

# Statewide Database Meeting (California)

Director's Remarks as Prepared for Delivery

November 2, 2022

## STATEWIDE DATABASE'S FOCUSES FOR THE MEETING:

- Explaining what the Statewide Database does and how it uses census data.
- Demo of the three GIS/software products they created to visualize U.S. Census Bureau data and make it user-friendly to “communities of interest.”
- Overview of what is in redistricting data and how “communities of interest” might use it.
- Discuss ongoing collaboration with James Whitehorne and his team.

## ISSUES:

- Longstanding issues around DP (differential privacy), related to the fact that California is the first state to require prisoners to be reallocated to their city of origin.
  - Both Census Bureau and Statewide Database received the same publicly available administrative record from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR).
  - Once DP/DA (differential privacy/disclosure avoidance) was applied to the administrative record—with the intent of protecting the privacy of a dataset that is already available to the public—it was increasingly difficult to reallocate prisoners to their home locations, and often they would end up with a negative count which was unusable. The data from the publicly available, submitted dataset and the data they got back from the Census Bureau did not match.
  - Statewide Database felt the Census Bureau did not respond to them in a timely manner that we would not change our SOP (standard operating procedure).

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

- Recognize that Statewide Database has created tools that allow for easier “democratization of data,” which allows “communities of interest” to participate in the redistricting process.

### Back-of-pocket talking points

#### 2020 Census Residence Criteria and Residence Situations

The Census Bureau's goal is a complete and accurate census of every person living in the United States. To be fair and consistent, we follow a longstanding principle set by Congress to count people at their usual residence, which is where they live and sleep most of the time. As required by Article I, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution, the decennial census is conducted to be able to apportion seats in the U.S. House of Representatives among the states. To that end, it is crucial to count everyone in the right place during the decennial census.

## **We count people at their usual residence, which is where they live and sleep most of the time.**

- From the very first census in 1790, Congress established the principle of counting people where they usually reside in order to be fair and consistent. The census has followed that principle ever since.
- For most people, determining their usual residence is straightforward. For others—like members of the military, college students, and other people living in group quarters—knowing where to count them can be more complicated.
- Over time, we have developed guidelines for applying the principle of usual residence so that we accurately count people in more complicated residence situations in the correct location.

## **Each decade, we review how we apply the principle of usual residence to people in different residence situations, and we invited the public to weigh in during our review for the 2020 Census.**

- We received comments primarily on where we count prisoners and where we count military deployed overseas.
- We carefully considered the comments we received and objectively looked at the residence situations closely to make our final decisions.
- On Feb. 7, 2018, the U.S. Census Bureau published a decision memo about the release of the “Final 2020 Census Residence Criteria and Residence Situations” in the Federal Register.

## **For the 2020 Census, we have updated where we count people in certain residence situations. In total, the way the criteria are applied changed for five residence situations.**

- ***Overseas military and civilian employees of the U.S. government***—We plan to change where the census counts military and civilian employees of the U.S. government who are temporarily deployed overseas on Census Day (April 1). The 2020 Census will count military and civilian employees of the U.S. government who are temporarily deployed overseas at their usual home address in the United States, as part of the resident population, instead of their home state of record.
  - In 2010, the census counted military and civilian employees of the U.S. government who were *temporarily* deployed overseas in their home state of record and only included them in the total state counts that were used for the apportionment of congressional seats.
  - For 2020, military and civilian employees of the U.S. government who are *temporarily* deployed overseas will be counted at their usual home address in the United States. Furthermore, they will be included and counted in both the state population counts (apportionment) and local population counts (redistricting).
  - Military and civilian employees of the U.S. government who are *stationed* or *assigned* overseas on Census Day, as well as their dependents living with them, will continue to be counted in their home state of record. Consistent with the 2010 Census, these federal employees and their dependents will only be included in the total state counts to be used for apportionment of congressional seats.
- ***Overseas federal employees who are not U.S. citizens***—For 2020, we plan to include any non-U.S. citizens who are military or civilian employees of the U.S. government who are deployed, stationed, or assigned overseas on Census Day. These legal U.S. residents will be counted in the same way as U.S. citizens who are included in the federally affiliated overseas count. They are also “temporarily away in service to our country.”

- **Maritime/Merchant vessel crews**—In 2020, we will count the crews of U.S. flag maritime or merchant vessels who are sailing between a U.S. port and a foreign port on Census Day at their usual home address, or at the U.S. port if they have no usual home address. Previously, they were not counted in the census.
- **Juveniles in treatment centers**—In 2020, we will count juveniles staying in noncorrectional residential treatment centers on Census Day at their usual home address, or at the facility if they have no usual home address. Previously, they were counted at the facility.
- **Religious group quarters residents**—In 2020, we will count people living in religious group quarters on Census Day at the facility. Previously, they were counted at their usual home address or at the facility if they had no usual home address.

