



Get out the Count: Field Guidance 2.0

Get out the count (GOTC) has looked different in 2020. The COVID-19 public health crisis significantly altered the Census Bureau’s operational timeline requiring innovation in get out the count (GOTC) organizing and the national discourse about systemic racism has created a need to adjust messaging. Find the below summary of field and outreach guidance to support your GOTC work in this moment. **This is a live document that will include new materials as they become available.**

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Updates on Census Bureau Operations

Find key updates to 2020 Census operational plan in the links below:

- [2020 Census Operational Adjustments Due to COVID-19](#)
- [Funder's Census Initiative Key Census Milestone's - Updated June 2020](#)

Review the above links for a full update on operational shifts. In addition, below are some considerations for stakeholders to keep in mind as you develop and execute outreach plans:

- **Update/ Leave and Outreach to Rural Areas:** The Update/Leave operation ensures 5% of households, primarily rural households—including most American Indian reservations—receive an invitation to participate in the census (online, by paper or by phone), even if they do not have traditional mail service. After a suspension of field operations due to COVID-19, the U.S. Census Bureau resumed the Update/ Leave operation beginning in mid-May to rural communities and those without traditional mail service. Find [guidance about the resumption of the Update/ Leave operation along with talking points here](#) and [guidance on outreach to rural communities here](#).
- **Responding without a Census ID:** Households can respond to the census without their Census ID with just the address of where you're living on April 1, 2020. New America and the Census Counts campaign have developed a helpful explainer on how to participate in the 2020 Census without an ID. [See how to participate by phone or online without a unique ID by reviewing the guide linked here](#).
- **Fixing an Incorrect Census Submission:** If you have already completed the census only to realize you left off your baby, young child, or someone else, you can correct your census submission. [Check out this blog from Count All Kids on how to correct a submitted census submission](#).
- **Nonresponse Follow-Up (NRFU) or Door-to-Door Enumeration:** The goal of the NRFU is to get census participation to 100% by collecting data from households (occupied housing units) that didn't self-respond and identifying housing units on address list that are vacant or non-existent ("delete" units). The operation has been rescheduled to start on August 11 everywhere and with a soft launch beginning in mid-July.
 - Starting July 16, [six area census offices](#) (one per Census region) will begin the operation of interviewing households that have yet to respond to the 2020 Census. Additional areas where the Census Bureau is soft launching operations for a second wave may be announced to occur later in July. Aside from ACOs that are part of the soft launch, all

areas managed by remaining ACOs will begin NRFU on August 11 and conclude no later than October 31.

- Find the areas served by an ACO on the [Census Hard to Count Map](#). Please note that some ACOs cover large areas. For example, the Oklahoma “County” ACO covers 20+ counties in and around Oklahoma’s panhandle. Here’s a link to the Oklahoma County ACO: <https://bit.ly/2ZtJs8j>.
- Advocates can advise community members that the census taker or field representative will present an ID badge that includes: their name, their photograph, a Department of Commerce watermark, and an expiration date. They will have an official bag and Census Bureau-issued electronic device, such as a laptop or smartphone, bearing the Census Bureau logo. Census takers and field representatives will conduct their work between the hours of 9am and 9pm, local time.
- **Counting People Experiencing Homelessness:** The U.S. Census Bureau counts people experiencing homelessness through Service-Based Enumeration (SBE) and Targeted Non-Sheltered Outdoor Locations (TNSOL). These operations have been rescheduled to September 22 - 24. People experiencing homelessness can also participate in the census by responding by phone or online with a non-ID response.

Reminders on Digital Organizing during GOTC

The COVID-19 pandemic quickly forced many organizations to abandon in-person events and instead rely on digital tools. Digital strategies and tactics are new to some organizations so Census Counts and State Voices created [Digital Tools Guidance](#). As GOTC continues, we want to share more strategies and tactics. Here are some basics to consider as your organization continues to organize remotely.

- [Tips for engaging Rural communities](#)
- [Virtual canvassing](#)
 - Check out these [best practices](#) for virtual events and Zoom
- [Phone Programs](#)
- [Community Events and Census Kiosks](#)
- [Relational Organizing](#)
- [Digital Tactics](#)
 - You can use [this sample social media campaign from the State Voices network](#) as a template to build out a campaign that works for you!
 - APALA created a [digital toolkit](#) for Census 2020 organizing. Check it out!
 - Looking for a place to start? United We Dream has [shareable graphics and posts](#) you can share!
 - Check out this [toolkit](#) for a breakdown of paid ads on social media.

Tips for including Census in Civic Engagement Activities

Organizations can continue to include census education as they begin important work for voter registration, expanding voter access, issue organizing, and Get out the Vote. The 2020 Census is an essential component of civic engagement and representation and builds long-term power for communities of color. Because the 2020 Census is a nonpartisan activity, Census Counts and State Voices, as 501c3 organizations, cannot provide guidance to 501c4 organizations. As groups move to other civic engagement work, there are things to keep in mind:

