

2030 Census Webinar: 2026 Census Test Site Selection

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. All participants are currently in a listen-only mode. There will be a question-and-answer session at the end of today's presentations. To get into queue to ask a question, you may press Star 1 now. Again, no questions will be taken until the conclusion of today's presentations. The webinar is being recorded. I'd now like to turn this conference over to Stacy Vidal, who will be hosting us through today's presentation. Thank you. You may begin.

Stacy Vidal: Good afternoon. Thank you for joining us for today's event where we'll share important updates about our preparation for the 2030 Census. My name is Stacy Vidal, and I'm from the U.S. Census Bureau's Public Information Office.

Today, we will talk about an important step in 2030 Census planning. We'll announce the locations where we will conduct the 2026 Census test. Speaking today about the test sites and how we selected them are Ron Jarmin, Deputy Director of the Census Bureau; Tasha Boone, Assistant Director of Decennial Census Programs; and Dann Doyle, Deputy Chief of the Decennial Census Management Division.

Immediately following the presentation, we'll take your questions. Please note, if you are watching today's webinar via YouTube, you'll need to dial into the phone line to ask a question. That phone number is listed on your screen now. If you already know what you'd like to ask, you can get in line now to ask a question by dialing Star 1. Without further ado, I'll now turn it over to our Deputy Director, Dr. Ron Jarmin. Ron?

Dr. Ron Jarmin: Thank you, Stacy, and hello everybody. So, I'm Ron Jarmin, Deputy Director of the U.S. Census Bureau and I want to thank all of you for joining us for this important update about our preparations for the 2030 Census. So, the planning and the execution of every decennial census is informed by research, lessons learned, stakeholder input, and the wide range of expertise from partners and Census Bureau professionals and, of course, extensive testing. But today we're announcing the locations where we'll conduct the first of two major on-the-ground tests in the run-up for the 2030 Census.

The first test will take place in 2026. We carefully selected these sites using a set of criteria determined by rigorous analysis and research. Today, you'll hear about that thorough data-driven process that we used to determine these sites, and importantly, how each of these sites will help us better accomplish our goal to count every person living in the United States.

Each decennial census is different, and they take over a decade of planning and preparation. And the 2026 Census Test is an important part of that preparation. For the 2020 Census, much of our testing was focused on proving new technologies and methods, like deploying iPhones rather than paper questionnaires for field data collection.

The success of those new technologies and methods gives us the opportunity to focus on procedures and approaches that focus on ensuring that we

accurately enumerate hard-to-count households and historically undercounted populations in the 2030 Census.

We look forward to working with the selected communities, and we appreciate their cooperation. By acting as a proving ground for the testing of our strategies, systems, and operations, they're performing a valuable service for our whole nation.

We're excited to get started, but much work lies ahead as we prepare for the 2026 test. I hope you'll continue to join us throughout this process and participate in these webinars on our preparations, attend the 2030 Census Advisory Committee meetings, which start this Friday, July 26th, and subscribe to receive updates on [census.gov](https://www.census.gov).

We very much need you to stay engaged with us and each other. We need diverse voices and perspectives to make our work the best it can be. That's true for the 2030 Census, and it's true for the more than 130 surveys and programs that the Census Bureau conducts each year. We're all in this together.

Our efforts and our nation are stronger when we work together towards a common goal of a complete and accurate census. I appreciate your support and enthusiasm and look forward to sharing important new details about the 2026 Census Test today. I'm now going to turn the presentation over to Tasha Boone, Assistant Director for Decennial Programs.

Tasha Boone: Thank you, Ron, and thank you all for joining us for today's webinar. We will start off by reviewing the 2030 Census Planning Update that we shared during our most recent webinar on April 30. This will set the stage for today's main topic, the sites for the 2026 Census Test. We will start by recapping the

objectives of this first major field test, as well as the changes and enhancements being tested. Then we will present the data-driven approach we followed to select these sites, including the site selection criteria and announce the locations where testing will be conducted. Finally, we will review the next steps for this test.

Throughout today's presentation, we will share detailed information about the 2026 Census Test, including the specific locations where the test will be conducted. By the end of our presentation, we hope to have left you with an understanding that we selected these sites using a rigorous data-driven approach. While no one site alone provides the conditions necessary for testing everything, we are confident that the sites we chose when used together allow us to examine all the enhancements and changes under study in each operational area. Our focus is on improving the count for the hard-to-count and historically undercounted populations.

This priority was an important driver of site selection. This is the fourth in our webinar series for the 2030 Census. Our previous webinars have covered key updates about our preparation. Our previous webinars are posted on our website at www.census.gov/2030census.

Now, let me provide you an overview of the 2026 Census Test and the changes and enhancements we will be testing. This will provide context for today's announcement about the test site because the elements we of testing help determine where this test will be conducted.

The 2026 Census Test is the first of two major field tests we will conduct to prepare for the 2030 Census. Census day, or the reference date for the test, will be April 1, 2026. The test will expand new and enhanced practices and methods that we are looking to implement for the 2030 Census.

