This memorandum documents changes to the Integrated Partnership and Communications (IPC) operation since the publication of the IPC Detailed Operational Plan in 2016 and subsequent publication of documentation describing the implementation phase of the operation in 2020 IPC Updates. The Detailed Operational Plan described mainly the planning phases of this operation, while the update document described in greater detail the final components of the operation, their various interactions, and the stakeholders for each output.

This operation was greatly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Public events were canceled, and messaging during both the self-response and the Nonresponse Followup operation phases needed to be adapted to this situation. In addition, the schedule of operations was impacted, which also required changes to the schedule of communications. Below we outline the areas described in the update document where plans were adapted in response to the pandemic. Other changes to this operation in the implementation phase are also noted below.

The operation purpose, background, audiences, and stakeholders are unchanged (Update document sections 1.1, 2.1, 3.1, 3.2.1).

Section 3.2.2 Promotional materials and items available for use were adapted and optimized to reflect the changes in the country. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, digital distribution became the primary method for sharing materials and resources with established and potential partners. The Census Bureau relied on all its digital properties, but especially the 2020 Census website and direct email contact, to share materials. Materials such as fact sheets, brochures, posters, social media toolkits and graphics, and other resources were publicly available for download on the 2020 Census website for partner and general audience use. For 2020 Census promotional items that could not be distributed digitally—such as pens, water bottles, drawstring backpacks, tote bags, and chip clips—the Census
Bureau shipped those items to partners for their own outreach, as resources allowed. Further, in light of the pandemic, the Census Bureau sent promotional items to partners for inclusion in meal kits and care packages to be distributed in communities that were significantly impacted by COVID-19.

The Census Bureau also revised existing partnership materials and produced additional materials to reflect the new circumstances. For instance, one new item we created and distributed to partners was a half-page flyer that encouraged self-response among rural audiences, especially in areas where door-to-door enumeration was significantly delayed. In addition, because of COVID-19, the in-person events had a small number of participants. The National Partnership Program (NPP) and the Community Partnership and Engagement Program (CPEP) pivoted and found alternate uses for the promotional materials and items. These programs sought out venues in communities where there was a need for continuation of services and places that were open, such as food banks and school cafeterias.

Section 3.2.3  Statistics in Schools
Materials were adapted for an online education environment. The Statistics In Schools program created hundreds of materials for the 2020 Census and worked with partners to promote the materials’ use in schools and at home. Because of the pandemic, most school districts were closed. This provided a great opportunity for parents and students to use the in-school materials at home. The program also held live and virtual events and produced free worksheets, maps, videos, and an “Everyone Counts” song to engage students and build awareness of the 2020 Census. Resources targeting parents and caregivers were also developed for at-home use during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Section 3.2.4  Public Relations and Crisis Management
The Census Bureau defines a crisis as a situation that significantly threatens the health and safety of Census Bureau employees or public confidence in the security of Census Bureau data, interferes with the Census Bureau’s ability to carry out operations effectively, or damages the Census Bureau’s reputation. The role of crisis communications in the campaign was to anticipate potential threats and respond appropriately when challenging situations emerged. An emphasis on preparedness was important in helping the Census Bureau plan for unforeseen events, issues, and disruptions that could hinder our ability to obtain a complete and accurate count. We sought to quickly manage and mitigate any issues before they escalated to crises. Coordination among multiple Census Bureau teams was key to delivering important messages clearly and effectively when rapid response was needed. Our crisis communication efforts included threat monitoring and social media listening, and we deployed messaging to make public announcements and mitigate the spread of misinformation and disinformation.

The Census Bureau began 2020 Census crisis communication management efforts in 2017. The purpose of this area was the same through implementation. The final scope of this component included pandemic communications related to the impact on census operations and schedules. With the unforeseen circumstances presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and the rapid spread of information in our digital environment, crisis communications were more important than ever.

In light of the pandemic and variation in emergency response by region, the communications campaign sought to emphasize to all audiences the ease of responding to the census online, over the phone, or by mail without having a face-to-face interaction with a census taker. Communications also needed to relay information about enumeration activities and timing, especially for those anticipating in-person enumeration, such as people living on tribal lands, in group quarters, and in remote areas. Public
relations, media outreach, partner outreach, and frequent website updates were critical activities for conveying operational changes to the public. Other campaign communication tactics, such as media briefings, were canceled or held virtually when possible.

Section 3.2.5  Enterprise Communications
This component is unchanged.

Section 3.2.6  Website Development and Digital Activities
This component is unchanged, but the website had increased visibility while it was used for communicating census operation plans and schedules.

