

City of Madison: Issues plea for all to complete the Census despite confusion

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Madison, WI – The deadline for completion of the 2020 Census count remains uncertain as a federal judge’s temporary restraining order directs the bureau to pause plans to complete the count by September 30. The Trump administration had extended the deadline to October 31 in April, then rescinded the extension in July. A group led by the National Urban League challenged the Trump administration to allow the Census Bureau time to complete the count fairly and honor the October 31 deadline. A court decision was expected on September 17 but was delayed when Justice Department attorneys failed to provide requested documents.

Because of changing dates, political interference, and misinformation many Madison residents may not be counted. Community leaders, nonprofits, and Census staff are working frantically to reach as many Madison residents as possible, especially in parts of the Northside, south of Wingra Creek/Lake Monona, and in the Allied Drive area, where household self-response rates are below the city average.

“Freedom, Inc. has been providing mutual aid to our community, making sure that residents are safe and have what they need to get through this time while we talk to them about the census,” said Ntxhais Chai Moua, Freedom, Inc. Community Power Coalition Director. “We are keeping our communities safe and making sure we are counted.”

Participation in the 2020 Census is important for several reasons:

□ Funding: The census count affects state and federal funding for our community over the next decade. Every person who is not counted results in an estimated loss

of \$2,000 per year in federal funding for important community investments like health care, transportation, and affordable housing.

□ Reflecting our diversity: Madison has grown and changed a lot in the last ten years. An accurate count of all neighborhoods will help community leaders and researchers understand the true diversity of the people who live here. Some of the most historically undercounted populations are people of color.

□ Representation: Political district boundaries are based on the Census. Everyone living in the U.S. (not just citizens) must be counted to ensure equal representation at all levels of government.

Everyone living in Madison should complete the Census, including immigrants. “A complete count of our residents is critical to Madison getting its share of the resources for school, housing, healthcare, and more that help people every day,” said Mayor Rhodes-Conway. “I’m concerned that misinformation about the Census is holding people back from participating. The truth is, you don’t have to be eligible to vote to be counted, there is no citizenship question on the Census, and all information from the Census is confidential and can only be used for statistical purposes.”

By law, census information cannot be shared with immigration officials, law enforcement, landlords, creditors, employers, or anyone else outside of the Census Bureau.

Whether the deadline remains September 30 or not, time is running out. Go online at my2020census.gov or call 844-330-2020 to complete the Census. It takes less than ten minutes. Census workers are also knocking on the doors of houses and apartments that haven’t completed the Census. When you answer the door, they will help you complete the Census and be counted.