Seminole County 2020 Census Response Team Final Action Plan

A Working Plan Creating 2020 Census Awareness and Outreach

It's Not too Late to Respond!







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Seminole County and the 2020 U.S. Decennial Census

The following actions by the Seminole County Board of County Commissioners (Board) demonstrate the County's commitment to ensuring a complete and accurate population count toward maximizing the census response rate to the 2020 Census among all Seminole County residents.

April 9, 2019: Issuance of a proclamation proclaiming April 1, 2019, as "Census 2020 Awareness Day" in Seminole County, encouraging all residents to participate in events and initiatives to raise awareness of the 2020 Census.

May 14, 2019: Enactment of Resolution 2019-R-81, creating the 2020 U.S. Decennial Census, Seminole County Complete Count Committee ("Complete Count Committee"), a volunteer committee, for the purpose of creating census awareness and motivation for County residents to participate in the 2020 Census. In addition, beginning in May 2019, the County launched a 2020 Census website to educate residents on the importance of the 2020 Census toward achieving an accurate and complete population count.

January 14, 2020: Issuance of a proclamation observing April 1, 2020 as "National Census Day in Seminole County," adopting the motto for the 2020 Census as "We All Count in Seminole County," and encouraging residents to promptly respond to the 2020 Census.

July 28, 2020: Enactment of Resolution 2020-R-90, creating the Seminole County 2020 Census Response Team, herein referred to as the "Response Team" or the "CRT", consisting of staff members representing local governments and public agencies that were also members of the Complete Count Committee, noted above, and an additional member representing Seminole County Government.

In enacting Resolution 2020-R-90, the Board found that the Complete Count Committee had served faithfully and honorably under a most difficult time and that the July 31, 2020, end of service date for the Committee need not be extended, and that creation of a new census team was the most appropriate action to take regarding the 2020 Census. To fully understand Seminole County's involvement in the 2020 Census requires consideration of the achievements of both the Complete Count Committee and the Response Team.

October 31, 2020: End of Service for the Seminole County 2020 Census Response Team. On October 13, 2020, the U.S. Census Bureau announced that the self-response and field data collection operations (population counts) for the 2020 Census will conclude on October 16, 2020, at 5:59 a.m., within the Eastern Time zone. This date was ordered by the U.S. Supreme Court in their October 13, 2020, decision and replaces the October 31, 2020, date that was originally issued by the Census Bureau on October 2, 2020. October 29, 2020, was the final meeting of the 2020 Census Response Team.





Background to the 2020 Census

History

The Constitution of the United States from its ratification has mandated a census of the population to occur every 10 years. Article 1, Section of the Constitution states that an enumeration shall be made within three years after the first meeting of Congress (i.e., 1790) and within every subsequent term of 10 years. The first census in America was directed by Thomas Jefferson under the presidency of America's first president George Washington. The first census of Florida was taken in 1830, when Florida was still a territory.

The 2020 Census in Perspective

The 2020 Census may be one of the most unique in American history, and must be understood in light of the following:

- 1. For the first time in the history of the census, residents could choose to self-respond to the census online, by telephone, or by mail. Beginning in March 2020, the U.S. Census Bureau began inviting residents to self-respond to the census using one of these options.
- 2. On January 30, 2020, a coronavirus virus, later named COVID-19, was declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern, eventually designated as a pandemic affecting the response rate to the 2020 Census.
- 3. In response to the COVID-19 virus, the U.S. Census Bureau, on several occasions, adopted operational adjustments to the timeline for completion of the 2020 Census. Most significantly, the initial date of July 31, 2020, for residents to respond to the 2020 Census, was eventually adjusted to October 16, 2020, by order of the U.S. Supreme Court. These adjustments ranged from the initial date of July 31 to August 12, September 30, October 5, October 16, and October 31 (on two occasions) resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and legal challenges.
- 4. Residents also had the opportunity to respond to the census via census takers (aka doorknockers) and by the Census Bureau's Mobile Questionnaire Assistance operations. The 2020 Census will be the most accessible census in the history of the United States Census counts.

Included among other opportunities to respond to the 2020 Census, residents were provided with approximately 1,000 census television commercials, reports from various news media and numerous social-media platforms, printed census outreach materials, such as fact sheets, census awareness activities by thousands of complete count committees nationwide, special events, and other special census presentations.





