

January 2019

A complete and accurate 2020 census count matters

The US Constitution requires the federal government to conduct a census every ten years in order to generate an accurate count of all persons living in the United States, Puerto Rico, and all other US territories. A precise count is vital to guaranteeing each state receives the appropriate number of seats in the House of Representatives, it influences how states draw their legislative districts, and, equally as important, it ensures communities across the country receive proper funding for a host of important services families and local economies rely on. Unfortunately, the upcoming 2020 census is in jeopardy as inadequate funding and an unprecedented and untested citizenship question threaten participation, and an accurate count of all people – particularly residents in hard-to-count communities.

Colorado should invest \$12 million in state funds to ensure an accurate count for the 2020 Census

With as much as \$600 billion in federal funding at stake, several states have appropriated funds and created Complete Count Committees (CCC) to ensure an accurate count in 2020. Trusted CCCs are volunteer groups created by state and local governments, community groups, and/or organizations focused on increasing awareness of and participation in the census through “trusted community messengers.”¹ With an already difficult task of counting millions – especially hard-to-count communities including immigrants, people of color, Coloradans who earn low incomes, Native Americans, Coloradans living in rural communities, people who speak and understand limited amounts of English, and many others – the state of Colorado should invest in these trusted community groups so they can expand their outreach efforts to ensure all Coloradans are counted in 2020.

In order to ensure they can accomplish this goal, the Colorado Fiscal Institute (CFI) recommends state lawmakers invest \$12 million in this year’s budget for 2020 census outreach efforts aimed at the hard-to-count population.

State funding can ensure a complete count

A \$12 million-dollar investment would allow the state to allocate resources to each of the 64 counties based on each county’s hard-to-count population (refer to Figure 2). Using Census Bureau data to determine the total hard-to-count population in the state, CFI was able to estimate the costs of doing basic, moderate, and intensive outreach for the 2020 census. Figure 1 below details the level of outreach that can be made to the approximately 1.5 million hard-to-count Coloradans at an average cost of \$2 per person. The state could also reach about 147,000 Coloradans with moderate-level outreach at \$25 per person, and about 73,000 Coloradans at \$75 per person.

Outreach needs will differ across the state depending on geographic location and the makeup of each community. To aid policymakers as they allocate resources, CFI’s analysis includes a breakdown of the dollars that can be allotted to community groups for 2020 census outreach in each county based on the share of hard-to-count residents:

¹ https://uploads-ssl.webflow.com/59fb4f76691c1b000103c309/5ac690b856b2db257820afb2_CCC%20Training%20Manual%20D-1255--draft.pdf

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In **Denver County**, community groups would receive \$1.5 million to reach 176,155 residents. About \$350,000 would go to basic outreach to the entire hard-to-count population, \$440,000

would be used to follow up with moderate outreach to 17,616 people, and \$661,000 would go to intensive outreach to 8,808 people.

In **Adams County**, community groups would receive \$1 million to reach 125,792 residents. One quarter would go to basic outreach to the entire hard-to-count population, \$314,000 would be used to follow up with moderate outreach to 12,579 people, and \$472,000 would go to intensive outreach to 6,290 people.

In **Weld County**, community groups would receive \$628,000 to reach 76,158 residents. Roughly \$152,000 would go to basic outreach to the entire hard-to-count population, \$190,000 would be used to follow up with moderate outreach to 7,616 people, and \$286,000 would go to intensive outreach to 3,808 people.

In **Montrose County**, community groups would receive \$103,000 to reach 12,535 residents. \$25,000 would go to basic outreach to the entire hard-to-count population, \$31,000 would be used to follow up with moderate outreach to 1,254 people, and \$47,000 would go to intensive outreach to 627 people.

