



# The Guardian

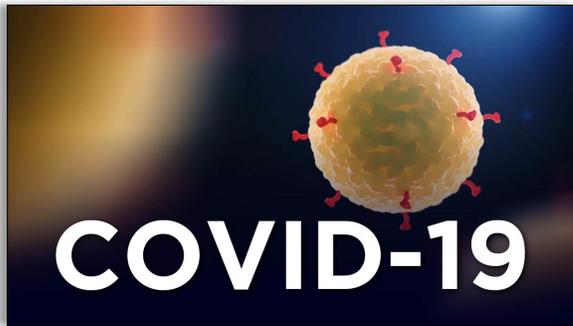
The Newsletter of the New Mexico Department of Veterans Services

[www.nmdvs.org](http://www.nmdvs.org)

1-(866) 433-8387 toll-free

April, 2020

## DVS Adjusts Field Offices Operations During the Ongoing COVID-19 Outbreak



To ensure that the New Mexico Department of Veterans Services (DVS) is doing its part to protect the veteran community during the COVID-19 outbreak, DVS has temporarily postponed in-person office visits and outreach efforts. DVS Veterans Service Officers (VSO's) will instead provide veterans' benefits assistance via telephone, video conference, or e-mail.

This change is to comply with Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham's statewide public health order directing state agencies to further help minimize the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

All previously-scheduled in-office visits will need to be Rescheduled—and will resume pending the "all-clear" given by the Governor. For now, veterans or widows of veterans can work with DVS VSO's) by:

- Leaving a message on a VSO's "work" phone number.  
—VSO's regularly check their office phones for messages.
- Contacting a VSO on his/her mobile phone
- E-mail
- Video conferencing.

Below is the contact information for DVS VSO's. Assistance will be provided on a first-call, first-served basis. Livestream video conferencing can be arranged with all VSO's.

### **Alamogordo (VSO: Larry Weatherwax)**

Office: (575) 437-4635

Mobile: (575) 491-3127

[Larry.weatherwax@state.nm.us](mailto:Larry.weatherwax@state.nm.us)

### **Albuquerque #1 (Karen Abeyta)**

Office: (505) 346-3986

Mobile: (505) 429-0856

[Karen.abeyta@state.nm.us](mailto:Karen.abeyta@state.nm.us)

### **Albuquerque #2 (Gordon Schei)**

Office: (505) 346-4810

Mobile: (same as office number)

[gordon.schei@state.nm.us](mailto:gordon.schei@state.nm.us)

### **Carlsbad (Dagmar Youngberg)**

Office: (575) 885-4939

Mobile: (575) 988-5900

[Dagmar.youngberg@state.nm.us](mailto:Dagmar.youngberg@state.nm.us)

**Clovis (Matt Barela)**

Office: (575) 762-6185

Mobile: (575) 825-9602

[Matthew.barela@state.nm.us](mailto:Matthew.barela@state.nm.us)**Farmington (Beverly Charley)**

Office: (505) 327-2861

Mobile: *(same as office number)*[Beverly.charley@state.nm.us](mailto:Beverly.charley@state.nm.us)**Hobbs (Dalton Boyd)**

Office: (575) 397-5290

Mobile: (575) 241-0714

[Dalton.boyd2@state.nm.us](mailto:Dalton.boyd2@state.nm.us)**Las Cruces #1 (George Vargas)**

Office: (575) 524-6124

Mobile: (5785) 520-2634

[George.vargas@state.nm.us](mailto:George.vargas@state.nm.us)**Las Cruces #2 (Rosa Bycenski)**

Office: (575) 524-6220

Mobile: (505) 870-1349

[Rosa.bycenski@state.nm.us](mailto:Rosa.bycenski@state.nm.us)**Las Cruces #3 (Craig Chumley)**

Office: (575) 524-6220

Mobile: *(same as office number)*[Craig.chumley@state.nm.us](mailto:Craig.chumley@state.nm.us)**Las Vegas, NM (Martin Marquez)**

Office: (505) 454-0068

Mobile: (575) 520-5079

[MartinM.marquez@state.nm.us](mailto:MartinM.marquez@state.nm.us)**Roswell (Danielle Thompson)**

Office: (575) 624-6086

Mobile: (575) 416-2284

[Danielle.Thompson@state.nm.us](mailto:Danielle.Thompson@state.nm.us)

Veterans can also self-file for their VA benefits online at [www.ebenefits.va.gov](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov).

