



2020 New Mexico Complete Count Commission

Recommendations Report for 2030 Census

SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF:

- ▶ The Governor's Statewide Complete Count Commission (SCCC)
- ▶ The Office of the Secretary, New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration (DFA)

RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT FOR 2030 CENSUS

From the 2020 New Mexico Complete Count Commission

At the time of publication, the Bureau has released only initial population counts for purposes of apportionment of Congressional seats. The 2020 Census count for New Mexico is 2,117,522 people. This total is higher than initial estimates by the U.S. Census Bureau for the resident population of New Mexico. Based on this data, the efforts described in this report led to Census participation that exceeded expectations despite significant challenges. Additionally, New Mexico outperformed neighboring states of Arizona, Colorado, and Texas in overall Census participation (estimated population vs. actual). Further information about demographic- and geographic-specific details about the state's final population count was not yet available before the publication of this report. However, with this initial release of data, the New Mexico Complete Count Commission is cautiously optimistic that the 2020 Census counted all New Mexico residents.

While the Census itself is the responsibility of the federal government, local and state governments have a vested interest in supporting these efforts to ensure their communities are fairly and accurately counted. It was to this end that the Commission was established and operated during the 2020 Census as a statewide, cross-sector, multi-year collaboration.

About the Recommendations Report

This is a companion report to the New Mexico Complete Count Commission's 2020 Census Final Report, which documents the activities, challenges, and successes of promoting Census participation during the 2020 Census.¹

Because of the work done by the Commission during the 2020 Census, we believe that advocates statewide are better equipped to prepare for the 2030 Census. In this report are the Commission's recommendations for 2030 Census advocacy in the state. The information herein was collected from Subcommittees, Local Complete Count Committees, media and outreach partners, nonprofits, and state agencies.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Start early.
2. Invest in accurate addresses.
3. Address internet access and computer literacy issues.
4. Create a core campaign and resource infrastructure.
5. Use community-centered outreach strategies to educate residents.
6. Encourage cross-sector and multi-county partnerships.
7. Cultivate positive relationships with Bureau staff at all levels.

¹ New Mexico Complete Count Commission 2020 Census Final Report is available at www.nmdfa.state.nm.us.

1. START EARLY.

"Whoever is Governor in 2027 should begin mobilizing this effort immediately."

— Data Subcommittee

"The effort for the 2030 Census cannot start too early."

— Los Alamos Complete Count Committee

"Engage in tribal collaboration no later than 3 years prior to the 2030 Census and develop/co-draft a joint state-tribal plan together very early."

— Tribal Representatives Subcommittee

"Working with the State Demographer, we put together private and public funding of \$363,500 for the Local Update of Census Address (LUCA) program that identified 100,000 addresses in hard-to-count areas that were missing from the U.S. Census Bureau's files. The Bureau added 63,000 of those addresses to its files. If all addresses were counted, it could garner billions more federal dollars to New Mexico, especially in traditionally undercounted communities."

— Charitable Funders Subcommittee

Provide early support and financial investments.

Given that the Census is a decennial effort, it's critical that the momentum leading up to the 2030 Census starts early and intentionally. By providing state funding in the years leading up to the Census, traditional advertising efforts and grassroots campaigns will be able to start earlier and coordinate more effectively. Cities and municipalities will also have the appropriate time to engage in grant agreements and procurement processes leading up to active outreach.

Build coalitions and partnerships in preparation for Census outreach.

Partnerships between public, private, nonprofit, and philanthropic sectors should begin years advance to connect resources, people, and organizations. The rapid coalition building was successful largely due to partnerships that had already been established outside of the state's involvement and the post-COVID shift to digital formats which allowed Complete Count Committees to connect digitally with one another, with nonprofit groups, and with the Commission. These partnerships proved critical and helpful on many fronts.

Develop a state-tribal partnership and plan.

