



ALAMEDA COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

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Agenda Item _____ December 15, 2020

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December 1, 2020

Honorable Board of Supervisors
Administration Building
1221 Oak Street, Suite 536
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Dear Board Members:

**SUBJECT: CENSUS 2020 – FINAL STATUS REPORT REGARDING
CENSUS OUTREACH ACTIVITIES FROM THE ALAMEDA
COUNTY COMPLETE COUNT COMMITTEE**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Accept the final status report regarding Alameda County’s Census 2020 outreach program from the Complete Count Committee.

DISCUSSION/SUMMARY:

Census 2020 officially concluded on October 15, 2020. Despite the significant challenges faced by the census in 2020, the final Census 2020 Self-Response Rate for Alameda County was 75.8%, ranking 7th amongst California counties. Alameda County achieved a higher “Self-Response Rate” than Census 2010 by 5.6%.

The Board of Supervisors identified Census 2020 as a priority because the results will dramatically affect the well-being and political representation of county residents for the next decade. In June 2018, your Board invested \$1.5 million as vital seed funding for the community engagement and education efforts needed to attain a complete count of County residents and authorized the creation of the Alameda County Complete Count Committee (CCC). The CCC first met on November 18, 2018, chaired by Supervisors Wilma Chan and Nate Miley. The CCC consisted of a vast and deeply committed coalition of community and faith-based organizations, individual volunteers (called Census Ambassadors), educational institutions, cities, and elected officials. The CCC formed 15 subcommittees to frame its community engagement to reach residents who have been historically undercounted, including low-income individuals, immigrants, people with limited English proficiency, people of color, young children, people with disabilities, and people residing in overcrowded housing or are unhoused. The US Census Bureau refers to such populations as “Hard-to-Count.” Issued through a Request for Proposal process, Alameda County Census 2020 outreach grants ranging from \$5,000 - \$47,500 were awarded to 70 organizations; 1 grant in the amount of \$150,000 was awarded to Tech Exchange; and mini-grants, under \$3,000, were awarded to 37 organizations.

Subsequently, the State of California (State) directly invested \$1,324,696 in Alameda County's outreach efforts to support the "Hard-to-Count" residents. The State directed an additional \$100,000 to United Way Bay Area to directly help Alameda County with outreach materials and digital marketing. In addition to direct funding, the State provided \$6.5M, including the \$1.3M to Alameda County, to Region 3 - consisting of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Solano counties - to ensure community outreach and education coverage.

The census' importance is reflected by the collective effort and resources provided by numerous and diverse partners. The East Bay Community Foundation granted funds (approx. \$1M) to dozens of Alameda County nonprofits for Census outreach and education. At the same time, The Bay Area Census Funders Collaborative (a partnership between Northern California Grantmakers, East Bay Community Foundation, Silicon Valley Community Foundation and other foundations) came together by providing approximately \$2.3M in grants in the San Francisco Bay Area to support Census 2020 education and outreach efforts.

Challenges

Census 2020 endured significant challenges to ensuring a complete and accurate count of all residents. Federal-level actions and policies, including the proposed citizenship question on the census, changes to the "public charge" regulations, raids and deportations, combined to instill fear and mistrust among immigrant communities regarding government activities. Also, there was general distrust in government and concern about sharing personal information through the first online census. The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic added to the challenges.

Census 2020 officially launched for "self-response" on March 12, 2020 when Census notices were mailed to each address. Simultaneously, the Coronavirus pandemic became a serious threat in Alameda County and the nation at large. Corresponding shelter-in-place orders postponed or canceled hundreds of Census-specific events, closed the community spaces in which 130 Questionnaire Assistance Centers were planned to open, and shuttered schools where programming had been scheduled to include Census education activities.

