



2020 CENSUS



Interfaith Community Engagement Toolkit



BOARD OF RABBIS
of Greater Philadelphia

2020 CENSUS TOOLKIT

FOR INTERFAITH COMMUNITY LEADERS

- WHY IS THE 2020 CENSUS IMPORTANT? -



Political Representation: Census data determines how many congressional representatives our state has and how district lines are drawn. Therefore it's important to make sure Philadelphia has a complete and accurate count of all people.



Funding: Census data informs how billions of dollars in federal funds will be distributed to vital services and infrastructures like school programs such as the free lunch program and special education, section 8 housing, SNAP, road maintenance and more...



Data and Analytics: Businesses, Nonprofits, local and federal governments also use census data to inform their work of how to best serve their constituencies. This data informs where schools and hospitals will be placed, where vital social services are needed and how governments respond to their residents and visitors.

- WHO IS MOST AFFECTED? -

Certain communities and demographics have been historically undercounted in this process. When undercounted these communities suffer the most with severe underfunding and underrepresentation for critical services. Here's a list of the top historically undercounted communities.

- Children under age 5
- African Americans
- People living in poverty
- People experiencing homelessness

- Immigrants
- Latino communities
- Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific islanders (AANHPI)
- Native Americans & tribal communities
- Religious Minorities

- HOW CAN WE HELP? -

Philadelphia's faith network is very diverse and strong and holds a significant stake in the way that people live out their lives. Most often people turn to their faith leaders for information and guidance and we want to make sure that when folks turn to us for information on the census we are prepared and ready to be that leader they are seeking. Below you will find a few ways that you and your network can assist in these efforts moving forward.

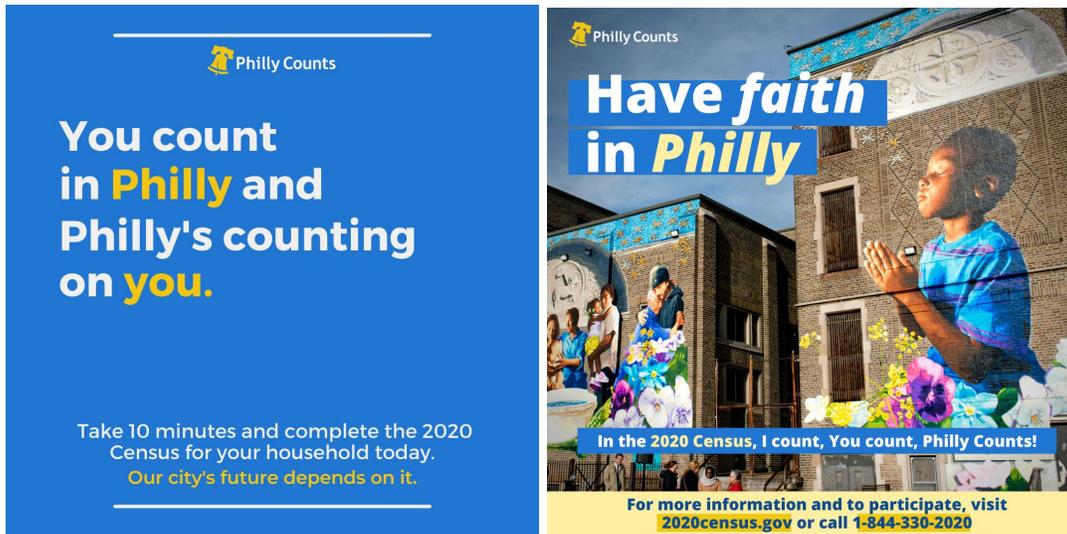
[Dress Down on Philly Counts Fridays](#)

Join Philly Counts and our partners from across the city in dressing down in Philly Counts swag on Fridays. To get your Philly Counts swag, [sign up here](#).



[Promote the Census to your social network](#)

Check out the Philly Counts Social Media toolkit to find easy to use social media content. Use this link to access the [Philly Counts Social Media Toolkit](#)



Distribute digital literature

- Leverage existing email lists, newsletters, online bulletin boards etc. to share information about the 2020 Census
- Incorporate Census messaging into your worship service. Speak about the dignity of all people, the importance of being counted, and what's at stake for your community. Let's make this a Citywide effort! Reach out to morris.hobson@phila.gov to coordinate with Philly Counts and other Faith leaders

Work with Philly Counts: Join a Working Group

Communications and Advertising Working Group: Since we are not able to hold community events to engage people, communications and advertising are more important than ever. We are looking for partners to join a working group to help plan ongoing communications efforts. To join this working group, email mark.rooney@phila.gov

Phone Banking: Join Philly Counts and our volunteers in calling households across Philly to check in and share information about the 2020 Census. Do you have your own list you'd like to call? That's cool too! Reach out to pedro.rodriquez@phila.gov for more information about phone banking.

Ongoing Census Engagement Working Group: We know that many of you have ongoing communication with the people you serve. You may be



distributing food, holding wellness check ins, or providing other resources or services. We would like to create a working group to explore ways we can add census communication to these ongoing interactions and create ways to encourage this with other organizations. If you're interested in joining these efforts, email morris.hobson@phila.gov.