Early engagement and collaboration between state and tribal governments is essential. By establishing an actionable plan early on, the Commission and its partners will be well-suited to acknowledge and address the challenges that Native Americans face to filling out the Census. This collaboration should also include Native-led or Native serving organizations connected to the urban Native community.

2. INVEST IN ACCURATE ADDRESSES.

Fund the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) program.

Accurate and up-to-date addresses matter. Investing in updating Census addresses in the years prior is critical to set the state and the Census Bureau up for success in reaching and counting residents in all households. It is important that tribal governments and urban Native organizations are involved in the LUCA program to ensure Census maps are updated and ensure follow-up by the Census Bureau to reflect these updates.

Invest in an improved state address file.

Alternatively, the state could invest in an improved state address file built

around the E911 database that is maintained to a high level of accuracy in perpetuity. This database currently needs improvement in some counties and could be improved with data from other state address records.

3. ADDRESS INTERNET ACCESS AND COMPUTER LITERACY ISSUES.

Prepare for more reliance on online participation from the Bureau.

Requesting that households respond online is a cost-effective way for the Bureau to collect responses. It would be wise to anticipate that the Bureau will increase its encouragement to respond online rather than by paper or by phone. The state should be prepared to address this barrier across the state with a specific focus on rural, tribal, low-income, and senior communities.

Increase broadband access.

The 2020 Census was the first time the Census was offered online. For New Mexico, this was a significant barrier to ensuring that residents were counted. Increasing broadband access would help ensure that more households are able to respond online. This is especially critical in Update Leave areas, which make up about 18% of New Mexico households versus only about 5% of the national population.

Support computer literacy programs.

Computer literacy is the second step after broadband access to ensuring that community members can respond online. After an area has internet access, some residents will be able to use a computer or tablet on a daily basis for the first time. Educating them how to use it, what they have access to, and how to troubleshoot problems will help with Census participation as well as other civic duties and daily activities.

4. CREATE A CORE CAMPAIGN AND RESOURCE INFRASTRUCTURE.

Conduct statewide message testing.

Two years before active Census outreach, New Mexico-specific message testing should be conducted to understand what messages will be best for New Mexico's residents. That information should then be distilled down into key findings and recommended messaging and shared with anyone involved in Census outreach efforts.

"Rural populations are traditionally difficult to count, and even more so during a pandemic... Improving access to broadband infrastructure could help deliver improved rural response rates for the 2030 Census."

— Rural Communities Outreach Subcommittee

"The message testing funded by NM Counts 2020 Funders group set a critical foundation to the success of the whole campaign."

— Media and Messaging Subcommittee

Develop one statewide campaign for all Census outreach.

It is from the message testing that the state should create a core campaign, develop a campaign plan, and create outreach materials. For ease of public engagement, having one clear campaign identity that all major outreach efforts use is recommended. To the resident, it doesn't matter if the commercial they're watching or pamphlet they're reading was funded by the state, by philanthropy, or by a business. Having all efforts externally housed under one campaign identity will help make outreach clear for the public.

Establish Complete Count Committees and provide guidelines and professional training.

Having a Complete Count Committee in 33 counties and 23 Tribes and Pueblos was a phenomenal success. In 2030, there should be more parameters around who should be on the CCC and guidelines to core activities.

Many state agencies and Complete Count Committees recommended having a staff member or contractor dedicated to the Census rather than fitting in this outreach into their current staff capacity. The state should provide Complete Count Committees and others with professional communications and campaign training prior to active outreach. Getting active members on the same page about best practices, resources, and tools to help them expand outreach efforts in their local area will be helpful to an effective campaign across the whole state. Doing this early on, will also give them time to develop a place-based outreach plan.

Additionally, make becoming a Census Enumerator a requirement for a certain percentage of each Complete Count Committee. These individuals are going to be leading outreach efforts in their local communities and will encounter residents on a regular basis. In order to legally help residents complete their Census on the spot, the CCC members need to be a Census enumerator who was hired and trained by the Bureau.

Create and share recommended outreach plans and materials.

