

Why your participation in the 2020 Census is critical

Results of the U.S. Census determine the amount of federal and state funding we get for important programs like after-school care, workforce development, roads and bridges, affordable housing, and much more. The Census also determines the number of political representatives we have, and affects community decision making.

In short, an accurate Census count ensures that Chester County residents receive their fair share of federal funding. Since the last U.S. Census in 2010, the population of Chester County has grown by about 5 percent, which is just over 23,000 people.

Funding

The 2020 U.S. Census determines how the federal government distributes funds. During fiscal year 2015, 132 federal programs used Census Bureau data to distribute more than \$675 billion in funds. State funding is also based on census data. In fact, Chester County's 2018 budget included a total of \$192.1 million in Federal and State grants, which is 41 percent of the operating budget.

- **Youth programs.** Federal funding is critical for the county's youth. Examples include the Chester County Economic Development Council's after school program; after school and summer youth programs sponsored by the Garage in Kennett Square; and the Young Men and Women in Charge (YMWIC) program of STEM.
- **Municipal public facilities.** Local communities also benefit from federal funds. Example facilities include Phoenixville Borough's waterline replacement, Valley Township's Manor Road storm sewer installation, capital improvements to the Coatesville Area Public Library, and senior center renovations in Kennett Square Borough, Phoenixville Borough, and the City of Coatesville.
- **Workforce development programs.** Federal money helps people find and train for new and better jobs. For example, the HireOne program, the Certified Nurse Aide Training, and the GED Education and Testing Services.
- **Affordably-priced homes.** Federal money supports new housing for county residents, such as 50 units at Eagleview Senior Housing in Uwchlan Township, the First-Time Homebuyer Program, and the upcoming 61-unit Red Clay Manor development in Kennett Square Borough.
- **Representation.** The county's U.S. Congress members, state senators, and state representatives serve districts that are based on population. If there is an undercount of the county's population, this representation will not be accurate and the county will be underrepresented.
- **Business, Planning, and Social Service.** Census data is critical to figure out who lives in Chester County. Businesses use this information to determine locations for offices and stores; government planners use it to decide about a range of actions, such as road improvements, park locations, and emergency service needs; and social service agencies use it to see who needs assistance and how this assistance should be delivered.

Participation the Census is easy and completely confidential

The 2020 Census form is easy to fill out. It has only nine questions asking about your sex, age, race and ethnicity, and the number of people living at your address. You will not be asked to give your income, financial information, or Social Security number. **You will NOT be asked if you are a citizen.**

- **Three ways to fill out the census form.** When you receive a letter from the census in March 2020, you can ask to be sent a paper form, which will then be mailed to you. Or, you can fill out the online form on any computer or mobile device, at your house, at a library, at work, or at a friend's house. The Census Bureau also will offer a phone service in English, Spanish, and a number of other languages.
- **Keeping your personal information safe.** Federal law states that data collected by the Census is **confidential and will remain anonymous.** Census data cannot be used against any person by any government agency or court. All census workers take an oath of non-disclosure that protects your confidential answers. Punishment for mishandling Census data is up to a \$250,000 fine and up to five years in federal prison.
- **Don't get scammed!** All census workers will have a Census ID and a Census briefcase. You can verify the ID of a Census worker online at: <https://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/main/email.cgi> . A Census worker will NEVER: 1) Contact you by email; 2) Ask you to step outside your home; 3) Ask you for your Social Security number; or 3) Ask you for money, donations, or credit card information.

The Census Schedule for 2020

- **Between March 12th and the 20th,** every house and apartment will be mailed a letter with instructions for filling out the census online.
- **From March 16th to April 3rd,** a reminder letter will be sent.
- **By April 16th,** if you did not fill out the census online, you will be sent a reminder letter and a paper census form.
- **By April 27th,** if you did not fill out a paper form, you will be mailed a notice that a census worker will come for a visit.
- **During May through July,** if you did not fill out a paper form, a census worker will visit you and help you fill out the form.