### **Help for Veteran-Owned Businesses**

Veterans who own their own business can contact the New Mexico Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC) for information about emergency assistance programs for small businesses affected by the COVID-19 outbreak.

**Rich Coffel (VBOC Director)**

(505) 383-2401

[richardL.coffel@state.nm.us](mailto:richardL.coffel@state.nm.us)**Jim Cassidy (VBOC Veterans Business Advisor)**  
*based in southern/SE New Mexico*

(575) 624-6002

[jamesM.cassidy@state.nm.us](mailto:jamesM.cassidy@state.nm.us)

## **Ft. Stanton & Gallup State Veterans Cemeteries**

Committal/funeral memorial services and the rendering of military funeral honors--whether by active military personnel or volunteer organizations--are also temporarily postponed until further notice at the DVS-managed Ft Stanton and Gallup State Veterans Cemeteries.

Immediate family gatherings will be limited to five individuals at interments. Cemetery staff will work with families to schedule a full/"normal" committal or memorial service at a later date. For more information:

### **Ft. Stanton State Veterans Cemetery**

David Flores/*Supervisor*  
(505) 383-4381  
[David.flores@state.nm.us](mailto:David.flores@state.nm.us)

### **Gallup State Veterans Cemetery**

Gilbert Lopez/*Supervisor*  
(575) 921-3494  
[Gilbert.lopez@state.nm.us](mailto:Gilbert.lopez@state.nm.us)

The rendering of military funeral honors have also been temporarily halted at the Santa Fe and Ft. Bayard National Cemeteries. For more information:

### **Santa Fe National Cemetery Ft. Bayard National Cemetery**

Debbra Van Hoosen/*Director (both cemeteries)*  
(505) 988-6400

## **Upcoming DVS-Presented/DVS-Attended Events Have Been Postponed**

In compliance with Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham's public health order to fight the spread of COVID-19 virus, the following DVS-scheduled/DVS-participant events have also been postponed:

DVS 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarterly Briefing	Apr. 8	Albuquerque/NM Veterans Memorial
VAMC POW Ceremony	Apr. 8	Albuquerque/Murphy VA Med. Ctr.
SAF Bataan Remembrance Day Ceremony	Apr. 9	Santa Fe/Eternal Flame Monument
NACVSO Accreditation Training Conference	Apr. 13	Santa Fe/Higher Education Complex
DVS BernCo Property Tax Outreach	Apr. 16	ABQ/Bernalillo County Assessor's Office
Rio Communities Wellness Fair	Apr. 18	Rio Communities/City Hall
Women Vietnam Veteran Conference	Apr. 22`	Albuquerque/Hilton Garden Inn Uptown
Native American Training Institute Conference	Apr. 25	Isleta Resort & Casino
Metro Public Safety Day	May 9	Rio Rancho/Intel Parking Lot

Other DVS-presented or attended events scheduled for May and June are, as of this writing, still scheduled as planned—but are subject to a change in status. DVS will inform the public in the event of postponements.

## Governor Requests Deployment of Army Combat Support Hospital to Albuquerque



Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham has formally requested that the U.S. Department of Defense deploy a staffed 248-bed U.S. Army mobile combat support hospital (CSH) to Albuquerque as a proactive measure intended to expand the state's ability to provide medical treatment.

The Governor made the request under a federal law that authorizes the U.S. government to provide states with emergency medical assistance

"This CSH is urgently needed to support the State of New Mexico's ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which threatens to overwhelm our existing medical treatment facilities and resources," said the governor upon submitting the request to Defense Secretary Mark Esper.

Governor Lujan Grisham is asking for the hospital to be placed under the operational control of New Mexico Air National Guard Brig. Gen. Michele K. LaMontagne.

The Governor's request that the hospital be deployed to Albuquerque is part of a comprehensive state response to the COVID-19 health and economic crisis. That response has included stay-at-home instructions and other efforts to prevent spread of the disease, as well as assistance for unemployed workers and distressed businesses.



