



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

April 2019

The Countdown is On: Census 2020 is One Year Out 1

Why the Census is Important 1

How Much has Changed in 100 Years? 2

What is Being Done in Preparation for Census?

Efforts to get a good handle on housing units and the correct political and statistical geography have been ongoing for well over a year. Annually, the Census Bureau asks cities to provide updates to their boundaries. This ensures population counted in a given area that the cities have annexed are counted in the city's total population.

In 2018, the Census Bureau asked local governments to sign up for a program called Local Update of Census Addresses or LUCA, in which they were given a chance to provide edits to the Census Bureau's list of addresses for a given area. This is important because the Census Bureau must know the housing unit exists in order to count the individuals living there.

Currently, local governments are also being asked to review proposed changes to statistical geography in their areas.

# The Countdown is on: Census 2020 is One Year Out

Shape your future START HERE > **United States Census 2020**

## How the 2020 Census will invite everyone to respond

Every household will have the option of responding online, by mail, or by phone.

Nearly every household will receive an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census from either a postal worker or a census worker.

95% of households will receive their census invitation in the mail.



**Almost 5%** of households will receive their census invitation when a census taker drops it off. In these areas, the majority of households may not receive mail at their home's physical location (like households that use PO boxes or areas recently affected by natural disasters).

**Less than 1%** of households will be counted in person by a census taker, instead of being invited to respond on their own. We do this in very remote areas like parts of northern Maine, remote Alaska, and in select American Indian areas that ask to be counted in person.

Note: We have special procedures to count people who don't live in households, such as students living in university housing or people experiencing homelessness.



The purpose of the census is to count the entire population of the country, and at the location where each person usually lives. The constitutional purpose of the count is to determine the distribution of seats in the House of Representatives of the United States Congress. North Dakota is estimated to have gained more than 80,000 individuals since Census 2010, but it is unlikely that we will see a change in the number of seats the state is allocated as a result of the census.

What will be asked? Forget the "census long form" in which a percentage of the population answered a much longer questionnaire. The 2020 census form contains only 11 questions:

Name, phone number, age, sex, citizenship, Hispanic origin, race, relationship to householder, household tenure (own/rent), number of persons in the household and does the person usually stay or live somewhere else?

## Why the Census is Important

In addition to the constitutional defined purpose of apportionment of seats in the house of representatives, the same process is used to define the state's legislative districts. Business use the data to make informed decisions on everything from where to build a store to locating a new production facility. The biggest single reason

in North Dakota to participate in Census 2020 is financial. The most recent decennial census count is used to determine the proportional distributions for federal funds. Federal funds for grants and support to states, counties and communities are based on population totals and breakdowns by sex, age, race and other factors. Our state and

communities benefit the most when every single resident is counted.

When people respond to the census, they help their community obtain its fair share of the more than \$675 billion per year in federal funds spent on schools,

See CENSUS on Page 2

## How Will it be Conducted and is it Safe?

Census Bureau responses can only be used for census purposes and are not shared with other government agencies. Census employees from the newest hired employee working on the census to the director of the Census Bureau must sign a nondisclosure agreement under Title 13 of the US code. Violating that agreement would subject them to penalties of up to \$250,000 fine, five years in jail or both. Information from the census can be released to the public, but only after 72 years has passed.

The census is essentially done in two parts. The first part counts the number of housing units. The second part counts the number of individuals in each of those housing units. Next, housing units of a given city, census tract or county are grouped together to get a count of a given areas, such as inside or outside a city.

Census 2020 will be the first census in which household respondent can respond electronically. Other options include by mail or phone or if need be, an enumerator showing up at your house. A Census Bureau employee will not ask questions on your bank accounts or which way your kids go to school.

## How Much has Changed in 100 Years?

Between 1910 and 1920 the population of North Dakota went from 577,076 to 646,872, a growth of 12 percent, slightly less than the percentage of growth the state has seen this decade. The Census of 1920 was the last census in which the "first digit" in the state's population count changed – in that case from a 5 to a 6. The 1920 Census was also the only census in which North Dakota had more residents than its sister state, South Dakota. At the time, North Dakota had three seats in the US House as the 35th-largest state.

In 1920, more than 86 percent of the state's population was

rural. North Dakota largest city, Fargo, had less than 22,000 residents, roughly the number that the city has grown by since the year 2000. Bismarck, now the state's second-largest city, was then the state's fourth-largest behind Grand Forks and Minot, having just over 7,000 residents.

What are now the state's 13 largest cities, those with a population of 5,000 or more, totaled to less than 85,000 residents in 1920 compared to nearly 450,000 in the most recent estimate.

When comparing the population of each county in Census 1920

to the most recent population estimate, we find that 10 have grown while 43 have lost population. Of the counties that have lost population, a 60 percent decline is about the average. Cavalier County has had the highest numerical loss at nearly 12,000 and Slope the highest percentage loss at 85 percent of their 1920 populations.

Another deference was the age of state residents. In 1920, 84 percent of residents were less than 45 years of age compared to just 62 percent in the most recent population estimate. In the Census of 1920, no average age was calculated.

## Census: Story Continued from Page 1

hospitals, roads, public works and other vital programs.

In fiscal year 2015, a total of \$1,445,647,171 (\$1.45 billion) in federal funds for programs like Medicaid, highway construction, Head Start, Foster Care, Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Low Income Energy Assistance, Special Education and other programs were obligated in North Dakota based upon resident count from Census 2010 and subsequent annual population estimates.

Approximately \$1,910 in federal funds per resident was spent that year. Of all the statistics we live with, the census count is one of the longest lasting as the census occurs only once every 10 years.

Not counting everyone can cost North Dakota. That means for just one resident missed or counted in another state, it will cost us in North Dakota about \$19,100.

Census data is vital to ensure equal representation in government. The same process used to determine the number of seats apportioned in the US House also applies to the legislature in the state. Governments at all levels, private sector business, nonprofit groups and private citizens use census count to make choices in determining everything from revitalizing older neighborhoods to expanding schools to traffic planning.

Census data is used by emergency managers to determine the number

of households and individuals impacted and how many are very young or elderly that require additional care. Combining decennial census data with the ongoing American Community Survey, a mosaic can be painted quickly for the impacted area.

In North Dakota, American Indians on reservations and children under the age of 5 are the most likely to not be counted in a census. Other potentially challenging groups include recent arrivals in the Bakken oilfield, immigrants from overseas, military personnel and college students who are legal residents elsewhere (Yes, for Census purposes they are residents in the state). Last, those in very rural areas of the state tend to be more difficult to count.

North Dakota Department of Commerce  
1600 E. Century Ave., Suite 2  
Bismarck, ND 58503 701.328.5300

Joe Cicha, Census Specialist  
701-328-7283  
Email: [jcicha@nd.gov](mailto:jcicha@nd.gov)  
Web: [NDCensus.gov](http://NDCensus.gov)

NORTH  
**Dakota** Be Legendary.™