During the 2020 Census, Complete Count Committees had autonomy to create their own local outreach plan. For the 2030 Census, it is recommended that the state provide a general outreach plan that the CCCs can use as a starting point for their work. Then, CCCs can adjust the plan based on local opportunities and ideas specific to reach the residents in their areas.

Just like the findings from the message testing, all outreach materials should be made available to anyone involved in Census efforts leading up to active outreach. Whenever possible, materials should be editable so that CCCs can adapt them to their local community.

"I would recommend that counties do term hires or hire contractors with campaign outreach experience as opposed to relying on staff with pre-existing job responsibilities and little experience with this level of outreach."

— Taos County Complete Count Committee

"Attending the Statewide CCC meetings both in person and later via Webex were helpful. Consistent attendance made all the difference because of the networking and ability to remain informed about initiatives, particularly once things began changing after COVID-19."

— McKinley County Complete Count Committee

"The work of 'trusted messengers' is critical in a state like New Mexico, where there is a history of broken trust and misconceptions about the role of the federal government, specifically as it relates to the Census and aligned funding."

— Children, Students, Youth, & Education Subcommittee

"Ensure that the funding for the Census is placed with the proper organizations that are on the ground getting the work done."

— Minority & Underrepresented Communities Subcommittee

"A population primed to complete the Census will have a much higher turnout, especially early, if they are ready, primed, and understanding of its importance."

— Rio Arriba Complete Count Committee

"Mobile Assistance Centers required portable electronics such as laptops and tablets to access the internet via cell phone hotspots, as public Wi-Fi access is non-existent in southeast New Mexico. Our local AT&T store assisted us with this matter numerous times, at no cost"

— Chaves County Complete Count Committee

Stay connected and informed.

Regular meetings and newsletters proved useful to updating the broad network of Census partners on any adjustments enacted by the bureau, new ideas, and troubleshooting local issues together. This will be an important element to keep in place during the 2030 Census.

5. USE COMMUNITY-CENTERED OUTREACH STRATEGIES TO EDUCATE RESIDENTS.

Use trusted messengers.

Partnerships with trusted messengers in local communities was extremely valuable to encouraging residents to respond to the Census. Using local celebrities, radio show hosts, educators, fire fighters, nurses, and more is an effective way to show that the Census matters in every community.

Leverage established community-based partnerships.

Similar to trusted messengers, community-based organizations and partnerships were beneficial to share information; educate residents; and address misconceptions, misinformation, and mistrust toward the Census. By funding outreach through CBOs and giving them talking points and information about the Census, they can have direct conversations with residents.

Educate the public about the Census on an ongoing basis.

Since this is a decennial Census, most of the public is unaware of its importance in our lives, what it does, and who should be counted. Incorporating curriculum about the Census in schools on a more regular basis will help inform the next generation of residents who will fill out the 2030 Census for the first time.

6. ENCOURAGE CROSS-SECTOR AND MULTI-COUNTY PARTNERSHIPS.

Leverage cross-sector partnerships on the state and local levels.

The Census provides a unique opportunity to pull in everyone from the nonprofit, private, philanthropic, and public sectors to make sure every resident is counted. Leverage cross-sector partnerships as much as possible to prevent overlap or gaps in outreach. On the state level, having a holistic view of the activities going on was helpful to being able to adapt quickly and effectively. On the community level, these partnerships proved useful for direct outreach and connections to residents during daily activities.

Develop multi-county strategies.

Media entities, save for social and digital media entities, do not follow county lines so there will be inevitable campaign overlap. To reduce the likelihood of a resident seeing multiple campaigns, which can be confusing and cause message fatigue, counties should work together to come up with regional campaigns and media materials. This will also prevent duplications in media spending so that budgets can be spent on other outreach strategies. Beyond media buying and placement, the need for multi-count strategies extends to grassroots efforts for hard-to-count areas that cross county borders.