Section 3.2.7  Social Media
This component had an increased role in communicating changes in operation plans and schedules because of the pandemic. This component was designed as a flexible medium to address current issues, and in implementation of how both pandemic and non-pandemic issues were handled. For example, social media proved especially valuable given the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, as more people were staying home and using social and digital technology at high rates. Social media posts helped answer common questions and increase census participation. This was beneficial given that the pandemic limited in-person opportunities for people to talk with Census Bureau employees or partners speaking on behalf of the 2020 Census communications campaign. Our social media approach included working with social media influencers, harnessing the capabilities of customer service chatbots, and taking advantage of livestream and other technology to capture audience interest. Social media tactics and content were closely integrated with public and media relations, digital paid media, the 2020 Census website, and campaign optimization activities. The Census Bureau also created and deployed a variety of paid advertising assets, including keyword search ads, social media ads, digital banner ads, and sponsored content.

Section 3.2.8  Paid Advertising
Creative assets were revised during the campaign to emphasize the safety measures that the Census Bureau had implemented to protect staff members and the public during the COVID-19 pandemic. The revised creative assets stressed that the count would go on, that census participation was critical, and that respondents could complete the census safely and quickly from their homes. We also messaged that if households did not self-respond or needed help responding, census takers would come to their door to enumerate them. Most media channels could make updates to creative assets within hours or days of receiving instructions, however, it was typically easier to adjust digital media assets than it was traditional media assets because of time and resource constraints.

Some advertising was adjusted to communicate changes in operation plans and schedules related to the pandemic and to encourage participation and cooperation. Paid media plans were adjusted considerably over the course of the 2020 Census communications campaign, but especially from March 2020 forward because of the COVID-19 pandemic. One key shift was the cancellation of live events, including in-person concerts and cultural festivals as well as televised live sports, awards shows, and other entertainment. Most events in which the Census Bureau had planned to participate through paid partnerships or media sponsorships were canceled or transitioned to virtual forums, which significantly reduced or eliminated key advertising opportunities to reach many audience groups. Event cancellations especially affected outreach to diverse and non-English-speaking audiences—many of which were considered hard to count.
Section 3.2.9 Recruitment Advertising

The goal of field recruitment activities is to recruit the maximum number of 2020 Census employees in the right geographic locations at the lowest reasonable cost. To achieve this goal, we reached out to former Census Bureau employees, particularly those who had previously served as census takers. We also capitalized on social and paid digital media trends to maximize the public’s exposure to 2020 Census opportunities. Further, to build strength of messaging and maintain consistency of brand application, we linked recruitment marketing materials to the overall 2020 Census advertising campaign.

Recruiting was also affected by the pandemic and other external factors. This platform was designed to be responsive to these external factors. Some changes made regarding recruiting included that the Census Bureau created recruitment marketing materials in multiple languages and developed a centralized recruiting resource—the 2020 Census jobs website—to generate interest in decennial census jobs. An added paid media component enabled the Census Bureau to rapidly expand our employee base, helping ensure that enumerators could count people across the country once COVID-19 safety measures were implemented.

While recruiting and maintaining such a large base of temporary employees was challenging for the Census Bureau, especially given the COVID-19 pandemic, hiring efforts were successful. We hired a nationwide team sufficient to complete the enumeration.

Beyond the 2020 Census jobs page, most recruitment materials and advertising assets were not revised to directly address the COVID-19 pandemic. However, in May 2020, the Census Bureau updated our recruitment videos to reflect new safety guidance for census takers and the public. We created animated videos in English and Spanish that portrayed census takers visiting houses while wearing masks and maintaining safe social distance from the respondents. In sharing these new videos with prospective employee audiences, we reinforced our commitment to prioritizing the health and safety of Census Bureau employees and the public while conducting the critical decennial count.

Communications support for operations that involve or require interaction with the public was part of the purpose of the IPC operation. This became particularly important because of the pandemic.

Section 3.4 IPC Phases, Section 3.4.3 Execution

In Execution, the various planned phases of the operation were all affected by the pandemic. In particular, the schedule, plans, and key messaging for the Motivation, Reminder, Thank You, and Dissemination Phases were impacted by the extension and adaptation of field operations. The particular changes for each phase are discussed below.

The final dates for the Motivation Phase were extended for a period of March through July 2020. During this phase, the campaign motivated individuals to complete the census questionnaire and to encourage participation among their friends, families, and communities. As this phase began in mid-March, COVID-19 had fully taken hold across the country and represented a broad threat to public health. The Census Bureau responded by canceling all in-person campaign events, temporarily suspending field operations, and otherwise limiting in-person interactions between employees and with members of the public. The Motivation Phase was originally planned to end in May. However, in June, the Census Bureau decided to extend the Motivation Phase through July because of field operations suspensions and data collection delays. The extended Motivation Phase surge encompassed a series of regional, weeklong activations. In July 2020, the activations rolled out across multiple communication channels: We aimed to surround the
public with census messaging and to generate a wave of self-response. The Census Bureau used a rolling format to deploy approximately two regional surges per week for five weeks. These surges involved region-specific outreach, and all communication tactics were developed in coordination with the Census Bureau’s regional office staffs in Chicago, Atlanta, Denver, Philadelphia, New York City, and Los Angeles. The Census Bureau produced assets in English and Spanish for television, radio, social and digital video, digital banners, and print channels. Videos were a key asset for the extended Motivation Phase surge. We created 22 videos, including 13 videos for audiences nationwide and nine region-specific videos. These efforts included a mix of paid traditional and digital media, as well as pitching news stories to journalists, conducting media relations, organic social media, partner outreach, website content development, and 2020 Statistics In Schools activities.

