

Sonoma 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?

- ▶ Many Sonoma County residents are part of a hardest-to-count (HTC) group, including Latino (27.0%), African American (2.0%) , Native Americans (2.2%), noncitizens and children under the age of five (5.1%).²
- ▶ 3% of Sonoma County census tracts are considered hard to count due to demographic characteristics and historical trends. 27.38% of Sonoma County residents are African American, Latino, or Native American, all of which are historically undercounted groups.³

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

² <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/sonomacountycalifornia,CA/HSG010218>

³ <https://www.ppic.org/map/2020-census-maps-californias-hard-to-count-communities/>



- ▶ The high proportion of young children in Sonoma County is part of the hardest-to-count (HTC) group. Young children, who are frequently undercounted by the census, make up 5.9% of Sonoma County residents.⁴
- ▶ Noncitizens may be less likely to respond in 2020 due to the planned addition of a citizenship question. Approximately 9.5% of Sonoma County residents are noncitizens, and are especially vulnerable to being undercounted.
 - 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 conditions make outreach harder for the Census Bureau to find and count residents. Approximately 39.6% of Sonoma County residents live in rentals.⁵
- ▶ Language access can contribute to an undercount. According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau, 25.6% of the population in Sonoma County speaks 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, Sonoma communities and residents still face barriers to connectivity, particularly the 14.9% of Sonoma County residents with no broadband internet subscription. 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.⁷

⁴ <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>

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

⁶ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/sonomacountycalifornia,CA/AFN120212>

⁷ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/sonomacountycalifornia,CA/AFN120212>



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.
- ▶ Sonoma County receives federal funding for community services such as funding for child support services, disaster recovery and in-home supportive services.⁸
 - This funding could be reduced with an incomplete count.
- ▶ Since 2020 Census data will be used to redraw legislative districts lines, it can affect political representation. For example, Senate District 2 (McGuire) which covers Sonoma, 3% are predicted to not respond initially to the census.⁹
- ▶ In 2018, Sonoma received \$35.4 million of federal funding for Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers, which assists residents in seeking 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
- ▶ Sonoma County receives census related federal funding for medical services, including clinics and children's health insurance.

⁸ <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/CAO/Public-Reports/Budget-Reports/>

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, Sonoma County received \$8.5 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.¹²

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.

¹² <http://www.ed-data.org/district/Sonoma/Alexander-Valley-Union-Elementary>