We're building on and refining our efforts from the 2030 Census from the 2020 Census to work toward a complete and accurate count of all segments of the population. The test will include two components, six test sites that, as a group, cover all operational areas in scope for the test, and nationally represented self-response testing that will allow us to study self-response and contact strategy improvement. We will test key changes in operational areas. These are self-response, which is focused on ways to make it easier for the public to respond to the census questionnaire on their own – online, by phone, or by mail.

In-field enumeration: This is a consolidated and improved approach to collecting census data through enumerators who visit households in person.

Group quarters enumeration: This will explore new ways of counting people who live or stay in group living arrangements that are owned or managed by entities or organizations providing housing for the residents.

Communications, partnership, and engagement: This will include enhancing our outreach strategies to bring awareness and build trust to encourage response. **Cross-operational support and infrastructure.** This will test enhancements to several functions that need to work together across operations for a successful census.

And finally, near real-time response processing, which will include processing, reviewing, collecting and editing data concurrently with data collection. Important to note, the operational areas being tested in the 2026 Census Test includes aspects that directly or indirectly help us enumerate hard-to-count and historically undercounted populations. When identifying the operations that would be included in the 2026 Census Test, we establish clear criteria to help us optimize the design of the test.

First, the operation must include improvements or innovations that need to demonstrate they work in the real world. Second, the operation must be feasible based on available budget, systems, and other resources. Simply put, our objective for the 2026 Census Test is to verify if we can and should continue pursuing the key enhancements and innovations coming from our early research efforts.

Before we dive into the specifics for the Census Test site, let me explain that there are two components of the test. We have the test site, the work of which I have just introduced, and we have the national sample. The national sample will be used to test the nationwide self-response to this test.

This nationwide self-response component will complement our test site by mailing materials to a nationally representative sample of households, inviting them to respond to the test online, by phone, or by mail. This component builds upon the Census Bureau's ongoing small-scale testing to improve the online questionnaire and invitation materials sent to households. It will also provide insight on self-response rate trends, which will inform the 2030 Census planning for field infrastructure, communications, and other operations.

The sample size for the national component will be determined based on the detailed plans in development for the test and available resources. Now, let's turn our focus to the test sites. We'll start by looking at how we selected these locations. And for that, I'll hand it over to Dann Doyle, Deputy Chief of the Decennial Census Management Division. Dann?

Dann Doyle: Thank you, Tasha. The approach we take to selecting test sites plays an important role in ensuring that we're meeting the test objectives. This is

because the locations we select must provide optimal opportunities for us to implement all the changes and enhancements we have planned for the test, under real conditions and on a larger scale, than research simulations allow.

We're focused on improving the count of historically undercounted and hard-to-count populations in these enhancements, making the sites that we select especially critical. With this in mind, we followed a rigorous data-driven approach to identify the sites for the 2026 Census Test. We are confident that the locations selected through this process are optimal for implementing all the objectives of the 2026 Census Test.

Now, I'm going to walk through the approach, share the criteria we used, explain how the test sites meet these criteria and what they will enable us to test as a result. First, the approach. The process for selecting test sites began after we determined the full scope of the 2026 Census Test. Our first step involved reviewing the high-level requirements for each element that we're planning to test. This allowed us to identify the conditions, characteristics, and specifications that we would need in the selected location to test each element most effectively.

Then, we compiled these requirements into a consolidated list of criteria that test sites must meet to make sure that we can test all the planned changes and enhancements. We will share this full set of criteria with you later in this presentation.

Next, a team of experts used these criteria to identify possible candidates for sites. They conducted a rigorous data-driven analysis into possible sites by using an in-house tool that contains protected Title 13 household and geographic data collected from censuses, Census Bureau surveys, and publicly available data on unemployment rates, and cellular data from major cellular

companies.

After this analysis was complete, the site selection team recommended the locations that the data indicated were optimal for the test. By optimal, we mean that the combination of sites selected would allow us to meet all testing criteria, while also meeting available budget, systems, and other resource constraints.

It's important to recognize that we did not have a preset number of testing sites in mind as we began our work. We selected and finalized the total number of locations based on the combination of sites needed to meet testing requirements in the most optimal way.

Now, I know we're all excited to learn what these sites are, but I do want to take a moment to explain the specific reasons that drove the selection process, so you can better appreciate why these locations were chosen. The selection criteria cover four types of testing requirements; geography, living quarters characteristics, staffing, and technical characteristics.

It's important to note that each of these four sets of factors driving site selection includes requirements that would enable us to implement and evaluate planned improvements on how we enumerate historically undercounted and hard-to-count populations.

Now, let me dive deeper into the specific requirements included in each of these four criteria. Here you can see the full list of requirements that we will be covering in the next few slides. As I discuss these, keep in mind that no single location will cover all these requirements.

