

MEDIA RELEASE



COUNTY OF ERIE
OFFICE OF THE
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 27, 2020

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Erie County residents reminded to respond to the U.S. Census

Erie, PA – County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper reminds Erie County residents to fill out the U.S. Census form. Residents can respond to the form by mail, by phone, and for the first time, online until Wednesday, Sept. 30.

The U.S. Constitution requires a census count every 10 years, and documents population increases, decreases and changes in community demographics. Those statistics are then used to decide how many seats each state gets in the U.S. House of Representatives and determines the amount of federal funding Pennsylvania receives for essential programs and services, including healthcare, food assistance, education, transportation, housing, community development, and more.

“We are quickly approaching the deadline for everyone to complete the census,” Dahlkemper said. “COVID-19 has disrupted so many things; we must not let it take the blame for a significant undercount. The CARES Act funding we just received was based on our population. It is believed we were undercounted in 2010, so we would have received more money if everyone had participated then. This is only one example of how we lose out. Every resident in Erie County can help determine our future by making sure every friend, family member and neighbor is counted. It takes 10 minutes to respond to the 2020 Census. And that determines our state and county funding for the next 10 years.”

Residents who have not responded to the 2020 Census should expect a census enumerator to contact them in person or over the phone. All census workers must carry a valid ID badge with their photo, U.S. Department of Commerce watermark, and expiration date. Residents can call 800-923-8282 to check if a visitor works for the census.

Residents do not need to be concerned about safety and security, as census answers can't be used against an individual, and data security is managed by security experts operating at the highest levels. Under Title 13 of the U.S. Code, the U.S. Census Bureau cannot release any information that identifies individuals, and anyone who breaks this law faces a fine of up to \$250,000 and/or up to five years in prison.

For more information and resources related to the 2020 U.S. Census, please visit <https://www.pa.gov/census/>.

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