6, 2017)**  
Associate Director, Decennial Census Programs

**Subject:** Area Census Offices for the 2020 Census

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This memorandum documents the 2020 Census Program decision regarding the number and locations of the area census offices that will be established to manage and support field operations during the 2020 Census.

### Overview

The Census Bureau plans to open 248 area census offices (ACOs) to support the 2020 Census. They will house the managers, staff, materials, and equipment needed to support the hundreds of thousands of Census Bureau employees conducting local census operations, including following up with households that do not respond, counting residents living in group housing, and other enumeration operations. Every state will have at least one ACO. Forty ACOs will open early, in a first wave, to support the Address Canvassing operation. The initial locations of the 248 ACOs, including the locations of early opening ACOs, are listed at the end of this document.

### Discussion

The Census Bureau determined the number of ACOs through a data-driven process based on the number of enumerators needed for the 2020 Census. The Census Bureau projected the workload and determined the number of enumerators needed to conduct the Nonresponse Followup (NRFU) operation for the 2020 Census.

The Census Bureau used several data sources to estimate the number of enumerators needed per area, such as response rate projections based on the 2010 Census, the estimated NRFU workload, and the locations of group quarters.

The Census Bureau then used the following criteria to delineate the ACO areas:

- Each state must have at least one ACO.

- Indian reservations and military bases (regardless of county, state, or regional boundaries) will be managed by only one ACO.
- ACO areas of responsibility will not cross state or regional boundaries (with noted exceptions above).
- ACO areas of responsibility will align with county boundaries (except for counties with multiple ACOs).
- Each ACO area of responsibility will contain at least one major city.
- ACO areas of responsibility must consider the transportation network and impassable geographical features/water bodies.

### **Decision**

The Census Bureau will open 248 areas census offices to support the 2020 Census at the following locations (see attachments at the end of this document for the list of initial ACO locations). These locations could still change as a result of the process the Government Services Administration uses to identify locations and negotiate leases.

### **The 2020 Census Memorandum Series**

The 2020 Census Memorandum Series documents significant decisions, actions, and accomplishments of the 2020 Census Program for the purpose of informing stakeholders, coordinating interdivisional efforts, and documenting important historical changes.

A memorandum generally will be added to this series for any decision or documentation that meets the following criteria:

1. A major program level decision that will affect the overall design or have significant effect on 2020 Census operations or systems.
2. A major policy decision or change that will affect the overall design or significantly impact 2020 Census operations or systems.
3. A report that documents the research and testing for 2020 Census operations or systems.

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