CENSUS DAY HANDBOOK 2020

WWW.DRNY.ORG
Disability Rights New York’s (DRNY) Protection and Advocacy for Voting Access (PAVA) program was created by U.S. Congress through the Help American Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002. We ensure New Yorkers can vote in every election and participate in their community’s government.

DRNY works to ensure each step of the voting process is accessible to people with disabilities. We are advocating for your right to vote. We are working to remove barriers to New York State’s voting program. We are helping voters with and without disabilities have a voice in our democracy. This includes informing people about the Census because every community member is important.

**DRNY provides the following services:**

- Training and education programs to increase Census literacy in the community;
- Ensure that people, regardless of disability, participate in the civic life of our communities;
- Help New Yorkers register to vote;
- Inform people of their voting rights and of their duty to participate in the Census;
- Provide individual and systemic advocacy to address barriers and problems in New York State’s voting program.
What Is the Census?

The Census counts the total number of people living in the United States and five U.S. territories (Puerto Rico, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands). The Federal Government conducts the Census every 10 years, and has done so since 1790. It is required by the U.S. Constitution.

- Every person, every home and residence in the U.S. is counted. This includes people living in nursing homes, jails, and other institutions. This also includes people who are homeless or do not have a permanent address.
- The Census count is based on where every person lives as of April 1, 2020.
- The Census only asks a few questions about how many people live in your home or residence. It is simple and easy to complete by mail or online.
- Each year, government funding is provided based on the Census data to fund programs like healthcare, transportation, housing, emergency planning, education, and school lunches.

How the Census Relates To Voting

The Census count in your community determines:

- The strength of your voice at all levels of government. The Census count is used to consider redistricting, which defines congressional and state legislative districts, school districts, and voting precincts.
- How many elected officials represent your community in your state and federal government. Since 1911 there have been 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives, and each state is guaranteed at least one seat. Additional seats are distributed by state population. The states with the most people get the most seats in the U.S. House of Representatives.
How Do You Complete The Census?

By Mail: The U.S. Census Bureau sent a paper questionnaire to every household in mid-March 2020.

Online: The U.S. Census Bureau invited every household to complete the Census online, and sent online survey information in mid-March. For the first time in history, the Census is available to complete online.

In Person: A U.S. Census worker may come to your house beginning mid-May if the household has not submitted the survey.

What Questions Are In The Census?

- Information about people who live in your home
- Ages and gender
- Race/ethnicity
Is the 2020 Census Accessible?

Website Accessibility
- The online Census form follows the latest website accessibility guidelines.

American Sign Language (ASL)
- Census workers who communicate in ASL can visit homes if someone needs assistance in ASL.
- A video in ASL is available to explain the online Census at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ifEQvQO4b8&list=PLewV-zKXDZkiAT8Tp96NysEoq3dDEMl7L&index=28#.

Braille and Large Print
- Braille and large print guides are available online, or call the U.S. Census Customer Hotline at 844-330-2020 for assistance.

Census Questionnaire assistance is available to read in over 12 languages.
- Spanish, Chinese (Mandarin, Cantonese), Vietnamese, Korean, Russian, Arabic, Tagalog, Polish, French, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, and Japanese.
- Resources in different languages are available at https://2020census.gov/en/languages.
Will the Government Share My Census Information?

Census information is confidential. The information you give on the Census Questionnaire cannot be shared or used against you in any way. The government does not share Census information with the police or immigration authorities. The Census information you submit cannot be used against you in court or by a government agency.

- Census forms are kept private for 72 years.

AVOID CENSUS SCAMS & FRAUD!

The Census and Census Workers NEVER ask for:

- Your Social Security number
- Money or donations
- Your political affiliations
- Your bank or credit card numbers
- Your religion
- Your citizenship status

Report fraud or suspicious activity by calling 800-923-8282 or email rumors@census.gov.
WHY IS THE CENSUS IMPORTANT TO THE DISABILITY COMMUNITY?

Making sure that everyone is counted is vital to ensure that people with disabilities get the support and services they need. Everyone’s participation in the Census is important!

The Census data will determine how much money communities receive to fund programs such as:

- Medicaid and Healthcare
- Public Transportation
- Arts and Cultural Projects
- Special Education Services
- Housing and Food Programs
- Income Assistance Programs
- Employment Resources
- Childcare and Education

25% of people living in the United States are living with a disability.

The data from the Census helps community leaders, advocates and elected officials address the issues that affect communities. Elected officials will not be able to make useful decisions about how to spend tax dollars equally and effectively without having an accurate population count of their community.
What is the American Community Survey?

Every year, the U.S. Census Bureau contacts 3.5 million households across the country to participate in the American Community Survey.

The American Community Survey (ACS) and the 2020 Census are two different surveys the U.S. Census Bureau requires. It is important to complete both surveys when your household receives them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Census</strong></th>
<th><strong>American Community Survey (ACS)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sent every 10 years</td>
<td>Sent every month in every year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short form</td>
<td>Long form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legally required to complete</td>
<td>Legally required to complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sent to Every Household</td>
<td>Sent to 3.5 Million Households per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No disability-related questions</td>
<td>Asks three disability-related questions</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The American Community Survey (ACS) asks questions about you and the people in your house beyond the few questions asked in the Census Questionnaire. The information collected every year through the ACS helps community officials and elected leaders understand changes taking place in their community so that they can allocate money to fund necessary programs.

When you respond to the ACS, you are doing your part to help your community plan the future of schools, hospitals, lunch programs, veteran services, emergency services, and so many other public programs.

The U.S. Census Bureau has more information about the ACS at: https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs.

Why Does The ACS Ask About Disabilities?

The ACS asks about six disability types: hearing loss, vision loss, cognitive disabilities, ambulatory disabilities, disabilities affecting self-care, and independent living. It asks questions about your ability to perform specific daily tasks. Your responses are used to create statistics about people with disabilities living in the United States and U.S. Territories.

Your Information Helps the Disability Community!

Federal, state, and local agencies use the information from the questions about disability in the ACS to plan and fund programs that people with disabilities rely on. The ACS data helps governments at all levels provide enough funds to meet the needs of people with disabilities.
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EVERYBODY COUNTS

#2020Census

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