

2020 Census Operational Adjustments Due to COVID-19

The 2020 Census is underway, and more than half of the households across America have responded and more are responding every day. Online, phone, and mailed self-responses will continue throughout the data collection process. In light of the COVID-19 outbreak, the U.S. Census Bureau has adjusted 2020 Census operations in order to:

- Protect the health and safety of the American public and Census Bureau employees.
- Implement guidance from federal, state, and local authorities regarding COVID-19.
- Ensure a complete and accurate count of all communities.

The Office of Management and Budget and the Office of Personnel Management have provided federal agencies with guidelines for resuming operations on an epidemiologically sound, data-driven basis, adhering to the latest federal, state, and local guidance. The Census Bureau continues to monitor the changing conditions at the state and local level, and in consultation with the appropriate officials, update its planned start dates for selected operations in selected states.

The information the Census Bureau receives daily from FEMA and state and local authorities guides Census Bureau decisions on timing. As a result, selected field operations will resume on a phased schedule on a geographic basis.

Under the adjusted 2020 Census operational plan, the Census Bureau is conducting a series of preparatory activities so we are fully ready to resume field activities as we continue to advance the mission of the 2020 Census to ensure a complete and accurate count. In-person activities, including enumeration, office work, and processing activities, will always incorporate the most current guidance from authorities to ensure the health and safety of the public and Census Bureau employees.

Activity/Operation	Original Schedule	New Schedule
Self-Response Phase Online, phone, and mailed self-responses continue throughout the data collection process.	March 12–July 31	March 12–October 31
Group Quarters (e-Response and Paper Enumeration) Many group quarters have already begun responding through our e-response enumeration option.	April 2–June 5	April 2–September 3

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Activity/Operation	Original Schedule	New Schedule
<p>Remote Alaska</p> <p>Early operation to reach parts of Alaska that may be difficult to reach later in the year and whose populations depart for other activities. The operation will be mostly completed on the original planned schedule, though some areas with year-round populations will be enumerated when it is safe to do so.</p>	January 21–April 30	Tentatively January 21–June 19, but may need further review and coordination
<p>Field Offices at Peak Operations</p> <p>Managers and staff commence administrative, training, deployment, and support activities for peak data collection operations. This includes selecting and hiring field staff.</p>	March 1	June 1
<p>Update Leave—Stateside</p> <p>Census takers drop off invitations to respond and paper questionnaires at the front doors of 5 million households stateside while updating the addresses.</p>	March 15–April 17	June 13–July 9
<p>Update Leave—Puerto Rico</p> <p>Update Leave Operation for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, approximately 1.7 million households, will be coordinated separately.</p>	March 15–April 17	Needs further review and coordination with outside partners and stakeholders.
<p>Update Enumerate</p> <p>Census takers interview about 2,000 households in remote parts of northern Maine and southeast Alaska.</p>	March 16–April 30	June 14–July 29
<p>Nonresponse Followup (NRFU)</p> <p>Census takers will interview households in person.</p>	May 13–July 31	August 11–October 31
<p>In-Person Group Quarters Enumeration</p> <p>Group quarters that remain a part of our in-person group quarters enumeration efforts will begin in July.</p>	April 2–June 5	July 1–September 3
<p>Service-Based Enumeration</p> <p>We’re working with service providers at soup kitchens, shelters, and regularly scheduled food vans to count the people they serve.</p>	March 30–April 1	Needs further review and coordination with outside partners and stakeholders.
<p>Mobile Questionnaire Assistance</p> <p>Census Bureau staff assists people with responding online at places people gather (events, grocery stores, etc.).</p>	March 30–July 31	Needs further review and coordination with outside partners and stakeholders.

Activity/Operation	Original Schedule	New Schedule
<p>Count of People Experiencing Homelessness Outdoors</p> <p>Census takers count people under bridges, in parks, in all-night businesses, etc.</p>	April 1	Needs further review and coordination with outside partners and stakeholders.
<p>Enumeration of Transitory Locations</p> <p>Census takers count people staying at campgrounds, RV parks, marinas, and hotels if they do not usually live elsewhere.</p>	April 9–May 4	Tentatively September 3–September 28, but may need further review and coordination.
<p>Process Apportionment Counts</p> <p>After collection activities are complete, Census Bureau experts run and review output from programs to unduplicate responses, determine final housing unit status, populate any missing housing unit data on household size, and finalize the universe to be included in the apportionment count file.</p>	July 31, 2020–December 31, 2020	October 31, 2020–April 30, 2021
<p>Process Redistricting Data</p> <p>Census Bureau experts run and review programs to populate any missing demographic data for each household, run differential privacy programs to ensure confidentiality, and run tabulation programs for each state delivery.</p>	January 1, 2021–March 30, 2021	May 1, 2021–July 31, 2021
<p>Deliver Apportionment Counts to the President</p> <p>By law, the Census Bureau will deliver each state’s population total, which determines its number of seats in the U.S. House of Representatives.</p>	By December 31, 2020	Deliver by April 30, 2021
<p>President Delivers Apportionment Counts to Congress</p>	Within 7 days of start of legislative session or approximately 10–20 days after receipt.	Within 14 days of receipt.
<p>Deliver Redistricting Counts to States</p> <p>By law, the Census Bureau will deliver the local counts each state needs to complete legislative redistricting.</p>	By April 1, 2021	Deliver by July 31, 2021