Statewide Total Population	100 percent of hard-to-count population		10 percent of hard-to-count population		5 percent of hard-to-count population		Total State Funding
	Number of People	Basic Outreach @ \$2/person	Number of People	Moderate Outreach @ \$25/person	Number of People	Intensive Outreach @ \$75/person	
5,607,154	1,500,000	\$3,000,000	147,000	\$3,700,000	73,000	\$5,500,000	\$12,000,000

Figure 1. CFI analysis of Census Bureau's 2010 Census participation rates. Population from 2017 Census Bureau population estimate. Population totals and dollar amounts are rounded.

A complete count will help our communities thrive

For almost 230 years, the census has played a critical role in counting all people in the country, citizens and non-citizens alike, ensuring residents in each state are properly represented in Congress. However, less is known about the incredible importance of accurate census data in securing funding for everything from transportation and health care, to tools for reducing the amount of people experiencing poverty. A study by the US Department of Commerce found 132 programs used census data to distribute over \$675 billion dollars to states in fiscal year 2015.² The following sixteen programs are some of the largest and more commonly known programs that help Coloradans and residents across the country make ends meet:

Sixteen Large Federal Assistance Programs that Distribute Funds Using Census Data, FY 2015	
Program Name	FY 2015 Funds
Medical Assistance Program (Medicaid)	\$311,975,766,352
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	\$69,489,854,016
Medicare Part B (Supplemental Medical Insurance)	\$64,176,725,988
Highway Planning and Construction	\$38,331,904,422
Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers	\$19,087,549,000
Title I Grants to Local Education Agencies (LEAs)	\$13,859,180,910
National School Lunch Program	\$11,560,852,485
Special Education Grants (IDEA)	\$11,233,112,681
Special Children's Health Insurance Program (S-CHIP)	\$11,089,152,000
Section 8 Housing Assistance Payments Program (Project-Based)	\$9,238,092,008
Head/Start/Early Head Start	\$8,259,130,975
Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)	\$6,347,680,031
Foster Care (Title IV-E)	\$4,635,733,000
Health Center Program	\$4,181,407,055
Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)	\$3,370,228,288
Child Care and Development Fund	\$2,858,660,000
Total	\$589,695,029,211

Source: The George Washington Institute for Public Policy

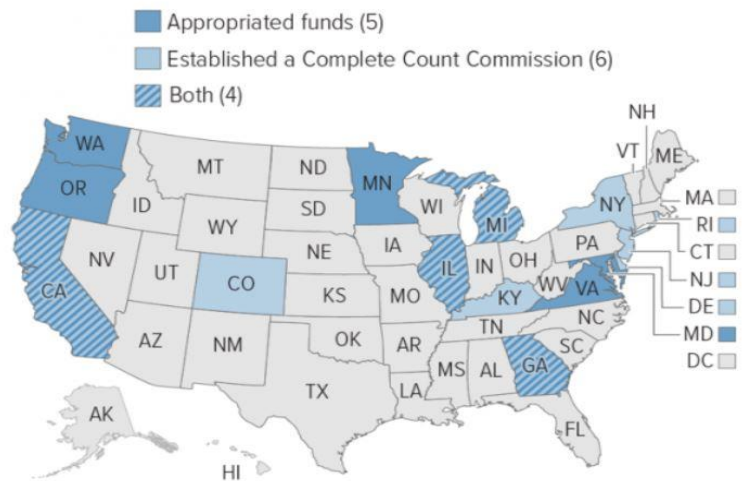
² <https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial/2020/program-management/working-papers/Uses-of-Census-Bureau-Data-in-Federal-Funds-Distribution.pdf>

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From services that help struggling families put food on the table or see a doctor, like SNAP (formerly food stamps) and Medicaid, to lesser known but equally important programs like the Hazardous Waste Management State Program; Rural Business Enterprise Grants; and the Water Pollution Control, State, Interstate, and Tribal Program, the census funds a variety of public investments that help build the kind of communities Coloradans of all races and backgrounds want to call home. In fiscal year 2015, Colorado received more than \$8 billion in census-based federal funds for these and many other important public services.³

\$12 million will provide a big return on investment due to the major and long-lasting effect census-based services have on the individuals and families who rely on them, and the stabilizing effect those same services have on the state's economy—particularly during recessions and economic downturns.⁴ If the state does not invest in outreach efforts, hard-to-count communities will be underrepresented, hundreds of thousands of Coloradans may have a tougher time making ends meet, and local economies will suffer.