Mission of the U.S. Census Bureau

The U.S. Census Bureau is the federal agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce charged with collecting and publishing a wide variety of statistical data relating to population, housing, and the economy of the nation. The Bureau's primary mission is to conduct the decennial census, and submit population totals to the President of the United States by December 31 of the census year. The census counts every resident once, and only once, and in the right place, where they live on April 1st of every 10 years ending in zero.

Importance of the Decennial Census

The primary purpose of first census was to determination representation in Congress. Today, population counts from the census also determine allocation of millions of dollars in federal funding for activities and programs such as public health, housing assistance, education, and transportation. Population counts also determine representation in the U.S. House of Representatives, and will be used for redistricting state and local voting districts. Estimates are that Florida may receive additional seats in the U.S. House of Representatives from the 2020 Census, depending on the final population count.

2020 Census Response Team

Creation of the Response Team

In view of the July 31, 2020, end of service date for the Complete Count Committee, on July 28, the Board of County Commissioners enacted Resolution 2020-R-90, creating the Seminole County 2020 Census Response Team (CRT) consisting of staff members representing local governments and public agencies that were also members of the Complete Count Committee. These include: Seminole County Government, County Municipalities, Seminole County Sheriff's Office, Seminole County Public Schools, East Central Florida Regional Planning Council, and the Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority (LYNX). The CRT is assisted by a Response Team Coordinator from Seminole County Government responsible for providing general administrative and technical support to the Response Team. There are no officers, i.e., chair persons assigned to the CRT. The Response Team will remain active through October 31, 2020.

In creating the Response Team, the Board found that:

- 1. The Response Team could take advantage of the adjusted deadline for responding to the 2020 Census, beyond the initial July 31, 2020 deadline, thus increasing the opportunity for an increased response rate to the 2020 Census;
- 2. The need for an accurate and complete population count is magnified resulting from the devastating impacts from the COVDI-19 virus on government services, business and industry, health care, education, and families; and





3. As noted above, population counts determine representation in the U.S. House of Representatives, and will be used for redistricting state and local voting districts. Florida is projected to add an additional two or more seats in the U.S House of Representatives with the 2020 Census population counts.

Response Team Action Plan

The 2020 Census Response Team's Action Plan draws extensively from the previous U.S. Decennial Census, Seminole County Complete Count Committee's Final Action Plan. This will assist the CRT in achieving its mission of census awareness and motivation for residents to respond to the 2020 Census. The Committee's Final Action Plan is referenced only herein due to its size. As noted above, and throughout this Action Plan, to fully understand Seminole County's involvement in the 2020 Census requires looking at the achievements of both the Complete Count Committee and the Response Team.

Response Team Roles and Responsibilities

<u>Census Awareness and Outreach</u>. The Response Team focused on the following roles and responsibilities:

- The CRT adopted this Action Plan to encourage participation in the 2020 Census toward achieving an accurate and complete population count and maximizing the response rate to the 2020 Census. This included census awareness and outreach to Hard-to-Count (HTC) areas within the County recording low response rates reported by the U.S. Census Bureau. By definition, HTC areas may, but not necessarily, include minority populations, renters, those with a mistrust of government, new immigrants, certain handicapped persons, and low income households. HTC areas are shown in Appendix B.
- 2. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and its inherent risk of infectious disease from attending both indoor and outdoor events, and in light of the completion date for responding to the 2020 Census (at that time, October 31, 2020, later adjusted to its final date of October 16, 2020) the CRT had opportunity to focus on digital messaging to facilitate census awareness and outreach via, as examples:
 - a. Fact Sheets, utility billing, newsletters, and other forms of messaging; and
 - b. Digital media such as web postings, email, social media such as Facebook, Nextdoor, Twitter, and Instagram, or message boards.
- 3. The decision of any person or group to partner with the Response Team was solely that of each of each respective partner. The Census Bureau defines a partner as a group or individual that commits to participate in some way with census activities.



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- 4. Attendance at any live indoor or outdoor events by CRT members were optional and only under strict advisement of Seminole County officials in consideration of health and safety issues associated with the COVID-19 virus. The CRT could distribute census outreach materials to representatives of an event, if requested, without attending the event.
- 5. The 2020 Census Complete Count Committee Coordinator shall serve as the Response Team Coordinator.

