

# VIRGINIA COMPLETE COUNT COMMISSION TOOLKIT

## Welcome!

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide resources for community members that are interested in ensuring that all of the diverse voices in the Commonwealth of Virginia, from the largest cities to the smallest towns and rural communities, are counted in the 2020 Census.

Data collected from the decennial census is used to determine a variety of things, such as how to distribute more than \$675 billion in federal funds to support states, counties, and local communities, how to redistrict, and how to distribute the seats in the U.S. House of Representatives.

This toolkit contains a variety of information and resources to help guide your communications and outreach efforts. Thank you for wanting to help ensure that all of the people in your community are counted.

## BELOW IS A LIST OF CONTENTS:

- Census 101: What You Need to Know
- Virginia Talking Points
- VCCC Infographic
- VCCC Membership
- Outreach Planning
  - Make It Actionable
  - Make It Relevant
  - Plan the Delivery
- Census Outreach Planning Worksheet
- Planning Event Checklist
- List of Outreach Materials
- Sign In Sheet
- Examples of Events
- Sample Proclamation
- Stickers
- Draft Social Media Posts
- Business or Organization Website Language
- VCCC Logos

# CENSUS 101: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The 2020 Census is closer than you think!  
Here's a quick refresher of what it is and why it's essential that everyone is counted.

## Everyone counts.

The census counts every person living in the U.S. once, only once, and in the right place.

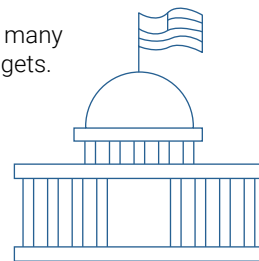


## It's in the Constitution.

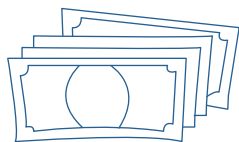
The U.S. Constitution requires a census every 10 years. The census covers the entire country and everyone living here. The first census was in 1790.

## It's about fair representation.

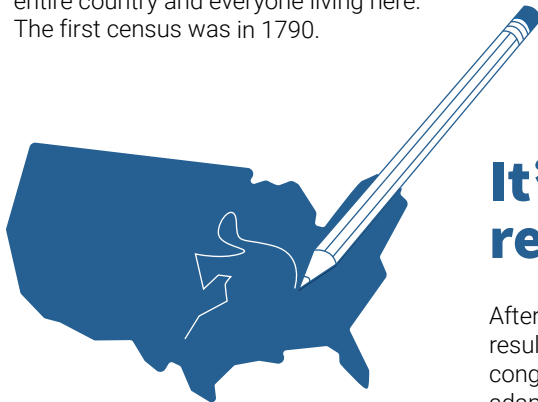
Every 10 years, the results of the census are used to reapportion the House of Representatives, determining how many seats each state gets.



## It means \$675 billion.



Census data determine how more than \$675 billion are spent, supporting your state, county and community's vital programs.

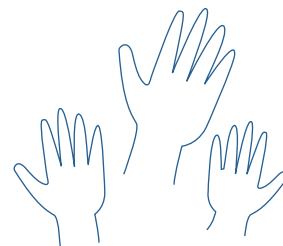


## It's about redistricting.

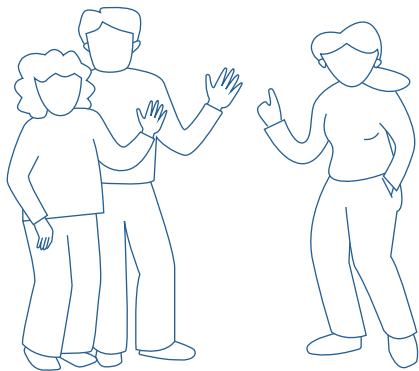
After each census, state officials use the results to redraw the boundaries of their congressional and state legislative districts, adapting to population shifts.

## Taking part is your civic duty.

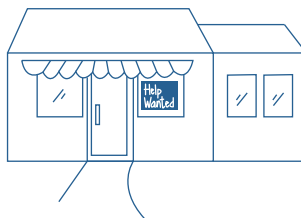
Completing the census is required: it's a way to participate in our democracy and say "I COUNT!"



