

Counting People in Group Quarters

If you are living or staying in a group living arrangement, also known as group quarters, on April 1, 2020, the Census Bureau has a special process for counting you. This process, known as the Group Quarters operation, will ensure that you are counted in the right place for the 2020 Census.

What Are Group Quarters?

Group quarters are places where people live or stay in a group living arrangement. These places are owned or managed by an entity that provides housing and services for the residents. These services may include custodial or medical care as well as other types of assistance, and residency is commonly restricted to those receiving these services. This is not a typical household-type living arrangement. People living in group quarters are usually not related to each other.

Examples of group quarters include:

- Group homes (non-correctional)
- Nursing facilities/Skilled-Nursing facilities
- Psychiatric hospitals and psychiatric units in other hospitals that provide long-term, non-acute care
- Residential treatment centers (non-correctional)
- College, university, and seminary student housing, including residence halls, apartments where students enter “by the bed” leases (i.e., single-liability leases), and fraternity and sorority housing recognized by the college or university
- Religious group living quarters (e.g., convents, monasteries, abbeys)
- Correctional residential facilities
- Federal and state prisons
- Local jails and other municipal confinement facilities
- In-patient hospice facilities
- Hospitals with patients who have no usual home elsewhere
- Workers’ group living quarters
- Job Corps centers or vocational training facilities
- Military quarters (barracks and dormitories)
- Military disciplinary barracks and jails
- Military treatment centers
- Maritime and Military Vessels

Purpose of the Group Quarters Operation

The purpose of the Group Quarters operation is to make sure the following people are counted in the 2020 Census:

- People living or staying in group quarters.

- Provide an opportunity for people experiencing homelessness and receiving services at service-based locations.

How Does the Group Quarters Operation Work?

Because group quarters are owned or managed by a third party, the Census Bureau assists group quarters administrators in responding to the census on behalf of its residents. There are several Group Quarters operations that apply to group quarters administrators. These are described below.

Group Quarters Advance Contact

The Group Quarters Advance Contact operation helps the Census Bureau prepare for a successful population count by identifying a group quarters administrator to assist in the enumeration process and provide important identifying information about their facility. This operation begins in February 2020.

Service-Based Enumeration

Service-Based Enumeration counts people who may be experiencing homelessness who stay or receive services at a service-based location (e.g., emergency and transitional shelters, soup kitchens, regularly scheduled mobile food vans, pre-identified non-sheltered outdoor locations).

Group Quarters Enumeration

Group Quarters Enumeration is the process by which each person living or staying in group quarters is counted. For the 2020 Census, group quarters administrators may choose from five response methods.

Maritime and Military Vessel Enumeration

Maritime and Military Vessel Enumeration provides an opportunity for people residing on U.S. flagged vessels to be counted in the right place for the 2020 Census.