

MENTAL HEALTH COUNTS!

WHAT IS THE CENSUS?

Every 10 years, the government counts everyone and asks questions about every home in the country. This is called the census. The census is when the government counts everyone in the country.

The government will send you a letter in the mail in March with instructions on how to fill out the census.

The census asks one person in every home to answer a few questions. A home can be a house or apartment.

WHAT IF I DON'T LIVE IN A HOUSE OR AN APARTMENT?

Mostly, you should make sure that you are counted where you live or sleep most of the time.

If you are living or staying in a group living arrangement that is owned or managed by an entity or organization that provides residents with housing and/or services, you are living in group quarters and will be counted by the entity or organization. So, you don't need to worry about filling out the census.



Examples of group quarters include:

- Group homes
- Residential treatment centers
- Psychiatric hospitals and psychiatric units in other hospitals that provide long-term, non-acute care
- Hospitals with patients who have no usual home elsewhere
- Federal or state prisons or local jails

If you are in a short-term stay at a hospital or other facility, you should make sure that you are included in your home's census paperwork.

If you are experiencing homelessness or do not have conventional housing, you will likely be reached out to by the Census Bureau who is partnering with shelter directors and service providers to count people. You should be contacted directly to fill out the census on one of these three days:

- **March 30, 2020:** Counting people who are in shelters.
- **March 31, 2020:** Counting people at soup kitchens and mobile food vans.
- **April 1, 2020:** Counting people in non-sheltered, outdoor locations, such as tent encampments and on the streets.

WHAT QUESTIONS DOES THE CENSUS ASK?

The census asks questions about your home. It also asks questions about each person who lives in your home.



**What is your
phone number?**



**Do you own your
home or rent it?**



**How many people
live in your home?**

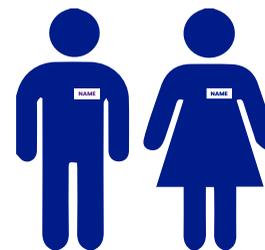
Only one person needs to respond to the census in each home. If you live with other people, talk to them about who will fill it out.

Your answers to the census are secret. The government will not share your answers with anyone. Your answers are used to count how many people there are in the country.

The census does not ask if you are a citizen of the United States.

The census also asks questions about you, such as:

- **What is your name?**
- **What is your sex?** The census gives two options. You can choose “male” or “female.”
- **What is your age?**
- **Are you Hispanic, Latino or of Spanish origin?** This question has to do with where your family comes from. The form uses the term Hispanic, Latino or of Spanish origin, so if your family comes from a Spanish-speaking country, your answer to this question is probably yes.
- **What is your race?** For this question, you check boxes. The census lists different races. Some examples are “white,” “black” or “American Indian.” You can check more than one box. After you check boxes, the census asks for more details, like what area, country or tribe your family is from.



The census will also ask these same questions about the people who live with you.

Please note that the census may include language that NAMI does not support.

IS IT REALLY THE CENSUS?

Sometimes, people will mail you spam that says it is from the census. Here is how to tell if mail that says it's from the census is real or fake:

THE CENSUS WILL NOT



WHY IS THE CENSUS IMPORTANT FOR PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS?

The law requires the census to collect information for the government. The government uses that information to make decisions. These decisions affect people with mental health conditions. There are two main ways the census affects people with mental health conditions:



1. Money for services and programs

Information from the census is used by federal, state and local governments to make decisions about funding for services and programs, which include education, housing, health and mental health care, transportation and other community needs. People with mental health conditions can benefit from these services.

Having enough money for programs and services for people with mental illness depends on the government having the right information. That is one reason why it is important for all people with mental health conditions to be counted in the census.



2. Representatives in Congress

The federal government makes laws for the whole country and the people who make these laws are called Members of Congress, who we vote for in elections. One half of Congress is the House of Representatives. Its members are called Representatives and every state has a different number of Representatives based on how many people live in the state.

If people don't fill out the census, a state might get less Representatives. Then, the people in that state won't have as much of a say about decisions in Congress.

We need to make sure every state has the right number of Representatives.

HOW DO I FILL OUT THE CENSUS?

The government sends you a letter in the mail. They will send the letter in March 2020. This letter has instructions on how to fill out the census online.

There are three ways to fill out the census:



ONLINE



PHONE



ON PAPER

Remember, only one person in your home can fill out the census. If you live with other people, you should talk to them about who will fill it out.

There are guides to help people with disabilities fill out the census. There are large print guides. There are also guides in braille. If you have questions, you can **call 1-800-923-8282** or go to **2020census.gov**.

If you do not fill out the census, a census worker may come to your home to help you fill it out. They may come in May, June, or July.

ARE THEY A REAL CENSUS WORKER?

All census workers have a badge proving they are a census worker. You can ask to see their badge to check that they work for the census.

A real census worker's badge has four things on it:

1. The badge says "Department of Commerce."
2. The badge has the worker's name printed on it.
3. The badge has a picture of the census worker.
4. The badge has an expiration date on it. That means that the census worker can use the badge until that date. But they cannot use the badge after that date.

For More Resources, Visit nami.org/census