

A banner with a dark blue background. In the center is the official seal of Los Angeles County, California, which features a woman holding a scale and a book, surrounded by the words "COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES" and "CALIFORNIA". The seal is overlaid with several stylized, purple and red virus particles. The text "Los Angeles County COVID-19 Emergency Operations Center" is written in large, white, sans-serif font across the top half of the banner.

Los Angeles County COVID-19 Emergency Operations Center

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COVID-19 CRISIS POINTS TO THE NEED FOR EVERYONE IN L.A. COUNTY TO COMPLETE THE CENSUS

Health officials sound the alarm that current low census response rates put L.A. County at risk of losing out on federal funding to respond to emergencies like COVID-19 for the next ten years

Los Angeles County health leaders urged residents to complete the 2020 Census, highlighting the COVID-19 crisis as an example of how important federal funding is to maintaining a strong local health care system. An accurate count is essential because the census influences billions of dollars in federal funding that helps patients access health care services, as well as funding for substance use disorder treatment and prevention, schools, support for people who lose their jobs and services for seniors.

“To help fight COVID-19, we not only need people to wear a face covering and maintain physical distancing—they should also make sure they are counted in the census. Not completing the census could deprive L.A. County of the very resources we need to fight the pandemic and other diseases that have life-or-death consequences in our community. It takes only ten minutes to fill out the census, and you can do it right from home on your computer or phone,” L.A. County Public Health Director Barbara Ferrer, Ph.D., M.P.H., M.Ed., said. “We all lose if our residents don’t take part. Not completing the census is like throwing away money that we desperately need to protect the health and well-being of our communities and families.”

Census forms can be completed online at my2020census.gov, by phone at **844-330-2020** or by mail if you receive a paper form. The L.A. County 2020 Census website at census.lacounty.gov offers county-specific information in 16 languages. The U.S. 2020 Census website offers general information in 59 languages including in-language guides.

As part of the County's census outreach campaign, posters and flyers are being placed at COVID-19 testing sites to educate and urge residents to respond to the census immediately.

"We're happy that residents taking advantage of our expanding network of community-based COVID-19 testing sites will also be able to learn how important the census is to all of us in L.A. County," L.A. County Health Services Director Christina Ghaly, M.D., said. "Filling out the census means we can all contribute to our communities' future health and resilience."

L.A. County's census response rate is 58.6 percent as of July 23. This is significantly behind California's overall 63.6 percent response rate, and far behind L.A. County's goal of 100 percent participation.

In response to the evolving situation around COVID-19, the U.S. Census Bureau extended the official deadline to participate in the census. The last day for households to respond online, by phone or by mail is October 31.

Completing the census is private. Responses are protected by federal law, specifically Title 13 of the United States Code. They cannot be shared with any other government agencies or other entities, including your landlord.

The U.S. Constitution mandates a census of the nation's population every 10 years. Census statistics are used to determine the number of seats each state holds in Congress and how much in federal funding is allocated to state and local communities for the next 10 years. Local government officials use the census to plan new schools and hospitals. Businesses use census data to decide where to build factories, offices and stores, which creates jobs. Real estate developers and city planners use the census to plan new homes and improve neighborhoods. Residents use the census to support community initiatives involving legislation, quality-of-life and consumer advocacy.

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About the County of Los Angeles's "Be Counted" Campaign

An accurate 2020 Census is essential to ensure fair political representation and maintain an equitable distribution of formula-based federal funding for projects and social service programs. Los Angeles County's Census goal is that every resident is informed about, has access to and completes the 2020 Census survey. For more information, visit <https://census.lacounty.gov/>.



County of Los Angeles, Chief Executive Office, Office of Emergency Management
For questions, please contact the L.A. County Joint Information Center - COVID-19
at pio@ceooem.lacounty.gov.