**A Complete Census Count Will Safeguard Michigan’s Food Assistance Programs**

Hundreds of thousands of Michigan children depend upon their local school not only for a good education, but also for a nutritious meal each day. Studies have shown good nutrition is critically important in schools -- healthy students are better students who demonstrate good attendance and behavior and achieve better test scores.

Schools provide these meals to children whose families struggle to afford them through federally funded programs. Your participation in the 2020 Census will ensure these critical meal programs continue because census numbers will determine how much money the federal government will give Michigan.

There are at least five programs that feed our children, families, and senior citizens here in Michigan that use census data.

Two of them, the **School Breakfast Program** and **National School Lunch Program,** provide public and nonprofit private schools and residential childcare establishments nutritionally balanced breakfasts and low-cost or free lunches to children each day.They also fund snacks for children who participate in afterschool programs.

Importantly, these programs are continuing to provide meals and snacks even though Michigan children are not currently attending school under Gov. Gretchen Whitmer’s “Stay Home, Stay Safe” order. Our census data is critical for ensuring programs like these are properly funded.

Other programs include:

● The **Child and Adult Care Food Program**, which provides children and adults nutritious meals and snacks at childcare centers, adult daycare centers, daycare homes, afterschool care centers and emergency shelters throughout our state.

● The **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP),** which offersnutrition benefits to low-income individuals and families to use at stores to supplement their food budgets so they can purchase healthy foods. It’s the largest anti-hunger program in our country.

● **Special Programs for the Aging, Title III** provides senior citizens with healthy meals in group settings, such as senior centers and faith-based locations, as well as in their homes**.**

A complete count of all Michigan residents on this year’s census is important for the next 10 years. The data will help determine the allocation of billions of dollars in federal funding in our state to support these food assistance programs, as well as other state and local services including medical care programs, education programs and funding for hospitals.

Complete the 2020 census today for your family, friends and neighbors. Go to [2020census.gov](https://2020census.gov/) to fill it out online using your computer or handheld device. Or call 1-844-330-2020 to learn how to complete the census by phone, including in the language of your choice. It takes just 10 minutes to answer nine questions.