Floating Action Day: We have approximately 100,000 informational Census door hangers in our office. When social distancing measures are relaxed, we will create a list of target neighborhoods to distribute the rest of the materials. We will need our partners to be ready with volunteers. We anticipate this will be held on a single day in late July or early August. If you're interested in working with us, email census@phila.gov.

- CENSUS SABBATH WEEKEND -

In coordination with  **Faith-Based and Interfaith Affairs**

Friday, June 12th - Sunday, June 14th

Faith Leaders from across Philadelphia will join together during Census Sabbath Weekend to encourage their communities to be counted in the 2020 Census. For three consecutive days, Philadelphia's faith community will hold worship about the importance of the Census and how it relates to your beliefs and spiritual values. We encourage all faith leaders to use this toolkit as a guide for your worship during this weekend.



Philadelphia has a huge and diverse faith community where people go to get vital information and advice. Through our work at Philly Counts we understand that trusted messengers such as faith leaders are key to efforts such as the census and what better way to get this message out than through sermon.

Get involved: It's simple, we just ask that you incorporate census messaging into your teachings for the proposed weekend whichever way that you are having service right now.

- CENSUS TALKING POINTS -

The 2020 Census is an issue that impacts all people. Faith leaders have a huge stake and voice to ensure that the people who follow you have the information and understanding of why the census is important to their families and community. Here's a few talking points to consider when speaking to your congregations.

- **As people of faith, we believe in the divinely given dignity of every person.** When we answer the Census and help our neighbors do so too, we declare that we are part of “we the people” and we refuse to be excluded from the critical resources and political representation that we deserve. Because everyone counts in the eyes of God, we must work to ensure that everyone is counted by our government.
- **Our community benefits from everyone being counted, and we have one chance in a decade to get it right.** The 2020 Census’ impact on our communities and our nation is profound. It shapes everything from whether we have fair political representation in Congress to whether our roads, hospitals, schools and fire departments have the funding they need to support our health and well-being for the next decade. A full, accurate count lays the foundation for a healthy democracy and communities where families thrive and flourish.
- **Your census information is confidential, and we have a legal and moral responsibility to take part.** When you fill out the Census, your personally identifiable information will not be shared with any other government agency. Your information is confidential and protected by ironclad federal laws. It’s important to note that, by law, each person living in the United States is required to participate in the Census. Moreover, our families, children, and neighbors are counting on us to participate so we all have the critical resources and representation that we need and deserve.
- **Throughout history, the U.S. Census has been used as a tool of exclusion, but we can reclaim it as a tool for equity, democracy, and justice.** Historically, the Census has been used as a tool of white supremacy, denying political representation, public resources and recognition of dignity to people of color. In the early decennial Census’ of our country, enslaved people of African descent were counted as only 3/5 of a person and most Native Americans weren’t counted at all. The legacy of racist systems that have privileged white communities

with access to capital and education have contributed to people of color consistently being undercounted in the decennial Census. In the 2010 Census, 3.7 million African Americans and 3.8 million Hispanics were not counted. The faith community has a moral responsibility to dismantle white supremacy and further inclusion for all people. Ensuring everyone is counted in the 2020 Census is a matter of racial justice that is long overdue.

- **Completing the Census is easy, and there is support available for you and your community.** You can choose how you want to respond – online, by paper, or over the phone. Telephone assistance and an online questionnaire will be available in 12 languages, and paper forms will be translated in English and Spanish, *with glossaries available in 59 non-English languages and Braille on the Census Bureau’s website.*

Online: <https://my2020census.gov/>

By Phone: 844-330-2020

- CENSUS IN RELIGIOUS TEXT -

Hebrew Bible

“The Lord spoke to Moses in the tent of meeting in the Desert of Sinai. He said: ‘Take a census of the whole Israelite community by their clans and families, listing every man by name, one by one.’” (Numbers 1:1-2)

“Rich and poor have this in common: The Lord is the Maker of them all.” (Proverbs 22:2)

New Testament Christian Scriptures

“In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world...So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary,

who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.” (Luke 2:1-5)

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because He has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed.” (Luke 4:18)

“But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.” (1 Corinthians 12:24-26)

Islamic Scriptures

“He knows each one of them, and has counted them a full counting.” (Maryam 19:94)

“Surely those who deny the truth spend their wealth to hinder people from the way of Allah, and will continue to so spend until their efforts become a source of intense regret for them.” (Al-Qur’an 8:36)

“Do not mix truth with falsehood or hide the truth knowingly.” (Al-Baqarah 2:42)

“They ask thee what they should spend. Say, ‘Let whatever of your wealth you spend be for parents, kinsfolk, orphans, the indigent, and the traveler. Whatever good you do, truly God Knows it.’” (Al-Baqarah 2:215)

“You will never attain piety till you spend from that which you love. And whatever you spend, truly God knows it.” (Ali’Imran 3:92)