NEW JERSEY COUNTS 2020

Alana Vega, Kids Count Coordinator, ACNJ
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Supportive Housing Association Meeting
WHAT IS THE CENSUS?

• Essential Constitutional requirement every 10 years
• Counts every living person in the United States
• Run by the federal Census Bureau
WHY DOES THE CENSUS MATTER?

- **Funding**: $675 billion in federal funds depend on Census ($22B in New Jersey!)
- **Planning Data**: Number of hospital beds or school classrooms; new business branches; roads/highways
- **Representation**: Census data determines district boundaries and how many representatives states get in Congress
- **Community**: Census tells us who our communities and neighbors are
## CENSUS DATA IMPACT FEDERAL FUNDING ALLOCATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Obligations (FY 2016)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medical Assistance Program (Medicaid)</td>
<td>$9.1 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicare Suppl. Medical Insurance (Part B)</td>
<td>$2.9 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program</td>
<td>$1.2 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers</td>
<td>$740 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 8 Housing Assistance Payments Program</td>
<td>$516 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Assistance for Needy Families</td>
<td>$404 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education Grants</td>
<td>$370 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Income Home Energy Assistance</td>
<td>$127 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Andrew Reamer’s “Counting for Dollars 2020: New Jersey
HOW DO PEOPLE FILL OUT THE CENSUS?

• Four ways to fill out Census in 2020
  • Online (new preferred method)
  • Phone
  • Mail
  • In-Person Interview ("door-knocking")
CHALLENGES FOR 2020

• First Census to be primarily filled out online or on the phone
• 15% of NJ residents have no internet or dial-up only
• Distrust of government and polls/surveys
• Less Census staff than 2010 for in-person follow-up and coordination
• Concentrations of HTC populations throughout NJ
**HOW CAN PEOPLE BE MISSED BY CENSUS?**

- **“Hard-to-count”** populations are groups that are often missed by the Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homeless persons</th>
<th>Young children (under age 5)</th>
<th>Black or Hispanic people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asians or Asian-Americans</td>
<td>Males ages 30-49</td>
<td>Renters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-income households</td>
<td>Those who don’t speak English well</td>
<td>No internet access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans</td>
<td>Immigrants</td>
<td>Migrant or highly mobile groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MANY REASONS FOR UNDERCOUNT

- Address not listed
- Multi-unit buildings
- People not included on questionnaire
- Complex households
- Highly mobile populations
  - Census determined by “usual place of residence” on April 1, 2020
- Fear of government
- Language issues
YOU HAVE A BIG ROLE TO PLAY

• You **play a critical role in ensuring an accurate Census count in 2020!**
• There’s less trust in “official” sources and more trust in local trusted messengers
• A fair 2020 Census for NJ needs all hands on deck!
  • 10 years of funding and planning depend on it
WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR CENSUS 2020

• Become a Census Partner

• Join/start a local complete count committee

• Host a Census kiosk

• Educate your network—newsletters, email blasts

• Resource: CA Disability Community Toolkit
CONTACT US

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