## State to Use Emergency Alert System for Important COVID-19-Related Communications

Given the current public health crisis and the need to communicate critical information directly to as many New Mexicans as possible, the state of New Mexico will use an emergency alert system, disseminated from the state's Emergency Operations Center, when conditions warrant.

This system is similar to Amber Alerts which are used to notify the public about missing children. Alerts will be sent through text messages, television, and radio. It is intended to disseminate important information widely and as quickly as possible and is not a cause for alarm.

Messages will state essential public information from the Department of Health, Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, and Governor's Office regarding important public health guidance and instruction, such as the recent instruction to remain at home except for outings essential to health, safety and welfare.

More information about the state of New Mexico's response to COVID-19 is available at [newmexico.gov](http://newmexico.gov) and [cv.nmhealth.org](http://cv.nmhealth.org)

## COVID-19 Update From the NM Dept. of Health

As of April 2, the New Mexico Department of Health (DOH) is reporting that the number of positively-identified COVID-19 cases stands at 403...with seven deaths.

### Breakdown of Reported COVID-19 Cases (per county):

Bernalillo	163
Santa Fe	48
San Juan	41
Sandoval	40
Doña Ana	21
McKinley	24
Chaves	13
Taos	13
Valencia	5
Cibola	5
Curry	5
Rio Arriba	5
Eddy	4
Socorro	4
Torrance	3
Lea	2
Roosevelt	1
San Miguel	1

Of the seven deaths, six were individuals older than 70-years old; the other was a male in his 40's. All seven had what doctors said were chronic/underlying medical conditions.

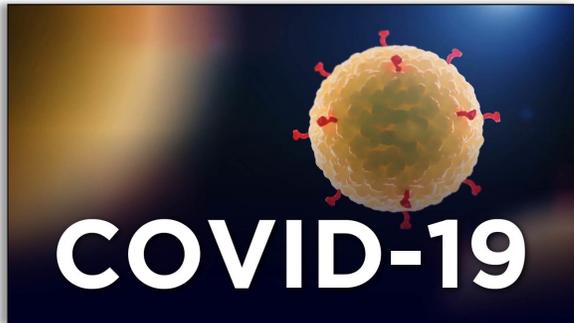
As of April 2, there are **34 individuals hospitalized** in New Mexico for COVID-19. This number does not include New Mexicans who tested positive for COVID-19 and may have been transferred to a hospital out of state. As of April 1, there are **31 COVID-19 cases designated as "recovered"** by DOH.

DOH has detected community spread and is investigating cases with no known exposure. The agency reports that given the infectious nature of the virus, it is likely other residents are infected but yet to be tested or confirmed positive. To that end, ***all New Mexicans have been instructed to stay home except for outings absolutely necessary for health, safety and welfare.*** These additional restrictions have been enacted to aggressively minimize person-to-person contact and ensure spread is mitigated. All businesses except those deemed essential have been ordered to close. New Mexicans are strongly urged to limit travel to only what is necessary for health, safety and welfare.

New Mexicans who report symptoms of COVID-19 infection, such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath, should call their health care provider or the NMDOH COVID-19 hotline immediately: **1-(855) 600-3453**. Testing must be prioritized for persons with symptoms of COVID-19 infection such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath. This is allergy season, and allergy symptoms such as sneezing or itchy eyes, nose or throat do not indicate a need for testing.

New Mexicans who have non-health-related questions or concerns can also call **(833) 551-0518** or visit [newmexico.gov](http://newmexico.gov).

## NM Dept. of Health Revises COVID-19 Testing Criteria



In an effort to allow more New Mexicans to be tested for COVID-19, the New Mexico Department of Health (DOH) has revised the test criteria.

The following people may now be considered for COVID-19 testing:

- Asymptomatic people who are close contacts or household members of New Mexico residents who have already tested positive for the coronavirus

- Asymptomatic residents in nursing homes
- Asymptomatic people in congregant settings such as homeless shelters, group homes, or detention centers
- Symptomatic people displaying the COVID-19 symptoms of cough, fever or shortness of breath.

