

You Count!

Leasa Sieve, Reference Librarian

Every ten years the U.S. Census Bureau counts every person living in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and five U.S. territories. Make sure you are counted by filling out the 2020 U.S. Census!

How will I be counted? You will receive an invitation to fill out the U.S. Census sometime between March 12 and March 20, 2020. You can respond to the census in one of three ways: online, through the mail or by phone. The U.S. Census form consists of twelve simple questions about you and everyone that is living in your house on April 1, 2020. You can view a sample of the questions on the official U.S. Census website (www.2020census.gov).

Why should I fill out the census? It is required by law that everyone fill out the 2020 census. The U.S. Census Bureau makes every effort to make sure everyone is counted. If you have not responded by filling out the form, U.S. Census staff will contact you in person. Getting an accurate count is very important. Census data is used to decide where federal funding will go. It impacts many decisions, including new roads and schools and services that benefit families and older adults. It also determines how many congressional seats Minnesota gets and where legislative district lines are drawn. If you have researched your family's history on Ancestry.com you have no doubt accessed census data.

Good to know: The census is available in 12 languages in addition to English. One person should fill out the U.S. Census form for everyone in the household. Your census information is kept completely confidential. It is protected by Title 13 of the U.S. Code. It cannot be released to anyone, not even law enforcement, for 72 years. Keep in mind...the U.S. Census Bureau will never ask for social security numbers, bank account information or money/donations.

A couple more interesting facts: the majority of the 1890 census population schedules were damaged in a fire at the Washington D.C. Commerce Department Building in January 1921, so there isn't any census information for 1890 available on Ancestry. The U.S. Census has been performed every ten years since 1790.

Reminder: if you don't have access to a computer, come to the library and fill out your census form. You don't need a library card to use our public computers.

