



Commission on Aging

SENIOR UPDATE  
AREA AGENCY ON AGING  
ADVISORY COMMISSION ON AGING  
6955 FOOTHILL BLVD, SUITE 300  
OAKLAND, CA 94605-1907

July/August/September 2020

# Senior Update: COVID Edition

...The Eyes and Ears of Alameda County Seniors

## Inside this issue:

A Special Thank You	1
Food and Nutrition Resources During COVID-19	2
Staying Connected During These Unusual Times	3-4
Coronavirus' Disparate Impacts	4-5
In the Eye of the Ombudsman	5-6
COVID-19: Social Security Services	7
Dates to Remember	8
Insert Page 1: Senior Info Assist Program: Quick Reference Guide	
Insert Page 2: Save the Date HLF; Census 2020	

## A SPECIAL THANK YOU!

Jennifer Stephens-Pierre, Director, Area Agency on Aging

**We are here  
for you.**



*As the Director for the Area Agency on Aging, I want to take this opportunity to say **THANK YOU** to my team, our AAA providers, and the entire older adult network for your commitment and immediate response to the needs of seniors during this Covid-19 Pandemic. When Governor Newsom, in consult with the California Public Health Officer, issued an Executive Order for the preservation of public health and safety throughout the entire State of California, it included a special advisory specifically issued to Seniors to "shelter in place (SIP)" due to their being identified at high risk for death from COVID-19. As you can imagine, the SIP order devastated our Senior community and required an immediate response from the older adult service network and you immediately **RESPONDED**. Many of you immediately changed service delivery models by implementing social distancing and curb side service to ensure that older adults were safe, so they were able to continue to receive meal on wheels and other viable older adult services. To sum it up.....you're all **HEROES**.*

*With much work still ahead, know that AAA we will continue to work with our community partners to assess and address the needs of older adults throughout the County. **WE ARE HERE FOR YOU** and we will get through this pandemic together.*

Take good care and stay safe,  
Jennifer Stephens-Pierre, MA  
Director, Area Agency on Aging  
Alameda County

**here&  
Now**





## Food and Nutrition Resources During COVID-19

Mary Louise Zernicke, Senior Nutritionist



As we all know, older adults have been disproportionately affected by the coronavirus pandemic. It is anticipated that older adults will be advised to continue sheltering in place for longer than younger adults and children. For many of you in this demographic, this has presented problems with food access. Even if you can otherwise afford the food in the store you may be very uncomfortable going into public spaces to shop. Our food providers have responded, and quickly, to help older adults get the food they need without going to the store.

- **Our grocery program for low income seniors, Mercy Brown Bag, will now deliver bags of groceries to your home twice monthly.** The bags include “senior friendly” foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables, healthy packaged products, and low sodium items. The direct line to Mercy Brown Bag is 510-534-8540. There is no cost for the bags.
- **If you were formally not eligible for meals on wheels but are now stuck at home because of COVID-19, you are eligible for meals on wheels.** Meals on wheels programs have expanded their services, dramatically. Each area of the county has its own meals on wheels program. While donations are requested, they are anonymous and not mandatory.
- **Most of our dining site lunch programs are operating, but are offering a “grab and go” meal.** Some programs will deliver a lunch to local seniors. Many new sites have opened so there is likely a site near you.

**To find out how to reach these programs, call 1-800-510-2020**, our information and assistance number. You can also call the general resource number 211, or go to this website:

<https://alaco211.sharepoint.com/:x/s/ResourceInfo/Efj2Q5TBjENELAwPdYdUqMMB8XrGBze-YggjQEBw9JiGCg?rttime=w1Fa-KT710g>, which is updated regularly.

