**“Census in Place”**

A safe activity for an anxious time

The kids are home from school. Church services are cancelled. Sports have stopped. You can’t even meet your friends at a restaurant for dinner. We are in a time when almost every community activity has been completely disrupted by the threat of Coronavirus.

Take comfort, then, that filling out the Census form online is one of the most powerful community-building activities we can all do safely right now.

Think about it. The U.S. Census is one of the few things in the United States that actually connects every single one of us. No matter your age, gender or ethnicity, you are strongly encouraged to take part. It doesn’t matter how you dress or the language you speak. The Census tells us all that we are part of one, huge, diverse community throughout Michigan and the rest of the United States. It is written into the U.S. Constitution as “every person,” period. No exceptions and no exclusions.

Right now, most households are receiving an invitation through the U.S. Postal Service to respond online. The invitation has instructions and a unique census ID number you enter as you fill out the online form. It also has instructions on how to respond by phone. You don’t have to leave your home, or even open your front door. Just sit down and be counted at [www.2020census.gov](http://www.2020census.gov). If you haven’t seen the Census invitation, you can still fill out the survey. See how at <https://2020census.gov/en/ways-to-respond.html>.

If you happen to have school children around the house right now, gather them to watch as you answer the 2020 Census questions. They ask about each person living in your household as of April 1, 2020. Answering the census questions together could be a very good lesson in your family’s history and relationships. The federal government uses census data when it funds schools, so completing the census is also an important way to ensure your children’s schools receive the support they deserve.

If you are willing to dive a little deeper, click on this webpage to find learning activities about the 2020 Census you can do with your children. At least check out the really cool maps.

<https://census.gov/programs-surveys/sis/2020census/2020-resources.html>

Best of all, you can feel completely safe as you fill out the online census form in your own home. You will be keeping your social distance, and you can be sure your privacy is protected, too. By law, the Census Bureau cannot release any identifiable information about you, your home, or your business, even to law enforcement agencies.

Michigan is your state, and you deserve to be counted. Safely.