The final dates of the Reminder Phase were extended from August through October 2020. During this time, the Census Bureau quickly planned and launched several communication “surge” efforts during these two phases. The surge efforts comprised a variety of integrated activities that sought to break through the busy media landscape and encourage census response, both among the audience at large and in communities with low response rates. We launched paid newspaper advertising in 21 additional languages, along with digital and search advertising in 11 additional languages, which are beyond the originally planned 13 for a total of 45 languages. The Census Bureau sent three waves of emails directly to households in census block groups with low response rates to encourage their participation in the census. The Census Bureau had never targeted communications about the decennial census at such a granular level. Through this effort, the Census Bureau reached the email inboxes of more than 48 million recipients—many of them in traditionally hard-to-count audience groups—and generated more than 400,000 visits to the 2020 Census website. The Census Bureau conducted two waves of targeted outreach and public service announcement (PSA) distribution. The first wave focused on national and local media outlets across the country, and the second focused on a smaller set of media markets that had large populations of traditionally hard-to-count households with young children. Collectively, the PSAs garnered more than 13 million impressions on radio and TV stations across the country. Response rate growth increased considerably during this delayed Reminder Phase outreach.

Additionally, the Thank You Phase was scheduled for August through December 2020. While a formal thank-you phase was included in the original campaign planning, this phase was suspended because of the large-scale operational changes and extended response period. However, the Census Bureau acknowledges that the count could not have happened without the support of respondents, partners, and stakeholders nationwide. We are expressing gratitude to these groups through targeted communications in 2021, as appropriate and as resources allow. We are also using our web, social media, email, and other permanent properties to foster ongoing engagement with the audience at large. We will encourage members of these audiences to review the census results when summary data becomes publicly available.

Finally, the Dissemination Phase was scheduled to begin in January 2021. The data dissemination phase, like the thank-you phase, was included in the original campaign planning but was ultimately suspended. The Census Bureau is communicating and promoting the availability of the 2020 Census results through targeted outreach, as appropriate and as resources allow. We are disseminating data and relevant materials to specific partners and audience groups. We are also using our web, social media, email, and other permanent properties to encourage audiences to use the data and to continue interacting with the Census Bureau after the decennial census.
The 2020 Census Memorandum Series

The 2020 Census Memorandum Series documents significant decisions, actions, and accomplishments of the 2020 Census Program for the purpose of informing stakeholders, coordinating interdivisional efforts, and documenting important historical changes.

A memorandum generally will be added to this series for any decision or documentation that meets the following criteria:

1. A major program-level decision that will affect the overall design or have significant effect on 2020 Census operations or systems.

2. A major policy decision or change that will affect the overall design or significantly impact 2020 Census operations or systems.

3. A report that documents the research and testing for 2020 Census operations or systems.

Visit 2020 Census on Census.gov to access the Memorandum Series, the 2020 Census Operational Plan, and other information about preparations for the 2020 Census.
2020 CENSUS PROGRAM MEMORANDUM SERIES: 2020.04

Date: April 8, 2020

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Record

From: Albert E. Fontenot, Jr. (Signed April 8, 2020)
Associate Director, Decennial Census Programs

Subject: 2020 Census Operation Updates for the Detailed Operational Plan for: 11. Integrated Partnership and Communications Operation (IPC)

Contact: Maria Olmedo Malagon
Decennial Communication Coordination Office
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This memorandum documents operation updates on the Integrated Partnership and Communications operation (IPC) since the Detailed Operational Plan was published on September 22, 2016.

The Integrated Partnership and Communications operation communicates the importance of participating in the 2020 Census to the entire population of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and United States territories to:

- Engage and motivate people to self-respond, preferably through the Internet.
- Raise and keep awareness high throughout the entire 2020 Census to encourage response.
- Support field recruitment efforts for a diverse, qualified census workforce.
- Effectively support dissemination of census data to stakeholders and the public.

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2020 Census Operation Updates for the Detailed Operational Plan for: 11. Integrated Partnership and Communications Operation (IPC)

A New Design for the 21st Century

Issued: April 8, 2020
Version: 1.0
Prepared by: Decennial Census Management Division
Approvals

This Integrated Partnership and Communications Operation (IPC) Detailed Operational Plan Operation Updates has been reviewed and approved for use.

