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**North Dakota's Unique Challenges**

North Dakota has several groups that are likely to present challenges in getting every last resident counted.

North Dakota's large population of American Indians, recent arrivals in the Bakken oilfield, immigrants, those in very rural areas, foreign students and legal residents of other states (generally military and students) who spend most of their time in North Dakota represent some of the challenges to getting everyone counted. Data from past censuses shows these groups have lower response rates.

Minority populations, those in poverty, recent migrants, very rural populations and some people who just do not like the government tend to be the most difficult to count and are generally least likely to respond to the census and various Census Bureau surveys such as the American Community Survey (ACS).

# Ramping up for Census 2020

North Dakota is preparing for Census 2020. This once-in-a-decade event occurs on April 1, 2020. The census aims to count the entire population of the country, and at the location where each person usually lives. The ultimate goal of the census is to count everyone once and in the right place. The census asks questions of people in homes and group living situations, including how many people live or stay in each home, the sex, age and race of each person.

This once-in-every-10-years effort is a huge undertaking. In fact, a census is the largest non-military mobilization within the United States. Every household will be contacted by mail. Many households will be visited in person by an employee of the Census Bureau. In North Dakota alone, the Census Bureau plans to hire more than 1,200 total employees, primarily enumerators

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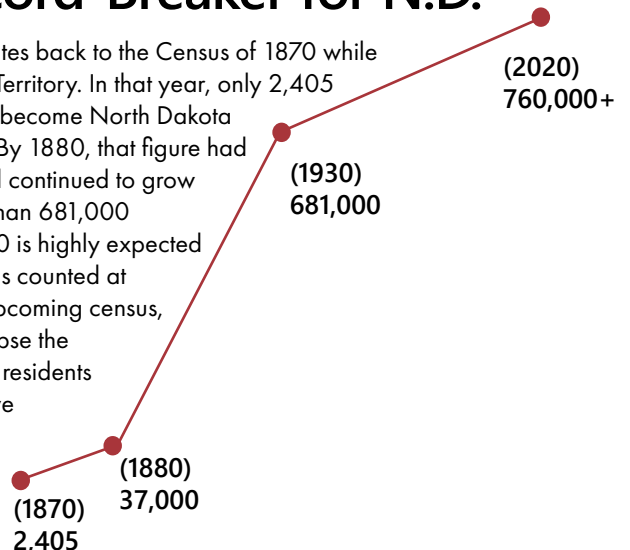
**United States**  
**Census**  
**2020**

during the peak effort months of March through May of 2020.

Each census is used to determine the distribution of political power and taxpayers' dollars for the next decade. This is because voting districts and the distribution of both federal and state funds is based on the outcome of the resident count. While the count of residents itself may be of marginal interest to many residents, every person in the state will be impacted in one way or another.

## 2020 Likely a Record-Breaker for N.D.

Data on North Dakota's population dates back to the Census of 1870 while North Dakota was still part of Dakota Territory. In that year, only 2,405 residents were counted in what was to become North Dakota (American Indians were not counted). By 1880, that figure had jumped to nearly 37,000 residents and continued to grow through the 1930 Census when more than 681,000 individuals were counted. Census 2020 is highly expected to be the first census in which the state is counted at more than "700,000" residents. This upcoming census, North Dakota will almost certainly eclipse the previous census high mark of 681,000 residents counted in 1930, a record that will have lasted for 90 years.



## It's about the dollars. Yes, money is important

It is easy to understand the importance of the census when you look at the financial figures. The George Washington Institute for Public Policy, in a program titled "Counting for Dollars 2020," calculated the funds distributed to each state based upon the Census 2010 population counts. For North Dakota according to the report, in fiscal year 2015, \$1,445,647,171 (\$1.45 billion) in federal funds for programs like Medicaid, highway construction, Head Start, Foster Care, SNAP, Low Income Energy Assistance, Special Education and other programs were obligated.

That means approximately \$1,910 in federal funds per resident was spent that year. Of all the statistics we live with, the census count is one of the longest lasting as the census occurs only once every 10 years. Subsequent population estimates are created by the Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program.

Not counting everyone can cost North Dakota dearly. Not adjusted for inflation, the approximate costs to the state will be:

- For one missed resident - \$19,100.
- One missed household (average 2.32 persons) - \$44,312.
- A statewide census count off by just 0.1 percent - \$15 million.

