

# CENSUS 101: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The 2020 Census is closer than you think!  
Here's a quick refresher of what it is and why it's essential that everyone is counted.

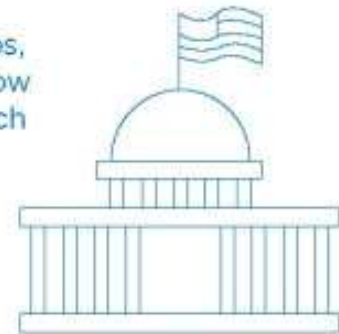
## Everyone counts.

The census counts every person living in the U.S. once, only once, and in the right place.



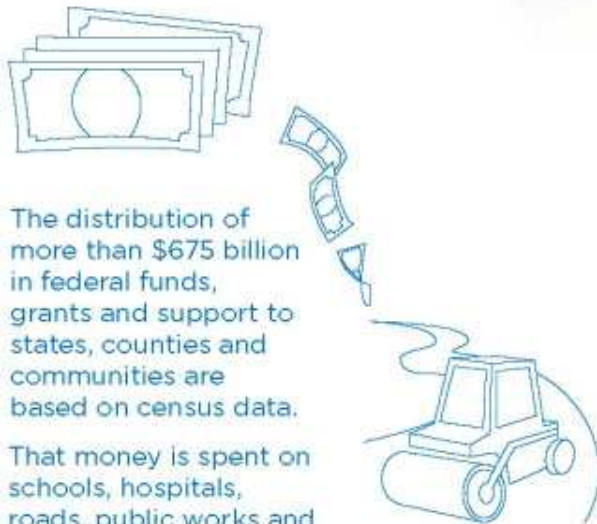
## It's about fair representation.

Every 10 years, the results of the census are used to reapportion the House of Representatives, determining how many seats each state gets.



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**It's about  
\$675 billion.**



The distribution of more than \$675 billion in federal funds, grants and support to states, counties and communities are based on census data.

That money is spent on schools, hospitals, roads, public works and other vital programs.

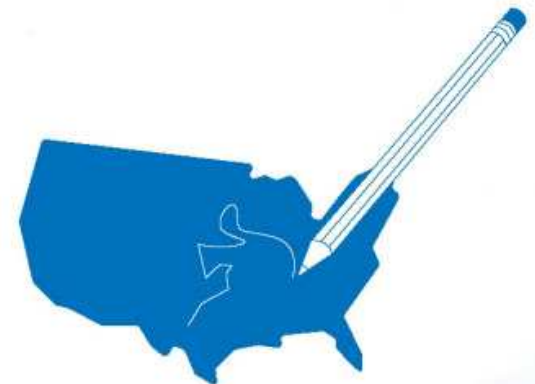


**It's in the  
constitution.**

The U.S. Constitution mandates that everyone in the country be counted every 10 years. The first census was in 1790.

**It's about  
redistricting.**

After each decade's census, state officials redraw the boundaries of the congressional and state legislative districts in their states to account for population shifts.



**Every household will have the option of responding online, by mail, or by phone.**

**Nearly every household** will receive an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census from either a postal worker or a census worker.



**95%** of households will receive their census invitation in the mail.





# How the 2020 Census will invite everyone to respond



**Almost 5%** of households will receive their census invitation when a census taker drops it off. In these areas, the majority of households may not receive mail at their home's physical location (like households that use PO boxes or areas recently affected by natural disasters).



**Less than 1%** of households will be counted in person by a census taker, instead of being invited to respond on their own. We do this in very remote areas like parts of northern Maine, remote Alaska, and in select American Indian areas that ask to be counted in person.

Note: We have special procedures to count people who don't live in households, such as students living in university housing or people experiencing homelessness.

United States<sup>®</sup>  
**Census**  
**2020**

## WHAT WE WILL SEND IN THE MAIL

On or between	You'll receive:
March 12–20	An invitation to respond online to the 2020 Census. (Some households will also receive paper questionnaires.)
March 16–24	A reminder letter.
	<b>If you haven't responded yet:</b>
March 26–April 3	A reminder postcard.
April 8–16	A reminder letter and paper questionnaire.
April 20–27	A final reminder postcard before we follow up in person.

## We understand you might miss our initial letter in the mail.

- Every household that hasn't already responded will receive reminders and will eventually receive a paper questionnaire.
- It doesn't matter which initial invitation you get or how you get it—we will follow up in person with all households that don't respond.