“Studies are suggesting that asymptomatic people may be driving the spread of COVID-19, making it more difficult for containment,” said DOH Secretary Kathy Kunkel. “If we can keep more asymptomatic COVID-19 positive patients at home and not out in public, the more effective we will be at flattening the curve.”

New Mexicans with health-related questions can call our coronavirus hotline at 1-(855) 600-3453. For non-health-related questions or concerns call **1-(833) 551-0518** or visit [www.newmexico.gov](http://www.newmexico.gov), which is being updated and finalized as a one-stop source for information.

The state Department of Health updates its dedicated COVID-19 webpage <https://cv.nmhealth.org> with additional tests as the state lab provides results.

**Senior & Disabled Adults Food Access Hotline:**  
**1-(800) 432-2080**



# STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

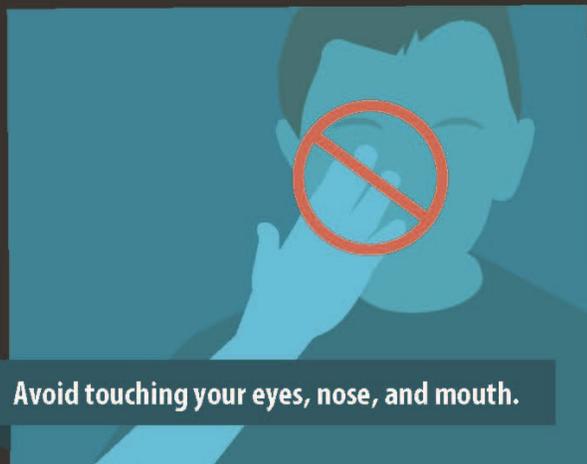
Avoid close contact with people who are sick.



Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.



Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.



NEW MEXICO  
DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH

For more information: [cv.nmhealth.org](http://cv.nmhealth.org)

## New Mexicans Warned About Tax Refund and Federal Stimulus-Related Phishing Scams



The deadline for filing New Mexico and federal income taxes has been extended to July 15 in recognition of the financial difficulties many people face because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the federal government has announced it will be making direct payments to taxpayers as part of its relief efforts.

The New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department (TRD) is thus warning tax filers and tax preparers to be alert for phishing and other scam activity related to tax extensions and federal stimulus payments to be paid by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Tax

filers and preparers should always beware of phishing scams by email and unsolicited phone calls seeking social security numbers or credit card and banking information

Potential targets may receive phone calls or emails with messaging such as “in order to receive your/your client’s stimulus payment via direct deposit, we need you to confirm the banking information,” according to the Federation of Tax Administrators.

**According to the IRS, most people will not need to take any action to receive their stimulus payments, as the payments will be distributed automatically.**

**The IRS will not call, text or email people to verify their banking information for stimulus payments.**

Anyone unsure about an inquiry from the New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department may call 1-(866)-285-2996 and ask for confirmation on the status of their return.

New Mexicans can also use the Taxpayer Access Point system at [tax.newmexico.gov](http://tax.newmexico.gov) to check on the status of their returns and review other information about their accounts.

More information also is available at [irs.gov](http://irs.gov).

## DVS Hires a Third VSO For Its Las Cruces Office



**Craig Chumley**  
New Las Cruces DVS VSO

DVS has hired Craig Chumley as a third Veterans Service Officer (VSO) in the agency's busy Las Cruces field office.

Born into a military family in Augsburg, Germany, Craig enlisted in the U.S. Army shortly after graduating from high school in Conway, Arkansas. He served as a Combat Engineer while deploying three times from Fort Bliss, TX, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn. His primary duty was conducting route clearance operations under the 1st Cavalry Division and 1st Armored Division.

During his nine-year career, Craig served in various positions including Squad Leader, Platoon Sergeant, and Operations Sergeant before medically retiring as a Staff Sergeant. He utilized the VA's Vocational Rehabilitation Program to then attend Dona Ana Community College—and then graduating with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Criminal Justice from New Mexico State University.

The city of Las Cruces, with 102,731 residents, is New Mexico's 2<sup>nd</sup>-largest city....trailing Albuquerque's population of 564,764.