Electronically signed  
Kaile H. Bower  
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IPT Program Manager

March 27, 2020  
Date Signed
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1. **Document Purpose**

This document provides some updates on the Integrated Partnership and Communications operation (IPC) since the [Detailed Operational Plan](#) was published on September 22, 2016.

As the U.S. Census Bureau prepares for the 2020 Census, it faces a challenging set of environmental factors, such as declining response rates, an increasingly diverse population, and more informal and complex living arrangements. The Census Bureau is committed to conducting a cost-effective census in 2020. Since the most expensive part of the decennial census is the cost of sending field staff to visit nonresponding households in person, any steps we can take to increase self-response are important.

1.1 **Operation Purpose**

The Integrated Partnership and Communications operation communicates the importance of participating in the 2020 Census to the entire population of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and United States territories to:

- Engage and motivate people to self-respond, preferably through the internet.
- Raise and keep awareness high throughout the entire 2020 Census to encourage response.
- Support field recruitment efforts for a diverse, qualified census workforce.
- Effectively support dissemination of census data to stakeholders and the public.

The Census Bureau can promote self-response by taking advantage of new and improving technologies. Internet tools and increasing cellular coverage and smartphone use have opened up new communications channels and media. The Census Bureau fully intends to harness these emerging technologies and channels as part of its Integrated Partnership and Communications Program for the 2020 Census.
2. Background

2.1 2000 and 2010 Censuses

The Census 2000 Partnership and Marketing Program demonstrated that use of a paid advertising campaign, supplemented for the first time by a strong partnership program, helped reverse three decades of declining mail response rates in the decennial census. In 1970, 78 percent of housing units responded without the need for in-person follow-up (note that housing units include both occupied and vacant addresses). That number dropped to 75 percent in 1980 and to 65 percent in 1990. The strategy for the 2000 Census included the first uses of paid advertising and a comprehensive partnership program. These efforts—combined with media relations, promotions, and special events—educated people about the census, motivated them to return their questionnaires, and encouraged cooperation with enumerators. The Census Bureau’s strategy paid off. At a time when mail response rates for other governments and private sector surveys were declining, the Census 2000 mail response rate did not decline, remaining consistent with the 1990 Census at approximately 65 percent.

In the 2010 Census, the Integrated Communications Program (ICP) was developed in an effort to build on the success of the Census 2000 program. To develop a communications campaign for the 2010 Census, the Census Bureau worked with a primary contractor, the advertising agency Draft FCB, and a group of 13 subcontractors. Twenty-two states, 1,553 counties, and 278 cities and townships met or exceeded their 2000 Census participation rates. Although many predicted a decline, the mail response rate remained at 65 percent in the 2010 Census. The marketing and promotion industry recognized the 2010 Census and associated outreach campaign for its success.

3. 2020 Census Integrated Partnership and Communications Campaign

The 2020 Census Integrated Partnership and Communications Campaign will be one of the most extensive and far-reaching marketing campaigns ever conducted in this country. Unlike most integrated marketing campaigns that find their most likely prospects and concentrate their resources on them, this operation must attempt to reach every household to achieve its mission. Challenges the operation faces are that some population segments are much more difficult to motivate than others. It may be because they do not speak English, are highly mobile, do not see the benefits, are fearful of participating, or do not trust the government. The campaign must balance additional effort and resources to reach these groups effectively while still maintaining sufficient presence among the rest of the audience.
3.1 Audiences

IPC engages with different audiences depending on the specific goal. The general public is the audience for IPC’s primary goals of engaging and motivating the public to self-respond and raising and keeping awareness high to encourage response. IPC also supports field recruitment activities, which has an audience of the pool of applicants for a diverse, qualified census workforce. Finally, for IPC’s goal of effectively supporting dissemination of census data to stakeholders and the public, the audience is data users.

Figure 1 depicts these three audiences and the operation’s respective goals for them.

For the 2020 Census, the Partnership Program will expand upon and develop new tools and systems to automate and enhance the IPC operation for more efficient and effective communication. The IPC has taken great strides in learning more about new and innovative technology since the 2010 Census. Many of the innovations are directly reflective of how we communicate. Therefore, there are many opportunities for leveraging new technologies and communication mechanisms. Systems and tools used by the Census Bureau and external stakeholders include:

- **Fulfillment Center** – A system that will reside within the Government Publishing Office and will process and ship promotional materials and item orders requested via the Partnership Portal.
Customer Relationship Management System – A database used by partnership specialists in the regions, National Partnership Program staff, and data dissemination specialists that houses data on census partners collected over the past two decades.

The Partnership Program will use the systems and tools to identify and work with partners to build and promote awareness of the 2020 Census, and ultimately to motivate participation. In working with partners, one of the primary goals is to identify the trusted individuals and gatekeepers within each community who are willing to use their credibility to encourage cooperation from those who are reluctant to respond. In addition, partners support or sponsor promotional activities to raise awareness and encourage participation in the 2020 Census.

