



Civics is all around us. There is a lot to know about the government and how “We the People” interact with the government and each other. Let’s help each other expand our civic literacy.



Even in times of crisis, as we face the COVID-19/Novel Coronavirus pandemic, **residents** of the United States and the federal government have responsibilities and obligations. Conducting the Census is a constitutional obligation of the federal government. Completing the Census form is a responsibility of the people.

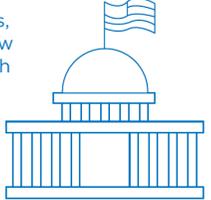
Article I, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution states that for the purposes of determining representation, there shall be a census “...every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct.”

The first census occurred in 1790. The **twenty-third census** is going on right now, and current law directing the administration of the Census makes no exceptions for the COVID-19/Novel Coronavirus pandemic.

In addition to ensuring accurate representation Congress, **census information** helps determine funding for government services such as public housing and neighborhood construction, helps communities thrive, and helps businesses learn about their existing and potential base. Census information helps health provides predict the spread of disease through communities with children or elderly people. When natural disasters occur, the census helps rescuers estimate how many people will need their help. The numbers are also used to help determine the distribution of hundreds of billions of dollars in federal and state funds. These fund support hospitals, highways, stadiums and school lunch programs.

It’s about fair representation.

Every 10 years, the results of the census are used to reapportion the House of Representatives, determining how many seats each state gets.



Individual census records are held confidential for 72 years, but one may request a certificate from past censuses that can be used as proof to establish age, residence or familial relationships, information that could help one qualify for a pension, establish citizenship or obtain an inheritance.

We have a **civic responsibility** to participate in the census. By answering the **12 questions** on the census form, we are counted as residents of the United States, our states, and communities

➔ To Think and To Do: The last census was conducted in 2010. What can you infer about how the 2010 census data is being used to provide support during the current pandemic?

Learn MORE about the U.S. Census and civic responsibility. Free registration may be required.

- [Citizen Obligations and Responsibilities](#), from Civics360
- [Census 2020 Toolkit](#), from IllinoisCivics.org
- [How to Complete the Census](#), from the United States Census Bureau
- [Fast Facts from the Census Through History](#), from the United States Census Bureau

