

To: All DAFS Employees  
From: Commissioner Figueroa  
Subject: Did You Know? It's Census Season!

Good morning all,

Did You Know? March kicks off census season! Mailers from the U.S. Census Bureau will be delivered to our mailboxes between March 12-20 asking us to complete the census. The 2020 Census counts the population in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and five U.S. territories. I'm eagerly awaiting my chance to complete the census, and here's why! **It's Important; It's Safe; and It's Easy!**

**It's Important!** The census provides critical data that lawmakers, business owners, teachers, and many others use to provide daily services, products, and support for us and our communities. Every year, billions of dollars in federal funding go to hospitals, fire departments, schools, roads, and other resources based on census data. Based on 2010 census information, Maine received more than \$4 billion in 2016 to help fund programs like Medicaid, Federal Direct Student Loans, and the National School Lunch program, just to name a few.

Census results also determine the number of seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives, and they are used to draw congressional and state legislative districts, school districts and voting precincts. It's also in the Constitution: [Article 1, Section 2](#), mandates that the country conduct a count of its population once every 10 years. But the census is more than just a count of Maine's population. An accurate and complete count is *essential* to supporting your neighbors, community members, and fellow Mainers.

**It's Safe!** Per [Title 13 of the U.S. Code](#), the U.S. Census Bureau is bound by law to protect your answers and keep them strictly confidential. In fact, every employee takes an oath to protect your personal information for life. Under Title 13, the Census Bureau cannot release any identifiable information about you, your home, or your business, even to law enforcement agencies. The law ensures that your private data is protected and that your answers cannot be used against you by any government agency or court. The answers you provide are used only to produce statistics. You are kept anonymous.

**It's Easy!** You will answer a simple questionnaire about yourself and everyone who is living with you on April 1, 2020. To get a peek at what you'll be asked, click [here](#). And, for the first time in history, the census can be completed online, making it more accessible than ever. It takes only a couple minutes, and nobody has to come to your door. You can also reply by mail or phone.

The 2020 Census can also be an employment opportunity. The Census Bureau is looking for thousands of workers to help conduct the census. Check out this [link](#) to learn more.

I hope you take into consideration the importance of this once-in-a-decade opportunity when you receive your invitation in the coming days.

If you would like more information about the census, please visit the [Maine Complete Count Committee](#) website. This committee, led by DAFS and other state agencies, was established by Governor Janet Mills' Executive Order last year and is devoted to ensuring as many Mainers participate in the census as possible. If you have any questions about the census, please reach out to [DAFS' Communications Director](#).

Thank you for your participation in this truly important activity.

Kirsten LC Figueroa

DAFS Commissioner

P.S. Did You Know? within the Did You Know! 109,826. That was the combined population of the country's five largest cities based on the 1790 census: New York City; Philadelphia; Boston; Charleston, South Carolina; and Baltimore. For comparison, 107,601 is the attendance capacity at the largest college football stadium in the United States—Michigan Stadium in Ann Arbor, Michigan, aka The Big House. (Just a shy larger than the University of Tennessee Neyland Stadium in Knoxville, which holds 102,455. 😊)