KEY MESSAGES

**Montana Census 2020: Make it Count**

- Responding to the Census is quick, easy and safe.

- Fill out your form today at my2020census.gov, by phone at 1-844-330-2020, or by mail.

- If a household has yet to receive an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census with their 12-digit ID this does not mean they need to wait to fill out their form. Simply start the questionnaire online and select the option “If you do not have a Census ID, click here” or call in the response.

- With the U.S. Census Bureau’s delays in field operations across the nation due to COVID-19, it is critical that Montanans self-respond to the 2020 census questionnaire.

- Counting everyone in Montana is critical because it determines the state’s share of federal funding for the next decade, and it determines whether Montana will get another representative in Congress.

- Responding to the Census once every decade matters today and for the future. Make it count, Montana!

TALKING POINTS

- Self-responding to the 2020 Census is more important than ever for Montana because it determines the state’s share of federal funding over the next decade for critical services like healthcare. Annually, Montana receives more than $1 billion each year for healthcare programs alone. Your response means Montana hospitals, clinics, Medicare, the Children’s Health Insurance Program and more receive funding.

- Overall, more than $2 billion from 300 federal programs is allocated back to Montana based on Census counts and information.

- Missing only one resident means that a community misses $20,000 of its fair share of federal funding.

- In Montana, almost 20% of homes do not receive mail at a traditional household address. In some Montana counties and reservation areas, almost all households do not have city-style addresses. This means many Montanans have not received their Census information because the U.S. Census Bureau does not mail to P.O. boxes or rural route addresses.

- Many areas of Montana have lower internet connectivity compared to other areas in the nation further limiting the ability of state residents to self-respond.
• If Montana residents don’t respond to the Census, then we end up with an undercount. And an undercount means other states with a more complete count will end up getting some of our fair share of federal funding. It also means our state’s voting districts are misaligned, and Montanans don’t have accurate data for making important business, community and governing decisions.

• Communities rely on Census data to plan for the future.

• An inaccurate Census count doesn’t just hurt Montana short-term – it hurts for the next 10 years! We don’t want that to happen!

• The 2020 Census count started in Montana March 12 and runs through the summer.

• The Census count also serves as the keystone for our representative government in two ways. First, it determines the number of representatives each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives. Second, decennial Census data is used in redistricting to draw the lines that link local representatives to their constituents for the next ten years.

• The actual Census count is a federally run effort. The State of Montana does not participate in any of the actual counting activities. The State’s role is promoting why it is so important for Montanans to fill out the form - which is very easy to do, taking less than 10 minutes to complete.

• The Legislature approved $100,000 for Montana’s Census outreach effort in HB 2. This represents 9 cents a person – which is the same amount funded by the legislature for the 2010 Census.
  ○ Other states are spending much more – California has a budget of $187 million! With more limited resources, it is imperative that Montanans work together to achieve a complete count.

• Local Complete Count Committees have formed across the state to get the word out about the Census. A map of those CCCs is available at CENSUS.MT.GOV.

• The Census Bureau is hiring thousands of employees in Montana to help execute the 2020 Census. A variety of temporary jobs are available. The Census Bureau wages for Montana field workers are between $17 - $19.50 an hour. For information about Census jobs, visit 2020census.gov/jobs.

• Recruiting will continue throughout the Decennial Census count and hiring workers is essential if Montana is to achieve a complete count.

BACKGROUND
Resource: census.mt.gov

The Montana State Complete Count Committee (MT CCC) is a group of volunteers established across the state whose purpose is to increase awareness about the Census and motivate residents in their
Lt. Governor Mike Cooney is the Chair of the MT CCC. Leonard Smith, Executive Director of the Native American Development Corporation in Billings and Kathie Bailey, Executive Director of the Snowy Mountain Development Corporation in Lewistown are both serving as Co-chairs of the CCC. Leonard Smith and Kathie Bailey were recruited to serve as MT CCC co-chairs because of their understanding of tribes and rural communities. Their leadership is essential to MT CCC efforts in obtaining a complete count in our state.

The Census and Economic Information Center (CEIC) is in the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development of the Department of Commerce and is designated under MCA 90-1-109 as the state census and economic information repository for the state. It is the US Census Bureau’s designated State Data Center (SDC) for disseminating Census Bureau data for Montana, which it has done since 1978. Since the 1980s, CEIC has supported the U.S. Census Bureau’s decennial census efforts and will do that again in 2020.

In 2000, the state did not fund a Census promotion effort. That year, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated 14,390 Montanans were missed – and that meant state did not receive $22 to $49 million in federal funding. And, the gaps in the data because of the undercount meant a lack of good information for making important planning decisions in communities statewide.