15 States Have Taken Action Towards a Complete 2020 Census Count



Source: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

Of additional interest to those who want to ensure an accurate and complete count: because Colorado has joined 15 other states by taking action to count all citizens – especially hard-to-count communities – there are opportunities to pitch in. [Colorado's Complete Count Campaign](#) is currently seeking volunteers to support the 2020 census.

³ https://gwipp.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs2181/f/downloads/Counting%20for%20Dollars%202020%2008-22-17_0.pdf

⁴ <https://www.coloradofiscal.org/defending-the-colorado-way-of-life/>

Methodology

Colorado's hard-to-count population was calculated by determining the percent of people in each county who did not participate in the 2010 Census. That percent was multiplied by the total population of each county to estimate the number of hard-to-count Coloradans in 2017. These estimates were used as a baseline to project how much Colorado needs to invest in outreach in order to have a full and accurate count of all Coloradans in the 2020 Census.

To estimate the average per-person outreach cost for hard-to-count communities in Colorado, we use a study completed by the New York Fiscal Policy Institute (FPI) as a proxy.⁵ In the study, FPI utilized a survey of community groups expecting to do outreach for the 2020 Census to estimate the per-person outreach costs for hard-to-count communities. The survey returned 32 responses. The responses were divided into three groups based on the level of outreach and the cost per person:

- Basic Outreach: \$2 per hard-to-count person
- Moderate Outreach: \$25 per hard-to-count person
- Intensive Outreach: \$75 per hard-to-count person

Of the 32 responses, twelve groups said they would use basic outreach meaning some level of broad outreach like public forums or providing information to individuals who come into an office. At the basic level, these groups proposed spending \$10,000 and to reach 10,000 people, another said \$15,000 and 8,500 people, and one said \$78,000 and 12,000 people. This results in an average cost of \$2 per hard-to-count person for basic outreach.

Eleven groups said they would use moderate outreach that includes both broad outreach like public forums as well as specific outreach like in-person discussions. At this level of outreach, groups estimated spending \$120,000 to reach 10,000 people, \$500,000 to reach 20,000 people, or \$20,000 to reach 500 people. This results in an average cost of \$25 per hard-to-count person for moderate outreach.

Nine groups would employ intensive outreach. This type of outreach is focused on communities that have the largest barriers to being counted. Outreach at this level can include in-depth discussions to explain the process, assistance for people who do not have access to the internet or who are not familiar with computerized forms, in-language discussions for families with limited English, and outreach to people and communities experiencing homelessness. With this type of intensive outreach, groups estimated spending \$75,000 to reach 1,500 people, \$250,000 to reach 5,000 people, and \$100,000 to reach 1,000 people. This results in an average cost of \$75 per hard-to-count person for intensive outreach.

Because of cost variations and limited resources, community groups are not expected to employ each level of outreach to all of the hard-to-count populations. For example, intensive outreach is a substantially larger task for community groups and resources for this type of outreach would need to be specific and targeted. Following the structure outlined in FPI's study, estimates assume that all of Colorado's hard-to-count population, or 1.5 million people, will receive at least a basic level of outreach. Ten percent, or 147,000 people, will receive moderate outreach. Five percent, or 73,000 people, will receive intensive outreach. The Colorado Fiscal Institute used these estimates to calculate the total amount Colorado should invest for 2020 Census outreach to hard-to-count communities.