7. CULTIVATE POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH BUREAU STAFF AT ALL LEVELS.

"Partner with Census Bureau Partnership and Operations teams to understand recruitment goals, methodology, timeline, questionnaire, and nuance of each operation."

— Tribal Representatives
Subcommittee

Help promote hiring local Census Enumerators.

In addition to requiring that CCC members become Census enumerators, one of the best ways the Commission should also create a recruitment campaign with local messaging and imagery for residents to become Census Enumerators. People are far more likely to get counted if the person knocking on their door is from their community, or even someone they know. The Bureau is solely responsible for hiring and training these enumerators; however it is of the utmost importance that the Commission help with recruitment so that the Bureau reaches their local hiring goals. These enumerators should also be given local talking points to address specific concerns that New Mexico's residents may have before completing their Census.

Meet regularly with Bureau staff.

Ensure the Commission has a dedicated staff member to invite to meetings to provide updates from the Bureau. During the 2020 Census, activities were adjusting constantly, at times even on an hourly basis. Having access to up-to-date information from a dedicated Bureau representative was helpful. The Commission's media team also had a constructive relationship with the Bureau's media team and were better able to navigate the overlapping media landscape and campaigns.

Census Matters: Census-Guided Funding in New Mexico

The Bottom Line

New Mexico received:

\$17,709,409,976

in census-guided federal
spending in Fiscal Year 2023.

This funding flowed from 371 census-guided federal assistance programs that, nationwide, allocate \$2.24 trillion in FY 2023. These programs rely on state and local data from the decennial census (or data, like the American Community Survey, derived from the census)

to direct federal funding to specific areas of the country.

An incorrect count in the census can cost a state millions — even billions — in federal funds over the decade between counts.

Where New Mexico Census-Guided Spending Went in FY 2023¹



Medicaid and Medicare

Providing millions of Americans with health insurance and assistance in paying for medical services, prescription drugs, surgeries, hospital stays, and more.

\$12.51 billion



Health Spending (excluding Medicaid and Medicare)

Assisting households with medical costs, providing nutritional support, social services, community health centers, and more.

\$2.44 billion



Infrastructure

Allocating funds for roads, bridges, energy production, broadband, water treatment, and other community infrastructure projects.

\$1.37 billion



Education

Supporting primary education, special education, higher education, as well as training and education of community members on important issues.

\$1.13 billion



Economic Development

Providing loans for business expansions, small business assistance, employment services, and more, to improve the economic well-being of communities.

\$501.32 million



Housing

Assisting homeowners and renters with housing costs, investing in public housing, and helping veterans, older Americans, people with disabilities, and others find affordable housing.

\$379.88 million

How the Census Directs Funding

Eligibility criteria – The census can inform who qualifies for funds. For example, census population data determines which areas count as rural and therefore qualify for The Rural Rental Assistance program.

Allocation formulas – Census data can decide how much money people or communities get. For example, the Social Services Block Grant program uses census data to calculate what

percent of the total U.S. population lives in a state – and assigns funds accordingly.

Application evaluations – When states or communities compete for funding, the census can provide key data points. For example, the Middle Mile (Broadband) Grant Program prioritizes counties with greater numbers of underserved and high poverty communities.

Loan interest rates – Some federal assistance loan programs use census data in setting the interest rates on the loans they offer or guarantee. For example, the USDA's Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program sets interest rates based on the median household income and population of an area.

Why An Accurate Count Matters

New Mexico had an estimated population of **2,114,768** as of 2023.² A complete and accurate population count in the 2030 census is an essential baseline to ensure the state gets the full federal funding

to which it is entitled. Even small undercounts or overcounts can cost New Mexico money, depending on the program and exactly who is miscounted. One challenge is that every state has significant

populations of people who have been historically and persistently undercounted by the census, including people of color, young children, renters, and those in low-income households.

Put this Fact Sheet into Action



Make elected officials and policy makers in New Mexico aware that inaccurate census numbers impact federal funds. Urge them to begin planning now to ensure everyone is accurately counted in 2030.