<u>Response Team Meetings</u>. The Seminole County 2020 Census Response Team was subject to the Florida Commission of Ethics Guide to the Sunshine Amendment and Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees. Meeting notices, minutes, and agendas were available for public review on the County's website at <u>Seminole County Census Website</u>, or by contacting the Seminole County Planning and Development Division Office, County Services Building, 1101 East First Street, Sanford, Florida, Room 2028, or by email below. All Response Team meetings were noticed and open to the public. All CRT meetings were conducted via the Zoom teleconferencing platform. Email: <u>census@SeminoleCountyfl.gov</u>.

Regarding the current situation surrounding the COVID-19 virus, and to limit public gatherings in accordance with Federal, State, and County directives, interested persons who wish to participate were encouraged to do so remotely via telephone or communications media technology as such technology may be established. Interested persons should call the phone number below for details on such remote participation.

Additional information regarding the Seminole County 2020 Census Response Team and the role of Seminole County in the 2020 Census were available by phone at 407-665-7332; by email at census@seminolecountyfl.gov; or FAX at 407-665-7385. Notice was provided that one or more members of the U.S. Census Bureau, and one or more elected official may be present at CRT Zoom meetings.

2020 Census Awareness, Accuracy, and Completeness

The preferable method of responding to the 2020 Census was by self-responding, where households complete and return their census questionnaire in a timely manner, directly to the Census Bureau, without requiring a census worker to visit households to obtain a response to the census in person. Self-responding online, by phone, or by mail was significantly less costly than in-person, non-response follow-up. Non-response follow-up consists of census takers (aka door-knockers) to interview households and assist in completing the census questionnaire where a self-response was not received. The census participation rate will include the self-response rate combined with the various census follow-up activities conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. The estimated date of publication of the participation rate is between May and July of 2021. The 2010 Census self-response rate for Seminole County was 69% and the overall participation rate was 77%, and the 2020 Seminole County self-response rate was 73.6%.





2020 Census Response Team Final Action Plan

An accurate response is one that counts everyone once, and only once, and in the same place.

Census awareness included informing and education residents that the 2020 Census is easy, safe, it's in the Constitution, and it's a civic duty. Residents were reminded that Seminole County may receive millions of dollars in federal and state funding for activities and programs such as public health, housing assistance, education, and transportation; and that population counts determine representation in the U.S. House of Representatives, and will be used for determining voting districts.

Response Team Major Action Steps

	Conduct 2020 Census Response Team Meetings.
	Adopt and publish the 2020 Census Response Team's Action Plan.
August 1 through	 Implement the 2020 Census Response Team's Action Plan.
October 31, 2020	 Adopt and publish the 2020 Census Response Team's Final Action Plan
	 Assist the Census Bureau with census follow-up activities, if requested.

Shape your future START HERE >







Seminole County Census Response Team "It's Not too Late to Respond!"



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Appendix A

Response Team Census Outreach Methodology

Seminole County 2020 Census Response Team Census Outreach Methodology



In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and its inherent risk of infectious disease from attending both indoor and outdoor events, the Census Response Team (CRT) predominantly used digital messaging to facilitate census awareness and outreach. In addition, previous census partners from the work of the Complete Count Committee and any new partners from the CRT, may have received messaging to respond to the census, caused by the COVID-19 pandemic that predated previous census messaging.





Appendix B

2020 Census Self-Response Rates Map Hard-to-Count Sites



Self-Response Rate by Percentage, October 16, 2020, the end of 2020 Census Population Counts as ordered by the U.S. Supreme Court on October 13, 2020.

Assigning Hard-to-Count Areas and Self-Response Rates - The map above, published by the U.S. Census Bureau, with Map Sites added by Seminole County, depicts self-response rates for Seminole County as of October 16, 2020, the end of the 2020 Census. The Census Bureau recommended that due to the effects of the COVID-19 virus on census outreach, and in keeping with the then October 31, 2020, ending date of the 2020 Census, that those Census Tracts achieving less than 50% selfresponse may be defined as Hard-to-Count Areas (HTC). Following are the response rates for these HTC Map Sites within and below the 50 percentile: Site 1:37.6% (City of Sanford); Site 2:50.3% (City of Sanford); Site 3:54.5% (City of Sanford and Seminole County); Site 4:54.0% (City of Sanford and Seminole County), and Site 5:56.4% (City of Oviedo).