This is because the strategy driving our selection process identified a

combination of locations that together would allow us to cover all the elements we are testing in the most optimal way. The first set of selection criteria are the geographic-related requirements. These factors dictate the specific levels of geography that the collection sites must meet to ensure optimal coverage of the full test scope.

At the highest level of geography, the test requires geographic dispersions with sites located in two of the six Census Bureau regions. This would help to encourage diversity in the areas where we are testing. If you're not familiar with how the regions are divided, think of the cities where the regional offices for each of these centers are located, Chicago, Atlanta, Denver, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and New York City.

To meet the geographic requirements for the 2026 Census Test, we must also select sites that contain at least one rural area with high rates of historically undercounted populations and low self-response, a tribal area, a colonia, and non-mailable addresses such as PO boxes where households don't receive mail directly to their address. All these geographies and requirements do not need to be present at the same site.

By considering these factors when identifying optimal testing locations, we will be able to test improved partnership and communication strategies in areas with higher rates of historically unaccounted populations, such as American Indian and Alaska Native populations living in tribal areas.

Selecting sites with these geographic characteristics is also critical for testing elements such as the newly consolidated procedures for conducting in-field enumeration, the effectiveness of improved in-field self-response options and contact strategies and methods to accurately predict which areas will benefit from mobile questionnaire assistance.

Next, let's take a look at the living quarters characteristics that must be present among test locations. First, test sites must contain housing units in situations that are difficult to enumerate. These include housing units that are vacant during certain seasons of the year, complex housing units such as those with multi-generational families or blended families, and areas with high instances of new construction.

These hard-to-count situations also include multi-unit structures and hidden housing units such as basement apartments in what looks like a single-family home or an apartment over a garage and a new structure behind the house that's not visible from the street.

The 2026 Census Test also requires sites where group quarters facilities must meet certain requirements. The group quarters related site criteria also require a wide range of group quarters to be present among the sites chosen so that we can test the new automated group quarters enumeration procedures and their associated functionality.

The types of group quarters that must be present include worker dormitories, residential treatment centers, a correctional facility, and a military installation with residents who live in military barracks. Additionally, at least one location must contain a college area with student housing and housing units in the surrounding area, a site with a large continual care facility such as assisted living and hospice facilities that has sections of both group quarters and housing units.

By considering these living quarters characteristics when selecting test locations, we will be able to test strategies for engaging and enumerating hard-to-count populations in places that present unique challenges. We will

also be able to evaluate whether new field procedures improve accuracy and public engagement.

Several staffing-related requirements were also key drivers in determining test sites. These include identifying locations where recruiting field staff has been historically challenging, as well as areas with different levels of unemployment rates. Including these requirements in the site selection process would allow us to test new recruiting strategies and new automated tools for the hiring process.

The fourth and final set of site selection requirements relates to technical characteristics present in testing sites. These can be grouped in two categories. The first category involves technological connectivity requirements. The 2026 Census Test requires at least one site to have little to no Internet or cell phone service.

These conditions would ensure, for example, that we would be able to determine whether our mobile device solutions work effectively in areas with little to no cell phone service. They would also enable us to test whether and how the public chooses to respond to the census questionnaire in areas with no Internet connection and the extent to which field staff are able to receive electronic forms, attend training, and maintain good communication without using the Internet.

The second category of technical-related requirements relates to administrative data. The test requires at least one site with comprehensive administrative data and one with minimal administrative data. These sites would allow us to test enhanced enumeration procedures, define our contact strategies, and make other operational decisions based on the strength of administrative data.

And now, I'm going to share the sites where we have selected as testing locations for the 2026 Census Test. As you can see on this list, the 2026 Census Test will be conducted in six sites. The sites are Western Texas; Tribal lands within Arizona, which includes selected tribal reservations; Colorado Springs, Colorado; Western North Carolina; Spartanburg, South Carolina; and Huntsville, Alabama.

I will now walk you through each site and provide an overview of how each location contributes to our testing objectives and requirements, particularly those designed to help us improve enumeration among historically undercounted and hard-to-count populations.

Our first three sites are in the Denver region. First, let's take a look at the Western Texas site. This site includes Brewster County, Jeff Davis County, Pecos County, and Presidio County. The Western Texas site was found to have significant areas with little to no Internet or cell phone service. It also contains a high percentage of non-mailable addresses such as PO boxes and a large degree of seasonal vacancy.

The site also contains the Colonia and is a rural area with the presence of historically undercounted populations. Census self-response rates in this area have been historically low with 51% of households self-responding to the 2020 Census, compared to 67% at the national level.

Based on these characteristics, some of the changes and enhancements this site is optimal for testing include conducting mobile questionnaire assistance in remote areas, shipping materials and equipment directly to field staff homes, address in remote areas, testing enumeration on mobile devices in areas with limited internet and phone connection, testing new automated

functionality and procedures for recruiting and hiring in low connectivity areas, testing newly consolidated in-field enumeration procedures, and testing our public outreach strategy and translated data collection instrument with Spanish speakers.

