



American Statistical Association Statement on Ensuring Fair and Accurate 2020 Census

July 31, 2020

The American Statistical Association emphatically recommends allowing sufficient time for the 2020 census in order to ensure a fair and accurate count. With the decennial census being enshrined in the US Constitution and fundamental to our democracy, governance, commerce, and daily life, it is critical to give the professional career staff of the US Census Bureau the time and resources to carry out the decennial census.

In April, we issued a statement [supporting a 120-day extension](#) of the legal deadline for delivering decennial census data to the president and states in consideration of necessary adjustments due to COVID-19. Today, we reiterate our support.

[New reporting](#) indicates the Census Bureau will be forced to cut short the most vital components of the decennial census – enumerating the hard-to-count populations. If true, there is no scientific rationale to cut short the work for this constitutionally mandated activity in this way. As a membership organization of census, survey, and statistical experts, we believe that restraining the decennial field work unnecessarily threatens a fair and accurate count. As of July 31, almost 40% of households have not completed the questionnaire. The remaining households include many of the hardest to count households.

Given all the challenges facing the decennial census this year, the Census Bureau should be allowed to continue the timeline they proposed this spring.