



Census 2020 California Statewide Funders' Initiative
Adaptive Strategies to Get out the Count:
How California Census Grantees are Pivoting During
the COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has shifted how Census grantees reach out to local communities in California, forcing many to revise door-to-door and in-person strategies to digital and telephonic outreach. Below are several examples that demonstrate how groups on the ground are using their creativity and resourcefulness to Get Out the Count for the 2020 Census. We invite you to share these ideas with your grantees in the hopes they may inspire useful approaches.

Combining Census Information with Direct COVID-19 Relief

- La Luz Center in Sonoma, CA does [census outreach at local food banks](#).
- School districts in Sacramento partner with census outreach groups to share census flyers with families picking up Chrome books for distance learning.
- In the Inland Empire, groups providing direct relief and services related to COVID-19 are asking individuals that call for referrals whether they've completed the census.
- Clinic Consortia provides appreciation kits to essential workers at health clinics that include census materials.
- A community group in Sacramento adds census materials to diaper deliveries.

Working with Local Businesses

- Nuestra Casa de East Palo Alto works with Latino small businesses to pass out [census information with every purchase](#).
- Alianza Coachella works with a local grower to include census messaging as part of farmworker paychecks.

Integrating Census into COVID-19 Advocacy

- VietRISE in Orange County layered census messages onto their campaigns calling for cities like Santa Ana, Garden Grove, Westminster, and Costa Mesa to adopt emergency plan ordinances.

Online Questionnaire Assistance

- Movimiento Cultural de la Unión Indígena in Napa, CA hosts [Facebook Live sessions](#), teaching indigenous communities how to fill out the census questionnaire.

- International Children Assistance Network (ICAN) set up Google Hangouts to provide questionnaire assistance in Vietnamese in response to long wait times on the Census Bureau's questionnaire assistance lines.

Internet and Technology Access

- South Kern Sol in Bakersfield, CA informs the public that they can complete the Census online using 24/7 [WiFi access](#) from the parking lots of Kern County libraries.
- Rapid response funds from The California Endowment have allowed census groups in the Central Valley to purchase technology, phone lists (for groups that don't already have their own), and support to expand the reach of digital messages.

Shifting to Virtual

- Silicon Valley Community Foundation's marketing and communications team repurposed footage from a [census documentation project](#) to produce a [video in Spanish of popular education skits](#) performed by Latinos United for a New America before the COVID-19 pandemic. LUNA now uses the video as a virtual outreach tool.
- Cambodian Family in Orange County capitalized on an online celebration of the Cambodian New Year to relay census messages.
- In City Heights (San Diego), Mid City CAN's team of outreach workers uses its rich database of contacts from Integrated Voter Engagement work to call specific residents with whom they have a previous relationship.
- Sierra Health Foundation encourages grantees that have exhausted their census PDI lists and member phone lists to build community phone trees. Groups have had success with members providing additional contacts and calling their own social circles.

Engaging Community from a Safe Distance

- Equipped with a bullhorn and a truck, a community group in the Central Valley drives through rural parts of Fresno County relaying census messages in the streets.
- Alliance San Diego organized a ["census parade"](#) with dozens of cars to remind residents to respond to the census. They amplified their messages in multiple languages through a speaker mounted on one of the cars.

Teaming up with Trusted Messengers

- In Sacramento, faith leaders communicate the importance of the census during online sermons, Catholic radio shows, and through church bulletins.
- Sierra Health Foundation partnered with Radio Bilingüe to produce [three musical vignettes](#) with catchy songs and census messages that motivate Latinx community members to be counted, that reinforce responding by phone in Spanish, and that encourage people to spread the word.

Thank you to our members Latino Community Foundation, Sierra Health Foundation, Silicon Valley Community Foundation, and The California Endowment for providing these examples.