



## Council, Census Bureau urge Navajo public to apply for 2020 Census work

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**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** — Members of the Navajo Nation Census 2020 Complete Count Commission and Office of the Speaker received an update report on Monday from the US Census Bureau regarding recruitment and operations activity during the COVID-19 state of emergency.

“We know that every single person living on the Navajo Nation needs to be counted in the ongoing 2020 Census. To carry out the work of 2020 Census operations across the Navajo Nation, we want to continue to let Navajo communities know that the Census Bureau is still hiring. We’ll need all the help we can get once the COVID-19 state of emergency is lifted,” said 24th Navajo Nation Council Delegate Edison Wauneka.

“The 2020 Census field operations were suspended on March 18 due to COVID-19,” said Arbin Mitchell, area Census office manager for the 2020 Census. “When we suspended operations, 155 people were employed in the Update Leave Operation, meaning they were delivering census questionnaires with ID numbers to households.”

Following a preliminary survey of Navajo Nation households last year, the Update Leave Operation on Navajo planned to distribute 2020 Census questionnaires to approximately 77,000 housing units. When operations were suspended to protect worker health safety, Census workers had distributed questionnaires to only about 3,000 households.

Only about 4 percent of Navajo Nation households were given the information needed to answer the 2020 Census. For comparison, as of Sunday, the bureau reported that 53% of all US households already completed the questionnaire.

All 2020 Census field operations were halted just four days after they began in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This came after a 12-month effort to develop 2020 Census recruitment efforts and extensive public outreach campaigns. Delegates and Legislative Branch staff have been presenting radio

forums, print advertisements, agency reports and other forms of messaging with the goal of getting all Navajo people counted in the 2020 Census.

“Answering the 2020 Census is one of the easiest, most effective ways that Navajo people can do to positively affect our Navajo Nation for the next ten years. We have Census jobs available — we want as many people to apply as possible,” said Speaker Seth Damon.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Census Bureau began providing personal protective equipment (PPE) to Census operations employees. The Census Bureau provided the Office of the Speaker the update on PPE for workers to help reassure potential applicants that precautionary measures are in place to ensure workers are protected.

In the upcoming 2020 Census Nonresponse Followup Operation, Mitchell reported to the Office of the Speaker that 795 people were selected from applications submitted previously. Another 150 people needed to be selected before the COVID-19 outbreak, Mitchell said.

“Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we don’t know how many of these people are still willing to work. We want to recruit more of our people so we don’t run short on the Navajo workforce for the 2020 Census,” stated Council Delegate Edison Wauneka.

To apply to work for the 2020 Census, visit the application website at [2020census.gov/jobs](https://2020census.gov/jobs).

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