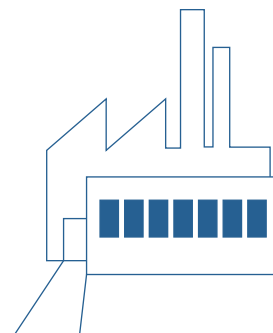
## Census data are being used all around you.



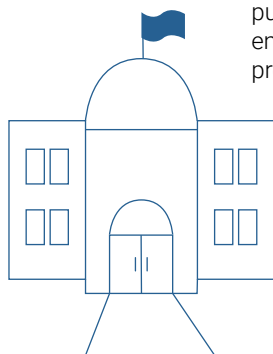
Residents use the census to support community initiatives involving legislation, quality-of-life and consumer advocacy.



Businesses use census data to decide where to build factories, offices and stores, which create jobs.



Local governments use the census for public safety and emergency preparedness.



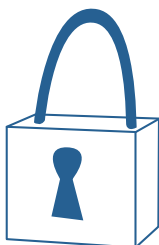
Real estate developers use the census to build new homes and revitalize old neighborhoods.



## Your data are confidential.

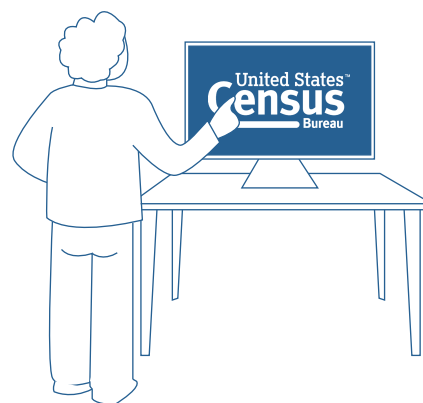
Federal law protects your census responses. Your answers can only be used to produce statistics.

By law we cannot share your information with immigration enforcement agencies, law enforcement agencies, or allow it to be used to determine your eligibility for government benefits.



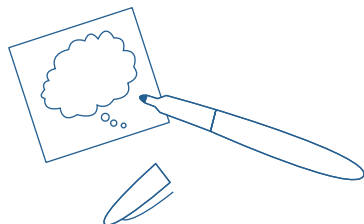
## 2020 will be easier than ever.

In 2020, you will be able to respond to the census online.



## You can help.

You are the expert—we need your ideas on the best way to make sure everyone in your community gets counted.



**United States<sup>™</sup>**  
**Census**  
Bureau

U.S. Department of Commerce  
Economics and Statistics Administration  
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU  
***census.gov***

**FIND OUT HOW TO HELP AT  
[CENSUS.GOV/PARTNERS](https://www.census.gov/partners)**

# VIRGINIA SPECIFIC TALKING POINTS

---



- In 2016, Virginia received **\$17,766,199,831** through 55 federal spending programs as a result of data collected from the 2010 Census
- **\$4,553,022,000** was given to the Medical Assistance Program (Medicaid)
- **\$1,169,412,644** was given to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- **\$1,024,381,647** was given to Highway Planning and Construction
- **Over 1 million** children under the age of five weren't counted in the 2010 Census
- Virginia was in the the **top 10 states** that had the **highest number of undercounted children** in the 2010 Census
- Children of color were missed **twice as often** in the 2010 Census as white children
- In Virginia, nearly a quarter of all children under five live in Northern Virginia, and the majority of those children are children of color
- Virginia, Arizona and Oregon are estimated to be frontrunners for an additional seat in the U.S. House of Representatives if their population growth is on the high end of estimates
- Census data will determine the placement, advancement, and funding for universities, medical facilities, nonprofit organizations, research facilities, and emergency resources.

# COMMUNITY. CONNECTION. BE COUNTED.



## ABOUT THE CENSUS

- The goal of the 2020 Census is to count everyone in America's diverse and growing population once, only once and in the right place.
- Ensuring a complete and accurate count in the 2020 Census is crucial to Virginia's economy. Census data is used to help determine how approximately \$675 billion dollars is distributed from the federal government to state and local governments.
- It is estimated that Virginia will lose up to \$2,000 annually for each person not counted in the 2020 Census. That amounts to upwards of \$20,000 per person over a 10 year period.
- Additionally, census data is used for attracting new businesses to states and local areas, planning for hospitals and other health services, and designing public safety strategies.

