

2016 Census Test

Preparing for the 2020 Census



Harris County, TX

The Census Bureau will conduct a 2016 Census Test in selected areas of Harris County, Texas. The test area includes approximately 225,000 housing units.

Census Day is April 1, 2016.

The U.S. Census Bureau is researching modern and cost-efficient methods for the population to exercise its civic obligation to be counted in the 2020 Census. Whether through the Internet, telephone, traditional paper questionnaires, or in-person visits, the Census Bureau is committed to making the mandatory once-a-decade headcount quick, easy, and safe for all to participate.

The 2016 Census Test will allow the Census Bureau to, on a small scale, employ a variety of new methods and advanced technologies that are under consideration for the 2020 Census. The Census Bureau will test new design, implementation, and management processes. We will also evaluate new technology for collecting and processing responses to the census.

The Purpose of the 2016 Census Test in Harris County

The 2016 Census Test will allow the Census Bureau to study a variety of new methods and advanced technologies that are under consideration for the 2020 Census. The primary focus of the test is to refine the methodology for nonresponse follow-up — the operation conducted to personally visit households that do not respond to the census. The Census Bureau also will refine methods and related activities for maximizing self-response (particularly via the Internet) to the 2020 Census. Testing in two sites will allow us to learn more about managing new systems simultaneously in multiple locations.

Goals

- Refine technologies and methods for assigning cases to field staff conducting nonresponse follow-up and continue to refine the use of mobile technology for data collection and case management.
- Continue to research how best to use existing government and commercial information to reduce the follow-up workload (ex. Using records to identify vacant units or to reduce additional visits for households we are unable to contact).
- Study partnership and outreach efforts for communicating with historically hard-to-count populations, including providing assistance in multiple languages
- Continue to explore self-response options, including how people respond using the Internet, mobile devices, the telephone, and paper questionnaires. Additionally, the test supports continued refinement of methods to process responses in real time submitted without a unique Census-provided address identification code (non-ID processing).

For help completing your 2016 Census Test questionnaire, call toll-free 1-866-226-2836.

For more information, visit census.gov.