

Rhode Island Census 2020 TALKING POINTS

Headlines

- Filling out the Census will benefit you, your family, your community, and your business.
- Rhode Island needs to have a complete count, so that we can plan for our future. A full count will ensure fair funding and representation for our communities.
- This is our chance as Rhode Islanders to make our voices heard by being counted.
- More than \$3 billion in federal funding *each year* is at stake.
- By law no individual information from a Census response can be shared with anyone for any reason. There are no exceptions.
- Everyone is required by law to fill out the Census.

What?

- The Census is a count of every person living in the United States.
- The U.S. Constitution requires the Census be conducted every ten years.
- Census numbers are used to determine the number of seats each state receives in the House of Representatives.
- The Census only releases statistics about your community, and Title 13 of federal law prohibits them from disclosing any private information that identifies an individual, including with other government agencies. Individual information cannot be shared with:
 - Immigration enforcement agencies;
 - Law enforcement agencies, or;
 - Be used to determine eligibility for government benefits
- Federal law requires that you respond to the Census and that you answer accurately.

Why?

- The Census ensures that Rhode Island continues to receive our share of political representation and federal funding.
- The government relies on Census data to plan and provide funding for schools, roads, housing, health care, public safety and investments in our economy.
- Approximately \$3.8 billion in federal funding is annually allocated to Rhode Island based on Census derived formulas.

- Census results will help direct billions of dollars in funding that Rhode Island receives for education, health care, housing, veterans, small businesses, public safety and to protect the environment.
- The Census determines funding for these specific programs – and others:
 - Medicaid
 - Snap (food stamps)
 - Medicare Part B
 - Section 8 housing support
 - Children's health insurance
 - School lunch program
 - Foster care
 - Special education
 - WIC
 - Head Start
 - Health centers
 - Energy assistance
 - Child care
- The Census is used to ensure accurate and fair political representation:
 - The Census results will decide whether R.I. keeps two Congressional seats in Washington, D.C., or is reduced to one.
 - The Census will make certain that districts for your city or town council and state legislative Representatives and Senators are drawn fairly and accurately.
- Census data is used to enforce civil rights, such as fair housing.
- Businesses rely on the Census to provide accurate information about communities and markets. This information helps businesses create lasting jobs by making smart decisions about selecting locations, hiring and marketing.

Who?

- The Census counts everyone living in the United States.
- Every household needs to fill out the Census and supply information about everyone in the household.

When?

- Every household will receive a series of mailings beginning in March 2020 asking them to complete the Census.
- Beginning in May 2020 the Census Bureau will send employees to households that have not returned the questionnaire.

How?

Filling out the Census should only take a few minutes. You have three options for completing the Census questionnaire:

- Go online.
- Use a paper form.
- Call the Census.

The online and telephone options are available in the following languages: English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Russian, Arabic, Tagalog, Polish, French, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, Japanese, as well as TDD.

The paper option is available in the following languages: English, Spanish.

Additionally, guides will be available in 58 languages and American Sign Language.

Computer terminals for completing the Census will be available at local libraries and some government offices.

If you don't respond in one of these ways, your household will be visited by the Census Bureau to collect the information in person.

The law is clear: no personal information from the Census can be shared with anyone for any reason. Responses can only be used to produce statistics.

Learn More

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