## VIRGINIA COMPLETE COUNT COMMISSION

On December 18, 2018, Governor Northam signed Executive Order Twenty Seven establishing the Virginia Complete Count Commission to improve the participation and representation of all Virginians in the 2020 Census. The Virginia Complete Count Commission is working to educate and motivate Virginians, particularly those in hard-to-count communities from all corners of the Commonwealth, in order to ensure there is a complete count.

### MISSION

The mission of the Virginia Complete Count Commission is to serve as a trusted voice and resource to educate, empower, and engage all communities for the purpose of ensuring that everyone who lives in the Commonwealth of Virginia is counted in the 2020 Census.

### VISION

Our vision is a thriving Commonwealth where everyone counts and every community matters; where every person who lives in Virginia has equitable access to opportunities, resources, and representation.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION



PHONE  
(804) 786-2441



EMAIL  
[virginiacompletecount@governor.virginia.gov](mailto:virginiacompletecount@governor.virginia.gov)



WEBSITE  
[commonwealth.virginia.gov/vacompletecount](http://commonwealth.virginia.gov/vacompletecount)

# VCCC MEMBERSHIP

---

## Virginia Complete Count Commission Members

**Nony E. Abrajano** of Virginia Beach, *Founder and Chairman Emeritus, Filipino American Community Action Group*

**Jonathan R. Alger** of Harrisonburg, *President, James Madison University*

**Suja Amir** of Henrico, *Secretary, Asian Latino Solidarity Alliance of Central Virginia*

**Vincent Ammann** of Fairfax, *Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, Washington Gas; Vice Chair, Executive Committee Board of Directors, Virginia Chamber of Commerce*

**Rev. Dr. Jonathan Barton** of Midlothian, *General Minister Emeritus, Virginia Council of Churches*

**Gilbert Bland** of Virginia Beach, *President and Chief Executive Officer, Urban League of Greater Hampton Roads*

**Rev. Kevin Chandler** of South Boston, *President, Virginia State Conference NAACP*

**Jim Dau** of Henrico, *State Director, Virginia AARP*

**Dr. James J. Fedderman** of Accomack, *Vice President, Virginia Education Association*

**Caryn Foster Durham** of North Chesterfield, *Durham Strategy + Consulting*

**Sarah Gross** of Richmond, *(former) President, Virginia Parent Teacher Association*

**Razi Hashmi** of Fairfax, *Member, Virginia Asian Advisory Board*

**Margaret Nimmo Holland** of Richmond, *Executive Director, Voices for Virginia's Children*

**Dr. Tiffany Jana** of Richmond, *Chief Executive Officer, TMI Portfolio*

**Gaylene Kanoyton** of Hampton, *President, Hampton Branch, NAACP*

**Steve Kast** of Poquoson, *President and Chief Executive Officer, United Way of the Virginia Peninsula*

**Hyun Lee** of Centreville, *Director of Public Affairs, Korean American Society of Virginia*

**Eric Lin** of Chesterfield, *Immediate Past Vice-Chair, Virginia Asian Advisory Board*

**Ashley Reynolds Marshall, J.D.** of Bedford, *Executive Director, YWCA of Central Virginia*

**Sreedhar Nagireddi** of Ashburn, *Director, Volunteering Together for Service*

**Giao “Genie” Nguyễn Thị Ngọc Giao** of Prince William County, *President, Voice of Vietnamese Americans*

**Beth O'Connor, M. Ed.** of Blacksburg, *Executive Director, Virginia Rural Health Association*

**Dr. William O. O'Hare** of Cape Charles, *President, O'Hare Data and Demographics Services LLC*

**Aida Pacheco** of Mechanicsville, *Member and former chair, Virginia Latino Advisory Board*

**James Parrish** of Richmond, *Executive Director, Equality Virginia*

**The Honorable Nancy Rodrigues of Surry**, *former Virginia Secretary of Administration; Deputy Director, 2019 Commemoration: American Evolution*

**Monica Dafney Sarmiento** of Washington, DC, *Executive Director, Virginia Coalition for Immigrant Rights*

**Terron Sims II** of Arlington, *U.S. Army Veteran; Veteran and Military Families Advocate*

**Dr. Elda Stanco Downey** of Roanoke, *Founder and Chief Executive Office, Roanoke Spanish*

**Reggie Tupponce** of Glen Allen, *Member, Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe*

**Julian Walker** of Chesterfield, *Vice President of Communications, Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association*

