Accurate Census Data Matters to Alaska

How community organizations can help

Every Alaskan counts.

#2020Census
Why the Census matters for Alaska

- Determines federal funding allocations for 70+ local programs in Alaska
- Need accurate census data to make strategic economic investments

$3.2$ BILLION of annual federal funding allocations within Alaska are determined by census data

Every Alaskan Counts
Federal spending comprises 21.8% of state GDP.

Non-profits receive 18% of the $3.2 billion in direct federal funding.
Alaska’s 2010 census participation Rate: 65%

The lowest in the nation

In 2020, Alaska will again be one of the hardest states to count

Every Alaskan Counts
Risks of Undercounting Alaskans in 2020

- Reduced federal funding, making current state and local budget crises even worse
- Reduction in essential services like road and airport construction, funding for health care and schools
- Children & low income Alaskans suffer disproportionately from decreases to education funding and other programs that make up Alaska’s safety net.

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Additional Risks

Lack of accurate data to plan and invest in communities across the state.

Redistricting may be inequitable because of poor quality data.
Barriers to an accurate count

Language barriers
• Census Bureau will translate Self-Responses and assist with questionnaires for only 12 non-English languages (none Alaska Native)

Distrust
• Suspicion of government
• Data privacy/confidentiality

Lack of internet skills or connectivity
• 2020 Census is the first to use online responses
Hard-to-count populations

Populations historically at risk of being missed

- People of color, especially Alaska Native
- Children under 5
- Elderly
- Renters
- Single-parent households
- People experiencing homelessness
- Low-income earners

Hard-to-count populations unique to Alaska

Every Alaskan Counts
We only get one chance every 10 years to get this right.

Community-based organizations like yours can make a big difference in encouraging participation from hard-to-count individuals.
Breaking Barriers to Participation

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alaskacounts.org
Share 5 Essential Messages:

Help people understand that the Census:

1. Is confidential
   Legal protections prevent Census Bureau staff from sharing personal data with any other person or agency

2. Is important
   The census affects every Alaska community by determining funding for everything from roads and airports to schools and health care

3. Is easy to complete
   10 questions + 10 minutes = 10 years of funding
   online, by mail or by phone.
Will invite you to respond March 2020

March mailing
April 1 Census Day
If no response, census workers will follow up with additional mail or in person.

People in more remote areas of the southern Kenai will get hand-delivered census materials at their homes.

Census workers can disregard no trespassing signs! (but will leave if asked)

Asks simple questions

Number of people living at address
Name, gender, age, ethnicity of each
Do residents own or rent
Phone number (if follow up is needed)

No citizenship question!
“I don’t have time to fill out the census.”

“I don’t think the census has any impact on my life.”

“I don’t feel comfortable sharing my information.”

Embed notification or link to the online census into one of your platforms so they can take immediate action.

Multiple reminders to take the census can be helpful.

Share impact federal funding has on your services; post relevant fliers.

Wear “census supporter” badge to build awareness.

Alaskans give more information to the government when they apply for their PFD than they give in the Census Survey. Census information is protected by law.
Heighten Census Awareness

• Educate your own staff, board & volunteers

• Make it visual:
  • Post posters in your lobby
  • Incorporate census content into social media, newsletters websites

• Select messages relevant to your audience

• Make it social:
  • Share census materials at community events and during client visits
  • Hold a census response event

• Volunteer to assist us with Complete Count outreach activities

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Financial Resources

- Alaska Counts Mini-grant Program
  - Up to $250 to conduct census communication & outreach in the community
  - Nonprofits, governments, schools and tribal organizations
  - Examples of eligible activities:
    - lunch & learn
    - poster-making contest
    - Complete-the-census events
    - Be creative—you know your community best!
  - Applications accepted on rolling basis; 2 week turn around
Complete Count Committee

• Tim Dillon, Executive Director
  Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District
  907-242-9709
  Tim@kpedd.org

Every Alaskan counts.

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• Provide Outreach packets –
  • Posters
  • Fliers
  • Fact sheets
  • Social media messages/images
  • Badges

• Or visit Alaska Counts alaskacounts.org or the US Census Bureau 2020census.gov/en/partners/outreach-materials for downloadable, pre-made messaging and more.

• Coordinate outreach events with you
  • Identify community events
  • Maintain volunteer list
  • Work with and equip event volunteers
2020 U.S. Census: Every Alaskan Counts