3.2 IPC Program Components

3.2.1 Stakeholder Relations

Stakeholders — those groups and individuals to which the Census Bureau is accountable — are invaluable in successfully carrying out the 2020 Census. Stakeholders are key participants in data collection activities, and they are uniquely positioned to help identify the challenges and concerns that affect communities and neighborhoods. For example, understanding language preferences and cultural intricacies within the community is key in serving communities with multicultural populations. The Census Bureau is dedicated to engaging with and responding to stakeholders who are invested in ensuring an accurate count.

To date, stakeholders have been valuable voices contributing ideas and recommendations for the strongest possible communications surrounding the 2020 Census. The Census Bureau is dedicated to continuing to engage with and respond to stakeholders who are invested in ensuring an accurate count.

The relationship between the Census Bureau and stakeholders is mutually beneficial. Stakeholders use census data to advance government, nonprofit, and business initiatives. They also promote the importance of the census among their audiences and support Census Bureau efforts across the decennial census and other surveys. As active users of census data, many stakeholders are well positioned to champion the value of an accurate count; thus, successful and efficient stakeholder relations are central to performing a complete count.

Stakeholders, as well as partners, have established trust and open communication in their communities, and they actively advocate for their constituents on important issues. As we approach the 2020 Census, the Census Bureau will, in turn, maintain an open line of
communication with stakeholders, ensuring that they have the information and resources to participate in and generate support for the 2020 Census.

3.2.2 Promotional Materials and Items

The Census Bureau has worked closely with external stakeholders to identify the campaign materials that we and our partners will need throughout the campaign. Our approach to materials development has taken the following into consideration:

- **Potential for Customization.** Materials that reflect the target population will be more appealing to the intended audiences. While materials leverage the “Shape your future: START HERE.” campaign, they are also being tailored in message, tone, and imagery for specific audiences.

- **Appeal to Hard to Count (HTC) Populations.** Although materials are being developed to reach all audiences, extra care is taken to appeal to HTC audiences. Building on campaign research, we have been working with influencers and potential partners to identify and develop materials that are most likely to be desired and used by HTC populations.

- **Cost, Storage, and Origin.** The materials and items developed must represent the most effective use of taxpayer dollars. The Census Bureau is acting as a good steward of taxpayer funds—selecting the lowest-cost options that meet quality standards and not producing multiple items that fulfill the same need. All print materials are being produced by the U.S. Government Publishing Office (GPO), and any items purchased are 100 percent made in the United States. There is no funding available for stakeholders to access in-kind dollars for materials production, which is another reason we are developing materials that stakeholders can customize and deploy themselves. The Census Bureau established a GPO-run warehousing facility where materials produced will be consolidated. The Census Bureau will then further disseminate materials to field operations.

3.2.3 Statistics in Schools

The Statistics in Schools (SIS) program has been one of the most successful outreach efforts for the Census Bureau. Over the last decade, the Census Bureau has transformed its engagement with schools into a program that has expanded beyond teaching about the decennial census
and is now focused on statistical literacy in intercensal years. This is a critical subject: 2018 data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics predict that statistics-related jobs, in industries such as business, health care, and engineering, will increase by more than 30 percent between 2018 and 2028.

The program offers activities for students and resources for teachers that help to highlight the census, the data it helps collect, and the ways in which those data can then be analyzed and used. Activities are designed to align with existing curriculums and supplement studies in math, geography, history, English language arts, and sociology with lessons incorporating statistical and data-oriented concepts.

For the 2020 Census, the Census Bureau has the opportunity to raise awareness and understanding of the decennial census among adults through the education of the country’s students. SIS will be particularly important in reaching (HTC) audiences and individuals who do not speak English or who have limited English proficiency, as they may rely on their children to translate or interpret information from English into their native language.

New materials and lessons are being created and added to the SIS program for the 2019-2020 school year. These lessons will educate students—and through the students, the adults in their households—about the importance of completing the 2020 Census. The overall goal of the 2020 SIS program is to increase awareness of and overall public response to the 2020 Census by engaging teachers, students, and their households in public conversations about the decennial census.

To promote these activities in classrooms throughout the United States, including in Puerto Rico and the Island Areas, the Census Bureau is engaging with educational organizations and associations to highlight the free, high-quality SIS resources in use during the 2019-2020 academic year.

3.2.4 Public Relations and Crisis Management

As a complement to the partnership and advertising program components, public relations and related media activities will assist the Census Bureau in reaching diverse audiences nationwide, including HTC populations. Public relations efforts anticipate and address common questions about the census, including questions about data security and privacy, the importance of the census, and the ways in which census data will be used. Another aspect of public relations involves providing information to the public about how to respond to the census questionnaire, including how to use the new internet response option.
The Census Bureau’s goals for public relations for the 2020 Census are to:

- Educate the public about the 2020 Census, its importance, and the response process.
- Assure the public of the confidentiality, safety, and security of personal information.
- Encourage self-response (by internet, phone, and mail) and an accurate response.
- Reach traditionally low-response communities.
- Advance the reputation of the Census Bureau.

