

## 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](https://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.
  - The Census Bureau suspended all field operations from March to early May to slow the spread of COVID-19 and extended the original deadline from July 31 to October 31 to respond to challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - Recently, the Bureau walked-back that commitment to extend the count and moved the deadline forward to Sept. 30.
  - The state of Montana is encouraging the Census Bureau to stick with an Oct. 31 deadline. As of early August, more than 525,000 Montanans had not been counted.
- The state of Montana and its partners in every corner of Montana are doing all it can to make sure Montanans know why it's so important to respond to the Census.
- 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.
- Montana communities across the state rely on an accurate Census to provide critical funding for schools, health care, highways and more.



- Overall, more than \$2 billion from 300 federal programs is allocated back to Montana based on Census counts and information. (*According to a George Washington University study*)
- Missing only one resident means that a community misses \$20,000 of its fair share of federal funding over the next decade.
- In Montana, almost a quarter 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 did not receive their Census information earlier this spring because the U.S. Census Bureau does not mail to P.O. boxes or rural route addresses. As of Aug. 10, all residents that rely on 'update/leave' have received one invitation to respond.
- 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 Sept. 30.
- 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 supporting the promotion of 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.

- The Governor allocated funding from the Coronavirus Relief Fund for expanded outreach and promotion, in addition to the original budget set by the Legislature to support the state's outreach and educational efforts to get an accurate count. This funding is being deployed to low response areas of the state in hopes of being able to quickly make up for the time lost this spring due to COVID-19.
  - \$530,500 was allocated to the Department of Commerce for additional outreach. The Department is partnering with four organizations to target low-response areas: Windfall, Montana Nonprofit Association, Western Native Voice, Forward Montana Foundation
- 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](https://www.census.gov).
- The Census Bureau is still hiring hundreds 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 start at \$15. For information about Census jobs, visit [2020census.gov/jobs](https://2020census.gov/jobs).

## BACKGROUND

### Resource: [census.mt.gov](https://www.census.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 communities to respond.

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.

