



A Surprise Ending

A big thank you to the agencies that have helped Region 1 Planning Council (RPC) ensure a complete count for the 2020 Census throughout the five-county Northern Illinois Region.

Isaac Guerrero, RPC The shifting deadline for the 2020 Census has challenged our efforts, to say the least, to accurately plan and budget for outreach activities to help people complete the Census survey.

In April, the Census Bureau moved the July 31 Census deadline to Oct. 31 to compensate for hardships caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Then, on Aug. 3, the Trump Administration moved the deadline up to Sept. 30. The Census Bureau later announced a short extension to Oct. 5. However, an Oct. 7 appellate court ruling deemed the earlier deadlines unlawful, effectively reinstating the original Oct. 31 deadline. Finally, an Oct. 14 Supreme Court decision determined that population count would end early after all. Enumeration and outreach activity terminated at 6 a.m. Oct. 16.



Isaac Guerrero answers questions about the Census at an Olivo Taco truck event in Rockford on Sept. 19, 2020.

While the timeline was in flux, Region 1 Planning Council and our nine subrecipient agencies focused our outreach efforts in areas where people had not yet responded to the Census. Outreach activity has included TV, radio, and online advertising and events featuring Census information and questionnaire assistance, food and drink, and Census-branded giveaways such as T-shirts, pens, facemasks, and more.



Aaron Lewis of RPC provides Census questionnaire assistance during the Buchanan Street Stroll in Belvidere on Sept. 13, 2020.



Isaac Guerrero helps a Belvidere resident complete the 2020 Census survey during the Buchanan Street Stroll.



Isaac Guerrero and Kaylin Janicke deliver Census-branded facemasks, water bottles, and hand sanitizer to Summerdale Early Childhood Center in Rockford on Oct. 2, 2020.

Census Grant Funding

Since last fall, RPC has received more than \$1.4 million for Census outreach efforts in the five-county region. The most recent installment of \$432,941 came July 1 and was distributed to nine subrecipients:

- Blackhawk Hills Regional Council
- City of Freeport
- City of Oregon
- City of Rochelle
- City of Rockford
- Northern Illinois University
- Rockford Area Mobility Project
- Vocational Rehabilitation Management, Inc.
- Winnebago County Health Department

Why is the Census important? The results of the population count help guide distribution of approximately \$1.5 trillion in annual spending across 316 federal programs to states, counties, and communities. The decennial head count is also used to calculate how many seats each state receives in the House of Representatives.

Northern IL Regional Response Rates: Above State and National Averages

Country and State	10/8/2020	Final 2010 Self-Response
National Average Response Rate:	66.8%	66.5%
State of IL Response Rate:	71.2%	70.5%
Cities		
City of Rockford	69.3%	69.6%
City of Rochelle	74.0%	73.5%
City of Belvidere	77.70%	73.80%
City of DeKalb	68.30%	67.60%
City of Freeport	70.8%	71.7%
City of Oregon	75.7%	74.2%
Counties		
Winnebago County	75.0%	72.5%
Boone County	78.60%	74.90%
DeKalb County	74.90%	71.70%
Stephenson County	74.4%	72.8%
Ogle County	76.3%	73.9%

<https://2020census.gov/en/response-rates.html>

Census Outreach Kicks into High Gear

Public outreach around the 2020 Census amplified in September as Illinois' shelter-in-place order subsided. Here's how Region 1 Planning Council (RPC) and our nine subrecipients promoted the 2020 Census in September and early October in Boone, Winnebago, Stephenson, Ogle, and DeKalb counties:

- **Blackhawk Hills Regional Council** led a radio and media campaign, hosted an outreach event, distributed educational materials, and promoted the Census via social media.
- **The city of Freeport** led a radio and media campaign, organized 18 outreach events, and distributed more than 700 Census flyers and educational materials.
- **The city of Oregon** hosted six community events, distributed more than 600 educational materials, and provided 90 individuals with Census questionnaire assistance.
- **The city of Rochelle** provided numerous community education and questionnaire assistance opportunities, including three "Ice Cream in the Park" events in September.
- **The city of Rockford** provided individuals with questionnaire assistance, distributed more than 120 educational materials, and led a robust broadcast and print advertising campaign about the Census.
- **Northern Illinois University** led a radio and media campaign, organized two outreach events, and distributed more than 200 Census flyers and educational materials.
- **Rockford Area Mobility Project** promoted the Census to hundreds of people through canvassing and phone banking efforts and at nine community events.
- **Vocational Resource Management Inc. (VRMI)** distributed more than 1,500 educational materials and partnered with Region 1 Planning Council (RPC) on outreach events in Rockford and DeKalb.
- **Winnebago County Health Department** distributed Census-branded facemasks and bottles of hand sanitizer, and Director Sandra Martell encouraged the public to complete the survey during her department's COVID-19 news conferences.
- **Region 1 Planning Council** distributed thousands of Census-branded facemasks, water bottles, and hand sanitizer to public schools and nonprofit agencies such as Miss Carly's and Rock River Valley Pantry.

Dozens of households, representing about 200 individuals in Rockford, Belvidere, and DeKalb, completed the Census survey at outreach events organized by RPC and VRMI. And since each individual who is counted equates to about \$1,500 in federal funds for the region per year for the next 10 years, these efforts alone translate to roughly **\$3 million over the next decade!**



Aaron Lewis and Isaac Guerrero assist a patron at a Rockford Mass Transit District Transfer Center outreach event on Sept. 25, 2020.

Census Fast Facts

- It's in the Constitution: Article 1, Section 2, mandates that the country conduct a count of its population once every 10 years. The 2020 Census marked the 24th time that the country has counted its population; the first was in 1790.
- The 2020 Census is not the first online U.S. Census. There was an online option for the 2000 Census, although it was available only for the short version of that year's form and only in English. The 2020 Census is set to be the first primarily online count to allow all U.S. households to reply through the Internet. The bureau is also collecting responses on paper, over the phone, and in person.



- According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there were an estimated 41 million potential trick-or-treaters in the U.S. in 2018 who had their pick of approximately 122 million homes or apartments.
- Some spooky places to visit include Slaughter Beach town, DE (Population: 232), Tombstone city, AZ (Population: 1,300), and Sleepy Hollow village, NY (Population: 10,057).
- Hopefully you get a chance to visit a few of the 3,430 candy and nut stores in the U.S. as of 2016. Happy Halloween!



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Outreach activity has made a big difference in the Northern Region!

Thanks to everyone for your hard work!