By emphasizing preparedness, the crisis communications component area helps ensure that, if urgent issues or crises arise, the Census Bureau can respond with adequate, timely information and communicate with the public or the news media as needed. Our approach is open and proactive to enhance our readiness and capacity to respond to crises.

The goals of these efforts and planning are to mitigate issues that may disrupt operations; to develop strategy, messages, timing, and distribution channels to communicate effectively; to respond promptly to crises; to speak clearly with one voice; to correct and minimize dissemination of false rumors, speculation, and misinformation; and to protect the reputation of the Census Bureau, its employees and stakeholders, and the 2020 Census itself.

3.2.5 Enterprise Communications

The Census Bureau’s Center for Enterprise Dissemination Services and Consumer Innovation is building a robust platform that will ultimately house and disseminate census data. This platform is being developed to ensure that data are easily released and accessible to stakeholders, partners, and a variety of audiences, including new data users, super users, and those searching for specific data points. It will be an important feature of data dissemination efforts once the results of the 2020 Census are available.

3.2.6 Website Development and Digital Activities

The current digital environment is fundamentally different from the one that the Census Bureau navigated for decennial counts in the past. In this new, highly sophisticated digital landscape, the Census Bureau’s web and digital properties are critical tools, helping to educate, engage, and motivate the population of the United States and its territories, while also
providing supporting materials and information for use in our paid and earned media and partnership efforts. In 2020, for the first time, the majority of residents will be able complete the questionnaire online.

The Census Bureau also faces challenges not as present in past decennials, like the threat of cyberattacks and misinformation campaigns on social media—making the 2020 Census website an even more critical piece of the census puzzle.

Research shows that, since 2016, mobile (including all handheld devices and tablets) has overtaken desktop as the primary source of all internet traffic (StatCounter Global Stats, 2019). Most recently, in 2018, 58 percent of web traffic was conducted using a mobile device or tablet (Enge, 2019). For the highest response rate, the Census Bureau needs to meet users where they are. That is why, for this 2020 Census, we are emphasizing a mobile-first approach and ensuring that our websites work effectively on the devices that most visitors will be using, while also providing a positive experience for desktop users.

We are designing landing pages, strategic calls to action, and other web content—all optimized for mobile devices—to help drive response and enable users to find more information, share content, and access data. Content will be tailored to users based on audience segment and how they enter the site. Regardless of their entry point, users will see consistency between web and other communications activities, such as digital advertisements, to ensure seamless, integrated engagement of audiences.

This creative integration is not limited to digital advertising. The Census Bureau is striving to ensure consistency of creative look and feel, as well as campaign messaging, across all program components of the communications campaign.

### 3.2.7 Social Media

Social media plays a critical role across several of the communications campaign’s phases. Primary objectives include raising awareness of the census, particularly among HTC audiences; motivating people to self-respond to the 2020 Census; and fostering engagement with the Census Bureau and in the 2020 Census campaign. Social media is also being used to enhance customer service efforts, promote recruiting efforts, and assist with data dissemination.

The Census Bureau’s social media plan comprises tactics that are dynamic and flexible, and that can shift to incorporate new platforms, emerging trends, data interpretation, and the changing needs of the campaign. In an evolving digital environment, continual evaluation of the social
media landscape coupled with a strategic framework for execution provide the data-driven approach needed for the campaign’s success.

With the expansion of social media, many new channels have emerged. All social media platforms focus on real-time creation and sharing of content, but the audiences that each channel attracts and the ways in which people engage on them vary. While it is important that the Census Bureau create relevant, powerful messages to reach target audiences, it is equally important that we optimize our efforts to be heard by the greatest number of people.

The Census Bureau is aligning content and outreach strategies by channel and audience, and we are integrating ongoing monitoring and analysis—along with inputs from partners and stakeholders—to continually refine social media efforts.

To do so, the Census Bureau has and will continue to:

- Perform research on the social media landscape to understand how the census is being mentioned.
- Analyze the use and performance of our social media networks.
- Evaluate new social media features and tools against established procedures and protocols.
- Prioritize goals and supporting strategies for expanding social media outreach.
- Integrate social media tactics across the 2020 Census campaign (with public relations on promoting events, with paid media activities on content needs for distribution, and with crisis communications on social listening topics and trends).

3.2.8 Paid Advertising

Paid advertising plays a crucial role in the 2020 Census campaign, raising awareness of the census and driving self-response through online and traditional modes.

The growth in technology use and in the number of media channels that can reach people creates numerous opportunities. Digital platforms are rapidly expanding their audience reach and penetration. For example, Pew Research Center reported that nearly 70 percent of adults use Facebook in 2019, compared with less than 60 percent in 2012 (Perrin, 2019). These developments are important because, with the expanded availability of non-ID response in
2020, digital advertising will help people navigate to the starting point of the census questionnaire with a single click. The Census Bureau is monitoring the evolution of these trends as the 2020 enumeration approaches to ensure our strategy remains relevant in the changing digital landscape.