In perspective, and as a tool for census outreach for the 2030 Census, it is noted that the 2020 Census self-response rate for Seminole County was 73.6%, and the 2010 Census self-response rate was 69%. There were 15 Census Tracts recording a self-response rate within the 60 percentile, and three (3) Census Tracts within the 80 percentile. All other Census Tract recorded a response rate within the 70 percentile. The map above does no depict these Census Tracts. It is also important to note that census outreach was not only provided to residents within these HTC Sites, but other HTC Census Tracts throughout the County as part of census awareness activities via the Complete Count Committee, Census Response Team, Seminole County Community Relations Office, and County Municipalities. Self-response rates are available at: 2020 Census Self-Response Rates.

Please note that the HTC areas published before April 1, 2020 (prior to invitations to response to the 2020 Census) were modified after tracking of response rates became available.



Seminole County Census Response Team



"It's Not too Late to Respond!"

Appendix C

2020 Census Self-Response Rate Progression April to October 2020

2020 Self-Response Rates By Percentages	April 1, 2020 National Census Day	October 16, 2020 End of the 2020 Census
Florida	35.7	63.8
Seminole County	40.5	73.6
City of Altamonte Springs	36.6	68.4
City of Casselberry	38.1	71.4
City of Lake Mary	45.6	76.9
City of Longwood	39.7	75.0
City of Oviedo	47.6	82.6
City of Sanford	32.7	62.4
City of Winter Springs	46.0	80.2

The preferable method of responding to the 2020 Census was by self-responding, where households complete and return their census questionnaire in a timely manner, directly to the Census Bureau, without requiring a census worker to visit households to obtain a response to the census in person. Self-responding online, by phone, or by mail was significantly less costly than in-person, non-response follow-up. Self-response rates do not include the work of census workers (aka door-knockers).

It is noted that Seminole County ranked first among the 69 Florida Counties at 73.6% in self-responding to the 2020 Census.

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates the population of Seminole County as of July 1, 2019, at 471,826 residents. The 2010 population of Seminole County was 422,718.

In addition, the COVID-19 virus significantly affected the overall response rate to the 2020 Census. Release of 2020 Census data by the U.S. Census is estimated to be between May and July of 2021.





Appendix D

Identifying a Census Taker at Your Door







Appendix E

Seminole County 2020 Census Flagship Poster





Seminole County Census Response Team

Census 2020

Appendix F

Board of County Commissioners Resolution 2020-R-90 Creating the Seminole County 2020 Census Response Team

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-R-90 SEMINOLE COUNTY, FLORIDA

RESOLUTION OF THE SEMINOLE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

CREATION OF THE SEMINOLE COUNTY 2020 CENSUS RESPONSE TEAM

WHEREAS, Article 1, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution mandates a census occur every 10 years of the population of the United States, including people of all ages, races, ethnic groups, citizens, and noncitizens; and

WHEREAS, on May 14, 2019, The Board of County Commissioners enacted Resolution 2019-R-81, creating the 2020 U.S. Decennial Census, Seminole County Complete Count Committee for the purpose of creating census awareness and motivating residents to participate in the 2020 Census towards achieving an accurate and complete population count among all residents of Seminole County; and

WHEREAS, the Complete Count Committee adopted and implemented a 2020 Census Awareness Action Plan to facilitate innovative and engaging census awareness outreach activities and events toward maximizing the census response rate, serving faithfully and honorably under the most difficult of times; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 6 of Resolution No. 2019-R-81, the Complete Count Committee shall remain active through July 31, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on January 30, 2020, a coronavirus virus, later named COVID-19, was declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern, reducing census awareness, and resulting in devastating impacts on government services, business and industry, health care, education, and families; and

WHEREAS, as a result of COVID-19, to protect the health and safety of the American public and U.S. Census Bureau employees, the Census Bureau adjusted its key dates for completing the 2020 Census from the Original Schedule of March 12-July 31, 2020, to the New Schedule of October 31, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the 2020 U.S. Census Bureau must submit state population totals from the 2020 Census to the President of the United States by December 31, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners recognizes the critical importance of achieving an accurate and complete population count among the residents of Seminole County as data from the census determines allocation of federal funding not only to states, but also local governments, that will provide vital assistance for activities and programs, and further recognizes that census counts determine representation in the U.S. House of Representatives, and are used for redistricting state and local legislative districts, including Seminole County Commission districts; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners has authority to create a government-sponsored Census Response Team to create awareness and motivation for residents to participate in the 2020 Census, and to assist the U.S. Census Bureau in census follow-up activities, if requested; and

