

IL Count Me In 2020 Field Guidance on Spread of COVID-19

The 2020 Census is finally here! However, while the first mailers arrived at home this week and our engagement efforts hit into high gear, we are also working through the spread of COVID-19. This virus pandemic is not to be taken lightly. The safety, health, and well-being of our communities, especially those historically undercounted or in hard to count geographies, should be a concern for all of us. In order to keep our communities safe, by **necessity, many of your Census strategies will need to change.** See suggested field guidance for your ongoing Census outreach efforts:

- At this time, please remind your constituencies there are 3 ways for people to respond to the Census: Online, by phone, and paper form. This can all be done at the comfort of one's own home.
- We **strongly** encourage you to pause and cancel all canvassing and community events with over 50 people until **April 3**. This also includes any April 1 activities. We ask that your organization reevaluate your outreach efforts in early April.
 - This is also a reminder that we are now in self-response mode and we still have the months of **April, May, and June** to do Census outreach. Canvassing, if resumed this spring, will need to complete by May 12, 2020, regardless of outreach strategy changes.
- During this time, we ask that you increase and highlight your digital outreach and presence, in particular, concentrated phone-banking and texting. If you work with the State's 987-987 program, we encourage you to use that service.
 - Forefront is currently working with UIC to provide grantees with a webinar training soon to best utilize the State's 987-987 texting program. Please be on the lookout.
- If possible and as you may have capabilities, please consider hosting webinars and/or conference calls for your programming and outreach to your respective constituencies.
- The City of Chicago announced on March 12 that Comcast will provide free internet to any low-income household starting **Monday, 3/16** through their internet essentials program. For more information on Chicago's efforts, [click here](#).

We recognize that the plans grantees described in their work plans are changing and we support them in making the programmatic and operational changes necessary for the health and well-being of their staff and the communities you serve. This is an emergency situation. **We will have more guidance around changing their work plans soon.**

For more information, please do not hesitate to reach out to Anita Banerji at abanerji@myforefront.org or Yoselyn Ovalle at yovalle@myforefront.org. We are here for YOU, our trusted messengers and partners on this important issue.

#ILCountMeIn2020 #ChicagoCountMeIn2020