



Responding to the 2020 Census Without a Census ID

The 2020 Census is the first time that the public can respond online or by phone, in addition to the traditional paper response. Technology improvements over the last decade that allow for these secure response options also enable the public to respond without a U.S. Census Bureau-issued identification number—making it easier to respond anytime, anywhere.

By now, most households have received an invitation in the mail to participate in the 2020 Census. That invitation includes a unique Census ID that links you to a physical address. But you can also respond online or by phone without a Census ID.

However, for some communities, the best way to respond is with your Census ID. Census workers drop off census materials to some communities that don't generally receive mail at their home using a city-style address like "101 Main Street." For these communities in particular, responding with a Census ID is important to make sure you are counted in the right place. You may be in one of these areas if you haven't received a census invitation yet. A census worker will drop one off soon.

How do I respond without an ID?

On the 2020 Census response web site, select the link under the login button that says, "If you do not have a Census ID, click here."

Can I respond online without an ID on any device or browser?

Yes. Responding online without an ID works on most modern devices. For best results, use the two latest versions of the following browsers: Internet Explorer, Edge, Chrome, Safari, Firefox, Samsung Native.

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Is my response affected if I don't use a Census ID?

Your Census ID allows us to immediately match your response to an address. If you respond without your Census ID, we'll ask you for your address when you respond so we can link your response to your address.

If we can't match the address you provide to one on our address list, census takers may need to visit you later to verify the address you provided and to collect your responses in person. We want to ensure we count everyone in the right place.

How do I provide my address?

When responding online without an ID, there are three options for entering an address:

1) STREET ADDRESS

For this option, you will be prompted to enter an address number, street name, and either the city and state or the ZIP Code. If a valid street address isn't available, check the box that says, "I do not have a street address" and you can proceed to enter a rural route address or other address/location (see options below).

2) RURAL ROUTE ADDRESS

A rural route address includes a rural route descriptor, rural route number, rural route box ID number, city and state or ZIP Code.

3) OTHER ADDRESS/PHYSICAL LOCATION

If you do not have a rural route address, the system will first ask if you are experiencing homelessness. Then, it will invite you to enter a city, state, ZIP Code, and description of the physical place where you live.

If I live or stay in a garage or added structure at a property, how do I respond?

To respond with a physical location on a property that does not have a separate address, utilize the "Street Address" option, enter the address, and include the description of the structure (e.g., "garage") in the apartment/unit number field. If you reply by phone, you will be prompted to provide the same description.

How do I respond for multiple people or families at a single address?

Everyone living or staying at an address, even if they are not a member of your family, should be counted by the person filling out the census form for that address. There are no restrictions on the number of people who can be included on your form. The Census Bureau has ways to resolve duplicate responses if multiple people at the same address respond separately.