**Dr. Leo Whitaker** of Richmond, *Executive Minister, Baptist General Convention*

**Jonathan C. Zur** of Richmond, *President and Chief Executive Officer, Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities*

## Virginia Complete Count Commission Staff

**Kelly Thomasson** *Secretary of the Commonwealth*

**Traci J. DeShazor** *Deputy Secretary of the Commonwealth and Director of African American Outreach*

**Fernando Mercado-Violand** *Special Assistant for Community Engagement and Director of Latino Outreach*





# MAKE IT ACTIONABLE

Reducing friction in the path towards action is critical—and sometimes the smallest tweaks can have a significant impact.

## 1 Keep it simple.

*Is all the information in my message immediately useful?  
Am I using simple language?*

When communicating to mass audiences, there is no award for impressive use of an extensive vocabulary. Stick to a fifth grade reading level and a conversational style (such as the use of contractions) that's to the point. It's easy to over-share in an attempt to be thorough. Instead, provide only the most essential items for the immediate actions people need to take, and include reference links for those interested in learning more.

## 2 Make it visual.

*What pictures could I use to convey my message?*

We've all heard the saying "a picture is worth a thousand words," but very few informational campaigns begin by drawing a picture. Humans are drawn to attractive imagery and color, and some studies show we read as little as 20% of the text on a page. Make your design default a picture, and then add words, rather than start with extensive written text.

## 3 Create a checklist.

*What are the individual steps my audience should take?*

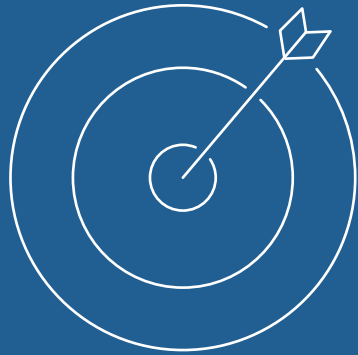
To help people take action, show a clear to-do list, next steps, or break down the specific tasks required to complete that action. Here's how:

- ☐ Start each step's sentence using the specific verb of the action they need to complete.
- ☐ Help people know what to expect, such as documents they'll need to bring with them to an appointment, etc.
- ☐ Break things down into smaller, more manageable chunks—for example, "Open a savings account" is more concrete than "Save money."

## 4 Prompt people to make a plan.

*What kind of planning does my audience need to do?*

There is often a gap between what we intend to do and what we actually do. To close this gap, a proven tactic is to provide a fill-in-the-blank template helping individuals to plan specific details of completing a task. Have them answer logistical questions such as what time they'll do something, what mode of transportation they'll use, the route they plan to travel, and other basic yet critical details.



# MAKE IT RELEVANT

Position your message to work for the audience you hope to engage—accounting for what’s important to them and what motivates them.

## 1 Make it salient.

*Why does my audience care?*

It’s easy to forget that the thing you’re advocating for, which you know a lot about, may not be as clear to someone even one step removed. Frame the “why” of taking an action as a value proposition that’s important to your targeted listener.

## 2 Make it personal.

*Where can I add a personal touch?*

Remember when your mom may have made you write thank you notes to your relatives after your birthday? It turns out she was on to something! Research has shown that personalization can increase response rates. Try these approaches:

- ☐ Personally address communications, such as letters or emails
- ☐ Tailor content to cite specific examples that matter or include the reader
- ☐ Include personal appeals from the sender, like a little handwritten note or signature on a template letter

## 3 Make it social.

*Who does my audience identify with or admire?*

We are strongly influenced by what those around us do, what we perceive to be “normal” or “acceptable,” and what others think of us. If we publicly commit to doing something, we’re more likely to follow through. We will purchase products that people we hope to emulate endorse, and consider how others rate restaurants or items we want to buy.

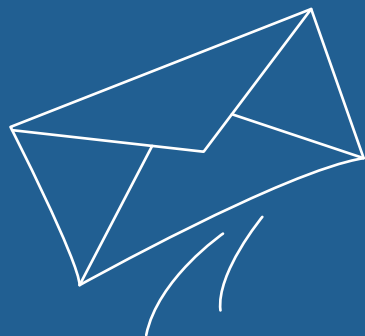
## 4 Consider the right incentives.