The State of California has announced a new, temporary program titled **Great Plates**. Older adults who have tested positive or been exposed to COVID-19 or have other vulnerabilities will be eligible for up to three meals a day, delivered free to their home. The program is of limited time (30-90 days) and eligibility is restrictive. If you live outside Oakland, please contact this information number for more info, 925-803-7943, email [ACGreatPlates@acgov.org](mailto:ACGreatPlates@acgov.org) or go to <http://acgreatplates.acgov.org>. If you live in Oakland, please call 510-238-3663, email [greatplates@oakland.ca.gov](mailto:greatplates@oakland.ca.gov) or go to: <https://www.oaklandca.gov/resources/great-plates-delivered-city-of-oakland>



## Staying Connected During These Unusual Times

Regina Silbert, ACA Commissioner

For older adults and those at higher risk of COVID-19, staying active at home and engaging with your family, friends and community can help combat social isolation and loneliness. Now more than ever, it's important for older adults to make an extra effort to engage in social and physical activities. This means more telephone time and perhaps learning how to use the computer to see friends and family and to join exercise classes online. These activities help our minds and bodies to remain active and vibrant, facilitating our sense of purpose and enhancing a positive perspective.



If you're not computer savvy or don't have access to a computer, there are a lot of exercises you can do by yourself. Exercise will help boost your immune system, increase strength and balance to reduce risk of falls, and improve your quality of life.

### Try the following simple exercises:

- Build leg and arm strength. Using the arms of a chair as support, press down on the chair arms while pressing heels into the ground and lift yourself up out of the chair, then sit back down. Start with repetitions of five and work up to 10 times, every day.
- Sit in a chair with a straight back, inhale deeply as you raise your arms upward, and then slowly exhale as you lower your arms. This helps with lung capacity and keeps the brain oxygenated for clearer thinking. Do this several times a day.
- Go outside for some fresh air. Walk around your yard for 10 or 15 minutes or do light yard work.

### Keep your mind active:

- Keep your brain fresh with crossword puzzles, Sudoku or reading a good book. Try to challenge yourself by counting backward from 50, by six.
- Start a journal or practice memoir writing. Memoir writing sounds intimidating, but the best way to start recording your stories is to journal regularly. Start with a different prompt or question each day. Write about your childhood best friend; describe a cherished place from your life like a home, vacation spot, school, etc.; or a favorite family tradition.
- Check out the free library resources — e-books, audiobooks and more — or start a virtual book club with friends and family.

## Staying Connected During These Unusual Times (Continued)

### Stay connected:

- Check in with friends and family regularly. Whether it's through video chats, phone calls or letters, most of us have more time now to catch up.
- If you use a computer, find online communities with people who share your passions or interests. There are many free classes and videos available online. Whether it's cooking, painting or gardening many organizations are sharing free resources and content to try at home.

Sheltering in place doesn't mean isolating yourself from the world. Don't forget resources like the Friendship Line, a free service provided by the Institute on Aging, at 800-971-0016. Or check out Well Connected (formerly Senior Center Without Walls), a community made up of participants, staff, facilitators, presenters, and other volunteers who care about each other and who value being connected. All groups are accessible by phone from wherever you are at no cost to you. Call 877-797-7299 to find out more.

## Coronavirus' Disparate Impacts

Thomas Gregory, Deputy Director, The Center for Independent Living

It's been said by many that the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, doesn't discriminate, that this current global pandemic, the deadliest in a century, threatens virtually everyone. But, while virtually everyone is at risk, it's not true that COVID-19 doesn't discriminate. It does, and it does so against seniors and people with disabilities (PWD) and others with underlying medical conditions, especially those pertaining to respiratory and immune systems.

And it's not just COVID-19 itself that disproportionately impacts PWD; many of the measures we collectively take to limit its spread are hitting disabled people the hardest. For example, AC Transit bus drivers are normally required to provide assistance as requested to wheelchair-using passengers who need help securing their wheelchairs (and themselves) via the bus' safety-strap system, but this service has been temporarily suspended in order to reduce personal proximity and contagion. Moreover, many of the everyday steps that people take to protect themselves (such as having their meals delivered or using masks and sanitizers) typically cost money and, statistically, PWD are among the poorest of California's (and America's and the world's) poor.

