

**United Way for West Ellis County**  
**Ellis County 2020 Census Talking Points**

REVISED: 1/31/2020

- This document provides broad talking points that should be adapted to the target being reached, the medium used, and length of time and/or space available to present.
- Generally, we want to be covering the WHAT, WHY, WHEN, HOW and WHO for all census-related messaging.
- We recommend using this document by saving it under a different name and deleting and adapting its messaging as needed.

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## **ONE-MINUTE TALKING POINTS**

- Every 10 years the Census Bureau counts the population of our country.
- The information collected serves as the basis to determine how public funds are allocated in our communities and how many congressional and state seats our region receives.
- However, we know that some communities are at risk of being undercounted and the programs serving them underfunded. In our region, where so much growth is happening, an undercount means we are also at risk of not having fair representation.
- At United Way of West Ellis County, we are committed to providing tools & resources to target hard-to-reach communities in Ellis County.
- Just like we do with other United Way efforts, our goal is to provide a community-wide platform to bring people, ideas, and resources together to ensure an accurate count.

## **ABOUT UNITED WAY**



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- United Way of West Ellis County brings people, ideas, and resources together to fight poverty in our community.
- We run and invest in programs that provide people with the skills and resources they need to take an active role in their own success – with a focus in the areas of education, health, and financial stability.
- Having an accurate census count is essential to achieve the United Way of West Ellis County’ mission to fight poverty. Census data informs service provision and policymaking and determines resources that flow into our community.
- We invite funders interested in supporting our regional efforts to contribute to our growing pool of community funding that the United Way of West Ellis County administers.

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## **WHY THE CENSUS MATTERS**

### **How the Census is Used**

- The Census data:
  - Determines how much federal funding is allocated to our communities for public services and infrastructure needs for the next 10 years;
  - Determines how many congressional and state legislatures seats our region is granted; and
  - Provides a picture of the changing demographics of our country.
- The Census provides a picture of our country's demographics, our growth and change.
- Responses to the 2020 Census will drive decisions on how more than \$700 billion in federal funds is distributed each year for the next 10 years. That's money that is used for education, housing, health care, emergency services like firefighting, and more.
- Census data is the gold standard of demographic information for businesses, governments, and researchers, providing a picture of the changing demographics of the country.
- Census data is used to determine funding for over 55 federal programs ranging from early childhood education to senior nutrition. Some of these programs include:
  - Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)
  - Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
  - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
  - National School Lunch Program
  - Head Start
  - Medical Assistance Program (Medicaid)

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- Census data is used to determine where schools, roads, hospitals, child care centers, senior centers, and other public services should be built.

**Consequences of an Undercount**

- However, some communities are at risk of being undercounted and the programs serving them underfunded.
- Historically, the Census has missed disproportionate numbers of populations of color, immigrants, young children, and people experiencing poverty, leading to inequality in access to public funding and private investment and political power for these communities.
- If people are not counted, our region could risk cuts to programs our entire community relies on.
- Based on 2010 estimates, in Texas, a 1% undercount in 2020 could result in losing at least \$300 million a year in federal funding.
- An inaccurate census count has cascading consequences:
  - Regions that are growing won't have fair political representation in congress and state legislatures;
  - Fewer children may have access to high quality childcare;
  - Businesses won't have the data they rely on to expand or find labor;
  - Natural disaster planning may be comprised;
  - Transportation planning and traffic may get worse; and
  - Health programs may be underfunded not providing critical resources our communities rely on to stay healthy.

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## WHAT

### What will the Census ask?

- The Census will ask 10 questions. It will ask:
  - How many people are living or staying at your home on April 1, 2020.
  - Whether the home is owned or rented.
  - Demographic data on sex, age, race, Hispanic or Latino origin, household type, family type, and relationship of each person in your home.
- In March 2020, every address in the country will receive an invitation to complete the census questionnaire. There are three ways to respond: 1) online, 2) on the phone or 3) send it by mail.
- Completing the census form should only take about 10 minutes to fill out.
- For those that don't respond, the Census Bureau will send reminders and a census taker from your community will follow up and assist you.

### The Census will NEVER ask you for:

- Your Social Security number.
- Money or donations.
- Anything on behalf of a political party.
- Your bank or credit card account numbers.

If you suspect fraud, call 800-923-8282 to speak with a local Census Bureau representative. If it is determined that the visitor who came to your door does not work for the Census Bureau, contact your local police department.

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**WHEN**

**2020 Timeline**

- The window to complete the census is March 23rd - July 31st, 2020.
- Everyone is encouraged to respond as soon as they receive their census form.