⁵ <http://fiscalpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/FPI-Brief-Census-Outreach-Funding.pdf>

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Proposed State Funding for Census 2020 Outreach by County

County	Number of People	% of Households that did not respond to the 2010 Census	# of HTC people	Basic Outreach 100% of HTC population @ \$2/person	# of HTC people	Moderate Outreach 10% of HTC population @ \$25/person	# of HTC people	Intensive Outreach 5% of HTC population @ \$75/person	Total Funding
Adams	503,167	25%	125,792	\$251,584	12,579	\$314,479	6,290	\$471,719	\$1,037,782
Alamosa	16,551	33%	5,462	\$10,924	546	\$13,655	273	\$20,482	\$45,060
Arapahoe	643,052	23%	147,902	\$295,804	14,790	\$369,755	7,395	\$554,632	\$1,220,191
Archuleta	13,315	56%	7,456	\$14,913	746	\$18,641	373	\$27,962	\$61,515
Baca	3,562	45%	1,603	\$3,206	160	\$4,007	80	\$6,011	\$13,224
Bent	5,938	25%	1,485	\$2,969	148	\$3,711	74	\$5,567	\$12,247
Boulder	322,514	22%	70,953	\$141,906	7,095	\$177,383	3,548	\$266,074	\$585,363
Broomfield	68,341	20%	13,668	\$27,336	1,367	\$34,171	683	\$51,256	\$112,763
Chaffee	19,638	38%	7,462	\$14,925	746	\$18,656	373	\$27,984	\$61,565
Cheyenne	1,845	44%	812	\$1,624	81	\$2,030	41	\$3,044	\$6,697
Clear Creek	9,574	45%	4,308	\$8,617	431	\$10,771	215	\$16,156	\$35,543
Conejos	8,184	50%	4,092	\$8,184	409	\$10,230	205	\$15,345	\$33,759
Costilla	3,776	63%	2,379	\$4,758	238	\$5,947	119	\$8,921	\$19,626
Crowley	5,810	37%	2,150	\$4,299	215	\$5,374	107	\$8,061	\$17,735
Custer	4,874	62%	3,022	\$6,044	302	\$7,555	151	\$11,332	\$24,931
Delta	30,568	35%	10,699	\$21,398	1,070	\$26,747	535	\$40,121	\$88,265
Denver	704,621	25%	176,155	\$352,311	17,616	\$440,388	8,808	\$660,582	\$1,453,281
Dolores	2,067	61%	1,261	\$2,522	126	\$3,152	63	\$4,728	\$10,402
Douglas	335,299	20%	67,060	\$134,120	6,706	\$167,650	3,353	\$251,474	\$553,243
Eagle	54,772	58%	31,768	\$63,536	3,177	\$79,419	1,588	\$119,129	\$262,084
El Paso	699,232	24%	167,816	\$335,631	16,782	\$419,539	8,391	\$629,309	\$1,384,479
Elbert	25,642	24%	6,154	\$12,308	615	\$15,385	308	\$23,078	\$50,771
Fremont	47,559	30%	14,268	\$28,535	1,427	\$35,669	713	\$53,504	\$117,709
Garfield	59,118	36%	21,282	\$42,565	2,128	\$53,206	1,064	\$79,809	\$175,580
Gilpin	6,013	50%	3,007	\$6,013	301	\$7,516	150	\$11,274	\$24,804
Grand	15,321	67%	10,265	\$20,530	1,027	\$25,663	513	\$38,494	\$84,687
Gunnison	16,939	59%	9,994	\$19,988	999	\$24,985	500	\$37,478	\$82,451
Hinsdale	794	80%	635	\$1,270	64	\$1,588	32	\$2,382	\$5,240
Huerfano	6,662	58%	3,864	\$7,728	386	\$9,660	193	\$14,490	\$31,878
