



City of New Bedford
Office of the Mayor
Contact: Jonathan Carvalho
(508) 979-1410
jcarvalho@newbedford-ma.gov

CITY OF NEW BEDFORD
Jonathan F. Mitchell, Mayor

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For Immediate Release

P R E S S R E L E A S E

New Bedford Counts: City launches 2020 Census effort

New Bedford, Massachusetts– Mayor Jon Mitchell and members of the New Bedford Complete Count Committee officially launched New Bedford Counts, the City’s 2020 Census efforts as the count gets underway starting today, March 12, 2020.

Last year at Mayor Mitchell’s direction, the City of New Bedford, in a comprehensive effort to ensure the entire population of the City is accurately counted in the 2020 Census, formed the New Bedford Complete Count Committee, a public-private partnership composed of 18 members (with 13 drawn from the community and 5 from City government).

The City also hired its first Census Outreach Coordinator, Lynn Coish, last year to organize the City’s focus on the Census. For the past 12 years, Ms. Coish worked for the Buzzards Bay Coalition as administrative assistant and volunteer coordinator. For the past 14 years, she has also served as the team leader of Operation Clean Sweep in New Bedford.

Census website launched

The Census is critical to all New Bedford residents. Census numbers directly affect the amount of funding the federal government directs towards New Bedford. The City has launched a Census website, www.newbedford-ma.gov/census, and will include reminders on radio, social media, and beyond for residents to receive important information about the Census.

Respond by May 12

The Census is here: it will begin arriving in the mail in New Bedford and nationwide over the next two weeks, beginning today. The self-response period ends May 12, so residents should complete their Census online, by mail, or by phone by that date. From May 13 through July 31,

Census workers will visit neighborhoods across New Bedford and the country to follow up with those who have not yet filled out their forms. Residents may still respond on their own during this period, but may receive a knock on their door from Census workers.

The Census is easy! Fill it out online, by mail, or by phone

The Census forms residents receive in the mail will include instructions on how to fill out the Census online, by mail, or by phone. It consists of a few simple questions to ensure everyone in the household is counted.

Help Centers and assistance available to City residents

As part of the New Bedford Counts effort, 25 Census Help Centers are also available across the city. These include the City's five library branches and more locations. The full list is available at www.newbedford-ma.gov/census.

The Census affects funding and representation

Conducting an accurate Census is critical to ensuring that New Bedford gets its fair share of federal for the people, services and projects in the city. If individuals are not counted, important programs that city families rely on will not be adequately funded – for the next ten years. These programs include:

- School funding (Title I)
- Hospitals/Medicaid funding
- Childcare subsidies and more

According to the Massachusetts Census Equity Fund, every person counted means \$2,372 in federal funding (average state-level figure). Mid-size cities including New Bedford are among the hardest to count in Massachusetts, and New Bedford is at significant risk of being undercounted in the 2020 Census. That's why it's of the utmost importance that New Bedford residents fill out their Census forms.

In addition, the results of the Census are used to reapportion the U.S. House of Representatives, determining how many congressional seats each state is assigned. The Census results in the redrawing of boundaries of congressional and state legislative districts to account for population shifts.

The Census is confidential

City residents should know that their privacy is protected in the Census process. By law, the Census Bureau cannot share residents' information or answers with any other government agency. It is a federal crime to release census information; information is used for statistics only.

Members of the New Bedford Complete Count Committee include:

- Mayor Jon Mitchell
- Helena DaSilva Hughes of the Immigrants' Assistance Center – Co-Chair
- Rev. David Lima of the Inter-Church Council of Greater New Bedford – Co-Chair
- Corinn Williams of the Community Economic Development Center
- Adrian Ventura of the Centro Comunitario Trabajadores
- Rev. Tony Youssef of Our Lady of Purgatory Church
- Rev. Robert Hughes
- Olivia Melo, Director of the New Bedford Library system
- Marci-Pina Christian, New Bedford Department of Community Services
- Patrick Sullivan, Director of City of New Bedford Housing and Community Development
- Manny DeBrito, City of New Bedford Election Commissioner
- Derek Santos, Executive Director of the New Bedford Economic Development Center
- Thomas Anderson, Superintendent of New Bedford Public Schools
- William Burns, Director of Government & Community Affairs for Southcoast Health
- Rick Kidder, CEO of the Southcoast Chamber of Commerce
- John Vasconcellos, President of the Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts
- Carl Alves, Executive Director of PAACA
- Pam Kuechler, Executive Director of PACE

For more information on how you can get involved with the New Bedford Complete Count Committee, contact Lynn Coish at 508.979.1410 or lynn.coish@newbedford-ma.gov.

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