

Call to Action: Protect the Integrity of the 2030 Census**Public comments are due October 13, 2026**

The U.S. Census Bureau has proposed significant changes to the rules governing the 2030 Census.

The proposed regulations would change how the Census Bureau determines where people live for census purposes, establish new criteria affecting who is included in population counts used for apportionment, and establish restrictions concerning demographic questions on the decennial census questionnaire.

These are proposed rules, not final changes. Organizations, researchers, governments, community members, and other stakeholders can provide information to the Census Bureau and document their concerns for the official record now, which could come in handy during future Congressional oversight.

Why this matters:

The decennial census is much more than a once-every-ten-years headcount.

Census data help determine congressional apportionment and redistricting and provide foundational information used by governments, researchers, nonprofits, businesses, and communities.

For organizations serving Minnesotans, detailed Census data can also be essential for understanding who lives in a community, identifying disparities, planning services, evaluating outcomes, and determining where resources are needed.

Minnesota has a particularly important stake

Minnesota retained its eighth congressional seat following the 2020 Census by a historically narrow margin of 26 people.

The proposed residence criteria also deserve particular attention in Minnesota because they would focus on a January 3–April 1 period that coincides with the heart of Minnesota's winter.

The proposal's treatment of demographic information is also significant. The Census Bureau's current planning materials had contemplated implementing updated federal race and ethnicity standards in the 2030 Census. The new proposal would largely erase and restrict critical demographic information.

For organizations that rely on detailed Census information, the practical question is:

What information would we lose, and what would we be unable to understand or measure if it were no longer collected or published?

WHAT CAN ORGANIZATIONS DO?

1. Submit a public comment

The most direct opportunity is to participate in the federal rulemaking process.

Deadline: October 13, 2026

Comments are most useful when they explain specific consequences rather than simply expressing a general opinion.

For example, tell the Census Bureau:

- Which Census dataset your organization uses.
- What program or service depends on it.
- What geographic level you use—state, county, city, tract, block, or another geography.
- What population(s) your organization serves.
- What would happen if the information were unavailable.
- Whether another dataset could realistically replace it.

- What limitations that alternative would have.
- How changes would affect your ability to plan, evaluate, or deliver services. Importantly, note the impact Minnesota would endure if your org, and other organizations like your org, are undermined by the proposed changes to the 2030 Census.

A specific example from an organization that uses Census data in its daily work can provide valuable information to federal decision-makers.

2. Tell your congressional delegation

Organizations can also educate their members of Congress about how Census data affect their work and ask members to conduct appropriate oversight of the proposed changes. **NOTE:** Congress oversees the Census and can step in to prohibit these changes.

Share concrete examples rather than simply sending a form message.

3. Educate your community

Help community members understand:

- what the Census is;
- what the proposed changes would do;
- why accurate population data matters;
- how the formal public-comment process works; and
- how they can participate (please reuse this resource if helpful).

Organizations should know that sharing information about a proposal or policy is absolutely nonpartisan and admissible. Stay focused on the proposed rule and its consequences, not on political figures' positions on the matter, and you are well within the bounds of 501 (c) (3) permissible actions.

4. Document your organization's dependence on Census data

If your organization relies on decennial census data, or other data products like the American Community Survey or Population Estimates that use decennial counts as a population base, now is the time to document that dependence.

Consider identifying:

- Grants
- Programs
- Research
- Demographic profiles
- Service-area analyses
- Equity assessments
- Planning processes
- Funding formulas
- Redistricting-related work
- Community needs assessments
- Landscape analyses/scans
- Advocacy
- Workforce metrics (e.g. HR)
- Service population metrics
- Comparing program service date to population data/ Weighting survey data to the population

- Evaluating education enrollment data
- Infrastructure planning/evaluation (housing, healthcare, transportation, etc.)
- Business placement & planning
- Other organizational decisions

This documentation can help your organization respond to future changes and provide concrete evidence during the current rulemaking process.

5. Share this opportunity with others

Organizations that work in health, housing, education, human services, economic development, research, philanthropy, local government, and community development may all have relevant expertise.

Please share information about the proposed rule and the October 13 comment deadline with colleagues who use Census data.

Keep the advocacy nonpartisan

501(c)(3) organizations can engage in public-policy advocacy, but federal tax law prohibits them from participating or intervening in political campaigns on behalf of or against candidates.

For this effort, organizations should focus on:

The data.

The evidence.

The proposed rules.

The consequences.

The public process.

Avoid endorsing or opposing candidates or political parties.

Why participation matters



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The proposed regulations are currently subject to public comment. This is an opportunity to put concrete information into the federal administrative record before decisions about the final rules are made.

The 2030 Census cannot simply be rerun later using a different methodology.

If your organization depends on reliable Census data, this is the time to explain exactly how—and what could be lost if the proposed changes become final.

Public comments are due October 13, 2026.

[Submit an official comment with the Federal Register here](#)

For additional information or to coordinate with Wilder's public policy team, please contact:

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