However, while the use of digital media is rapidly expanding, TV, radio, print, and out-of-home media are still critical channels for advertising, especially among certain HTC populations with limited internet access. The Nielsen Total Audience Report for the first quarter of 2018 showed that U.S. adults spend just under four hours a day consuming TV, including live and time-shifted TV, and more than 3.5 hours using an app or the web on a mobile device. Though radio trailed both of these media consumption trends, with adults reporting, on average, less than 90 minutes per day listening to the radio, certain geographies and audience segments reported concentrated radio listenership (Nielsen Total Audience Report, 2018).

Given the pace of change in the media environment and varying preferences for media consumption within the U.S. population, particularly among members of different ethnic groups, a one-size-fits-all approach will not be sufficient to reach all audiences. Our paid media and advertising strategy incorporates the needs of every region and audience group as well as changing technologies. Local paid media and advertising will play an important role in setting a baseline for reaching audiences across the United States while supporting and reinforcing national efforts. These efforts include partnership outreach, the Census Bureau’s Statistics in Schools program, social media, public relations, and other touch points with the Census Bureau’s audiences.

Figure 2 shows how the various components work together with the partnership programs to engage with the general public.
As illustrated, seven of the eight components are used to engage with the general public directly or through the partnership programs and partners. These seven components rely on a common platform of infrastructure (e.g., the 2020 Census website) and messaging, which is informed by rigorous research and analytics as well as advice from stakeholders (the eighth component, Stakeholder Relations, is shown on the right side of the figure).

The next two figures show how the components and partnership programs interact with the other two audiences. Figure 3 shows that only four of the components are active during the recruitment advertising phase where IPC is supporting the Field Infrastructure operation (FLDI) in communicating to potential applicants (i.e., the applicant pool). These four components are Paid Advertising, Social Media, Web/Digital, and Enterprise Communications. The partnership programs and partners actively participate in this phase. The platform used during recruiting (referred to as the Recruiting Platform) is different from the common platform used for the IPC activities associated with the public as shown above.
in Figure 2. This is because partnership and communications activities targeted at the applicant pool use different infrastructure and messaging from those targeted at the general public.

Figure 3: IPC Components and Programs for Engaging with the Applicant Pool

Figure 4 below shows the components actively used to target the data users. These include the four components used to support recruiting as well as the public relations portion of the Public Relations and Crisis Management component. Paid advertising will only be used if funds are available. The partnership programs and partners play an active role in supporting communications around data dissemination. The platform used for this audience is the same as for the general public; however, the messaging will be different, focusing on the dissemination of the data products.
IPC also provides communications support to other operations that involve or require interactions with the public, including:

- Working with local partners to assist in finding training sites for in-person training.
- Providing messaging for crisis management situations that require changing the standard messages provided when someone calls a Census Questionnaire Assistance center.
- Informing the local community about upcoming census field operations that will be conducted in their areas.
3.3 Key Concepts

As discussed above, a key concept of the 2020 Census Integrated Partnership and Communications operation is the integration of the components. This includes use of a common platform and messaging and a daily monitoring and analysis activity that examines the effectiveness of all components using various metrics from both within the IPC operation as well as from other operations. Figure 5 shows how this works. The IPC operation motivates the public to respond through its integrated partnership and communications campaign. An ongoing campaign optimization effort monitors and analyzes various internal and external metrics, particularly response rates by geographic area and demographic group to assess the effectiveness of the campaign. Based on the analysis, IPC makes adjustments to the components with the goal of increasing campaign effectiveness.

Figure 5: IPC Campaign Optimization Strategy

Another key concept behind the 2020 Census IPC campaign is reliance on a wide network of partners at both the local and national levels.
3.4 IPC Phases

As shown in [Error! Reference source not found.], IPC activities span four general phases: Research and Planning, Component Development, Execution, and Evaluation and Close-out.

Figure 6: IPC Phases

3.4.1 Research and Planning

Research and planning are the first steps. The results of quantitative and qualitative research and predictive modeling activities provide the key foundational inputs for campaign planning, which maps the entire IPC process.

The Census Bureau has built on previous research and communications efforts in developing the 2020 Census campaign approach. In executing its research initiatives, the Census Bureau has followed the guiding principles described below.

Leading up to the 2020 Census, campaign materials are being pretested and refined in multiple rounds. Throughout 2020 Census campaign planning and execution, we have conducted robust quantitative and qualitative creative testing to investigate how messaging and materials resonate with audiences of varying attitudes, languages, races, and ethnicities. This research has helped us modify communications for maximum impact.
Research is designed to provide actionable results. The Census Bureau’s approach to campaign research and creative testing is to produce tangible findings that we can act on throughout the communications campaign. Because different research methods are used to answer different research questions, our approach includes several initiatives that collectively contribute to an understanding of an increasingly diverse population while ensuring budget and time efficiency.

