

San Mateo County

Fact Sheet



What is the Census?

- ▶ The U.S. Constitution requires an accurate count of every person living in the United States every 10 years. The next census is in 2020 and asks questions that provide a snapshot of the nation and will determine how more than \$675 billion in federal funding is distributed to states and communities each year. Census results affect your voice in government, how much funding your community receives, and how your community plans for the future.
- ▶ The following communities are the hardest-to-count (HTC) by the census:
 - Latinos, African Americans, Native Americans and Tribal Communities, Asian American and Pacific Islanders (AAPI), Middle-Eastern North Africans (MENA), immigrants and refugees, farm-workers, people with disabilities, LGBTQ, senior/older adults, homeless individuals and families, children under 5 years, veterans, areas with low broadband subscription rates and limited or no access, households with limited English proficiency.¹

Why is my community undercounted?

- ▶ Bay Area counties tend to have lower than average numbers of HTC populations, but there are still many neighborhoods with high concentrations of HTC groups. Undercounting in the 2020 Census could lead to significant misrepresentation of communities in East Palo Alto.
- ▶ 8.3% of San Mateo County census tracts are considered hard to count due to demographic characteristics and historical trends.² 27.5% of San Mateo county residents are African American, Latino, or Native American, all of which are historically undercounted groups.

¹ <https://census.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2019/01/K-HTC-Demographic-Populations.pdf>

² <https://www.ppic.org/map/2020-census-maps-californias-hard-to-count-communities/>



- ▶ The high proportion of young children in San Mateo County is part of the hardest-to-count (HTC) group. Young children, who are frequently undercounted by the census, make up 5.9% of San Mateo County residents.³
- ▶ Noncitizens may be less likely to respond in 2020 due to the planned addition of a citizenship question. Approximately 15% of San Mateo County residents are noncitizens and are especially vulnerable to being undercounted.⁴
 - Immigrant communities are often wary of the government and fear that census information could be used against them, thus discouraging participation.
- ▶ Housing conditions such as rentals, multiple family homes, or mobile homes—which are prevalent in parts of the county like Redwood City—make outreach harder for the Census Bureau to find and count residents. Approximately 40% of San Mateo County residents live in rentals.⁵
- ▶ Language access can contribute to an undercount. According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau, 46.2% of households in San Mateo County speak a language other than English at home.⁶
- ▶ Internet connectivity is yet another barrier:
 - While the 2020 Census will be the first in history to be completed largely online, San Mateo County communities and residents still face barriers to connectivity, particularly the 11.3% of San Mateo County residents with no broadband internet subscription.⁷ This can pose a challenge to rural areas with low internet connectivity and people with lower incomes who are less likely to have a smart phone or internet services at home.

³ https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/17_5YR/DP05/0500000US06081

⁴ <https://www.ppic.org/map/2020-census-maps-californias-hard-to-count-communities/>

⁵ <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>

⁶ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/sanmateocountycalifornia>

⁷ https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/17_5YR/S2801/0500000US06081



What does an undercount mean for my community?

- ▶ When you fill out the census, you help:
 - Determine how many seats your state gets in Congress.
 - Guide how federal funding is distributed to states and communities each year.
 - Create jobs, provide housing, prepare for emergencies, and build schools, roads and hospitals.
- ▶ San Mateo County receives federal funding for community services such as flood protection and restoration, child support services, and community development programs.⁸
 - This funding could be reduced with an incomplete count.
- ▶ Since 2020 Census data will be used to redraw legislative district lines, it can affect political representation. For example, in Assembly District 22 (Mullin), which covers most of San Mateo County, 6.6% of households are predicted to not respond initially to the census.⁹
- ▶ In 2018, San Mateo County received \$88.8 million of federal funding for Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers, which assists residents in securing affordable housing in their communities.¹⁰
 - The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program uses census data to determine who the program serves, where they live, how federal funds are disbursed to California, and how the state distributes funds amongst its counties.¹¹
- ▶ San Mateo County receives census related federal funding for medical services, including clinics and children's health insurance.

⁸ https://cmo.smcgov.org/sites/cmo.smcgov.org/files/documents/files/FINAL_FY%202018-19%20Adopted%20Budget%20%28with%20hyperlinks%20_0.pdf

⁹ <https://www.ppic.org/map/2020-census-maps-californias-hard-to-count-communities/>

¹⁰ <https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/national-and-state-housing-fact-sheets-data>

¹¹ <https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial/2020/program-management/working-papers/Uses-of-Census-Bureau-Data-in-Federal-Funds-Distribution.pdf>



- ▶ In the 2017-2018 school year, San Mateo County received over \$16 million from the \$15.4 billion dollar federal budget for Title I Every Child Succeeds Act, which provides financial assistance to local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools with high numbers or high percentages of children from low-income families.
- If your community is undercounted, low-income areas would lose federal funding for textbooks, school supplies and food for students, which aid children in meeting academic standards.

How Can I Help?

- ▶ There are 3 easy ways you can help make sure your community completes the census and receives funding for important services.
 - (1) Fill out the census form online or on paper.
 - (2) Ensure your family, friends, and coworkers fill out the census.
 - (3) Educate your community about the census and why it is important to complete the census.