Public health crises, like disasters, can sharply illustrate many of the ways that the disability community often struggles to have basic needs met. Folks who are in precarious positions even before a society-wide crisis arrives are usually the same folks hit hardest by the crisis. Hopefully COVID-19 will remind us and our policy makers that vulnerable populations -- seniors, PWD, those with access and functional needs -- need low-cost and no-cost long-term services and supports in order to be resilient and healthy segments of a resilient and healthy community at large.



## Coronavirus' Disparate Impacts (Continued)

To help try to keep vulnerable people and everyone safe from COVID-19, TheCIL will be distributing no-cost face masks and hand sanitizers every Thursday afternoon from 4:00-4:45pm in front of TheCIL's offices at 3075 Adeline Street, Suite 100, Berkeley 94703. Distribution events will begin on 6/18 and continue every Thursday while supplies last. Everybody is eligible, ten masks per person per event...for more info contact Thomas Gregory at [tgregory@thecil.org](mailto:tgregory@thecil.org).



## In the Eye of the Ombudsman: Expressed Wished Advocacy in the Age of COVID-19.

Nicole Howell, Executive Director, Ombudsman Services of Contra Costa, Solano & Alameda

Ombudsman Services of Contra Costa, Solano and Alameda is the frontline of voices for residents in long-term care. We are a federally mandated program with the mission of acting as an advocate to ensure that residents live free of abuse and neglect. While advocacy includes a variety of approaches, our mainstay is making regular unannounced visits. Since COVID-19 began, we have been barred from entering skilled nursing facilities and residential care facilities. Yes, COVID has presented a whole new host of challenges, but that doesn't mean we stop advocating for the 15,000 residents that we serve in Alameda County.

As Ombudsman, we're keenly aware of emergency preparedness. From day one, our operations have been ongoing, and our staff continues to participate in facility care conferences discussing infectious control plans and supplies as well as regularly talking to families and residents. From March 15 – May 15, the height of COVID, our team completed nearly 300 facility consultations and close to 200 individual consultations providing vital information and resources. When faced with local outbreaks, our staff is checking in weekly until there are no more positive cases.

This pandemic has been hard because we can't just drop in and make sure what facilities are telling us is correct. We have a real lack of facility oversight, which is a huge problem. This makes our voices even more critical in terms of spreading awareness and advocating for systemic and policy change.

We have participated in efforts for residents' rights by collaborating with local reporters to spread the word on the risks that face older adults, ensuring that their voices are being heard. We've teamed up with the California Elder Justice Coalition in calling on Governor Newsom to incentivize care staff to stop them from working at multiple facilities. We've also been participating in advocacy efforts that oppose facilities absolving themselves of responsibility during the pandemic. And we're just getting started.

## In the Eye of the Ombudsman: Expressed Wished Advocacy in the Age of COVID-19 (Continued)

With the new era of care thrust upon us, we're looking ahead and working to addressing issues that elder care professionals will continue to face with the launch of our Elder Justice Lunch and Learn series. Initially set to be an in-person forum, we pivoted to a yearlong monthly webinar series that started on June 18, during Elder Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month, that brings our industry together with leaders at the forefront of addressing the evolution of elder abuse and COVID-19.

The coronavirus pandemic has changed the elder care industry and the long-term care community as we know it. There is no other option but to continue to fight for change. We need to encourage innovation, and the restructure of our regulatory framework to ensure we all can participate in society and live our daily lives free from worry or harm as we age.

If you or someone you know needs help, please reach out to our team by calling 925.685.2070. Or, for more information on the impacts of COVID-19 in Alameda County visit our COVID-19 resource page at [www.ccombudsman.org](http://www.ccombudsman.org).

