

The 2020 Census: What's at Stake for Idaho

The 2020 Census

The census is a constitutionally required, once-a-decade count of every person living in the United States and has a fundamental role in our democracy. The census is critical for three primary reasons:

1. Census data are used to reapportion seats in Congress, and to draw state and local legislative districts. The 2020 Census is at risk of disproportionately undercounting certain [Hard to Count \(HTC\) communities](#), undermining equal representation.
2. Census data are used to allocate [over \\$800 billion](#) in federal funding to states and localities.
3. Elected officials, business leaders and other decision-makers use census data to make critical decisions and inform public policy solutions.

Idaho Count Risk Factors	
Total Population	1,635,483
Population in HTC areas	33,674
Percentage in HTC areas	2%
Population in Tracts NOT receiving census by mail	12,199
Percentage households NO internet/ dial-up only	20.6%

To achieve its constitutional mandate, the census must be fair and accurate or risk undermining this indispensable population data for the next 10 years.

Threats to the Count in Idaho

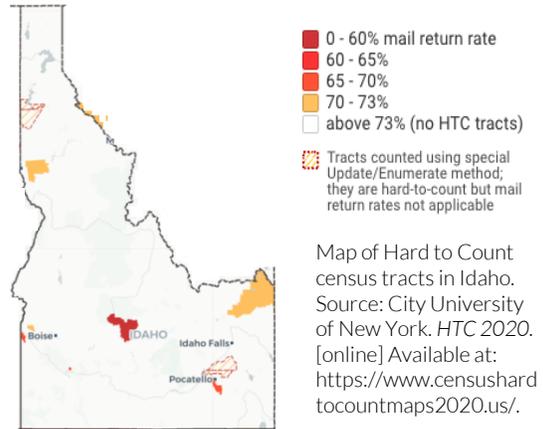
Unfortunately, the 2020 Census is facing [unprecedented challenges](#), including chronic and insufficient funding, decreasing public trust and delays to implementation of its IT systems. These threats heighten the risk that the census will fail to count every person living in the US.

In 2010, a 1 percent undercount would have missed 15,676 people in Idaho, costing the state \$11,301,745 in funding from census-derived federal financial assistance programs.

1. **Reduced Funding:** In 2015, more than [\\$2 billion](#) of Idaho's budget came from federal programs based on census data. Without accurate data, the federal government will [misallocate annual funding](#) for Medicaid, highways and other programs. Additionally, census data are used to allocate million to counties and cities annually.
2. **Economic Impact:** [Business leaders rely on census](#) demographic and economic data to inform development projections, marketing strategies and investment opportunities. Inaccurate data will derail potential economic growth for 10 years.
3. **Diminished Local Capacity:** In 2020, the Census Bureau plans to cut Area Census Offices (ACOs), reducing capacity to update address lists, conduct in-person visits to unresponsive households and liaison with complete count committees. Idaho would [drop to just one ACO](#) in 2020.
4. **Citizenship Question:** The addition of a new and untested [question about citizenship status](#) to the 2020 form is one of the most detrimental decisions to undermine the census. It is likely to [depress participation](#), [increase costs](#) by at least \$91.2 million, increase inaccuracy and inequity and erode public trust in the Census Bureau.
5. **"Internet Choice":** The 2020 Census will be the first decennial count using an online system to collect responses. Areas with low internet coverage or connectivity may experience greater difficulty participating in the count.
6. **Update/ Enumerate:** Areas without city-style addresses, in remote locations, or that have been affected by major disasters will not be mailed a census form. Instead, the Census Bureau will use alternative enumeration practices that may result in undercounts of up to 8%.

Hard to Count Populations in Idaho

The goal of the census is to “count everyone once, only once, and in the right place.” But some areas and populations are “hard to count” because of low self-response rates that force the Census Bureau to send personnel to non-responding households, which is difficult, time-consuming and expensive.



Hard-to-Count Group	Representation in Idaho’s Population
Hispanic or Latino	12% or approximately 196,258 people
Asian	2% or approximately 32,710 people
American Indian or Alaska Native	2% or approximately 32,709 people
Children under age 5	7% or approximately 114,484 people
Foreign-Born Individuals	7% or approximately 111,960 people
Limited English Proficient Households	2% or approximately 11,956 households <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 78% speak Spanish • 7% speak Indo-European languages • 9% speak Asian and Pacific Islander languages • 5% speak other languages

Top Counties at Risk of a Census Undercount

Counties at Risk	Total Population	Percent Hard to Count	Percent NOT mailed census form	Percent WITHOUT internet or only dial-up service	Percent Largest Community of Color	Percent Children Under Age 5	Percent Foreign-Born
Bannock	83,815	3%	2.8%	14.5%	8% Latino	8%	5%
Benewah	9,068		49.8%		11% AI/AN	6%	2%
Bingham	45,261		6.2%		18% Latino	8%	8%
Blaine	21,427	16%			21% Latino	6%	15%
Canyon	202,782	5%		16.9%	25% Latino	8%	8%
Elmore	26,103	12%			16% Latino	8%	13%
Fremont	12,896	9%			12% Latino	7%	6%
Kootenai	147,716	3%	1.7%	16.8%	4% Latino	6%	3%
Nez Perce	39,995	12%			7% AI/AN	6%	2%
Owyhee	11,356	38%			26% Latino	7%	10%