The next site is tribal lands within Arizona, which includes selected tribal reservations within Arizona. This site is a rural area that is comprised of the Fort Apache Reservation, home to the White Mountain Apache Tribe, and the San Carlos Reservation, home to the San Carlos Apache Tribe, which include populations historically undercounted in the census. Self-response to the census has historically been low. And 48% of households, self-responded to the 2020 census, which was lower than the national average.

It also has a high percentage of non-mailable addresses and a large degree of seasonal vacant housing units, both of which involve situations that are hard to count. This set of characteristics will provide us opportunities to test many elements within the scope of the 2026 Census Test, including changes and enhancements to new mobile questionnaire assistance, recruiting and hiring, shipping materials and equipment directly to field staff, home addresses, and remote areas, and testing our newly consolidated in-field enumeration procedures and areas with hard-to-count and historically undercounted populations.

We also look forward to improving our relationships in tribal areas with new partnership procedures developed specifically for tribal outreach and communications. Colorado Springs, Colorado, is the third testing site. This location is comprised of selected areas of Colorado Springs metro area and includes a significant number of multi-unit structures and hidden housing units in urban areas as well as areas with complex housing units.

Our research also shows that this city is going through a period of considerable growth, making it an area with high instances of new construction and minimum administrative record data. This site also includes well-established neighborhoods that have comprehensive administrative data.

The Colorado Springs, Colorado, site also includes all required group quarter types, including multiple universities, correctional facilities, and military installations. Based on these characteristics, Colorado Springs, Colorado is favorable for implementing and evaluating new automated group quarter procedures with correctional facilities, large universities, military installations, and other group quarter types, as well as new in-field enumeration procedures and complex housing units and multi-unit structures or hidden housing units. Procedures for conducting in-field enumeration early in areas surrounding universities and contact strategies with housing units and areas with comprehensive and minimum administrative record data.

We also look forward to improving communications and partnership with group core facilities through this test. Our next three sites are located in the Atlanta region. The fourth site is Western Northern Carolina. This site includes the Qualla Boundary, home to the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Cherokee County, Graham County, Jackson County, and Swain County.

It's a rural area with a high rate of historically undercounted populations and historically lower census self-response with a lower self-response rate than the national average for the 2020 Census. It also has high percentage of non-mailable addresses, a large degree of seasonal vacant housing units, and a rate of multi-unit structures and hidden housing units.

It also contains significant areas with little or no internet or cell phone service.

Additionally, it provides an opportunity to conduct testing in an area with a high number of large continuing care facilities, as well as complex housing units. Like with other sites that include tribal areas and group quarter facilities, this site offers an opportunity to improve our relationship with tribal nations and group quarter partners.

As you can see from these characteristics, this site is suitable for implementing elements of the test such as new enumeration contact strategies for seasonally vacant housing units, new partnership procedures in tribal areas and areas with high rates of historically undercounted populations, automated recruiting, hiring, and training in areas with little to no internet and cell phone service, and newly consolidated in-field enumeration procedures.

The fifth testing site is Spartanburg, South Carolina. This location covers several living quarters-related requirements. It includes at least one university area with student housing, a high number of mixed-use units that include both group quarter facilities and housing units, and a wide range of group quarter facilities, including worker dormitories, nursing and skilled nursing facilities, and at least one correctional facility.

It also contains complex housing units, as well as urban areas with significant numbers of multi-unit structures and hidden housing units. These living quarters characteristics make Spartanburg, South Carolina, an optimal site for testing enhancements such as new automated group quarter procedures at a university, new group quarters and housing unit enumeration procedures, procedures for conducting in-field enumeration early in areas surrounding universities, and new in-field enumeration procedures in complex housing units.

Huntsville, Alabama, is our sixth and final site for the 2026 Census Test. With

a low unemployment rate reported at 2.2% in December of 2023, Huntsville, Alabama is optimal for testing our new pay rate methodology and recruiting strategies for areas with low unemployment. Low-unemployment areas are where we historically encounter challenges to recruit field staff.

This location also contains at least one university with student housing, a wide range of group quarters types, complex housing units, and an urban area with multi-unit structures or hidden housing units. This combination of living quarters features makes this site favorable for testing new automated group quarter procedures with a wide range of group quarter types, including large universities.

Procedures for conducting early in-field enumeration in areas surrounding universities: New in-field enumeration procedures in complex housing units, multi-unit structures, and hidden housing units, as well as contact strategy with housing units in areas with strong administrative record data.

Now, I'm going to turn it back to Tasha who will help us visualize how this combination of test sites will allow us to cover all the testing criteria. Then she will walk you through our next steps. Tasha?

Tasha Boone: Thanks, Dann. Dann provided a wealth of information about the test sites. This graphic provides a helpful summary of how the testing criteria are distributed across the six sites. At the top of this graphic, you will see the site name, and on the left side, you will see the site selection criteria provides optimum coverage of the full scope of the test. And by reviewing each row and column, you can see a snapshot of the requirements that each site covers.