*How can I make my incentive seem even better?*

Both financial and non-financial incentives can be powerful motivators. Whenever applying this tactic, carefully consider the timing of the incentive and the context in which it is framed.

For example, a \$1 coupon is much more exciting for a \$5 item than a \$100 item even though in both instances an individual is saving the same amount. Providing a free financial planning consultation may be much more valuable during tax season.





# PLAN THE DELIVERY

Meet people where they're at—the packaging of your message matters.

## 1 Consider the messenger.

*Who will my audience listen to?*

People pay attention to who is asking them to do something. Is it someone they know? Trust? Respect? Consider who will resonate best with your target audience.

Additionally, if you're sending a written communication such as a letter or postcard, including a photo of the person sending the message has been shown to increase responsiveness.

## 2 Consider the timing.

*What is my audience's schedule like?*

*When will your message be most relevant?*

Research has shown that sending emails at lunchtime led to increased click rates, emphasizing the new year and a fresh start increased retirement savings, and asking people to sign a form at the start, rather than the end of a form reduced self-reporting errors.

Whenever possible, make your case for doing something linked to short-term costs or benefits. We have a tendency to discount things in the future, because they seem more abstract. This is why it's so hard for us to save for retirement or keep to a diet.

## 3 Consider the location.

*Where does my audience spend time?*

*Where will my message be most relevant?*

The context of your setting can also affect people's interest in hearing your message. Are you knocking on someone's door when they're home relaxing on a Saturday morning, or talking to them about how the census can impact educational funding while at the school parents' night?

## 4 Get creative with your mechanism.

*What kinds of communication channels does my audience like and already use?*

While sending letters or flyering can still be effective communications mechanisms, research has shown that text messages, pop-up boxes, and in-app messages are also cost-effective ways to connect.

Consider what channels your audience already engages with so you can meet them there, rather than trying to direct them to a new path of having to open their mail or visit a new website.

# CENSUS OUTREACH PLANNING WORKSHEET

## PLAN YOUR MESSAGE BY ANSWERING THESE QUESTIONS:

Who do I want to reach?

Why might they not participate in the census?

What is the action I want my audience to take?

These are the concrete steps required:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

Why should my audience care about my message?

What kinds of people does my audience trust and admire?

What channels of communication does my audience prefer?

What times of day is my audience available?

Where will my audience be most receptive to my message?

What incentives will my audience respond to?

## FINAL REVIEW CHECKLIST:

- ☐ *All the information in my message is immediately relevant*
- ☐ *I have edited my language to be simple*
- ☐ *I have used pictures where possible to convey information*
- ☐ *I have communicated the individual steps I want people to take.*
- ☐ *I have considered how to add a personal touch.*
- ☐ *I have considered how to make my incentive seem even better.*

# OUTREACH EVENT PLANNING CHECKLIST

---



## CREATE A VISION

- Identify your topic and your audience
- Determine the best ways to target your audience (i.e. Are they religiously affiliated? Do they attend a certain school?)



## START PLANNING IN ADVANCE

- What type of event do you want? Decide if you want an interactive event, a formal event, if you want to have guest speakers, etc. etc.



## DETERMINE THE LOCATION

- Find a place that is easily accessible for your audience to meet



## DETERMINE THE TIME

- Remember to focus on your audience and choose time that accommodates the most amount of people



## SET THE AGENDA

- Set the agenda
- Set the agenda for your event, from beginning to end
- Leave time for audience participation/questions and mingling
- Remember to have everyone sign-in



## PLAN FOR PROVIDING REFRESHMENTS AND OTHER SUPPLIES

- Light refreshments and drinks
- Information packets
- Relevant materials
- Stickers
- Determine the best ways to target your audience (i.e. Are they religiously affiliated? Do they attend a certain school?)



