



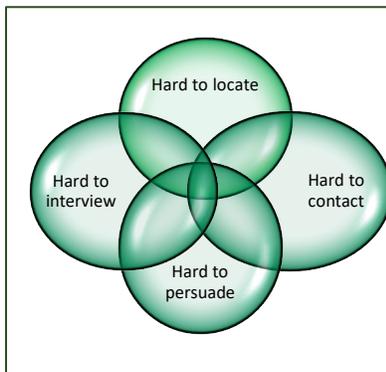
DEVELOPING AN OUTREACH PLAN FOR THE 2020 CENSUS

Project goal

- Raise awareness of what is at stake for each community in the state in the 2020 Census
- Mobilize communities across the state to engage in the 2020 Census as trusted messengers to encourage self-response
- Maximize self-response to the 2020 Census from mid-March to the end of April 2020

Target audiences

- All residents of the state with special emphasis on historically undercounted populations who often fall into one or more of the following categories:



- **Hard-to-locate** because the housing unit is unknown to officials and not included on the Census Bureau's Master Address File.
- **Hard-to-interview** due to language barriers, low literacy, and/or lack of internet access.
- **Hard-to-persuade** due to mistrust and suspicions of government and/or low levels of civic engagement.
- **Hard-to-contact** because the individual/household is highly mobile, experiencing homelessness, or behind physical access barriers such as a gated community.

- Community, faith, education, business, and local government leaders who know their communities and enjoy the trust and confidence of the community.

The Challenge

Research demonstrates that the historically undercounted populations are often:

- Fearful or mistrustful of government's ability and willingness to:
 - Protect the privacy of individual responses.
 - Ensure that the information provided is not used for any other purpose than developing a statistical picture of the country, especially a purpose that could bring harm to an individual, household or community.
 - Ensure information provided is not shared with other agencies.
- Unaware or unconvinced that the accuracy of the Census has any impact on their lives
- Less likely to have access to or be versed in and comfortable using the internet
- Most likely to benefit from the dollars that could be lost if there is an undercount in Washington

Elements of an Outreach Plan

These findings suggest that the outreach strategy needs to:

- 1) Educate the population about:
 - a. What the Census is (and isn't)
 - b. Why an accurate count is important to the community

- c. How the information is to be collected
 - d. What information is (and isn't) to be collected
 - e. How the information provided will be (and won't be) used
 - f. What the government obligations are to protect the privacy of information
- 2) Provide reassurances (and, if possible, rock hard guarantees) that:
 - a. individual information will not be shared with other agencies, and
 - b. information will not be used to target communities in harmful ways
 - 3) Ensure hard-to-interview audiences:
 - a. Are aware of the various language assistance available to them
 - b. Are provided assistance to navigate an online or paper form
 - c. Are provided with the internet connection to complete their form
 - 4) Mobilize local leaders from the private, nonprofit, and public sector to:
 - a. Ensure that the Master Address File is fully up-to-date with the latest lists of individual residences and transitory locations, as well as any new facilities (dorms, senior centers, etc.) housing groups (OFM Pop Unit can provide guidance).
 - b. Make an inventory of potential in-kind and monetary assistance that their organizations or institutions can provide to:
 - i. support the education and awareness process, and
 - ii. offer a trusting and reassuring venue for education or census completion.
 - c. Educate residents about the census process.
 - d. Serve as conduits between local residents and federal or state officials who can answer questions or address concerns.
 - e. Prepare a group of trusted messengers to serve as informed educators at these events.
 - f. Make a list of events from now until Census Day that can be used to educate target populations about the Census and its importance to the community.
 - g. Develop targeted messages—especially with concrete examples of how Census data has helped **this** community in the past.
 - h. Assemble a contact list of individuals willing to “Commit to the Census” who can be emailed, texted, or called once the Census portal is open with reminders to self-respond.
 - i. Open Census Questionnaire Assistance Centers from mid-March through the end of April to provide the computers and personnel necessary to assist in the completion of the census forms.

Trusted Messengers – A Must

Methods of delivering the outreach plan will vary from area to area based upon needs and interests, but a general conclusion from the research is that an individual with credibility in the community is the most effective messenger to provide:

1. convincing arguments about why the community has the right (and need) to stand up and be counted,
2. convincing assurance that completion of the Census will bring benefits to the community, and
3. assistance in completing the form.

Timeline

January-December 2019: Build the statewide network of informed and mobilized census ambassadors

Between now and the launch of the general public education campaign at the beginning of January 2020, a number of methods can be used to educate ever descending levels of trusted leaders until each community has a number of trusted and informed leaders ready to raise awareness and encourage participation. These methods include:

- Newspaper articles, newsletter articles, op-eds, blogs
- Radio and television talk shows – and podcasts
- Presentations to public community events (ask OFM, any CCC in the state, or the Census Bureau for a speaker)
- Information tables at public community events (conferences, fairs, etc.) with brochures and factsheets

January-March 2020: Ramp up the awareness campaign to the general population

- Place flyers, brochures, and posters in strategic locations
- Distribute printed information and make volunteers available to answer questions about the census
- Mention the Census at all public community events

Mid-March-End of April 2020: Promote self-response across the community

- Have flyers, brochures, and posters at strategic locations, encouraging self-response today
- Open Census Questionnaire Assistance Centers
- Send reminders via text, email, and calls to those who signed “Commit to the Census”
- Organize volunteers to go door-to-door to offer assistance