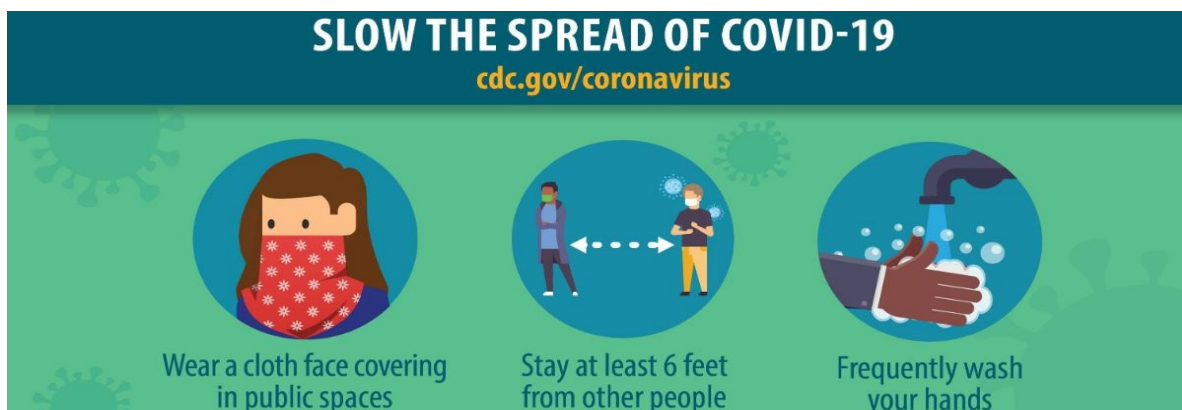


**2-1-1** is a free, non-emergency, confidential, 3-digit phone number and service that provides easy access to housing information, and critical health and human services.

**2-1-1** operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with multilingual capabilities. Alameda County 211 is committed to being the first, most essential resource to anyone who needs help.

**Phone: 211**

**Online: [www.211.org](http://www.211.org)**



## Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19): Important Information About Social Security Services

Sarah Kim-Lee, Social Security Regional Public Affairs Specialist & ACA Commissioner

We recognize that you may have questions about how the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) will affect Social Security services. The first thing you should know is that we continue to pay Social Security and SSI benefits. Also, beware of scammers who may try to trick you into thinking the pandemic is stopping your Social Security payments. This threat is not true. Don't let the scammers fool you.

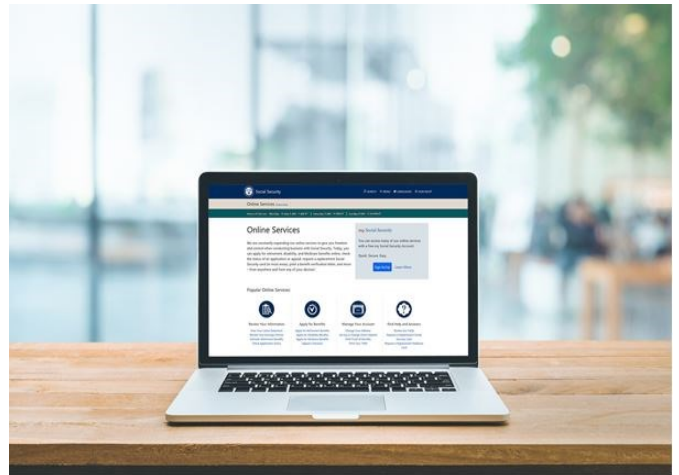
We want to share other important information about our services during this pandemic.

To protect you and our employees, and help stop the spread of COVID-19, we cannot accept visitors in our offices at this time. We provide many services online and limited, critical services via phone and email. During the pandemic, we are dedicating available staff to serve people in most critical need of our services.

Need help from Social Security? Many of our services are available online at [www.ssa.gov/onlineservices](http://www.ssa.gov/onlineservices), including:

- Applying for benefits.
- Setting up or changing your direct deposit.
- Changing your address, if you get benefits.
- Getting proof of your benefits.

We strongly encourage you to try our convenient and secure online services before calling us. Please be aware that our call wait times are much longer than normal. Save time and go online.