Jackson	1,385	61%	845	\$1,690	84	\$2,112	42	\$3,168	\$6,970
Jefferson	574,613	19%	109,176	\$218,353	10,918	\$272,941	5,459	\$409,412	\$900,706
Kiowa	1,376	45%	619	\$1,238	62	\$1,548	31	\$2,322	\$5,108
Kit Carson	7,158	36%	2,577	\$5,154	258	\$6,442	129	\$9,663	\$21,259
La Plata	55,589	41%	22,791	\$45,583	2,279	\$56,979	1,140	\$85,468	\$188,030
Lake	7,778	53%	4,122	\$8,245	412	\$10,306	206	\$15,459	\$34,009
Larimer	343,976	25%	85,994	\$171,988	8,599	\$214,985	4,300	\$322,478	\$709,451
Las Animas	14,238	45%	6,407	\$12,814	641	\$16,018	320	\$24,027	\$52,859
Lincoln	5,546	40%	2,218	\$4,437	222	\$5,546	111	\$8,319	\$18,302
Logan	21,896	33%	7,226	\$14,451	723	\$18,064	361	\$27,096	\$59,612
Mesa	151,616	24%	36,388	\$72,776	3,639	\$90,970	1,819	\$136,454	\$300,200
Mineral	766	79%	605	\$1,210	61	\$1,513	30	\$2,269	\$4,992
Moffat	13,131	36%	4,727	\$9,454	473	\$11,818	236	\$17,727	\$38,999
Montezuma	26,140	37%	9,672	\$19,344	967	\$24,180	484	\$36,269	\$79,792
Montrose	41,784	30%	12,535	\$25,070	1,254	\$31,338	627	\$47,007	\$103,415
Morgan	28,192	33%	9,303	\$18,607	930	\$23,258	465	\$34,888	\$76,753
Otero	18,326	28%	5,131	\$10,263	513	\$12,828	257	\$19,242	\$42,333
Ouray	4,794	53%	2,541	\$5,082	254	\$6,352	127	\$9,528	\$20,962
Park	17,905	59%	10,564	\$21,128	1,056	\$26,410	528	\$39,615	\$87,153
Phillips	4,292	29%	1,245	\$2,489	124	\$3,112	62	\$4,668	\$10,269
Pitkin	17,890	60%	10,734	\$21,468	1,073	\$26,835	537	\$40,253	\$88,556
Prowers	12,070	33%	3,983	\$7,966	398	\$9,958	199	\$14,937	\$32,861
Pueblo	166,475	28%	46,613	\$93,226	4,661	\$116,533	2,331	\$174,799	\$384,557
Rio Blanco	6,420	44%	2,825	\$5,650	282	\$7,062	141	\$10,593	\$23,305
Rio Grande	11,301	44%	4,972	\$9,945	497	\$12,431	249	\$18,647	\$41,023
Routt	25,220	56%	14,123	\$28,246	1,412	\$35,308	706	\$52,962	\$116,516
Saguache	6,626	59%	3,909	\$7,819	391	\$9,773	195	\$14,660	\$32,252
San Juan	715	68%	486	\$972	49	\$1,216	24	\$1,823	\$4,011
San Miguel	7,967	67%	5,338	\$10,676	534	\$13,345	267	\$20,017	\$44,038
Sedgwick	2,344	38%	891	\$1,781	89	\$2,227	45	\$3,340	\$7,348
Summit	30,585	71%	21,715	\$43,431	2,172	\$54,288	1,086	\$81,433	\$179,152
Teller	24,646	43%	10,598	\$21,196	1,060	\$26,494	530	\$39,742	\$87,432
Washington	4,938	38%	1,876	\$3,753	188	\$4,691	94	\$7,037	\$15,481
Weld	304,633	25%	76,158	\$152,317	7,616	\$190,396	3,808	\$285,593	\$628,306
Yuma	10,075	33%	3,325	\$6,650	332	\$8,312	166	\$12,468	\$27,429
Colorado	5,607,154	28%	1,465,008	\$2,930,015	146,500	\$3,662,519	73,250	\$5,493,779	\$12,086,313

Figure 2: Outreach cost estimates derived from New York Fiscal Policy Institute 2020 census study.