



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT ANNOUNCES \$2.7 MILLION INVESTMENT TO PREPARE FOR FULL, ACCURATE COUNT OF CHICAGOANS IN THE 2020 U.S. CENSUS**  
*City invests funding for all-hands-on-deck outreach strategy; commitment includes \$2 per hard-to-count resident to ensure every resident is counted*

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today announced a \$2.7 million investment in the City's 2020 census efforts—the largest amount of funding Chicago has ever committed to the census—for an all-hands-on deck outreach strategy to ensure that every Chicagoan is counted. With nearly half of Chicago's 2.7 million residents considered "hard-to-count" by the U.S. Census Bureau, this year's outreach methods will be even more important than in years past and for achieving a complete, full count that accurately reflects the City's electoral representation and federal funding needs.

"My administration is committed to ensuring that every single person living in the City of Chicago, regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity, income, or citizenship status is counted," said Mayor Lightfoot. "An accurate count is vital for Chicago as it determines whether we receive an appropriate level of representation in Congress, as well as the funding instrumental to maintaining our infrastructure, public safety, public health, and other City services."

The City's census investment will be used to cast a wide net and to fund strategies for connecting with residents in the hardest to reach communities. With nearly half of Chicago's population (48 percent) residing in a hard-to-count community, this year's outreach initiatives will be more important than ever before for reaching vulnerable constituencies and encouraging their participation. This includes families of color, children under five-years-old, the elderly, veterans, returning residents, individuals with high rates of mobility and housing instability, residents with disabilities, those with limited access to the Internet, and those who may be afraid to participate. The funds announced today will allow \$2 for every hard-to-count Chicago resident.

"We only have one chance to get this right for the next decade," said Alderman Ariel Reboyras, 30<sup>th</sup> Ward and Chairman of the Special Legislative Committee on the



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Census. “I look forward to working closely with all of my colleagues in City Council to ensure a complete count in all 50 wards.”

If its residents are not accurately reflected in the census count, the City of Chicago stands to lose \$1,400 per person missed in 2020, or \$14,000 in critical federal funds over the next decade. The census is also used for redistricting at all levels of government and to inform local policymaking. Also, this funding includes a mix of federal and local grant funds, including Medicaid, Head Start, SNAP, Section 8, Title I, and Special Education Grants.

The City’s outreach efforts will be crucial this year to not only ensure that residents understand the high stakes nature of the census, but that they also know that it is safe for them to complete it because they are protected by law. The new public awareness campaign, being developed in tandem with award-winning firm FCB, will ensure residents in every community will be informed on how to participate, and also that language is not a barrier to the upcoming census. This public awareness campaign will be created at no cost to the City.

“FCB is very honored to partner with the City of Chicago to ensure that everyone understands the importance of participating in the 2020 census,” said FCB Chicago President and CEO Michael Fassnacht. “Our efforts will focus on communicating that every single Chicagoan can make a positive difference for the future of our great city and that the city will do everything it can to make it easy and safe for them to participate.”

The City’s census funding will be used to align with partners working toward the same goals, and to implement creative strategy solutions. Because this is the first year residents will be asked to complete the census online, the City will rely upon funding to trouble shoot gaps residents may have in terms of accessing computers and the Internet. The funding will also support strategic coordination with government partners including Cook County, the State of Illinois, and other members of the Complete Count Committee.

To prepare for the 2020 census, the Lightfoot Administration has worked to spearhead key initiatives designed to prepare all communities for the count and to mobilize participation by the City’s key partners and stakeholders. This summer, the Mayor created a new Special Legislative Committee on the Census focused on engaging all 50 wards in Chicago. This body works to ensure City resources are mobilized efficiently and in an inclusive manner over the next several months. To help provide residents more real-time information about the 2020 census, the City also created a new website – [census2020.chicago.gov](https://census2020.chicago.gov) – offering how-to information



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on how to participate in the census, where to find city resources regarding the census, and what's at stake for next year's count.

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