For more information, please visit our COVID-19 page at [www.ssa.gov/coronavirus](http://www.ssa.gov/coronavirus). There you can find out what limited services we can provide by phone, and important information about deadlines we are extending to ease the burden on you and medical providers during this pandemic. You can also subscribe to get an email or text message notification when we update the page so you stay informed.

Please share our COVID-19 page with your friends and family.

Senior Update  
Area Agency On Aging  
Advisory Commission on Aging  
6955 Foothill Blvd, Suite 300  
Oakland, CA 94605-1907

Phone: 1-800-510-2020

Fax: 510-577-1962

#### We're On The Web!

[http://www.alamedasocialservices.org/public/services/elders\\_and\\_disabled\\_adults/area\\_agency\\_on\\_aging.cfm](http://www.alamedasocialservices.org/public/services/elders_and_disabled_adults/area_agency_on_aging.cfm)

**Senior Update Editorial Board: Ramil Rivera  
Donna Ireland, Regina Silbert, Delbert Walker**

## Senior Information

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PERMIT NO. 45



The Alameda County Area Agency on Aging, along with The Center for Independent Living and Community Resources for Independent Living working to be a reemerging ADRC to promote and provide easy, uniform, and streamlined access to a broad array of services, support, and advocacy for individuals seeking long-term supports and services (LTSS) and information about LTSS.

### Dates to Remember:

**Independence Day** - July 4, 2020

**Tax Day Extension Deadline** - July 15, 2020

**National Senior Citizens Day** - August 21, 2020

**National Ear Outside Day** - August 31, 2020

**Labor Day** - September 7, 2020

**911 Remembrance** - September 11, 2020

**Grandparent's Day** - September 13, 2020

**Autumn Equinox** - September 22, 2020

### Upcoming Meetings:

#### **Advisory Commission on Aging**

- ♦ July TBD, 2020
- ♦ August 10, 2020
- ♦ September 14, 2020

#### **Information & Assistance Roundtable**

- ♦ July 17, 2020





## SENIOR INFORMATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Alameda County Area Agency on Aging

800-510-2020 / 510-577-3530; <http://seniorinfo.acgov.org>

### Quick Reference Resource Guide

Service Category	Organization	Program Name	Phone	Notes
<b>Food Resources</b>				
(Grab and Go Meals)	<b>Open Heart Kitchen</b>		<b>925-500-8241</b>	East County area
	<b>Spectrum Community Services</b>		<b>510-881-0300 ext. 242</b>	North & Central areas
(Grocery Delivery)	<b>Mercy Brown Bag</b>		<b>510.534.8540 ext. 369</b>	Grocery distribution/delivery 2x month for low-income seniors 60+
(Grocery Distribution)	<b>Alameda County Community Food Bank</b>		<b>510-635-3663</b>	
(Home Delivered Meals)	<b>Alameda County Great Plates Delivered</b>		<b>925-803-7943</b>	Seniors that do not qualify for any other State Nutrition programs
	<b>Alameda County Meals On Wheels</b>		<b>510-777-9560</b>	Referral to local meals on wheels program
	<b>City of Oakland Great Plates Delivered</b>		<b>510-238-3663</b>	Oakland seniors that do not qualify for any other State Nutrition programs
<b>Mental Health Support</b>				
	<b>Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services (BHCS)</b>	ACCESS Line	<b>800-491-9099</b>	Provides information, screening and referrals for Alameda County residents
	<b>CA Dept. of Aging: Friendship Line California</b>		<b>888-670-1360</b>	24-hour, toll-free "life-line" serves for Californians 60+ that are feeling anxious, fearful or lonely
	<b>Crisis Support Services of Alameda County</b>	Friendly Visits by Phone	<b>800-260-0094</b>	Daily phone calls for homebound seniors
	<b>Geriatric Assessment &amp; Response Team (GART)</b>		<b>510-383-5020</b>	Provides supportive counseling and local mental health resources.
	<b>Pacific Center for Human Growth</b>		<b>510-548-8238</b>	Peer groups for LGBTQ seniors
<b>Disabled Adult Services</b>				
	<b>Community Resources for Independent Living - CRIL</b>		<b>510-881-5743</b>	Serves the Hayward, Fremont, and Livermore areas
	<b>The CIL - The Center for Independent Living</b>		<b>510-846-4776</b>	Serves the Alameda, Berkeley, Oakland areas
<b>Elder Abuse &amp; Neglect</b>				
	<b>Adult Protective Services (APS)</b>		<b>510-577-3500</b>	Report Elder Abuse and Neglect
	<b>District Attorney - Elder/Dependent Adult Protection Unit</b>		<b>510-267-8800</b>	Provides advocacy services to victims of Elder Abuse
<b>Health Insurance Programs</b>				
	<b>HICAP - Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program</b>		<b>510-839-0393</b>	Provides free and unbiased health insurance counseling to Medicare beneficiaries
	<b>Social Security Administration</b>	Medicare	<b>800-633-4227</b>	
<b>Housing Assistance Programs</b>				
	<b>2-1-1 Alameda County</b>	Emergency Housing /Shelters	<b>2-1-1/ 888-886-9660</b>	Information on low-income housing and emergency shelters
	<b>East Bay Housing Organizations - EBHO</b>		<b>510-663-3830</b>	Provides information on affordable housing



