

Santa Barbara 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?

- ▶ Santa Barbara County will be one of the hardest-to-count (HTC) communities in 2020, which means that households in this county are some of the least likely to respond to census forms. More than 21,000 people in Santa Barbara will be considered hard to count.²
- ▶ Certain groups, especially African American, Latino, and Native American residents, have been typically undercounted by the census in the past. These racial and ethnic groups make up about 45% of the population in Santa Barbara. This is one of the reasons why Santa Barbara County is so difficult to count.³

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

² <https://www.independent.com/2019/04/19/santa-barbara-county-preps-for-2020-census/>

³ <https://www.ppic.org/blog/2020-census-counting-the-central-coast/>



- ▶ The high proportion of young children in Santa Barbara County is difficult to count and has been historically undercounted in the past. In some areas, children under 5 make up more than 6% of the population, which is some of the highest in the state.
- ▶ Language access can contribute to an undercount. According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau, 39.7% of the population in Santa Barbara County speaks a language other than English at home.
- ▶ Certain areas of Santa Barbara County, specifically Santa Maria, Santa Barbara, and Isla Vista, are considered especially hard to reach.
- ▶ Legislative districts representing Santa Barbara County are among the hardest to count in California.
 - When residents are undercounted, political representation goes toward areas with higher population.
- ▶ Noncitizens may be less likely to respond in 2020 due to the planned addition of a citizenship question. Approximately 14.6% of Santa Barbara 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, which discourages participation.
- ▶ Internet connectivity is yet another barrier:
 - While the 2020 Census will be the first in history to be completed largely online, Santa Barbara County communities and residents still face barriers to connectivity, particularly the 17.7% of Santa Barbara County residents with no broadband internet subscription.⁵ 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 service at home.

⁴ <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/santa-barbara-county-ca>

⁵ https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/17_5YR/S2801/0400000US06.05000



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.

- ▶ In the 2017-2018 school year, Santa Barbara County received \$10 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.⁶
 - 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.

- ▶ Since 2020 Census data will be used to redraw legislative district lines, it can affect political representation. For example, in Assembly District 37 (Limon), which covers most of Santa Barbara County, 13.2% of households are predicted to not respond initially to the census.⁷

- ▶ In 2018, Santa Barbara received \$44.8 million federal funding for Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers, which assists residents in securing affordable housing in their communities.⁸
 - 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.⁹

⁶ <http://www.ed-data.org/county/SantaBarbara>

⁷ <https://www.ppic.org/map/2020-census-maps-californias-hard-to-count-communities/>

⁸ <https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/national-and-state-housing-fact-sheets-data>

⁹ <https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial/2020/program-management/working-papers/Uses-of-Census-Bureau-Data-in-Federal-Funds-Distribution.pdf>



- ▶ Santa Barbara County receives census related federal funding for medical services, including clinics and children's health insurance.
- ▶ Santa Barbara County receives federal funding for crucial community services like mental-health resources, education, school lunch programs, transportation infrastructure, neighborhood development, and housing assistance.¹⁰
 - This funding could be reduced with an incomplete count.

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.

¹⁰ <https://www.independent.com/2019/04/19/santa-barbara-county-preps-for-2020-census/>