As stated above, before, as Dann was talking through it, we used a rigorous data-driven process to identify this combination of test sites. By conducting

the test in these locations, we're confident the test will have robust and meaningful outcomes, and we'll be able to verify whether the innovations and enhancements we've researched are effective in the real world. If you would like to learn more about these sites, you can go to our 2026 Census Test web page at www.census.gov/2026test.

Now, you can see that the six sites selected for the test enable us to meet all the established criteria. Now, that testing the sites have been determined, we look forward to working with tribal and local officials in these areas. Your participation will help us work toward the goal of a complete and accurate count of every area of the country in 2030.

We appreciate your time and effort to engage with us to ensure successful 2026 Census Test. Throughout this year and next year, we will finalize the design of the test. We plan to release the detailed test plan in late 2025. This plan will provide details about how operations will be implemented during the test, as well as expected sample sizes and workloads.

We would also like to share a high-level timeline of when the activities will take place. In summer of 2025, we will begin outreach to raise awareness in the test site about the importance of participating in the test. In fall 2025, we will start recruiting temporary census jobs in the test site.

Then in spring of 2026, we will ask the public to begin responding to the test. Again, Census Day, the test reference date will be April 1, 2026. And participants are asked to respond based on where they live as of that date. The test concludes in summer of 2026. While status on contract actions that will support the 2030 Census is procurement-sensitive. The Census Bureau will work diligently to ensure adequate engagement and communicate procurement activities for the 2030 Census through postings through SAM, S-

A-M, dot, gov, and other mechanisms. This will be based on the most feasible acquisition strategies and vehicles determined by the Census Bureau during market research and acquisition planning phases.

We look forward to sharing more details with you throughout the planning process for the test. And as we finalize our plans for the test, we will hold another public engagement opportunity to update you on these preparations. For everyone who joined us, we thank you for your time today and giving us the opportunity to share our updates for the 2026 Census Test. We look forward to briefing you again during our next webinar in this series. I will now hand it back over to Stacy, so we can take your questions. Stacy?

Stacy Vidal: Thank you, Tasha. We are ready to begin taking your questions. Taking your questions today are the presenters, Tasha Boone and Dann Doyle along with Deb Stempowski, Associate Director for Decennial Census Programs, and Jennifer Reichert, Chief of the Decennial Census Management Division. Coordinator, would you give instructions on how someone can submit a question?

Coordinator: Thank you. If you'd like to ask a question, please unmute your phone and press Star 1. Please record your name in organization clearly. If you'd like to withdraw your question, press Star 2. Again, to ask your question, press Star 1. It does take a few moments for the first questions to come through.

Stacy Vidal: Thank you, Coordinator. As we wait for our first question to come in, we want to highlight a few resources for today's release. You can find them from our homepage at [census.gov](https://www.census.gov). There you will find a banner that links to our 2026 Census Test Press Kit.

On the press kit this afternoon, you'll find a copy of today's slide, a news

release, and more information about the test sites, including links to Census Bureau demographic, social, and economic data about each site. We'll also post a recording of today's webinar. Coordinator, do we have our first question?

Coordinator: We do. Our first question comes from Hansi Lo Wang with NPR. Your line is open.

Hansi Lo Wang: Thank you. This is Hansi Lo Wang with NPR. What contingency plans does the bureau have in place in case funding uncertainty from Congress forces the cancellation of some or all of the 2026 Census test plans?

Stacy Vidal: Hi, Hansi, thank you for your question. I'll invite either Tasha or Deb if you'd like to chime in on that one.

Tasha Boone: Sure. Thank you for your question, Hansi. In actuality, currently right now, our test plans are in line with the budget as we know it. And should any changes occur to the budget, we'll look at our plans, re-evaluate, and make sure that we update the public on what changes we need to make, if any.

Hansi Lo Wang: And if I can ask as a follow-up question, why does the 2026 Census Test not have a particular focus on improving the count of historically over-counted populations, including the non-Hispanic white population?

Stacy Vidal: Thank you for that question about potential overcounts. Let me see who would like to take that question. I think Dann, I see your hand, go for it.

Dann Doyle: Yes. Hi. And thank you for that question. That was a good question. And just a point I want to mention is that we have lots of different focuses that weren't part of this presentation. This was about the scope of the '26 tests. But we are

testing, and we do care about the overcount, and it's on our radar. From 2020, we had eight states that were part of the overcount, mainly in the Northeast, plus Hawaii, Minnesota, and Utah. And it's a little different of a problem than the undercount. But you will see it in our test plans in the seasonal vacant as well as the group quarter automated procedures where we're - best where we're trying to really focus on the overcount issues.

As well as within the test, we are trying to find sources of administrative records that we could use that help in the editing procedures for the overcounted population. So, even though it's not, we didn't say it's part of the test, it's on our radar, and it's a concern and something we're definitely looking at and part of our testing strategy as well.