# The 2020 Census and Confidentiality

*Your responses to the 2020 Census are safe, secure, and protected by federal law. Your answers can only be used to produce statistics—they cannot be used against you in any way. By law, all responses to U.S. Census Bureau household and business surveys are kept completely confidential.*

## Respond to the 2020 Census to shape the future.

Responding to the census helps communities get the funding they need and helps businesses make data-driven decisions that grow the economy. Census data impact our daily lives, informing important decisions about funding for services and infrastructure in your community, including health care, senior centers, jobs, political representation, roads, schools, and businesses. More than \$675 billion in federal funding flows back to states and local communities each year based on census data.



## Your census responses are safe and secure.

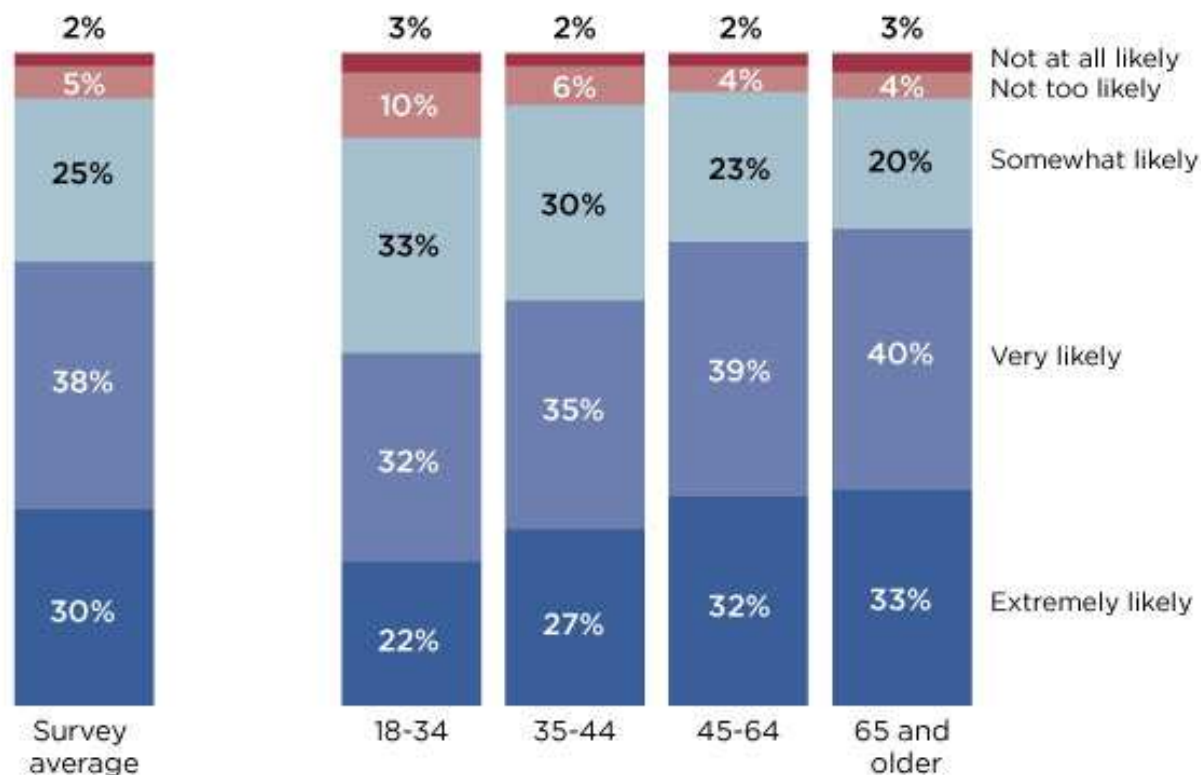
The Census Bureau is required by law to protect any personal information we collect and keep it strictly confidential. The Census Bureau can only use your answers to produce statistics. In fact, every Census Bureau employee takes an oath to protect your personal information for life. Your answers cannot be used for law enforcement purposes or to determine your personal eligibility for government benefits.

## By law, your responses cannot be used against you.

By law, your census responses cannot be used against you by any government agency or court in any way—not by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), not by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), not by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and not by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The law requires the Census Bureau to keep your information confidential and use your responses only to produce statistics.



# How Likely Would You Be to Fill Out the Census Form?



Notes: All estimates were rounded so that the sum of estimates equals 100 percent.

United States<sup>\*</sup>  
**Census**  
Bureau

U.S. Department of Commerce  
Economics and Statistics Administration  
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU  
[census.gov](https://www.census.gov)

Source: 2020 Census Barriers, Attitudes,  
and Motivators Study (CBAMS)  
Public Use Microdata Sample