- The updated 2020 Census timeline presents an opportunity to integrate census outreach with Get Out the Vote (GOTV) engagement. However, combining these efforts raises potential legal issues and other considerations for nonprofit organizations. Check out our memo on legal and other considerations [here](#). The Census Counts campaign and State Voices recommend integrating the following census and voting asks:
 - Participate in the 2020 Census and register to vote;
 - Participate in the 2020 Census and request an absentee or vote-by-mail ballot (or other voter access asks); and
 - Participate in the 2020 Census and pledge to vote (or other GOTV).
- Organizations should pause outreach for a week between a GOTC program and issue organizing campaigns. This ensures that households don't receive too many contacts and allows ample time for training on new messaging.
- Census non-response follow-up resumes on August 11. It will be critical for organizations to be mindful of the outreach conducted by Census Bureau enumerators. Homes may receive door-knocks from both an enumerator and a civic engagement campaign.
- All households need to complete the 2020 Census but not individuals are eligible to vote. All scripts and training should include this to avoid confusion. If your organization has capacity, consider creating separate lists to target voters and non-voters. For more information about creating lists and targeting in VAN, [review the State Voices VAN for Census document](#).
- If your organization plans to send mail, consider including a link to the 2020 Census self-response website www.my2020census.gov
- This is new! We encourage groups working on civic engagement to [join our national field working group calls](#) and share lessons and best practices.

Here are some template scripts:

- [Voter registration and GOTC script](#)
- [General Census Scripts](#)

Tips on Messaging:

The 2020 Census is an important part of democracy. Organizations are now revising their tested census outreach messaging to include important framing related to public health, police brutality, and racial equity. Here are several resources from Census Counts partners.

- [Find the latest census message research and messaging guidance in the Census Counts messaging and media toolkit](#). Additional resources are available here:
 - [Census Counts Message of the Week](#)
 - For succinct census messaging, check out the Census Counts [resource library](#)
 - Census Counts fact sheet that [dispels some covid-related misinformation](#)
- For outreach to immigrant communities, find [winning narratives](#) from FIRM.
- On police brutality and recent uprisings for justice- [Color of Change Talking Points](#)
- Additional Talking Points: [DACA, Immigrant Rights, and the U.S. 2020 Census](#)

Police Brutality, Black Lives Matter and Census Solidarity

Recent protests stemming from police brutality and systemic racism. As a national coalition, we support Black lives and public health measures in place due to COVID-19 but recognize that these events have altered how organizations continue their census outreach.

Black people deserve to thrive, not just survive. The same white supremacy that permeates our justice system and sanctions police brutality has also robbed many Black communities of the resources they need and deserve. Black people and other communities of color need to be counted in the 2020 Census.

Our partners at **Color of Change** have developed these [talking points](#) and messaging on how to talk about the 2020 Census, voting rights, and other democracy issues during these times. Please check it out!

It is time to invest in community-led solutions and advocate for resources that address community needs, dignity and existence. We have created additional guidance about the Census Bureau operations, how to include GOTC within civic engagement work, messaging that takes into account the current landscape, and tips for how organizations can continue to keep the 2020 Census relevant through October.

Tips on Keeping the Census ‘Relevant’ through October

Keeping up energy to Get Out The Count through October 31 is a tough job. Our communities are facing the COVID-19 pandemic, massive loss of jobs and income, and recurring police brutality across our country. As we continue to support our communities with mutual aid, meeting basic needs, and fighting for racial justice, we know we still need to center the long-term importance of the 2020 Census. Here are some ideas for integrating Census:

- If you’re doing any in-person outreach (e.g. food banks, PPE distribution), consider printing out flyers with Census messaging to provide to folks. Click [here](#) and [here](#) for sample flyers.
- If you’re hosting virtual events, consider adding a small Census component. Keep the lift small by inserting Census into outreach that you’re already planning to do.
 - Spend 3 minutes talking about the Census during a regularly scheduled social event, community space, or rally. Examples:
 - A short Census pitch during a [labor union May Day Rally](#) (minute 56:06)
 - A [virtual rally](#) to talk about AAPI (Asian American and Pacific Islander) issues and Census
 - Faithful Census events ([NC](#), [GA](#), [FL](#), [OH](#))
- Create social media content that highlights peak moments in Summer/Fall. The Census Counts coalition has many [social media graphics](#) and [PSA videos](#) that are free to use! Here are some ideas for peak moments:
 - June - Pride Month, Immigrant Heritage Month
 - July - Fourth of July
 - August/September - Back to School, Labor Day
 - Sep. 15 to Oct. 15 - Hispanic Heritage Month
 - October - Filipino American History Month, LGBT History Month, Halloween
 - Holidays - celebrate togetherness on July 4, Labor Day and un-official holidays like National Donut Day ([full list here](#))

Service providers, schools, civic engagement programs, and other organizations can also be sustaining census messengers in the face of COVID-19 and other obstacles. Here are some ways to include census education in your existing work, thanks to Community Action Partnership for their contribution:

- [Census Posters](#) to hang in schools and other public buildings
- [Census Buttons & Stickers](#) that can be worn at in-person and virtual events
- [Social media graphics](#)
- [Census Basics Handouts](#) can be placed in offices and during events

- Make phones and computers available for community members to take the Census while they visit your office
- [Postcards](#) to remind parents to count their children
- [Census PSA Video](#) that can be screened in office waiting rooms or classrooms
- [Census FAQs](#) to share with employees
- [Census coloring pages](#) that children take home to their parents

Tips on Census Metrics & Reporting

As organizations continue their digital organizing work to promote the 2020 Census, we want to ensure that staff are aware of how to collect and report on metrics. These metrics and reports will be helpful to show what your organization has accomplished and provide an assessment to prepare for a 2030 Census.

- [Metrics and Reporting document](#)
- [VAN for Census document](#)