Hansi Lo Wang: Thank you.

Stacy Vidal: Thank you. Coordinator, do we have our next question?

Coordinator: The next question comes from Mike Schneider with Associated Press. Your line is open.

Mike Schneider: Hi, good afternoon. I might have missed it, but did you say how many people live in the six sites or would be covered during this test?

Stacy Vidal: Hi, Mike. Thanks for that question about the population size for this test site. Dann, do you happen to have those numbers handy?

Dann Doyle: I don't have them handy, but I will explain why. So, we are using selected sites, number one, so it may not be the entire metropolitan area, and we are also still evaluating the operations that will happen on each city, so tune in later to another webinar for top count and other good information.

Mike Schneider: Okay. If I could ask another question about something that's pending in Congress, and that is the legislation dealing with the citizenship question. At this point, do you know if that will be tested in two years, a citizenship question?

Stacy Vidal: Thanks Mike for that question. We don't comment on pending legislation, but if you're talking specifically about the questions that we plan to ask about this question about...

Mike Schneider: Yes. I mean, is that going to be tested? Are you going to have a citizenship question on the questionnaire?

Stacy Vidal: Jennifer, would you like to answer that about those questions on the test?

Jennifer Reichert: Yes. Hi, Mike. Right now, it is not included in the content for the test. We are basically duplicating what we did in 2020 with the exception that we are trying to, you know, test some of the things that are coming out in the new OMB requirements. But currently, citizenship is not in the content for the '26 test, but content for the 2030 Census is far down the road for those decisions. So, those decisions have not been made yet for 2030, but for '26, no.

Mike Schneider: Okay. Thank you.

Stacy Vidal: Great. Thank you. Coordinator, do we have our next question?

Coordinator: That is from Allison Plyer with The Data Center. Your line is open.

Allison Plyer: Hi, everyone. Hope you can hear me.

Stacy Vidal: We can. Yes.

Allison Plyer: This had not, okay. Yes. So, - well, first of all, congratulations. I'm really impressed with the data-driven approach to this. You know, you've picked six areas that seem quite distinct in a number of ways, really getting at a lot of historically undercounted populations and characteristics and systemic challenges. So, I think this is really exciting. There were a few things that weren't clear to me that I wanted to ask about.

One was you mentioned, you know, you're looking at getting at places that have hidden housing units, which is great, and I'm wondering, first, how do you know they have hidden housing units, given that, obviously, housing units are hidden, right? You also talked about newly consolidated in-field enumeration and that - you know, testing that relative to hidden housing units and complex housing units.

And I - that's a phrase I wasn't familiar with and hoped maybe you could tell us what that is, newly consolidated in-field enumeration procedures. You said something about the mobile questionnaire assistance centers, but it seemed to go beyond that. So, that would be helpful. And then also, what is a complex housing unit? I have heard of complex households, but - and I've heard of multi-unit buildings, but wasn't sure you mentioned complex housing units several times and hoped you could explain what that is?

Stacy Vidal: Thank you for those questions, Allison. So, I've been tracking all the parts of it. I think we're talking about complex housing units, and we would like to understand a little bit more about the newly consolidated in-field enumeration operation. So, let's break those parts down. Dann and Jennifer, I'll invite you if you'd like to start taking a stab at whichever one of those you want to take first?

Dann Doyle: Well, we can start with the hidden housing units first, and Jennifer can pile on whenever she's ready. First with the hidden housings, we're able to determine that they're hidden after the fact by multiple IDs to a single household. So, we might see the three IDs to one household and then know maybe there's multiple families living there.

In terms of the complex housing units, that's generally blended families or multi-generation, not your normal typical household of two parents and kids. It's more of multi-generation, different relationships, maybe roommates, and that's what we call complex housing units. And then the in-field enumeration, we are planning to do three stages of in-field enumeration versus the early in-field, which compared to 2020, would be the update, leave, and updated enumerate operations.

We are also testing the (NRFU) and then the closeout phase. So, part of the in-field would be MQA, Mobile Questionnaire Assistance, which is going to be run through the communications, partnership, and engagement area. And, basically, that's where we go into areas maybe directly into undercounted populations, and we set up a table and people come there and fill out the census at the mobile questionnaire assistance. So, we're trying multiple different things targeted and also dynamic on different ways we can get at that historically unaccounted populations. I hope that addressed your questions.

Jennifer Reichert: Okay. And I'll just chime in a couple of other thoughts when we talk about complex housing units or complex households. The other thing to keep in mind is that some of our research, although it's only one factor, but much of our research has shown some correlation between these types of complex households and the undercount of young children, which we know is one of our critical historically undercounted populations, so that's another aspect of

that.