WHEREAS, the census, since its beginning in 1790, has never been cancelled or delayed; and

1









Seminole County Census Response Team

Census 2020

Appendix G

Response Team Membership Roster

No.	Primary and Support	Public Sectors
1	Katlyn Howery, Planner, and Alisha Maraviglia, Principal Planner	City of Altamonte Springs
2	Jonathan Tardif, Planner I	City of Casselberry
3	Kendall Story, Urban Planner	City of Lake Mary
4	Anjum Mukherjee, Senior Planner	City of Longwood
5	Yvonne M. Mouser, GIS Coordinator	City of Oviedo
6	Lisa Holder, Communications Officer	City of Sanford
7	Christopher Schmidt, Director of Community Development and Marla Molina, Senior City Planner	City of Winter Springs
8	Fred Milch, Project Review Coordinator	East Central Florida Regional Planning Council
9	Cheri Meyers, Director of Staffing and State Reporting	Seminole County Public Schools
10	Bert Francis, Chief Financial Officer	Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority (LYNX)
11	Nancy Acevedo, Community Relations Coordinator	Seminole County Sheriff's Office
12	Dagmarie Segarra, Senior Planner	Seminole County Planning and Development Division

Notes:

As noted herein, on July 28, 2020, the Board of County Commissioners enacted Resolution 2020-R-90, creating the Seminole County 2020 Census Response Team to encourage and motivate residents to response to the 2020 Census.

Tony Matthews, Seminole County Planning and Development Division, served as the Volunteer Coordinator of the Response Team.





Response Team Achievements

To fully understand Seminole County's involvement in the 2020 Census, requires consideration of the achievements of both the Complete Count Committee and the Response Team. The following lists of census related achievements by the Response Team may reflect a repeat or continuation of those achievements by the Complete Count Committee.

As noted above, the Response Team focused on digital messaging using the following possible options, but were not limited to, where available to the respective agency:

- 1. Fact Sheets, utility billing, newsletters, and other forms of messaging; and
- 2. Digital media such as web postings, email, social media such as Facebook, Nextdoor, Twitter, and Instagram, or message boards.

Examples of census outreach by Response Team members included:

- Bilingual postcards to low response areas.
- Display of 2020 Census Flagship Poster.
- Social media posts.
- Census messages on web pages.
- Census message on email signature.
- Census message in local buses.
- Distribution of 2020 Census outreach paper materials to various agencies such senior centers, churches, Veterans Office, Rescue Mission, Harvest International, and homeless populations.
- Recommend census activities for home schooling.
- Recorded podcast.
- Local newspaper story.
- Radio interview.





References and Citations

As noted above, this Action Plan draws extensively from the Complete Count Committee's Final Action Plan to assist the CRT in achieving its mission of census awareness and motivation for residents to respond to the 2020 Census. The Final Action Plan is referenced only herein due to its size.

As noted above, to fully understand Seminole County's involvement in the 2020 Census, requires consideration of the achievements of both the Complete Count Committee and the Response Team.

Action Plans are not required to be adopted or approved by the Board of County Commissioners but are provided to the Board for review and comment. The Census Team Coordinator will provide a copy of the Response Team's Final Action Plan to the County's Commission Records Office and post on the Seminole County Census website. The Coordinator will also distribute the Final Action Plan to the U.S. Census Bureau in appreciation of its partnership with Seminole County in the 2020 Census. The Coordinator may amend and codify the Final Action Plan, as needed, including any changes during the Response Team's final meeting on October 29, 2020, to adopt the Action Plan.

This Action Plan draws from a variety of source materials provided to the public by the U.S. Census Bureau for education, for creating census partnerships, and for encouraging an accurate and complete count of the population in the 2020 Census. These include, but are not limited to:

- U.S. Census Bureau Outreach Materials
- U.S. Census Bureau, Partnership Specialists
- 2010 Seminole County Complete Count Committee Documents
- 2020 U.S. Decennial Census, Seminole County Complete Count Committee 2020 Census Awareness Final Action Plan

Selected Websites include: 2020Census.gov 2020 Census Response Rates Census Bureau Outreach Materials SeminoleCountvfl.gov/census

<u>Note to Reader</u>: The internet and electronic pdf format provide the reader with the best overall view of this Final Action Plan. For questions regading the 2020 Census Final Action Plan contact the Response Team Coordinator by email at <u>census@seminoleocuntyfl.gov</u>. October 31, 2020.

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