Educate your community on the impact the census has on funding for schools, health care, and other local needs in New Mexico. This outreach can increase participation and help avoid undercounts.

Learn More



Learn more about the report, *Census Matters: Why an Accurate Count is Essential to Funding Our Communities*, on our website, including further details on our methodology, previous findings, and data on other states, at: www.pogo.org/census-nm.

If you have any questions, please contact census.info@pogo.org.

¹ Many programs serve multiple needs simultaneously, and in these cases, program funding was counted in more than one category. The total amount of funding by category, therefore, may exceed the state's total census-guided funding for the year.

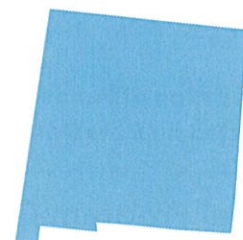
² Population data sourced from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey 5-Year Data estimates, 2023.

NEW MEXICO

In FY2016, New Mexico received

\$7,816,466,854

through 55 federal spending programs
guided by data derived from the 2010 Census.



The Counting for Dollars 2020 Project aims to understand 1) the extent to which the federal government will rely on data from the 2020 Census to guide the distribution of federal funding to states, localities, and households across the nation and 2) the impact of the accuracy of the 2020 Census on the fair, equitable distribution of these funds.

The project has analyzed spending by state for 55 federal programs (\$883,094,826,042 in FY2016). Three types of programs are analyzed:

- **Domestic financial assistance programs** provide financial assistance – including direct payments to individuals, grants, loans, and loan guarantees – to non-federal entities within the U.S. – such as individuals and families, state and local governments, companies, and nonprofits – in order to fulfill a public purpose.
- **Tax credit programs** allow a special exclusion, exemption, or deduction from gross income or provide a special credit, a preferential rate of tax, or a deferral of tax liability.
- **Procurement programs** award a portion of Federal prime contract dollars to small businesses located in areas selected on the basis of census-derived data.

The four uses of census-derived datasets to geographically allocate funding are:

- **Define eligibility criteria** – that is, identify which organizations or individuals can receive funds.
- **Compute formulas** that geographically allocate funds to eligible recipients.
- **Rank project applications** based on priorities (e.g., smaller towns, poorer neighborhoods).
- **Set interest rates** for federal loan programs.

The two categories of census-derived datasets are:

- **Geographic classifications** – the characterization (e.g., rural), delineation (e.g., Metropolitan Areas), or designation (e.g., Opportunity Zones) of specific geographic areas.
- **Variable datasets**
 - **Annual updates** of population and housing variables collected in the Decennial Census.
 - **Household surveys** collecting new data elements (e.g., income, occupation) by using the Decennial Census to design representative samples and interpret results.



Reports of the Counting for Dollars 2020 Project:

- > **Report #1:** Initial Analysis: 16 Large Census-guided Financial Assistance Programs (August 2017)*
- > **Report #2:** Estimating Fiscal Costs of a Census Undercount to States (March 2018)*
- > **Report #3:** Role of the Decennial Census in Distributing Federal Funds to Rural America (December 2018)*
- > **Report #4:** Census-derived Datasets Used to Distribute Federal Funds (December 2018)
- > **Report #5:** Analysis of 55 Large Census-guided Federal Spending Programs (forthcoming)**
- > **Report #6:** An Inventory of 320 Census-guided Federal Spending Programs (forthcoming)

* Data available by state
+ Source for this state sheet

Counting for Dollars 2020

The Role of the Decennial Census in the Geographic Distribution of Federal Funds

REPORT

COUNTING FOR DOLLARS 2020: NEW MEXICO

**Allocation of Funds from 55 Large Federal Spending Programs
Guided by Data Derived from the 2010 Census (Fiscal Year 2016)**

