

# CDF-TX 2020 CENSUS PRIMER

## Why does the Children’s Defense Fund – Texas care about the 2020 Census?

Every 10 years, the United States Census Bureau conducts a count of the U.S. population that collects vital demographic and economic information. The Census has been conducted each decade since 1790, as required by the U.S. Constitution. An accurate Census count includes **everyone living in the United States**. These totals determine the number of congressional representatives in each state (known as **apportionment**) and the number of electoral votes Texas will have in future presidential elections. Census totals also help the government decide how to distribute \$675 billion in federal funds to states’ social support programs over the next decade.<sup>1</sup>

The wellbeing of Texan children depends on an accurate Census count, and CDF-TX wants to make sure all the state’s children are counted. **This spring, we encourage full participation in this safe and secure survey for the long-term benefit of young people and their families.**

Ensuring that the Census truly reflects our population is directly connected to our mission of making sure that “every child has a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start and a Moral Start in life . . .”

## Protecting Immigrant Communities<sup>2</sup>

As part of the steering committee for the Protecting Immigrant Families Campaign, CDF-Texas is committed to ensuring immigrants are treated with human dignity. When a Census citizenship question was proposed in 2018, CDF opposed the effort out of a deep concern that many immigrant families would be intimidated out of participating.<sup>3</sup> The Supreme Court agreed. **The 2020 Census will not ask for citizenship status.**<sup>4</sup>

Families will begin receiving invitations to complete the Census in mid-March. Census forms can be filled out online, by phone, or by mail. **Families should count everyone living in the household when they are filling out the form, including young children and people staying there temporarily.**<sup>5</sup> Census takers will only visit homes that have not responded by April. Their job is to help make sure that everyone is counted. These **Census takers will have a photo ID** with a U.S. Department of Commerce watermark and expiration date.<sup>6</sup>

## KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- The Census aims to include every person living in the U.S.
- It will not ask about citizenship status. Census answers are confidential.
- Families should count every person living in their household. This includes young children, foster children, unrelated children, grandchildren, and people staying in their home temporarily.
- An accurate count determines:
  - our representation in Congress and in presidential elections.
  - the federal funding Texas receives to support children through important social programs like SNAP and CHIP.
- We encourage everyone to participate in the 2020 Census.

**Everyone living in the U.S. is encouraged to participate in the Census.** Census forms will be available in 13 languages. **Census answers are confidential – they are not allowed to be shared with agencies such as the FBI and ICE.**<sup>7</sup>

### **Child Welfare<sup>8</sup>, Health<sup>9</sup>, Education<sup>10</sup> and Ending Child Poverty<sup>11</sup>**

CDF-TX advocates for programs that support all children, including fair housing, early childhood and special education, the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). **All of these initiatives are supported through federal dollars.**<sup>12</sup> **How many dollars depends on each state's counted population.**

All children need to be counted in the Census so that Texas can fund the programs that families depend on. The Center for Public Policy Priorities has estimated that **with even a 1% undercount, Texas would lose \$300 million in federal funding per year for the next ten years.**<sup>13</sup> Among the most undercounted groups during the last Census were children under 5.<sup>14</sup> **Families should count every child living in the household at the time of the Census, including young children, foster children, unrelated children, and grandchildren.**<sup>15</sup> CDF-TX and our partners are committed to ensuring that every Texan – especially hard-to-count populations such as young children – is represented in the 2020 Census so that Texas will be able to fully fund programs that support our communities.

### **Important Dates<sup>16</sup>**

**April 1, 2020** Every U.S. household will have received an invitation to complete the Census.

**Late May-August 2020** Census takers will begin door-to-door follow-up with households who have not already responded to ensure that everyone is counted.

**December 2020** The Census Bureau is legally required to submit apportionment counts to Congress.

**March 31, 2021** States receive counts that will shape legislative districts and federal funding for the next 10 years.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://2020census.gov/en/partners.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://cdf-texas.org/protecting-immigrant-communities/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.childrensdefense.org/child-watch-columns/health/2018/the-census-citizenship-question-and-children/>

<sup>4</sup> [https://2020census.gov/en/newsevents/rumors.html?cid=20011:%2Bcitizen%20%2Bquestion:sem.ga:p:dm:en:&utm\\_source=sem.ga&utm\\_medium=p&utm\\_campaign=dm:en&utm\\_content=20011&utm\\_term=%2Bcitizen%20%2Bquestion](https://2020census.gov/en/newsevents/rumors.html?cid=20011:%2Bcitizen%20%2Bquestion:sem.ga:p:dm:en:&utm_source=sem.ga&utm_medium=p&utm_campaign=dm:en&utm_content=20011&utm_term=%2Bcitizen%20%2Bquestion)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2020/every-kids-counts.html>

<sup>6</sup> <https://2020census.gov/en/census-takers.html>

<sup>7</sup> <https://americasvoice.org/blog/2020-census/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://cdf-texas.org/policy/policy-priorities/child-welfare/>

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<sup>9</sup> <https://cdf-texas.org/policy/policy-priorities/health-2/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://cdf-texas.org/policy/policy-priorities/education/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://cdf-texas.org/policy/policy-priorities/ending-child-poverty/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial/2020/program-management/working-papers/Uses-of-Census-Bureau-Data-in-Federal-Funds-Distribution.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> <http://bettertexasblog.org/2020-census-tx/>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2019/11/big-push-to-count-every-newborn-young-child-2020-census.html>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2020/every-kids-counts.html>

<sup>16</sup> <https://2020census.gov/en/important-dates.html>