## PROMOTE AND PUBLICIZE THE EVENT

- Utilize the U.S. Census and Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth's materials and graphics to promote your event both in person and via social media.
- If your audiences are affiliated with certain groups, i.e. churches or schools, ask if they can promote your materials



## EVALUATE THE OUTCOMES

- Ask participants to fill out an evaluation form so you can see what can be improved



## ACTUAL LOGISTICS OF EVENT

- Determine who will be there to set up event, who will facilitate anything that happens during event, and who will stay behind to clean up event

# LIST OF OUTREACH MATERIALS FOR EVENT

---



**Handouts about Census**

**Sign-in Sheet**

**Stickers**

**Pens/Markers**

**Extra Paper**

Source: Governor Northam's Virginia Complete Count Commission

# SAMPLE PROCLAMATION

---

## Census Awareness Day

WHEREAS, every ten years, Article 1, Section 2 of the United States Constitution mandates a count of all the people living in the United States and its territories; and

WHEREAS, the 2020 Census will address every household in the nation with a simple questionnaire with the goal of counting everyone once, only once, and in the right place; and

WHEREAS, data obtained by the survey will be used to help determine how approximately \$675 billion will be distributed from the federal government to state, local, and tribal governments annually; and

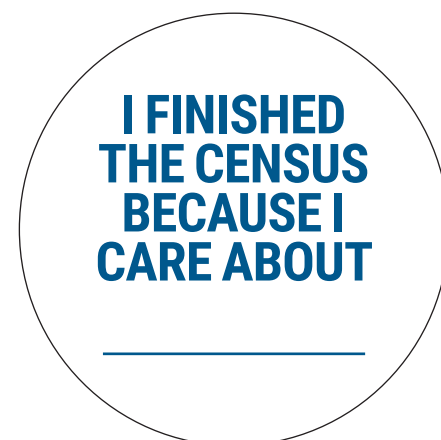
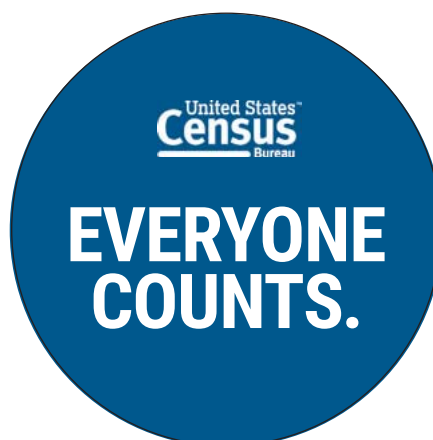
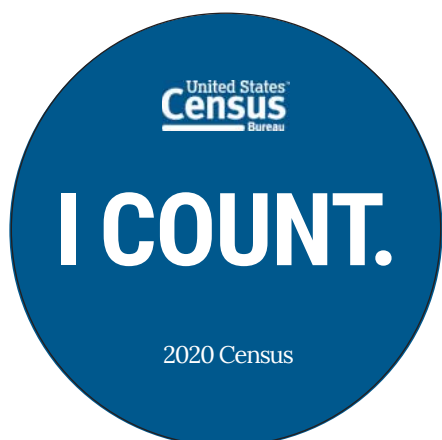
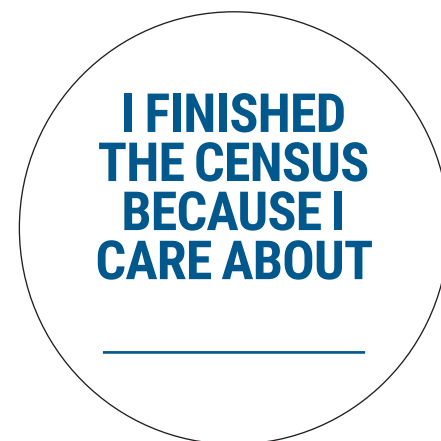
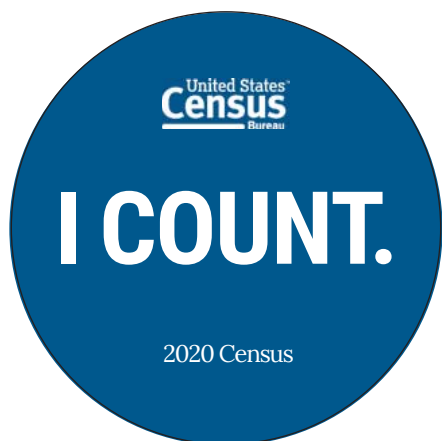
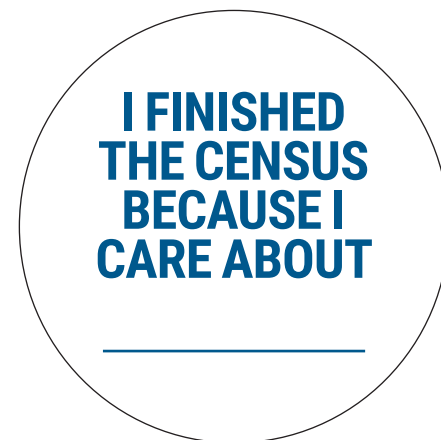
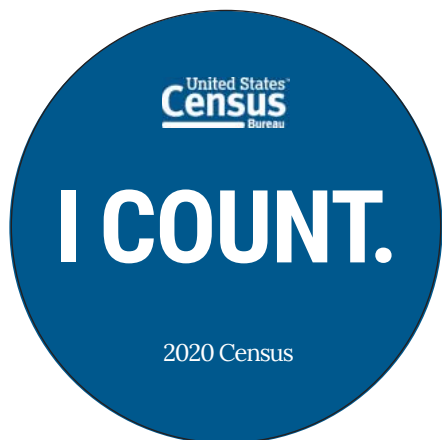
WHEREAS, up to \$2,000 of federal funding will be lost for each person not counted; as well as upwards of \$20,000 of federal funding lost every ten years; and