## SENIOR INFORMATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Alameda County Area Agency on Aging

800-510-2020 / 510-577-3530; <http://seniorinfo.acgov.org>

### Quick Reference Resource Guide

Service Category	Organization	Program Name	Phone	Notes
Housing Assistance Programs (continued)				
	ECHO Housing		510-581-9380	Fair housing, housing discrimination and tenant/landlord services
	Gold Star Senior Shared Housing		800-383-7813/ 510-729-0852	Assists with finding affordable shared housing
	Home Match - Covia	Fremont	510-574-2173	Assist with finding affordable shared housing in the Fremont area.
In-Home Support Services				
	In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)	Client/ Recipients	510-577-1800	Client Information and to apply
		Providers	510-577-1877	Provider information and to apply
	Public Authority for IHSS	Public Authority	510-577-1980	Provider list for clients
			510-577-5694	Registry list
Information & Resource				
	Area Agency on Aging	Senior Information & Assistance	800-510-2020	Information line for local senior resources and information
Legal Services				
	Bay Area Legal Aid		800-551-5554	Legal Advice Line
	International Institute of the Bay Area		510-451-2846	Immigration Legal Services
	Legal Assistance for Seniors		510-832-3040	Legal services for those age 60+
Social Services				
	Alameda County Social Services Agency	CalFresh	510-272-3663	To apply over the phone or request an application
		Medi-Cal	510-263-2420	
Transportation				
	2-1-1 Alameda County		2-1-1 or 888-886-9660	Information on transportation services
Utilities Assistance				
	Spectrum Community Services	HEAP	510-881-0300	Energy assistance for low-income households
Veteran Services				
	Alameda County Veterans' Service Office		510-577-1926	
	U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs		800-827-1000	

#### Other guides available from the Area Agency on Aging by request:

- Senior Housing Guide • Retirement Residences & Continuing Care Retirement Communities • Emergency Response Programs
- Fall Prevention • Food & Nutrition Resources Guide • Home Health Care, Home Care & Hospice Agencies • Placement Agencies

**Alameda County Area Agency on Aging, Senior Information & Assistance Program 800-510-2020 / 510-577-3530**  
<http://seniorinfo.acgov.org>





## SAVE THE DATE

United Seniors of Oakland and Alameda County Hosts  
***17th Annual Healthy Living Festival (HLF)***  
**Thursday, September 17, 2020**  
***(Remote by Video)***  
***10:00 am - 1:00 pm***  
**More details and logistics to come.**

### **“Promoting Health and Wellness for Over 60 Adults”**

To collectively take action to improve the quality of life for Alameda County seniors.