Dona Ana County has the second-largest veteran population of New Mexico's 33 counties. According to VA data, 14,174 veterans live in Dona Ana County...second only to Albuquerque/Bernalillo County's 50,688 veterans.

Yet last year, there were 2,676 office visits by veterans and widows of veterans to the Las Cruces office—making it the busiest DVS field office—even busier than the 1,995 office visits to the two DVS field offices in Bernalillo County.

Adding a third Dona Ana County VSO, said DVS Secretary Judy Griego, was one of her top priorities when she was appointed DVS Secretary last year.

"The numbers just jumped out at me--we really needed a third VSO in Dona Ana County," said Secretary Griego. "Craig's enthusiasm and passion for helping veterans will really help the office to better serve our in-office visits—and also help with our outreach in southern New Mexico. I'm excited to have him on board."

Craig joins Las Cruces VSO's George Vargas and Rosa Bycenski to assist veterans in the DVS Las Cruces office. All three VSO's (as are all DVS VSO's) are available to assist veterans and widows of veterans through the COVID-19 pandemic. The contact information for the VSO's can be found on the first two pages of this newsletter.

## Message from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Regarding COVID-19



**VA Secretary  
Robert Wilkie**

**For more news and  
benefits information  
from the VA, visit  
[www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)**

**The VA has a regional  
office in Albuquerque.  
For more information:  
[www.benefits.va.gov/  
albuquerque](http://www.benefits.va.gov/albuquerque)**

**For information about the  
New Mexico VA  
Health Care System:  
[www.albuquerque.va.gov](http://www.albuquerque.va.gov)**

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has implemented an aggressive public health response to protect and care for veterans in the face of this emerging health risk. The VA is working directly with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other federal partners to monitor the outbreak of the virus.

As of March 27, the VA has administered over 3,378 COVID-19 tests nationwide while taking aggressive steps to prevent COVID-19 transmission. These measures include outreach to veterans and staff, clinical screening at VA health care facilities nationwide, and protective procedures for patients admitted to community living centers and spinal cord injury units.

### **What Should Veterans Do?**

Any veteran with symptoms such as fever, cough or shortness of breath should seek medical attention.

Veterans who choose to contact their local VA medical facility instead of a nearby non-VA medical facility should call before coming in. Upon arriving at any VA medical facility in the nation, veterans will be screened for flu-like symptoms before they enter in order to protect other patients and staff. A VA health care professional will assist you with next steps once this screening process is complete.

At this time, the VA is urging all visitors who do not feel well to please postpone their visits to VA facilities.

Currently, there is no vaccine to prevent the COVID-19 infection and no medication to treat it. CDC believes symptoms appear 2 to 14 days after exposure. Avoid exposure and avoid exposing others remains the best way to avoid contracting the COVID-19 virus.

### **The New Mexico VA Health Care System**

Veterans in New Mexico should follow the recommendations outlined above before contacting any New Mexico VA Health Care System facility: Either the Raymond G. Murphy VA Medical Center in Albuquerque, or any of the twelve VA-operated or contracted Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC's).

**The Raymond G. Murphy VA Medical Center**  
(505) 265-1711 (more information: <https://www.albuquerque.va.gov/>)

**New Mexico's CBOC locations:**  
<https://www.albuquerque.va.gov/locations/>

# Albuquerque Raymond G. Murphy VA Medical Center Changes Visitor Policy

# Temporary No Visitor Policy

- A temporary “no visitor” policy has been adopted at the Raymond G. Murphy VA Medical Center.
- Access to the Community Living Centers, Spinal Cord Injury Unit, and visitation to the inpatient units is no longer permitted. These units are being strictly monitored to protect patients deemed more vulnerable and at higher risk. This means no outside visitors will be permitted to see residents in these units and inpatient areas. The only exceptions will be in compassionate cases.  
See more here: <https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5400>
- For outpatient clinic appointments at the Raymond G. Murphy VAMC and Community Based Outpatient Clinics throughout the state and in Southern Colorado, we strongly encourage Veterans to limit family members to one while accompanying them to their appointment or immediate caregivers only and no children under 18 years of age.