<p><b>March 12-20</b></p> <p>In March 2020, every address in the country will receive an invitation to complete the census questionnaire. There are three ways to respond: 1) online, 2) on the phone or 3) send it by mail.</p> <p>For those that don't respond, the Census Bureau will send reminders and a census taker from your community will follow up and assist you.</p>
<p><b>March 12 - July 31</b></p> <p>Self-response begins and continues through July</p>
<p><b>April 1</b></p> <p>Census Day is observed nationwide</p>

	<b>If you do not respond by these dates, the Census Bureau will:</b>
<b>March 16-24</b>	Send a reminder letter.
<b>March 26 - April 3</b>	Send a reminder postcard.
<b>April 8-16</b>	Send a reminder letter and paper questionnaire.
<b>April 20-27</b>	Send a reminder postcard.
<b>May</b>	Send staff to begin visiting homes, to make sure everyone is counted.



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### WHO GETS COUNTED

- Everyone! The census counts all people who reside in the United States, regardless of citizenship or immigration status.
- The census counts all people living or staying at an address, not just the person or family who owns or rents the property.

### HOW

#### How Can I Complete My Census?

- In March 2020, every address in the country will receive an invitation to complete the census questionnaire. There are three ways to respond: 1) online, 2) on the phone or 3) send it by mail.
- For those that don't respond, the Census Bureau will send reminders and a census taker from your community will follow up and assist you.
- Responding to the 2020 Census is easy, safe, and important.
- The online form and telephone line will be available in 13 languages. Language guides will be available in 59 languages other than English.
- Your personal information is kept *confidential*. The Census Bureau is bound by federal law to protect our information, and our data is used to produce statistics and will never identify our home or any person in our homes.
- The Census Bureau is not legally allowed to share information with immigration enforcement agencies like Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), law enforcement agencies, police, FBI or allow this information to be used to determine eligibility for government benefits.

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### Everyone Can Play a Part

- The results of the 2020 Census can help shape the future of our community.
- There are many ways for individuals, businesses, community organizations, and others to play a part. Each can learn about the census, share information with others, or join efforts already on the ground.
- You can get involved with a Complete Count Committee near you. Complete Count Committees are volunteer committees established by local organizations to increase awareness, answer questions, and motivate residents to respond to the 2020 Census.

### Work with the Census Bureau

- Earn extra income while helping your community.
- The U.S. Census Bureau is recruiting thousands of people across the country to assist with the 2020 Census count, including census takers, recruiting assistants, and office and supervisory staff members.
- People in neighborhoods at risk of being undercounted are encouraged to work for the 2020 Census and help ensure people in these communities hear from trusted voices when an enumerator comes to their door.
- In general, to be eligible, you must be at least 18 years old, have a valid Social Security number, and be a U.S. citizen. In addition, the Census Bureau [has recently received authorization to hire work authorized bilingual noncitizens](#) – mainly to be enumerators - where the Bureau is not able to find enough citizens with the necessary language skills.
- To complete an application visit: [2020census.gov/jobs](https://2020census.gov/jobs) or call 1-855-JOB-2020.



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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- *I have visitors at my house. Should they be counted?*  
Whether to count a visitor depends on the type of visitor. Visitors who are in your home on April 1, 2020, but who will return to their usual residence, should be counted where they live and sleep most of the time. Citizens of foreign countries who are visiting the United States on vacation or business on April 1, 2020, should not be counted.
- *I have joint custody of my children. Who should count them?*
  - The census counts everyone where they live and sleep most of the time, even if the living arrangement is temporary or the parents of the child do not live there.
  - If the child spends equal amounts of time between two homes, count them where they stayed on Census Day, April 1, 2020. Coordinate with the other parent or caregiver, if possible, so the child is not counted at both homes.
  - If it's not clear where the child lives or sleeps most of the time, count them where they stayed on Census Day, April 1, 2020.
- *Should babies be counted?*  
Parents should include babies on census forms, even if they are still in the hospital on April 1, 2020.
- *Is my 2020 census data safe?*  
After Sending your Census response, your personal information is kept safe. By law, it can't be shared with any other government agency, law enforcement or landlord. No one. You can take your 2020 census with a piece of mind.

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- *Will they ask me about my immigration status?*
  - No.
  - While there were discussions of adding an immigration question earlier in 2018 and 2019, it was decided the census will not be asking anyone their immigration status.
  - The Census Bureau is not legally allowed to share information with immigration enforcement agencies like Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), law enforcement agencies, police, FBI or allow this information to be used to determine eligibility for government benefits.