



RESPONDING TO THE CENSUS DURING THE PANDEMIC

Although the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is impacting some of the United States Census Bureau's efforts to gather responses to the 2020 Census, people living in the United States and its territories have multiple ways to be counted in the census. Census responses are used for many purposes, including allocating over \$675 billion in federal funds to states, counties, and local communities for schools, hospitals, roads, and many public programs. The North Dakota Department of Commerce estimated the state received approximately \$1.45 billion in federal funds over the past decade based on the number of residents counted in the 2010 Census.¹ Census data also are used by the North Dakota Legislative Assembly each decade to establish the boundaries of legislative districts and provide equal representation for state residents.

THREE WAYS TO RESPOND TO THE 2020 CENSUS

Responding to the Census by Mail

Many individuals receive census questionnaires with instructions in the mail. These people may complete the census questionnaire and return it to the Census Bureau by mail. Individuals who do not have a physical mailing address will not receive questionnaires in the mail. Instead, census workers will drop off questionnaires for these individuals at their homes if the individuals have not responded by other means. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many census workers are unable to make the personal deliveries at this time. When it is safe for them to do so, the workers may restart the deliveries. In the meantime, an individual who has not received a paper questionnaire has other options for participating in the census.

Responding to the Census by Phone

Individuals may complete the census questionnaire by telephone by calling 844-330-2020 between 6:00 a.m. and 1:00 a.m. Central Time.

Responding to the Census Online

Individuals may complete the census questionnaire online at www.my2020census.gov. Many people will receive a notice in the mail with instructions for completing the questionnaire online and a 12-digit identification code to use when beginning the questionnaire. If an individual does not receive an identification code, the individual still may complete the questionnaire online. After the individual goes to the website www.my2020census.gov and clicks on the box marked "Start Questionnaire", the individual may click on the link saying "If you do not have a Census ID, click here." The individual then will need to answer a few questions before beginning the census questionnaire.

ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

There are many official resources providing more information about participating in the census. The Census Bureau's website with guidance for responding to the census questionnaire and obtaining help in languages other than English is <https://2020census.gov/en/ways-to-respond.html>. The Census Bureau also has websites with information on how the information in responses is protected, how to avoid scams, and frequently asked questions at <https://2020census.gov/en/data-protection.html>, <https://2020census.gov/en/avoiding-fraud.html>, and <https://2020census.gov/en/help.html>. The North Dakota Department of Commerce's census information website is <https://www.commerce.nd.gov/census/>, and its telephone number is 701-328-5300.

¹ North Dakota Department of Commerce, Office of the Census, *Why is Census 2020 Important to North Dakota?*, available at: <https://www.nd.gov/sites/www/files/documents/News%20and%20Events/Census%202020/Fact%20Sheets/Why%20Census%202020%20is%20Important.pdf>.