# Why Census 2020 is Important

Data from the Census is used in several critical ways that impact our daily lives in ways that most of us do not consider on a daily basis. The Census Bureau published a list of 50 ways census data is used in our daily lives. A few are listed below:

## Vital to the Democratic Process

The United States constitutionally mandated decennial census is intended to ensure equal representation in an elected government. This is true, not only at the federal level, but also at state level and below.

The count from the census is used to determine the distribution of seats in the House of Representatives of the United States Congress. It is unlikely that North Dakota will regain a second seat in the House as a result of the 2020 Census. In order to achieve that, North Dakota would have to gain almost 400,000 additional residents. The state is estimated to have gained more than 85,000 individuals since Census 2010, and we are certain to see a shift in voting districts in the state after 2020 with those areas having gained population likely gaining additional districts in the state legislature.

## Return of Resident Tax Dollars to the State

The most recent decennial census count establishes the proportional distributions for federal funds. Federal funds, grants and support to states, counties and communities are based on population totals and breakdowns by sex, age, race and other factors. Our state and communities benefit the most when every single resident is counted. When people respond to the census, they help their community obtain its fair share of the more than \$675 billion per year in federal funds spent on schools, hospitals, roads, public works and other vital programs.

## Informed Decision Making

Governments at all levels, private sector businesses, non-profit groups and private citizens use census count data every day to make choices in determining

## History of Census Data and Confidentiality

Since 1919, it has been illegal to use census records and data for anything except statistical purposes, i.e., summarizing the characteristics of the population. The only exception to this practice occurred during World War II and was authorized by the Second War Powers Act.

1919	Fourteenth Decennial Census Act, passed in 1919, specified that individual responses to the census "shall be used only for the statistical purposes for which [they are] supplied ... nor shall the Director of the Census permit anyone other than the sworn employees of the Census Office to examine the individual reports." (Section 29(25)).
WWII	During World War II, the Second War Powers act (passed in 1942) overrode census privacy provisions. In 1943, the Census Bureau provided individual level data on persons of Japanese ancestry living in the Washington D.C. area from the 1940 Census in response to a threat to President Roosevelt. The Second War Powers Act was repealed in March 1947. This was the only disclosure of census data in the 20th Century.
1942	While the Census Bureau maintains the privacy of individual records, it does not maintain control of records in perpetuity. Title 44, passed in 1952, established the rules governing the release of historical census records. Under this title, the National Archives will release census records 72 years after their collection (Section 1208b).
1954	Title 13 of the U.S. Code was passed in 1954. This act consolidated rules governing census data privacy into a single statute. It reasserted the rules implemented in the 1929 Census Act that prohibited disclosure of individual census records. Title 13 established the penalty for disclosing census information at 5 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000.
1954-2002	Since 1954, attempts by the FBI and other agencies to gain access to individual census records were denied by the Census Bureau. These denials were later upheld by the courts. Subsequent laws, passed in 1994, 1997 and 2002, strengthened the privacy policies of the Census Bureau. The "E-Government Act of 2002" (PL 107-347) contains the following language: Data "shall not be disclosed by an agency in identifiable form, for any use other than an exclusively statistical purpose..." (Section 512.B).
1980	In 1980, the FBI removed boxes of completed census questionnaires from the Colorado Springs district office pursuant to a federal warrant and an investigation of falsifying census forms. After a discussion between Vincent Barabba (Director, Census Bureau) and William Webster (Director, FBI), boxes still sealed with evidentiary tape were returned to the district office.
2017	The Census Bureau reasserted its pledge of confidentiality in 2017. Referring to Title 13, the pledge states: "These acts protect... statistical information from administrative, law enforcement, taxation, regulatory, or other non-statistical use..." (81 FR 94321)

## Resources

Events in the Chronological Development of Privacy and Confidentiality at the U.S. Census Bureau [www.census.gov/privacy](http://www.census.gov/privacy)

everything from where to build a bridge across a river to where the best place is to open a daycare. Census counts and the associated socio-economic statistics are a cornerstone of virtually all well-conceived public and private business plans. Local governments use the census for public safety and emergency preparedness. Businesses use census data to decide where to build plants, offices and stores, and create associated jobs. Developers use the census to build new homes and revitalize old neighborhoods.

## Who Gains from Participating?

Everyone does!

If you drive on public roads, have children attending school, or anything that uses public services or infrastructure, you have a stake in the outcome of this census. Every person needs to be counted if they reside in the state. That includes citizens and non-citizens; those here legally or not legally. Unfortunately, those who tend to have the most to gain by being counted also tend to be the most difficult to count. As some people do not understand the impact of the data on their daily lives and their community, they are less likely to willingly participate.

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