**After careful review, we’ve decided that we will not change where we count people in other residence situations.**

- **Prisoners**—For the 2020 Census, we will continue counting prisoners who are incarcerated on Census Day (April 1) at the correctional facility. However, we plan to provide states with tools to help them “move” inmates back to where they lived before incarceration, if they choose to do so.
  - These tools will help states make their own decisions about where and whether to include prisoners when redrawing district boundaries.
  - This plan gives interested states the information they need to redraw district boundaries as they prefer while still following the census’s principle of counting people where they live and sleep most of the time.
  - We will also give states the counts of their prison populations earlier than before. After the 2020 Census, we will provide prison counts along with the other data needed for redistricting by March 31, 2021, (per Public Law 94-171) (2010 counts were released April 20, 2011).
- **College students**—We will continue to count college students where they live and sleep most of the time. For students who live away from their parents’ home, we will count them at their on- or off-campus residence.
- **Other residence situations**—We will follow the same guidelines for counting people in all other residence situations as we did in the 2010 Census. More information is available on <[census.gov](https://www.census.gov)>.

**Our goal is for a full, fair, and accurate count of the U.S. population that follows the longstanding principle of counting people at their usual residence.**

- We recognize the importance of counting people in the right place. We know that any change in where we count people can have far-reaching effects—on how we take the census, on political representation, and on funding decisions at every level of government. Because of this, and because of the need to identify new and changing living situations in the United States, we gave the public the opportunity to weigh in on the residence criteria and residence situations.
- These guidelines align with our desire for accuracy and fairness, and the longstanding principle to count people where they live and sleep most of the time.

## CENSUS GEOCODER

Some states have laws that require them to move certain group quarters populations elsewhere when they redraw their state's legislative boundaries. To help states work with our group quarters population counts, we have made the Census Geocoder available to assist states with "moving" their group quarters population to an alternate address for the purpose of redistricting. We also provide a channel for states working on state-level redistricting to provide larger address lists than the web-based Census Geocoder allows.

The Census Geocoder provides the ability to:

- Identify and verify the locations of group quarters to assign geographic identifiers to a group quarters address list.
- Identify the locations of individual addresses and assign geographic identifiers to those addresses.
- Use the group quarters address list, the individual address list, user-defined unique identifiers, and the returned geographic identifiers to create tabulation adjustment tables.
- And by extension through data sources and the geocoder output, link user-supplied race, ethnicity, and age data associated with each record and the tabulation adjustment table through user-defined unique identifiers.

This tool may help some states make decisions about where and whether to include individuals living in group quarters when redrawing district boundaries.

States can determine which group quarters populations they wish to reallocate (in accordance with their state laws) by using the geocoding service and the redistricting data. Specifically, states can use the table "P5—Group Quarters Population by Major Group Quarters Type" with the 2020 Census geographic data pulled from the geocoder.

## DIFFERENTIAL PRIVACY

**We're modernizing our approach to protecting your privacy in the 2020 Census statistics we publish. This ensures we can provide useful, high-quality statistics AND protect your personal information.**

**We must balance our responsibility to protect personal privacy with the need to release detailed, usable statistics from the 2020 Census.**

- Privacy and accuracy are, and have always been, core to our mission.
- Now more than ever, quality census statistics are critically important for communities as they work to recover from the pandemic's effects and make informed decisions.
- We are making hard but data-driven decisions about balancing the level of detail we can provide in our published statistics, especially for smaller geographic areas and population groups, while protecting the privacy of individuals.
- We have been working with advocacy groups, as well as privacy and data experts, to fine-tune the level of protection. We continue to meet with them to address outstanding questions.
- Protecting individual information ensures that people feel safe participating in the census and in surveys.

**Serious threats to privacy exist today that didn't exist 10 years ago during the last census. Our previous ways of protecting privacy are no match for these threats.**

- We've long used various statistical safeguards to help us avoid disclosing individual information when we release statistics.
- The methods we've used in the past are no longer enough to protect against today's cyberthreats.
- Today's powerful computers can find and match data from multiple databases to identify personal information.
- The law protecting census data (Title 13 of the U.S. Code) requires us to ensure that information about any specific individual, household, or business is never revealed, even indirectly, through our published statistics.
- Census Bureau data privacy experts have been working with other statistical professionals and stakeholders to implement a new solution to protect your privacy.

**The Census Bureau is using a cutting-edge method called "differential privacy" to protect your individual information, while letting us share important statistics about communities.**

- We are using a stronger system to protect your information against today's cyberthreats.
- Differential privacy uses a mathematical approach based on modern cryptography principles to disguise an individual's identity in the statistics we publish.
- It's called "differential privacy" because using it guarantees that no one should be able to see a large difference between a set of statistics from a database that included a specific person and a set that did not.
- If the Census Bureau were to revert to data-swapping or other legacy privacy methods, it would have to be at a scale that would distort the data beyond usability. The only other alternative would be large-scale data suppression which would mean simply not publishing many data tables or data cells.
- Apple, Google, and other big technology firms have also recently adopted forms of differential privacy to strengthen their protections.
- We've used differential privacy before on smaller projects, including our job location data in 2008, but this is the first large-scale use by a statistical agency worldwide.

**BACKGROUND:**

- More information is available on our 2020 Census disclosure avoidance webpage.