Response

In response to COVID-19, the Alameda County Complete Count Committee made rapid changes to the outreach plan. Through CCC staff, fellows, and Census Ambassadors, direct Census outreach continued through remote, virtual, and other contact-free methods, such as:

- Phone banking to more than 80,000 residents, using the State's Census PDI system
- 91 Mobile Questionnaire Assistance engagements - over 2,000 individuals completed the Census on-site using tablets and receiving support from trained Census Ambassadors. *Such in-person engagements were only conducted outdoors in compliance with public health guidelines and extensive usage of PPE. Locations included: Multiple sites of Oakland Unified School District's weekly food distributions, three Self Sufficiency Centers operated by Alameda County's Social Services Agency, COVID testing sites coordinated by Alameda County's Public Health Department, and multiple grocery stores in low-responding Census tracts*

- Direct mail to targeted populations, including Medi-Cal recipients, families with children ages 0-5 receiving services from First Five of Alameda County, tenants of Accessory Dwelling Units, and affordable housing residents
- Doorhanger deliveries and socially-distanced canvassing efforts
- Incorporating Census materials into hundreds of food and meal distributions
- Participating in online town halls and “Know Your Rights” forums

Grantees also shifted their efforts to methods that were safe to conduct during the pandemic. For example, many community and faith-based organizations had originally planned to hold in-person Census events but pivoted by assigning staff to call their clients or members for one-on-one Census education and support. Others hosted online events on Facebook Live or Zoom. Such efforts successfully ensured that thousands of residents completed their Census because these individuals were contacted directly by organizations and people they know and trust.

The Complete Count Committee staff accomplished the outcomes listed below and in the attached Impact Report:

- Facilitated 20 "Census Solutions Workshops" to solicit feedback from partners about the outreach methods they thought would be most successful. These workshops allowed staff opportunities to educate community leaders, advocates, and nonprofit staff about the fundamentals & mechanics of the Census, take their questions, and invest them in attaining a complete count on Census 2020.
- Supported US Census Bureau enumerator recruitment by coordinating 8 application workshops and a targeted promotion campaign of Census jobs through workforce development partners
- Delivered Census presentations to nearly 250 groups reaching over 6,500 individuals (including County departments, County and City commissions, nonprofits, & clubs)
- Trained over 800 individuals on how to conduct Census outreach
- Advocated on behalf of unhoused residents regarding the deficiencies of the US Census Bureau's plan to enumerate individuals experiencing homelessness (see attached memos)
- Equipped hundreds of partners with materials, incentives, signage, and technology
- Coordinated with County Agencies who serve historically undercounted populations on how to engage clients, including Public Health, Health Care Services, Social Services, Behavioral Health Care Services, and Probation
- Provided technical assistance to cities and the offices of elected officials, such as message development, crafting outreach strategies, and clarifying USCB processes
- Provided thought partnership and individualized support to grantees on how to alter their outreach plans in the wake of the COVID19 pandemic
- Real-time interventions to low-responding Census tracts: recruiting and onboarding new partners, coordinating strategy meetings amongst stakeholders serving those tracts, and enhancing resources such as Mobile Questionnaire Assistance or canvassing

To reach Alameda County's diverse population and people with limited English proficiency, the CCC ensured language access in multiple ways. Census educational materials was produced in multiple languages. For less commonly spoken languages in which translation services were less

effective, community-based organizations with linguistic capacity were provided resources to produce translated materials or videos. CCC staff produced a video series of immigrant testimonials in 13 languages, which was available on its YouTube page, promoted through grantees, and featured in United Way Bay Area’s digital marketing campaign in Alameda County. These videos were developed to address key concerns raised by immigrants about Census participation and allow immigrant advocates to express why they were committed to getting counted. In late 2019, CCC staff supported an English as a Second Language (ESL) expert to produce Census curriculum for adult education programs throughout the County. After these materials were produced, County staff led eight presentations to ESL instructors to teach about the Census and preview the materials to them. In lieu of being able to host 3 large Census “Know Your Rights” forums, the CCC activated Spanish-speaking partners from Faith in Action East Bay and Centro Legal and produced an online event and video to assuage fears of participation repeatedly raised by immigrants. CCC staff also contracted with various ethnic media outlets to feature Census Ambassadors in “Census Spotlight” programs on both KIQI 1010am (Spanish radio) and Ariana TV (which reached Farsi speaking Afghanis.) County Census materials also referred individuals to the 211 hotline, whose multi-lingual staff were trained to provide Census support. Language access was most significantly achieved through the dozens of ethnic grantees and mini-grantees who are “*trusted messengers*” among immigrants and non-English speakers, and who could conduct outreach in the most linguistically and culturally appropriate ways.

