



**SARTAC**  
Self Advocacy and Beyond

# **You Count, Get Counted!**

## **All About the U.S. Census**

**You only have until  
September 30th to take the  
census! Learn more about  
the census in this factsheet.**

# Words To Know

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## Congress

The part of the government that makes laws for the whole country.

## Census

When the government counts everyone in the U.S.

## House of Representatives

One part of Congress. Every state has a different number of people in the House of Representatives. It depends on how many people live in the state.

## What is the Census?

The government wants to know how many people live in the United States. They want to know more about each person living here. The census is when the government counts everyone in the U.S. They ask questions about every home in the U.S. One person from every home answers these questions. That helps the government know more about who lives in the U.S.

The census happens every 10 years. That is the law. It is 2020, so there is a census this year!

## How long can I take the census?

You can only take the census until September 30th, 2020, so take the census as soon as possible!

## Why should I take the census?

The Census is really important for people with disabilities! The census gets information from everyone living in the U.S. The government uses that information to make decisions. These decisions affect people with disabilities.

There are two main ways the census affects people with disabilities.

### 1) Getting money for government programs

Information from the census helps federal, state, and local governments figure out how much money different programs should get. Some kinds of programs are schools, housing, and health care. Many people with disabilities need help from these programs to live. If people with disabilities don't take the census, the government might not know we need help. They might cut money from these programs. They might think people don't need these programs.

### 2) Getting the right number of Representatives

**Congress** is the part of the government that makes laws for the whole country. Members of Congress are the people who make the laws. There are

Members of Congress for each state. People in each state vote for who should be Members of Congress.

The **House of Representatives** is one part of Congress. The Members of Congress in the House of Representatives are called Representatives. Every state has a different number of Representatives. It depends on how many people live in the state.

The census counts how many people live in each state. The government uses that number to figure out how many Representatives each state gets. If people don't fill out the census, a state might get less Representatives. Then, the people in that state won't have as much of a say about laws. We need to make sure every state has the right number of Representatives. That means you need to take the census and get counted!

## How do I fill out the census?

There are 3 ways you can fill out the census:

1. You can take the census online. You will fill out an online form with the census questions. Go to <https://my2020census.gov/> to get started!
2. You can take the census over the phone. A census worker will read the questions to you. You can call 844-330-2020 to take the census by phone.
3. You can write your census on paper. You'll send the paper back to the census office through the mail. You may have already gotten a paper census in the mail. If you did, you can just fill it out and send it back. If you want a paper census, you can call 844-330-2020 and ask for one. The census office will mail it to your house.

## Can I get accommodations to fill out the census?

Yes! You can get Braille or large print forms to fill out the paper census. To get a Braille or large print census mailed to you, call 844-330-2020.

You can get someone to help you take the census in American Sign Language (ASL). You can also take the census using a TTY by calling 844-467-2020.

The government wants to help everyone take the census. If you speak a different language than English, you can still take the census. You can get the paper census in different languages. You can take the online census in

many languages. You can also take the census by phone in many languages. There are different phone numbers you can call to take the census in other languages. To learn more about taking the census in different languages, go to <https://2020census.gov/en/languages.html>

The census office also made video guides about taking the census. These guides are in many languages, like Spanish and ASL. You can watch them by going to <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLewV-zKXDZkiAT8Tp96NysEoq3dDEMi7L>

## What does the census ask about?

The census asks questions about your home. It asks questions like:

- What is your phone number?
- Do you own or rent your home?
- How many people live in your home?

The census also asks questions about each person who lives in your home. It asks questions like:

- What is your name?
- What is your race?
- What is your sex?
- How old are you?

Only one person should answer the census in each home. If you live with other people, you should talk to them about who will fill it out.

Your answers to the census are secret. The government will not share your answers with anyone. The law says the government can't share your answers.

The census does **not** ask if you are a citizen of the United States. The census just checks that you live in the United States.

## How do I stay safe when I take the census?

The census sends out workers to ask people the census questions. It is normal for a census worker to come to your home and ask you questions. They will have an ID card from the Census Bureau to show you. That way, you can tell they really work for the census.

But sometimes, other people who don't work for the census office pretend to be census workers. They might call, email, or mail you something that says they work for the census. They could even come to your home and pretend to work for the census. Here are some ways to spot a fake census worker.

- A real census worker will never ask for your:
  - Social security number
  - Bank account information
- A real census worker will never ask you for money. Taking the census is free!
- A real census worker will never threaten you if you don't answer their questions. They will never try to take you to jail.
- A real census worker will never say they work for a political party, like the Republicans or Democrats. Real census workers don't work for political parties.

## Putting it all together

The census only happens every 10 years. But it has a big impact on how our government works. It's really important that you take the census. Make sure your voice counts!

To learn more about the census, go to [2020census.gov](https://2020census.gov)

To learn more about how the census affects people with disabilities, go to <https://thearc.org/census/>

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