## Murphy VA Medical Center Closes Community Care Service Center/Walk-In Services

# COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES

*Effective April 2nd*

Due to recent events, we are closing our walk-in services which are located in the basement room 108.

You can reach us at our call-in line at 505-265-1711 ext. 2707 and for clinical questions we can be reached at ext. 2825  
Thank you for your understanding

**SLOW THE SPREAD**

# VA Pays \$140 Million in Retroactive Benefits in January & February to “Blue Water” Navy Veterans

Blue Water navy veterans and widows of Blue Water navy veterans who filed compensation claims with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in January and February 2020 have so far received over \$140 million in retroactive benefits.

The Blue Water Navy Act (BWN), which went into effect on January 1, extends the presumption of herbicide exposure, such as to *Agent Orange*, to veterans who served in the offshore waters of the Republic of Vietnam between Jan. 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975, as well as veterans who served in the Korean Demilitarized Zone or within Vietnam’s inland waterways.

## How to File

Filing a claim for BWN benefits is a straightforward process. Veterans who wish to file an initial claim for an herbicide-related disability that have not been previously decided by VA can use **VA Form 21-526EZ** (<https://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-526EZ-ARE.pdf>) or the Application for Disability Compensation and Related Compensation Benefits at <https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim>.

Dependents who have never filed a claim but want to file a claim now can use **VA Form 21P-534EZ** (<https://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21P-534EZ-ARE.pdf>).

Survivors and dependents who have been previously denied a Dependency and Indemnity claim and want to file another claim now can use **VA Form 20-0995** (<https://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-20-0995-ARE.pdf>).

For additional Dependency and Indemnity claims information, visit <https://www.va.gov/disability/dependency-indemnity-compensation>.

## Additional assistance

If veterans or widows of veterans need help determining the location of the vessel a Veteran traveled on, VA has collaborated with the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) (<https://www.archives.gov/>) to digitize the deck logs of more than 1,800 Navy and Coast Guard vessels.

The VA has also developed an internal claims-related technical processing system which incorporates data from the digital deck logs and identifies vessels that may have traveled within the offshore waters of the Republic of Vietnam. While there are others claiming to be able to help BWN veterans locate their ship positions, the VA strongly discourages veterans from relying on any unauthorized service or tool as VA cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information. The VA was also not involved in developing any publicly available online tools currently being advertised.

The VA encourages any veteran who thinks that they may be eligible for Blue Water Navy benefits to file a claim. Additional information and resources about eligibility requirements and how to file an initial or supplemental claim can be found online at <https://benefits.va.gov/benefits/blue-water-navy.asp>.

## DVS Veterans Service Officers Can Help Veterans File for Blue Water Navy Act Claims

Veterans or widows of veterans can also contact any of the DVS nationally-accredited Veterans Service Officer (VSO) for assistance with filing for Blue Water Navy Act claims. The contact information for DVS VSO’s can be found on page 1 and 2 of this newsletter.

# 2020 National Census Effort Now Fully Underway



United States<sup>®</sup>  
Census  
2020

As of April 1—*National Census Day*—the United States Census is now fully underway.

The census is required by the Constitution, which calls for an "actual enumeration" once a decade since 1790. The 2020 population numbers will shape how political power and federal tax dollars are shared in the U.S. over the next 10 years. The number of congressional seats and Electoral College votes each state gets are determined by census numbers. They also guide how an estimated \$880 billion a year in federal funding is

distributed for schools, roads and other public services in local communities.

The demographic data is used by businesses to determine, for example, where to build new supermarkets and by emergency responders to locate injured people after natural disasters.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. Census Bureau has adjusted 2020 Census operations to protect the health and safety of our employees and the public, and to ensure a complete and accurate count of all communities based on guidance from federal, state, and local health authorities.

For the first time in history, Americans can fill out a census form online. You can do so at <https://my2020census.gov>.

However, paper forms are still be available. Census workers will make home visits to remote areas — including rural Alaska, parts of northern Maine and some American Indian reservations — to gather census information in person. Households in the rest of the U.S. that do not respond by early April may start receiving visits from door knockers trained to conduct census interviews and collect responses using smartphones.