WHEREAS, a complete count requires that we bring together leaders from all communities of the Commonwealth, so that every Virginian regardless of racial, social, or economic background is counted; and

WHEREAS, Governor Ralph S. Northam has established the Virginia Complete Count Commission, which is comprised of 40 members to collaborate with community partners and local Complete Count Committees to ensure an accurate 2020 Census count;

NOW, THEREFORE, \_\_\_\_\_ hereby proclaims April 1st, 2019, as Census Awareness Day.





# DRAFT SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

---



## INSTAGRAM

- Have graphics, headshot, photos of commission or of people doing census-related things to post
- Have captions with information about the 2020 Census, Virginia Complete Count Commission, or any upcoming events

### EXAMPLES POSTS

“The 2020 Census is closer than you think! Have any questions about the U.S. Census or how to help out? Feel free to message me! **#vacompletecount**”

“Census 101 Fact: Every ten years, the results of the census are used to reapportion the House of Representatives, determining how many seats each state gets.” **#vacompletecount**

“Come join me as I host a \_\_\_\_\_ event, Saturday March 2nd at 2:00 PM at the \_\_\_\_\_ located at \_\_\_\_\_. I look forward to seeing you there!” **#vacompletecount**



## TWITTER

- Can use same text as above

### EXAMPLES POSTS

“Want to learn more about the 2020 Census? Visit: \_\_\_\_\_ for more information. **#vacompletecount**”

“Join me at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ at the \_\_\_\_\_. **#vacompletecount**”

“Census 101 Fact: Local governments use the census for public safety and emergency preparedness. **#vacompletecount**”



## FACEBOOK

- Utilize the fact that you can make longer posts on Facebook – tell a personal story about why you decided to join the Virginia Complete Count Commission, have someone submit a quote on what the Census means to them.

### EXAMPLES POSTS

“Want to learn more about the 2020 Census? Visit: \_\_\_\_\_ for more information.”

“Once a decade, America comes together to participate in the decennial census. This census provides the basis for reapportioning Congressional seats, redistricting, and distributing billions of dollars in federal funding to support your state, county, and community’s vital programs”

# BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION WEBSITE LANGUAGE

---



The United States Constitution mandates a census of the nation's population every ten years. Data collected from the decennial census is used to determine a variety of things, such as how to distribute more than \$675 billion in federal funds to support states, counties, and local communities, how to redistrict, and how to distribute the seats in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The Virginia Complete Count Commission was created to improve the participation and representation of all Virginians in the 2020 Census, ensuring that all of the diverse voices in the Commonwealth are heard. Individuals, businesses, government organizations, nonprofits, and community leaders all have a role to play in the 2020 Census. There are multiple ways one can support a complete and accurate 2020 Census, including but not limited to attending Virginia State Complete Count Commission events, forming or participating in a Local Complete Count Committee, serve as a Virginia Complete Count Commission Census Ambassador, canvass or phone bank for the 2020 Census, host an informational 2020 Census event, and informing your employers and organizations about the 2020 Census.

# VCCC LOGOS

---

