



i COUNT NM  
i count because i care

# UPDATE/LEAVE IN NEW MEXICO

New Mexico has unique challenges and barriers to achieving an accurate census count. We are the hardest state to count and have the most to lose if those barriers are not overcome. Due to COVID-19, a Census Bureau operation known as Update/Leave was suspended just four days after it began. This means nearly 20% of households have not received their official census invitation or unique census ID.

## Recommended Talking Points

- Not every New Mexican has received an invitation to complete their census. If you have received it, respond today. If not, wait to receive it from the Census Bureau, then respond right away by phone, by internet, or by mail.
- Due to the suspension of field operations, 18% of households in New Mexico have not received their invitation to participate in the 2020 Census. This is one of the highest concentrations in the nation.
- All counties in New Mexico are impacted by this delay. However, some counties and tribal areas have much larger populations in Update/Leave areas.
  - Catron, Rio Arriba, and Mora counties have nearly 100% Update/Leave households.
  - Twelve of New Mexico's 33 counties have 50% or greater Update/Leave households.
  - All tribal lands, except Santa Clara Pueblo, are 100% Update/Leave.
- Until these households are invited, county-level response rates will be artificially low, as will the response rate for New Mexico as a whole.
- Any household that would like to respond online or by phone is able to do so without their Census ID. However, responding online or by phone without a unique Census ID is not an ideal option for some as it can be difficult, especially for households with a non-city style address.
- Responses without a unique Census ID in Update/Leave areas will likely result in a verification visit from a Census Bureau enumerator when field operations resume.



## So what options are there?

- **If you have received your invitation:** Complete your census immediately using your unique Census ID. It can be done online, over the phone or by mail, all from home. Learn more or take your census at [2020census.gov](https://2020census.gov)
- **If you have not received an invitation and do not have a city-style address (such as “123 Pine St.”):** Wait to receive your invitation from the U.S. Census Bureau. Respond immediately using your unique Census ID once you do.

The U.S. Census Bureau is scheduled to resume field operations on June 1. Once this happens, all households will begin receiving their census packet including a unique Census ID.

- Questions?  
For organizations with operational questions contact:  
Dr. Mercy Alarid, Senior Partnership Specialist, US Census Bureau  
(505) 715-3275; [Mercy.N.Alarid@2020Census.gov](mailto:Mercy.N.Alarid@2020Census.gov)

Robert Rhatagan, State Demographer, UNM Geospatial and Population Studies, (505) 277-4034; [gps@unm.edu](mailto:gps@unm.edu)

General Public Questions regarding their household:  
U.S. Census Bureau 1-844-330-2020

Thank you for your patience in this unprecedented situation and please do everything you can to fill out your census. You'll be able to fill out your form until August 15<sup>th</sup> so there is time. New Mexico needs everyone to be counted.

### Background on Update Leave:

The Census Bureau's Update/Leave operation encompasses approximately 6.8 million housing units nationwide. This is about 5% of the nation's residential households. It primarily focuses on communities where using the mail to deliver census invitations might be unreliable because homes don't have city-style addresses or receive mail at P.O. Boxes.

In the Update/Leave operation, a census worker visits these houses, updates the Census Bureau's Master Address File, verifies the location, and leaves a census packet at the door. The Update/Leave packet includes a paper questionnaire, as well as online instructions and a unique census ID for online or phone response.

In some states like New Mexico, the Update/Leave operation covers a substantial portion of homes. For example in Alaska, 30%; West Virginia, 27% and in New Mexico, almost 18% of the housing units are in Update/Leave areas.