The results of these efforts are illustrated in the County, City, and Community Self Response Rates below.

Area	2020 Self Response Rate	2010 Self Response Rate
Alameda County	75.8%	70.2%
Piedmont	90.0% <i>(highest in CA)</i>	85.8%
Newark	82.8%	73.5%
Livermore	82.6%	75.0%
San Lorenzo	81.7%	76.0%
Union City	81.6%	73.0%
Pleasanton	81.2%	79.3%
Albany	80.9%	50.4%
Castro Valley	80.0%	75.2%
Fremont	79.8%	74.9%
Alameda	79.2%	76.2%
Dublin	78.7%	71.0%
San Leandro	78.0%	75.2%
Fairview	74.3%	69.6%

Area	2020 Self Response Rate	2010 Self Response Rate
Berkeley	72.5%	72.3%
Hayward	71.6%	67.9%
Oakland	71.3%	66.6%
Emeryville	69.4%	63.5%
Ashland	67.0%	63.7%
Cherryland	65.4%	64.5%

Lessons Learned

The Complete Count Committee staff identified four actions that enabled the development of a coalition of thousands of community leaders and organizations. These leaders recognized the power of civic engagement and understand what is at stake when our diverse and vulnerable populations are not equally represented, resulting in a coalition that effectively fought for an inclusive and accessible Census.

- Starting early (launched in November 2018)
- Rooting the work in community engagement by providing many workshops for partner support and engagement
- Partnering with trusted messengers and supporting them with funding, training, materials, and technical assistance to ensure they would be successful in motivating people to respond to Census 2020
- Providing sufficient resources for community engagement

Future Actions

The accuracy of the census data and how that data will be used for reapportionment may be affected by an ongoing court case and a legislative bill. The State of California and numerous cities and counties, along with organizations across the country, have challenged the July 21, 2020 Presidential Memorandum that excludes undocumented residents for the reapportionment of Representatives following the 2020 census. On November 10th, your Board authorized County Counsel to join the State's Amicus Brief in the appeal to the Supreme Court (SCOTUS); the case will be heard beginning on November 30th. The SCOTUS decision on the exclusion of undocumented residents will determine how census data informs redistricting at the local level and the impacts on federal funding received by local governments.

On November 23, 2020, your Personnel, Administration, and Legislation (PAL) subcommittee recommended support for the 2020 Census Deadline Extensions Act (Senate 4571), which extends two critical statutory deadlines by four months to give the Census Bureau enough time to compile accurate data sets. The current streamlined data processing under an accelerated census plan presents risks to the data's accuracy and completeness. The Secretary of Commerce is required to provide a report to the president by December 31, 2020. In turn, the president must send a report containing each state's total population and the number of representatives to which each state is entitled to Congress on January 10, 2021. If the legislation passes, the deadline for

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the delivery of apportionment data will be April 30, 2021 instead of December 31, 2020. The delivery of the redistricting data to the states will change to July 31, 2021 from March 31, 2021.

Staff will return to your Board in January to report on the status of the SCOTUS decision and the legislative outcomes. At that time we will also discuss the new California redistricting laws - the Fair and Inclusive Redistricting for Municipalities and Political Subdivisions Act (FAIR MAPS Act), AB 849.

FINANCING:

There is no Net County Cost as a result of this action.

VISION 2026:

The Census count is used to allocate federal funds for vital services, including health care, social services, transportation, education, environmental protection, and housing. Census outreach efforts align with the 10X goal pathways of **Healthcare for All, Eliminating Poverty and Hunger, Eliminating Homelessness, and Accessible Infrastructure** in support of our shared vision of a **Thriving and Resilient Population, Safe and Livable Communities, and a Prosperous and Vibrant Economy.**

Very truly yours,

DocuSigned by:

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Chris Bazar, Director
Community Development Agency

cc: Susan S. Muranishi, County Administrator
Donna R. Ziegler, County Counsel
Melissa Wilk, Auditor-Controller
Jennifer Schulz, County Administrator's Office
Heather M. Littlejohn, Office of the County Counsel
Casey Farmer, Executive Director, Alameda County Census 2020 Program
Sandra Rivera, Community Development Agency

ALAMEDA COUNTY COMPLETE COUNT COMMITTEE IMPACT REPORT



Final Self Response Rate: 75.8%

Increase from 2010: +5.6%

WHY IS THE CENSUS IMPORTANT?