And then as well for the in-field enumeration, and Dan was alluding to this, instead of having three separate operations like we did in 2020 where we had, you know, self-response, and then we had traditional non-response follow-up, and then we had update enumerate and update leave in those areas where we, you know, either couldn't deliver mail or mail was delivered to post office boxes and that kind of thing are now consolidated in-field enumeration. We'll combine all of those into that single operation. So, that creates the need for us to do some special training for our enumerators because now they're going to deal with different types of housing units across their workload. So, that's one of the things we're testing as well in '26. So, lot going on there.

Allison Plyer: Thank you.

Stacy Vidal: Thank you for those questions. Coordinator, I think we're ready for our next caller.

Coordinator: Up next is Anita Lossiah with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. Your line is open.

Anita Lossiah: Hello, this is Anita from EBCI. And I was inquiring. We already have community members interested in becoming workers for the event, and I was wondering if there was a direct contact that I could refer them to, so as to not be running them through two or three different people, or if that has not been set up yet. I was just inquiring for this.

Stacy Vidal: Great. Thank you so much for that and that interest already. I think what may be the best way is if you would like, email us at PIO@census.gov, and we'll coordinate and get the right contact for you. And it's a little early for

recruiting, but we can start some conversations with you at least.

Anita Lossiah: Thank you very much.

Stacy Vidal: Great. Thank you. Coordinator, we're ready for our next question.

Coordinator: That is with Terri Ann Lowenthal with the Leadership Council. Your line is open.

Terri Ann Lowenthal: Hi. Can you hear me?

Stacy Vidal: Yes.

Dann Doyle: Yes.

Terri Ann Lowenthal: Great. So, far that's the leadership conference, but no problem. I have two questions, please, concerning the nationally representative sample. The first is, can you tell us what the sample size or in terms of number of addresses will be yet? And will that - subpart to that is, will this sample only be residential households or will there be any group quarters in the sample that might be eligible for the, you know, new modified self-response like college dorms. And then my second question is, is the Census Bureau taking steps to ensure that no one in the national sample is also in a test site so, as to avoid confusion in 2020?

Stacy Vidal: Thank you for those questions about the national sample. Jennifer, would you like to take a stab at answering those?

Jennifer Reichert: Yes. Hi, Terri Ann.

Terri Ann Lowenthal: Hi.

Jennifer Reichert: The sample size is not final yet. So, we'll share that. As Dann mentioned, all of the sample sizes and the workloads in the sites and all of that are being worked out right now, so that'll be shared as soon as we have all of those data available. I do not believe we will have any GQs in the national sample. It is purely a household self-response sample, so all of the GQ testing on Internet self-response will be within the site. So, I think those...

Terri Ann Lowenthal: Okay.

Jennifer Reichert: And then one is, yes, we will unduplicate. Households will not be in both a site and in the national sample, so we will make sure that those are definitely unduplicated, so.

Terri Ann Lowenthal: Thank you so much.

Stacy Vidal: Great. Thank you for those questions. Coordinator, we're ready for the next one.

Coordinator: That is from Arturo Vargas with NALEO Educational Fund. Your line is open.

Arturo Vargas: Thank you. I assume you can hear me.

Stacy Vidal: I can, yes. Loud and clear. Thank you.

Arturo Vargas: Hello, folks. Well, Terri Ann actually stole my question, but I want to follow up on the national sample. Could you explain a little bit more the relationship between what you tend to learn from the national sample versus these six

distinct sites, and what's the correlation between both the national sample and these individual sites? I just want to understand the - how they complement each other?

Stacy Vidal: Great. Thank you for that question about the national sample and how it correlates with the local sites. Jennifer, would you like to answer that one?

Jennifer Reichert: Sure. So, there is no correlation with the site. So, as I mentioned, they will be completely unduplicated. So, there won't be any, you know, cross-testing of response in the site versus the national. One of the main goals of the national sample is to establish that sort of baseline of national level responses. And that will help us to build our response models for 2030. So, just looking at, you know, what would we expect our self-response rates to be in different types, in different parts of the country and that kind of thing.

However, within that test, we will be doing some additional testing around like contact strategies, so things like messaging that's in the letters and that type of thing and that will inform us from a national sample just - it's not necessarily correlating with a lot of the criteria that we used within the site specifically, so it's more of a generic cross-section of the country for some of that testing. But there will be some common threads like we will be testing things like mailing to post office boxes and that type of thing in the national test as well as in the site. So, there's a little bit of overlap in some of the objectives, but they do have sort of different purposes across the two test sites.

Arturo Vargas: Can I ask a follow-up question?

Jennifer Reichert: Mm-hm. Yes.

Arturo Vargas: Will the national sample include Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico, and Pacific

Islands, or is it just the contiguous 48 states?

Jennifer Reichert: I will have to - we'll have to research, it will not include the island areas in terms of the - in the Pacific. It probably will include, I don't know if I'm looking to see if we can get an edit from our experts on that, but I'm not quite sure about Puerto Rico or Alaska, I'm assuming Alaska and Hawaii, yes, I don't know about Puerto Rico, but we can get that answer for you. No problem.