For more information  
Contact United Seniors Oakland and Alameda County  
at 1 (510) 729-0852  
Or email [mary@usoac.org](mailto:mary@usoac.org) or visit [www.usoac.org](http://www.usoac.org)



CONSERVATION  
SOCIETY OF  
CALIFORNIA

CONSERVATION & EDUCATION  
OAKLAND ZOO

# Our community. funding. future. power. Census.



GET COUNTED AT  
**WWW.MY2020CENSUS.GOV**

Our community **COUNTS**.

Our community **BELONGS**.



## TAKE THE 2020 CENSUS TODAY FROM YOUR HOME!

### When you respond, everyone benefits.

The government uses census data to decide how \$1.5 trillion is distributed in the nation every year. When you respond to the census, you help your community get its fair share of that \$1.5 trillion to fund education, roads, health care, social services and housing.

### Your personal information is 100% confidential.

By law, your census response cannot be shared with other government agencies such as DHS or ICE, or with people like your landlord or employer. It can only be used to produce anonymous statistics. The census will not ask about your citizenship or immigration status.

### Everyone counts. Everyone belongs.

Every person living at your address should be counted on the same census form regardless of their age or relationship to you. Don't forget babies or the people living in accessory dwelling units!



## CENSUS BY PHONE



English - 844-330-2020

Español/Spanish - 844-468-2020

中文/Chinese Mandarin - 844-391-2020

廣東話/Chinese Cantonese - 844-398-2020

Tiếng Việt/Vietnamese - 844-461-2020

عربي/Arabic - 844-416-2020

Tagalog - 844-478-2020

한국어 Korean - 844-392-2020

## ¡RESPONDA AL CENSO 2020 HOY DESDE SU CASA!

### Cuando usted responde, todos se benefician.

El gobierno utiliza los datos del censo para decidir cómo se distribuyen \$1,500 millones en el país cada año. Cuando responde el censo, ayuda a su comunidad a obtener su parte justa de esos \$1,500 millones para financiar escuelas, carreteras, atención médica, servicios sociales y vivienda.

### Su información personal es 100% confidencial.

Por ley, sus respuestas al censo no se pueden compartir con otros organismos gubernamentales, como DHS o ICE, ni con personas, como su propietario o empleador. Se puede usar solamente para producir estadísticas anónimas. El censo no le preguntará acerca de su ciudadanía o situación migratoria.

### Todos cuentan. Todos son parte de la comunidad.

Cada persona que viva en su domicilio debe incluirse en el mismo formulario de censo, independientemente de su edad o relación con usted. ¡No se olvide de los bebés o las personas que viven en unidades separadas de la casa!

## 即日起，在家里填写您的 2020 人口普查！

### 您的回应将给每个人都带来益处。

政府使用人口普查数据决定每年 1.5 万亿资金在全国的分配。通过参与人口普查，您可以帮助您所在的社区从 1.5 万亿资金中获得公平的份额，为教育、公路建设、健康护理、社会服务和住房提供资助。

### 您的个人信息是100% 保密的。

根据法律规定，您对人口普查的回应不会被分享给其他政府机构，例如国土安全部 (DHS) 或移民和海关执法局 (ICE) 等，也不得与您的房东或雇主等人分享。您的回应仅可用于生成匿名的统计资料。人口普查将不会询问国籍或移民身份的问题。

### 每个人都很重要。

每个人都应被计入人口普查中。每个居住在您地址的人都应被计入同一张人口普查表中，无论他们的年龄大小或与您之间的关系。不要忘记婴儿或居住在附属住宅单位 (ADU) 的其他人也应计算在内！

## WHY THE CENSUS MATTERS



Healthcare



Education



Transportation



Affordable Housing



*Your responses are  
protected by law.  
Sus respuestas son  
protegidas en ley.*