



CENSUS TALKING POINTS

Faith communities across California have a vital role to play in ensuring a complete Census count in 2020. We serve as “trusted messengers” for hard-to-count (HTC) communities and have deeply rooted relationships and knowledge in their neighborhoods. We uniquely can talk about the Census in ways that are not only accurate and culturally resonant, but also grounded in powerful shared faith narratives, spiritual traditions, and moral values. The following are key messages you can draw from for a sermon, announcement, or other presentation for your community or congregation.

AS PEOPLE OF FAITH, WE BELIEVE THAT EVERYONE BELONGS, EVERYONE MATTERS, AND EVERYONE COUNTS.

Participating in the Census sends a powerful message about who belongs, who matters, and who counts in our nation. It is an once-in-a-decade opportunity to demonstrate the inherent worth, humanity, and dignity of all people, especially our society intentionally discounts, discredits, and dismisses. We believe in building an inclusive, equitable society where all people -- regardless of what we look like, where we come from, or how we worship -- have the resources and representation we need to thrive. “Who Counts?” is a central question of our time and when we all participate, we get to decide: **Everyone Counts.**

WE ALL BENEFIT WHEN EVERYONE IS COUNTED IN THE CENSUS.

The Census helps determine how funds for vital public services we all use are distributed. It is estimated that our communities receive \$1000 for every person counted every year. A complete Census count ensures that medical care, schools, housing assistance programs, nutrition programs, emergency services, fire departments, and infrastructure projects receive our fair share of available funding to support our communities' well-being and health. A complete count also helps make sure funding is directed specifically to populations in need; for example, Census data on the number of children under age 5 living in poverty is used to determine Head Start funding.

ACCURATE CENSUS DATA RESULTS IN ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR



MEDICAL
CARE



SCHOOLS



HOUSING
ASSISTANCE
PROGRAMS



EMERGENCY
SERVICES AND
FIRE DEPARTMENTS



INFRASTRUCTURE
PROJECTS

OUR FAITH TELLS US TO SPEAK UP FOR OURSELVES AND FOR OTHERS THE CENSUS IS A WAY TO DO BOTH.

Completing the Census more than our individual civic duty. It is a collective responsibility because of its profound impacts on all of our families, schools, and communities for years to come. We are counting on each other to complete the Census. No matter our differences, we all do better when we are united with and for each other.

THERE IS NO CITIZENSHIP QUESTION ON THE CENSUS.

There will not be a question on citizenship or immigration status on the Census. Every person of every age, race, and place of origin living in the US deserves to be counted, regardless of our status and eligibility to vote. We are working together so that all people are counted.

COMPLETING THE CENSUS IS SAFE.

Your personal information is confidential and protected by incredibly strict federal laws. Outside agencies and private parties are prohibited from accessing it.



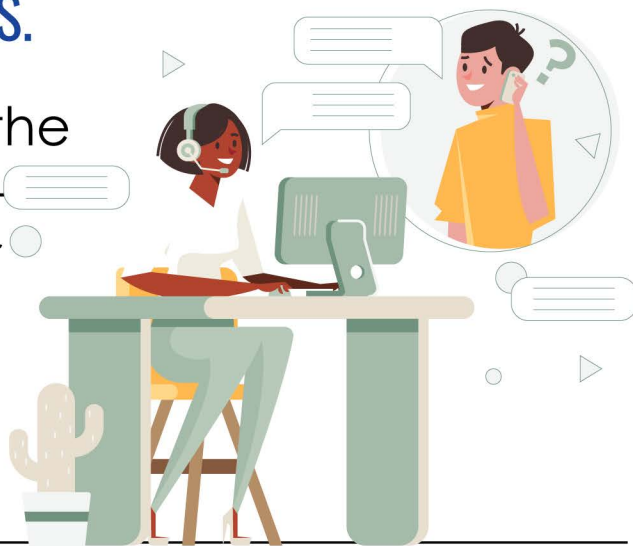
COMPLETING THE CENSUS IS SIMPLE AND ACCESSIBLE.

The Census asks 9 simple questions about basic information, such as your name, age, race and ethnicity for every person living in your residence. Answering these 9 questions in less than 10 minutes has profound impacts on our communities for the next 10 years. You can choose to respond online, by phone, or by paper form. You can respond in 12 different languages online or by phone, and paper forms are available in English and Spanish.



WE CAN HELP YOU COMPLETE THE CENSUS.

It is okay to still feel anxious about the Census. There is a Census questionnaire assistance center event near you, and we will sit alongside you to complete your form. Please fill out a pledge card and we will follow up with you.



IN COMPLETING THE CENSUS AND MAKING SURE ALL OF US ARE COUNTED, WE BEGIN TO CONFRONT ITS UGLY HISTORY OF RACIAL INJUSTICE AND CLAIM AN OPPORTUNITY TO LIVE BY OUR FAITH VALUES.

As we completed the Census and encouraged our friends and family, neighbors and fellow congregants to do the same, we recall that enslaved people of African descent were designated as three-fifths of a person on the Census. Native Americans were not fully counted until the 1890 Census. Because we recognize these painful, racist legacies at the core of our nation, we are determined to make 2020 a complete count of everyone of us to build a more just, equitable future for all.

AS PEOPLE OF FAITH, WE HOLD SPECIAL CONCERN FOR OUR NEIGHBORS IN NEED.

Populations in need are sometimes called hard-to-count (HTC) due to barriers that may include low access to broadband, housing instability, or limited English proficiency. Many programs that receive Census-related funding, such as Medi-Cal, serve HTC populations. If we undercount HTC populations, we risk underfunding and undercutting the very services designed to help them. Already disadvantaged populations have the most to lose. We must work together to ensure that our neighbors in need complete the Census.

Sources:

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