## Who gets counted in the census?

The Census Bureau includes every person living in the U.S. — regardless of citizenship or immigration status. International visitors on vacation or work trips to the U.S. during the census are not included. Residents are counted at the address where they usually live and sleep.

## Are census responses confidential?

Under current federal law, the bureau cannot share census responses identifying individuals with the public or other federal agencies, including immigration authorities and other law enforcement, until 72 years after the information is collected. The Census Bureau, however, can release anonymized census information about specific demographic groups at a level as detailed as a neighborhood.

## Can I refuse to answer a census question?

*You can be fined* for refusing to answer a census question or intentionally giving a false answer. Returning a partially filled-out questionnaire may result in a follow-up phone call or visit from a census worker.

## State to Host Virtual Census Event

The New Mexico Statewide Complete Count Commission is celebrating national Census Day today (Wednesday, April 1) with a virtual ongoing "fiesta" to encourage all New Mexicans to participate in the 2020 count without leaving home.

Because of the social distancing requirements to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, the fiesta will be held on social media, with messages reaching all 33 counties, tribal governments and universities.

The campaign on Facebook and other social media channels will include content showing how to fill out the Census form – online, by phone or by mail -- and explaining why it's important to do so. It also includes badges any New Mexican can add to their own social media profiles to show support for Census 2020.

"We are urging every New Mexican to participate in the 2020 Census in order to protect resources for all of our communities," said Olivia Padilla Jackson, Secretary of the New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration and chair of New Mexico's Complete Count Commission. "We are committed to educating every New Mexican about why the 2020 Census is so important and are working every day with Complete Count Committees to ensure they have adequate resources, share best practices, both physical and virtual, and provide toolkits, to empower our partners to accomplish our shared goal of a complete and accurate count".

For more information or to participate in the fiesta, visit ICountNM on Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/ICountNM2020>...and then click on the blue "Learn More" button.

New Mexicans can also sign-up for important census updates and have Census questions answered by texting CENSUS to 505-560-8848 (CENSO for Spanish).

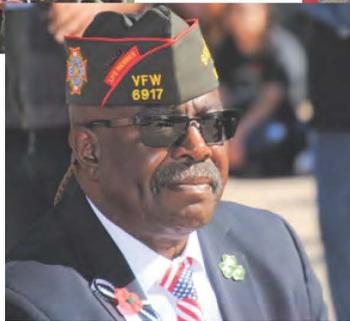
The decennial Census helps determine allocation of billions of dollars in federal funding. Research suggests that each New Mexico resident not counted results in a loss of \$3,700 per resident, per year.

The opportunity to respond to the 2020 Census began March 12 and is currently scheduled to continue until Aug 14. In rural areas and homes with Post Office boxes, U.S. Census Bureau workers go door to door delivering an official Census, including a unique ID number people can use to complete the Census online or over the phone.

Because of COVID-19, that door-to-door work has been delayed until mid-April, which means nearly 20 percent of New Mexico homes have yet to receive their official Census invitation. Until they do, response rates in New Mexico will be artificially low.

The logo for the United States Census 2020, featuring the text "United States®" in a smaller font above "Census" in a large, bold, sans-serif font, and "2020" in a very large, bold, sans-serif font below it.

# VeteransCount!



## Stand Up! Be counted for the 2020 U.S. Census!

### Census data is confidential

- Your personal information is protected by law, and is never released to any other local, state, or federal agency (Title 13 of the U.S. Code). Your individual census responses will not affect your tax status or insurance premiums.
- The Census Bureau will never ask for your Social Security number, bank account number, or money of any kind.

### Census data affects your community.

- Census data determines federal funding to Medicare, Medicaid, and many other federally-funded programs which greatly assist families.
- The data collected by the U.S. Census will determine your political representation for the next 10-years...at the local, state, and federal levels.
- *VA expenditures and other federally-funded veterans programs are directly affected by the military veteran population of a state.*

### Responding to the Census is easy.

- You can respond to the U.S. Census online, over the phone, or wait for the paperwork to be mailed to you.

**For more information:** [www.2020census.gov](http://www.2020census.gov)

*in cooperation with the New Mexico Department of Veterans Services*

United States®  
**Census  
2020**