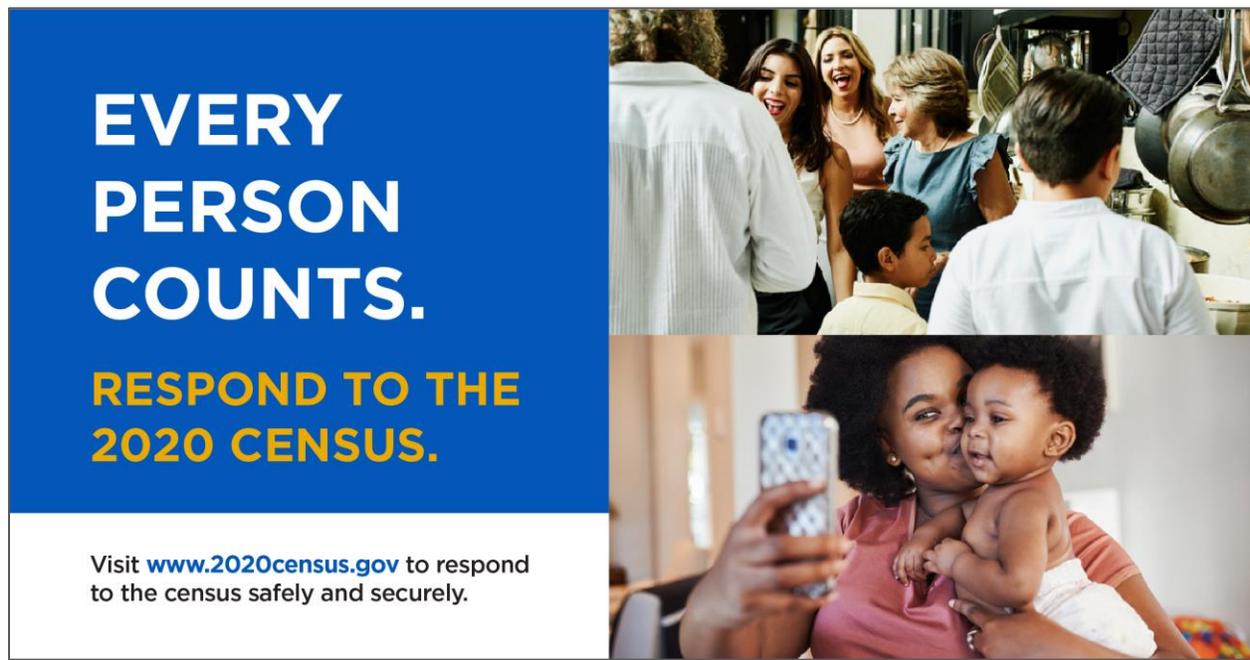


NLC Tips for a Remote Get-Out-The-Count (GOTC) Effort



**EVERY
PERSON
COUNTS.**

**RESPOND TO THE
2020 CENSUS.**

Visit www.2020census.gov to respond to the census safely and securely.

Please follow these guidelines to comply with [CDC](#) and [Census Bureau](#) guidance on social distancing while still pushing to achieve a complete and accurate count in the context of the current coronavirus response. ***Please note that, as of March 20, 2020, the census has been extended to August 14, 2020.*** Always check the latest [operational updates](#) from the Census Bureau when planning your GOTC.

Remember, public gatherings of any kind are highly discouraged and, in many places, prohibited by local orders. Please check the latest guidance from your local governing authorities.

We know and appreciate that in the face of the novel coronavirus you are working harder than ever to reach historically undercounted communities, to pivot your GOTC plans to comply with stay-home orders and social distancing, and to keep your residents, staff, families, and selves safe and healthy.

Stay safe, stay healthy, and good luck on the count!

The Cities Count Team
www.nlc.org/census

Ideas for a Remote GOTC

Looking for ideas on how to adapt for a remote GOTC to reach historically undercounted communities? Here are some great tips we've heard:

- **Highlight this is the first online census**, so people can complete it from the safety of their own homes at 2020census.gov.
 - [Responding by phone](#) is also safe, easy, and fast.
- **Increase social media ad and evening news ad buys** to target people who are home to remind them to respond to the census, or to go out and check their mail.
- **Increase drive-time radio ad buys** or billboards on high-traffic routes – many people are still required to commute and work in-person.
- **Leave literature where people will still need to go**, such as grocery stores, post offices, gas stations, and banks (remember to ask permission).
 - *Don't forget the essential workers themselves. When you speak with these establishments, ask them to encourage their employees to complete the census.*
- **Big or small, count 'em all!** Babies and kids under 5 are at even greater risk of undercount because of this changing context. CountAllKids.org has put together a great toolkit of resources.
- **Print and place stickers on diaper bank and food bank packaging.** Many young children have young parents who are also renters, low income, and [housing unstable](#) even before COVID-19.
- **Place stickers on grab-and-go meals** for kids who rely on free breakfast and lunch programs.
- **Distribute small hand sanitizers** and packets of tissues with stickers or instructions on how to take the census.
- **Use messaging specifically about COVID-19**, encouraging people to continue “social distancing” while going online or calling to complete the census.
- **Train volunteers or staff to flier the neighborhood** instead of canvassing (see Resources below for fliers and posters you can customize).
- **Keep your [library Wi-Fi signal open](#) for people to use outside** or in the parking lot.
- **Use mobile vans with strong Wi-Fi hotspots** that can drive into neighborhoods and temporarily provide a hotspot that people can use to finish their census online. Partner with local groups to set and communicate specific times in specific low-response areas.
- **Learn more about text-banking** by training volunteers to use apps built for organizing.
- **Set up remote phone-banking** with local nonprofits and community groups.
- **Start a [response rate challenge](#)** among your residents by offering a prize to the neighborhood with the highest self-response.
- **Use toolkits that exist.** The [U.S. Census Bureau](https://www.census.gov), [Sesame Street](https://www.sesamestreet.org), [NALEO](https://www.naleo.org), and other organizations have done the work for us to make awesome video and audio PSAs, beautifully designed printed materials, and messaging-research-backed social media that is there for us to use for free.
- **Continue to message** that there is [no citizenship question](#).

Resources

Below are some resources to help you develop materials or plans to shift to remote GOTC.

- [NLC Cities Count Census Communications Toolkit](#): The National League of Cities has created a toolkit library of census fliers, posters, and social media for you to use that you can customize with your own logo and contact information.
- [Digital Organizing Trainings](#): Census Counts has a series of recorded webinars focused on digital organizing, including one specifically on adjusting GOTC during COVID-19.
- [Census Campaign in a Box](#): Census Counts' toolkit of digital organizing resource to help your organization reach key constituencies.
- [CensusU Digital Help Desk](#): Census Counts' online platform to help answer your specific census organizing questions.
- [Organizing in the Remote](#): States COUNT Action Network's library of social media graphics, templates, and other remote organizing materials. This is a crowd-sourced repository that you can also [contribute your organization's ideas to](#).
- [Hard-To-Count Map](#): The City University of New York has an incredible map that is updated daily with the response rates and undercount risk groups for every census tract in the country.
- [ROAM Mapper](#): The U.S. Census Bureau's map gives detailed background information on every tract.

Guidance for Your GOTC Plans

Here are a few helpful reminders as you restructure your plans:

- **You *cannot* hire your own enumerators.** [Only US Census Bureau employees](#) who have taken a sworn oath may directly assist with responding to the census.
- **You *can* hire additional staff or give volunteer** stipends to *encourage* others to take the census online or over the phone with the US Census Bureau, as well as direct people with [language assistance](#) for *how* people can access and respond to the census.
- **Avoid the word "citizen"** when referring to inhabitants/residents of your target area. This can be confusing for people concerned that the census asks about citizenship status (it does not).
- **No unique I.D. number? No problem!** Households can still respond to the census with just their address.

Historically Undercounted Communities

Getting a full and accurate count for the 2020 Census was never going to be easy, particularly for historically undercounted communities, and now COVID-19 has increased the challenges municipalities and community organizations are facing to ensure that everyone is counted.

As a reminder, historically undercounted communities (sometimes referred to as “HUs”) include, but are not limited to:

- Newborns, babies, toddlers, and kids under 5 years old—in fact, this is the [largest undercounted group in the country](#), and the undercount risk increases for children of color
- Renters and people who move often
- People who live in large multi-unit buildings
- Unhoused and people experiencing homelessness
- People who don’t speak English or with low English proficiency
- Low-income households
- Immigrants
- LGBTQ youth
- Mixed immigration status households
- People of color and ethnic communities
- Rural communities
- College students who live in off-campus housing
- People affected by natural disaster
- Low-literacy households
- People without internet access at home

These groups are also known as hard-to-count (HTC) communities. The onus is on us all to make sure that everyone is counted by implementing a variety of outreach methods that work for different groups.