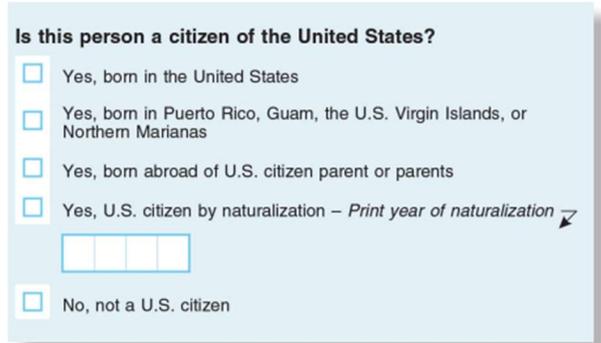


2020 Census and the Citizenship Question

What is the citizenship question?

The Census Bureau has added a question about citizenship to the Census questionnaire for the first time since 1950. There are six legal challenges to the citizenship question alleging that the citizenship question will scare people in immigrant communities and lead to an inaccurate Census count. The outcome of those challenges is unknown; for now the Census Bureau plans to include the question.



Is this person a citizen of the United States?

Yes, born in the United States

Yes, born in Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, or Northern Marianas

Yes, born abroad of U.S. citizen parent or parents

Yes, U.S. citizen by naturalization – *Print year of naturalization* 

No, not a U.S. citizen

Do people have to participate in the Census? Do people have to answer every question?

Technically, all people who live in the United States are required to participate in the Census and are required to answer every question in the Census questionnaire. It is actually a federal crime to fail to respond to the Census, in whole or in part. In truth, millions of people fail to answer at least some questions on every Census and enforcement of this law is virtually nonexistent.

Can someone skip the citizenship question on the Census? What happens if they do?

It should be possible to skip the citizenship question when you fill out the Census form on paper, online, over the phone, or with an enumerator. If someone skips a *single* question on the Census form, the Census Bureau probably will not have the resources to send an enumerator to come to the person's home to ask for an answer. However, the more questions a person skips when submitting the form, the likelier it is that an enumerator will come to their home to follow up. Enumerators may visit a residence up to six times.

What happens if someone provides a false answer to the citizenship question?

Providing any false answer on the Census is technically a crime, though enforcement of this is rare. The real risk is to respondents who falsely state that they are citizens when they are not. It is a crime to misrepresent oneself as a citizen and a crime to falsify an official form to benefit one's immigration status. There could be serious criminal and immigration-related consequences if respondents falsely state that they are citizens, including possibly deportation.

Will the Census Bureau share data about respondents with other agencies?

There are extremely strong privacy protections for Census data under federal law. Census data about individual respondents cannot be shared with any party outside the Census Bureau, including law enforcement or any federal agencies. Additionally, Census data cannot be used for any purpose other than statistical analysis. If a Census Bureau employee wrongfully discloses Census data, he or she could be given five years in prison and/or a \$250,000 fine.



Created November 2018

Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Asian Law Caucus is ready to provide free legal support and guidance to any community organizations working on Census. Please contact us if you have any questions.

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