Census data is used to allocate:

- Billions of dollars for important programs such as education, housing, transportation, and dozens of social services.
- Congressional representation for each state (+ redistricting!)



CHALLENGES

Alameda County faced unique challenges in attaining a complete count:

Growing Distrust
in government and
sharing of data



26% of the
County population
is considered
"Hard to Count"



Lack of knowledge
about the importance
of the Census

IMPACT OF COVID-19

Days before the launch of Census 2020, the pandemic and subsequent shelter-in-place orders **cancelled hundred events & 130 Questionnaire Assistance Centers**. Certain populations became extremely difficult to reach because they were no longer utilizing public spaces where outreach had been planned and many college students left the area entirely. The CCC staff and its partners pivoted their outreach plans to meet community members where they could safely gather while upholding safety guidelines.



91

Mobile Questionnaire Assistance events held
at food distributions,
COVID testing sites, etc.

15,000

Census 2020 masks
distributed



ALAMEDA COUNTY APPROACH: BY THE NUMBERS

The Alameda County Census Committee engaged the community by engaging local stakeholders, funding impactful outreach projects, investing in local targeted media, and our Census Ambassador program.



70,000
Phoebanking
calls made



City Engagement:
Worked closely with staff and elected officials from each city in the County to develop outreach strategies & communicate effectively to residents.

14 Subcommittees

1. Affordable Housing
2. Children 0-5
3. Cities
4. Community Based Organizations
5. Elected Officials
6. Immigrants
7. Libraries
8. LGBTQ
9. Health
10. Higher Education
11. People with Disabilities
12. Senior Citizens
13. Unhoused Community
14. Workforce Development

GRANTEE PROGRAM

Goal: Invest in effective organizations who are trusted by hard-to-count communities

\$2 Million
Awarded
In Grants

69
Grantee
Orgs
62
Mini-
Grantees

250
Presentations
Given
37,000
Calls made by
organizations

Total Impressions made:
688,710 people

CENSUS AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Ambassadors were trusted messengers, trained by County staff to provide direct outreach into their own communities

310
Census Ambassadors

DIGITAL OUTREACH

Know Your Rights Video



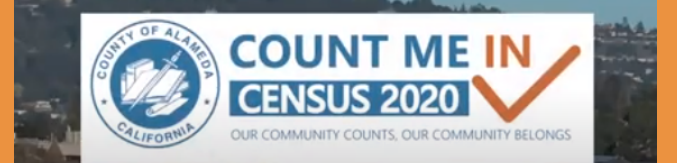
Immigrant Testimonial
Video Series

Immigrants across Alameda County shared their reasons for getting counted!

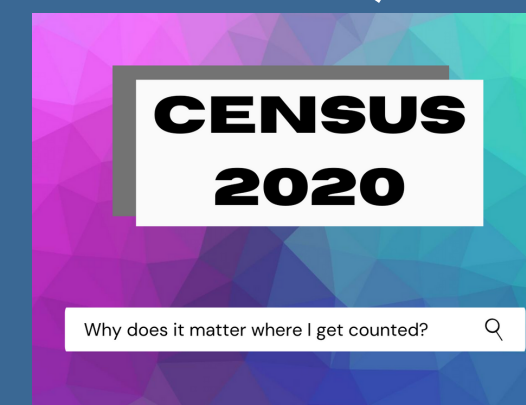
- Burmese
- Cantonese
- Dari
- Hindi
- Mandarin
- Punjabi
- Spanish
- Tagalog
- Tigrinya



**We are immigrants.
We are getting counted!**



Interactive Online
Census Quiz



Census Magic Show



EARNED MEDIA

Various outlets featured the outreach efforts of the Alameda County Census Committee



ADVERTISING