Total Program Obligations: \$7,816,466,854

Program	Dept.	Obligations	Program	Dept.	Obligations
Financial Assistance Programs		\$7,623,667,347			
Medical Assistance Program (Medicaid)	HHS	\$4,370,292,000	Community Facilities Loans/Grants	USDA	\$450,440
Federal Direct Student Loans	ED	\$280,221,723	Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants	ED	\$17,762,636
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program	USDA	\$693,426,783	Crime Victim Assistance	DOJ	\$14,551,569
Medicare Suppl. Medical Insurance (Part B)	HHS	\$264,828,366	CDBG Entitlement Grants	HUD	\$6,016,885
Highway Planning and Construction	DOT	\$386,013,375	Public Housing Capital Fund	HUD	\$6,050,000
Federal Pell Grant Program	ED	\$171,000,000	Block Grants for the Prevention and Treatment of Substance Abuse	HHS	\$9,565,114
Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers	HUD	\$75,625,000	Water and Waste Disposal Systems for Rural Communities	USDA	\$1,942,000
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	HHS	\$123,235,917	Social Services Block Grant	HHS	\$10,305,301
Very Low to Moderate Income Housing Loans	USDA	\$46,350,437	Rural Rental Assistance Payments	USDA	\$18,504,354
Title I Grants to LEAs	ED	\$127,689,674	Business and Industry Loans	USDA	\$14,123,000
State Children's Health Insurance Program	HHS	\$122,483,000	Career and Technical Education - Basic Grants to States	ED	\$8,074,607
National School Lunch Program	USDA	\$100,977,000	Homeland Security Grant Program	DHS	\$6,434,500
Special Education Grants	ED	\$194,908,708	WIOA Dislocated Worker Grants	DOL	\$6,664,680
Section 8 Housing Assistance Payments Program	HUD	\$30,258,104	HOME	HUD	\$5,317,900
Federal Transit Formula Grants	DOT	\$39,814,000	State CDBG	HUD	\$10,477,460
Head Start	HHS	\$83,579,234	WIOA Youth Activities	DOL	\$5,917,399
WIC	USDA	\$45,670,000	WIOA Adult Activities	DOL	\$5,792,559
Title IV-E Foster Care	HHS	\$17,205,501	Employment Service/Wagner-Peyser	DOL	\$5,989,058
Health Care Centers	HHS	\$69,063,161	Community Services Block Grant	HHS	\$4,099,540
School Breakfast Program	USDA	\$44,852,000	Special Programs for the Aging, Title III, Part C, Nutrition Services	HHS	\$4,277,275
Rural Electrification Loans and Loan Guarantees	USDA	\$0	Cooperative Extension Service	USDA	\$3,357,238
Public and Indian Housing	HUD	\$10,538,000	Native Amer. Employment & Training	DOL	\$2,405,715
Low Income Home Energy Assistance	HHS	\$17,999,041			
Child and Adult Care Food Program	USDA	\$33,856,000	Federal Tax Expenditures		\$77,461,712
Vocational Rehabilitation Grants to the States	ED	\$24,815,546	Low Income Housing Tax Credit	Treas	\$55,974,169
Child Care Mandatory and Matching Funds	HHS	\$19,767,000	New Markets Tax Credit	Treas	\$21,487,543
Unemployment Insurance Administration	DOL	\$15,188,000			
Federal Transit - Capital Investment Grants	DOT	\$4,138,050	Federal Procurement Programs		\$115,337,795
Child Care and Development Block Grant	HHS	\$22,850,000	HUBZones Program	SBA	\$115,337,795
Adoption Assistance	HHS	\$18,942,497			

Prepared by Andrew Reamer, the George Washington Institute of Public Policy, the George Washington University. Spending data analysis provided by Sean Moulton, Open Government Program Manager, Project on Government Oversight. | January 30, 2019

Note: The sequence of the above programs is consistent with U.S. rank order by program expenditures. (See U.S. sheet in series.)

Counting for Dollars 2020 publications and spreadsheet with above data available at <https://gwipp.gwu.edu/counting-dollars-2020-role-decennial-census-geographic-distribution-federal-funds>