



KEY 2020 CENSUS MILESTONES

NOTE: The Census Bureau released version 2 of the 2020 Census Operational Plan in October 2016 and continues to refine its final testing and operational schedule. We will update this fact sheet regularly to reflect newly defined operations and the detailed schedule for census preparations and implementation. The Bureau plans to release version 3 of the operational plan in October 2017. The scope and timing of many activities depends on sufficient funding from Congress from year to year. Some references to calendar years might be fiscal years for budgetary purposes. (The federal fiscal year runs from October 1 – September 30.)

| | |
|-------------|---|
| 2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Final decisions on methods to achieve a more cost-effective, high-quality census ○ Begin development of communications campaign; focus on audience segmentation model, overall plan ○ Begin Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) program, inviting state and local governments to review and update preliminary address lists (<i>ongoing thru 2019</i>) ○ Conduct Address Canvassing for three original 2018 End-to-End Census Test sites ○ 2017 Census Test: national self-response only sample of ~80,000 addresses, to continue evaluation of mailing strategies, self-response modes (Internet, telephone, and paper questionnaire); no follow-up with unresponsive households in this test (<i>April 1st "Census Day"</i>) ○ Submit topics for census (and ACS) questions to Congress, as required by the Census Act, by April 1st ○ <i>Canceled due to budget constraints: 2017 census site tests in Puerto Rico and American Indian Reservations and trust lands along North/South Dakota border and in Washington State</i> ○ U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issues final revised Standards for collection of federal data on race and ethnicity (expected by December 1) |
| 2018 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2018 End-to-End Census Test in Providence County, RI, to evaluate integration of all IT systems and operations in preparation for the 2020 Census (<i>April 1st "Census Day"</i>) ○ <i>Canceled due to budget constraints: End-to-End Census Test sites in Pierce County, WA, and Bluefield-Beckley-Oak Hill area of WV</i> ○ Submit census questions to Congress, as required by the Census Act, by April 1st ○ Open six Regional Census Centers (April); site selection for ~250 Area Census Offices (formerly called Local Census Offices) ○ LUCA program: Send address lists and digital maps to participating states & localities for verification and updating (Feb. – June) ○ Launch 2020 Census Partnership Program; encourage states and localities to form Complete Count Committees (<i>ongoing</i>) |

¹ OMB has proposed revisions to the official federal standards for the classification of race and ethnicity, which must go through the formal regulatory process. The Census Bureau tested a new ethnicity category for Americans of Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) origin in the 2015 National Content Test. OMB is considering a new category for persons of MENA origin, as well as guidance that would favor collecting race and ethnicity data through a combined question, instead of separate questions. It is expected to announce final revisions to the Standards by December 1, 2017, which will inform final decisions on the 2020 Census race/ethnicity question(s).

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>2019</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Print paper census questionnaires and other materials (e.g. invitation letters; reminder postcards) ○ Open and staff (management) ~250 Area Census Offices (<i>rolling basis</i>) ○ Hire ~90,000 temporary address listers for targeted Address Canvassing operation ○ Conduct “in-field” address canvassing covering ~30% of housing units, in areas identified as having significant growth, change, or absence of reliable administrative data/aerial imagery (<i>Spring</i>) ○ Begin recruitment for temporary census workforce of 350,000 – 500,000 (<i>Fall</i>) ○ Begin early advertising and promotion targeting hard-to-count communities/populations (<i>Late Fall</i>) ○ Incorporate all revisions to question content and wording, including race/ethnicity questions, into 2019 American Community Survey (ongoing part of decennial census) |
| <p>2020 (Dates for peak census operations will become more precise as we get closer to 2020)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enumeration starts in remote Alaskan villages (door-to-door interviewing) (<i>Late January</i>) ○ Launch national advertising campaign (<i>February</i>) ○ Hiring/training of temporary staff for major census field operations (<i>Winter</i>) ○ Self-response phase of census (Internet; mail; phone) (<i>Mid-March to late April, with April 1st Census Day</i>) ○ Enumeration of transitory and emergency living quarters and homeless population (Service-Based Enumeration) (<i>March – April</i>) ○ Enumeration of Group Quarters, such as military barracks, college dorms, skilled nursing homes, prisons; this operation likely to be conducted largely using administrative data that facilities provide, as well as using some questionnaires dropped off and collected from some facilities (<i>tent. March – April</i>) ○ Update/Enumerate & Update/Leave operation (covering ~12 million homes) in areas without reliable or direct mail delivery (<i>tent. March – April</i>) ○ Nonresponse Follow-up (NRFU) operation, encompassing estimated 50 million occupied housing units that didn’t self-respond (<i>tent. Late April thru July</i>) ○ Coverage follow-up and editing procedures; data processing and tabulation (<i>Summer thru Fall</i>) ○ Census Bureau transmits State population totals and congressional apportionment to the President (<i>legally required by December 31st</i>) ○ Close Area Census Offices by December |
| <p>2021 – 2022</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Census Bureau transmits redistricting files to States. The “P.L. 94-171 files” contain block-level data, by race/ethnicity, voting age (18+), and gender, as well as housing unit counts. For the first time, the redistricting files will include Group Quarters data (prisons, college dorms, military barracks, etc.). TBD: ethnicity data could include Hispanic origin and new Middle Eastern/North African (MENA) data. (<i>Flow basis from Feb. 2021 thru legal deadline of March 31, 2021</i>) ○ Census Bureau begins releasing basic data sets for all states and smaller levels of geography (<i>Spring 2021</i>) ○ Census Bureau releases detailed data sets for all geographic levels, with cross-tabulations by race/ethnicity and other characteristics (<i>ongoing through 2022</i>) ○ Close Regional Census Centers by June 2021 |