Arturo Vargas: Thank you.

Stacy Vidal: Thank you. Coordinator, I think, we're ready for our next question.

Coordinator: That question comes from Karen Narasaki with Census Equity Initiative. Your line is open.

Karen Narasaki: Hi, everyone. Very thoughtful choice of sites, very exciting to see. I have a couple of questions. One is there was some mention of communication, testing communications. I'm assuming you're not doing paid advertising, or I'm wondering what that means. What kind of communications will you be doing either for the national sample test or for the local test?

And the second is in testing, I'm so glad to see that you are looking heavily at the rural areas with non-traditional street addresses. Are you going to be testing other kinds, you mentioned PO boxes, but are you going to be testing like other kinds of addresses, like coordinates or something like that, that I think that the Native American advocates have been asking for?

Stacy Vidal: Thank you for this question. So, the first part about communications, Jennifer, is that something you would like to answer?

Jennifer Reichert: Hi, yes. Hi, Karen. Yes. We do intend right now to do some paid advertising within the test sites, so that will be part of our approach. But it's also very much about local engagement down at the local levels and building partnerships within all of the different sites, whether it be in a tribal area or in a local government area, building partnership with those local experts and advocates to help us have trusted voices and that kind of insight, but our current plans do also include some paid advertising, but the details are still to be worked out. And then I apologize, I forgot the second part of the question.

Karen Narasaki: What kinds of non-street addresses will you be...

Jennifer Reichert: Oh, oh.

Karen Narasaki: ...that's in beyond...

Jennifer Reichert: Yes. So, we...

Karen Narasaki:thinking about...

Jennifer Reichert: Yes. We are experimenting with what's called an every door direct mailer in the test. So, these are like sort of the postcards that go to, you know, resident, that type of things that most people are familiar with that come in your mailbox in terms of for people who normally get their mail maybe at a post office box or that kind of thing. It'll just have something in every mailing location.

We have some small scale testing going on outside of the '26 test where we are looking at other types of areas, like you mentioned, like the coordinates and that kind of thing. I'm not sure whether there'll be an opportunity in '26 to

test that, but we absolutely have that on our radar as part of our testing efforts throughout the decade, and building on our ability to get to households when we don't have just the standard, you know, city style address, so that's definitely a high priority for this decade.

Karen Narasaki: I'm very excited to hear that. And I just want to note, we'd love to - so I work with foundations, both national and state and local, and we'd love to work with you guys to figure out whether we should be funding something or not funding in the various sites that you're doing your test.

Jennifer Reichert: Thank you.

Stacy Vidal: Thanks for those questions. Coordinator, do we have any other questions at this time?

Coordinator: There are no other questions, but as a reminder, it is Star 1 if you'd like to ask a question.

Stacy Vidal: While we wait for, I think we have time for maybe just one more, while we wait for that question to come in, we'd like to highlight a few of our other upcoming releases. Tomorrow, we - on July 23, we invite you to attend the pre-release webinar about 2020 Census Detailed Demographic and Housing Characteristics File B. This product will provide household information for approximately 1,500 detailed race and ethnicity groups and detailed American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and villages.

We'll embargo the product beginning July 30 and the data will be public released on August 1. Then on Thursday, July 25, we will release new data from the Small Area Health Insurance Estimates Program. And on Friday, July 26, the 2030 Census Advisory Committee will hold its summer virtual

meeting. This will be the first meeting of the 2030 Census Advisory Committee. Coordinator, do we have any other questions at this time?

Coordinator: Thank you. And the next question comes from Mike Schneider with Associated Press.

Mike Schneider: Hi. Thanks. I know you said that as far as geographic dispersion, you all were interested in covering two out of the six regions. But I was wondering if there's just any hesitancy in just concentrating in the south and the west and omitting any locations in the midwest and the northeast.

Stacy Vidal: Thank you for that question, Mike. I'll turn to Dann or Jennifer to answer that.

Dann Doyle: Yes. Thanks, Mike. Lots of different factors played into which regional office. And it's not like we don't have a presence in the other regional offices. We have special censuses. We have current surveys still going on. So, part of the decision-making was also staying away from too busy of an area. So, there were lots of different factors that played into why we selected the sites and regional offices that we did.

Stacy Vidal: Great. Thanks for that, Mike. And that will be our final question. We are at time. If you have any additional questions after today's webinar, please contact the Public Information Office at 301-763-3030 or email us at pio@census.gov. Or if you have more general questions, please contact our Customer Service Center. And a reminder, you can find resources from today's webinar at www.census.gov/2030census. Also in our Press Kit for the 2026 Census Test. I'd like to thank everyone who took part in today's webinar. I'm Stacy Vidal. Thank you for joining, and have a great afternoon.

Coordinator: Thank you. That does conclude today's conference. We appreciate everyone's

participation. Enjoy the rest of your day. And you may disconnect.

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