Our strategy, creative development, and campaign execution have involved multicultural agencies and specialized communications partners working with Census Bureau communications experts from the early days of campaign formation. Cross-team input was integrated into the overarching plan, and this collaboration has allowed multicultural communications experts to develop meaningful creative executions for testing during research with diverse audiences.

Messages are being tailored to specific audiences, especially HTC groups, such as renters, rural audiences, and young and mobile individuals. Research and audience segmentation for the 2020 Census campaign aimed to understand groups that had low response rates in previous data collections. We have used research insights to identify ways to mitigate barriers that prevent HTC groups from responding. Using findings from research conducted specifically for 2020 as well as previous research and data collection efforts, the Census Bureau identified audiences and themes to focus on in the 2020 campaign to effectively drive self-response.

### 3.4.2 Component Development

Component development involves a variety of activities necessary to ensure that each of the IPC components are ready for execution. These activities encompass the following:

- Develop promotional materials and items component.
- Develop Statistics in Schools component.
- Develop public relations and crisis management component.
- Develop enterprise communications component.
- Develop web/digital component.
- Develop social media component.
- Develop paid advertising component.
- Develop stakeholder relations component.
The develop promotional materials and items component is subdivided into the following operational subactivities:

- Identify promotional materials and items needed.
- Create and review promotional materials and items.

The develop Statistics in Schools (SIS) component is subdivided into the following operational subactivities:

- Conduct detailed SIS planning.
- Prepare SIS training materials.
- Develop SIS website content.
- Conduct SIS partnership and school outreach.
- Develop requirements/content for SIS promotional materials and items.
- Develop and deliver classroom materials.

The develop public relations (PR) and crisis management component is subdivided into the following operational subactivities:

- Develop public relations strategy and milestones.
- Develop public relations website content.
- Determine needs and requirements/content for PR and crisis management promotional materials and items.
- Create PR-specific promotional materials and items.
- Create and disseminate background materials.

The develop enterprise communications component involves developing avenues to communicate with Census Employees and is managed by the Public Information Office’s Internal Communications Team. Such communications include:

- Broadcast emails.
- Internal intranet announcements.
• Employee newsletter.

The develop web/digital component is subdivided into the following operational subactivities:

• Create design for 2020 Census website.
• Review and test 2020 Census website design.
• Develop 2020 Census website.
• Test 2020 Census website.
• Prepare to launch 2020 Census website.
• Launch 2020 Census website.

The develop social media component is subdivided into the following operational subactivities:

• Create social media strategy.
• Develop and conduct social media training.
• Develop social media customer service approach.
• Stand up social media platforms.
• Prepare and post social media content.

The develop paid advertising component is subdivided into the following operational subactivities:

• Create paid advertising content.
• Develop media plan.
• Purchase ads from national providers.
• Purchase local/hyperlocal ads.

The develop stakeholder relations component operational subactivity includes identifying Census Bureau enterprise programs and offices that manage stakeholder’s that have an interest in decennial census operation to establish a core Stakeholder Relations subteam. The subteam
will develop a structured stakeholder engagement plan outlining stakeholder dates of interest, decennial operations dates, and planned communications releases from to ensure release consistent release across all stakeholder groups.

Note the Stakeholder Relations Component differs from other IPC components in that Census Bureau stakeholder management occurs throughout the decade by enterprise programs and not stand-alone decennial operations. To that end, the stakeholder relations component serves as a conduit for the distribution of information and an internal reporting mechanism of stakeholder feedback and requests.

3.4.3 Execution

The execution phase is divided into six communication phases that correspond to the timing of the data collection operations:

- **Strategic Early Education Phase (March 2019 – January 2020)** – The goal of this first phase is to build public awareness and understanding of the 2020 Census. The Census Bureau will form relationships with and will conduct outreach to members of the media, particularly multicultural media outlets. This is particularly important to inform long-form feature stories and long-lead publications.

- **Awareness Phase (January 2020 – February 2020)** – Throughout this phase, the objective for public relations activities is to broaden the population’s understanding of how to respond to the census and how they benefit from participating. To accomplish this, we will create “aha!” moments for reporters—and by extension, their audiences—in the form of “I had no idea that my participation in the census made this possible.” During this phase, we will illustrate the numerous ways in which census data directly affects decisions on matters of national and local importance: education, employment, veterans’ services, public health care, rural development, the environment, transportation, and housing. We will also work with partnership specialists who further enhance our relationships with influential stakeholders involved in these matters.

- **Motivation Phase (March – May 2020)** – Once the self-response option is available, public relations efforts will focus on encouraging participation in the 2020 Census and driving self-response. Recognizing that no two markets are alike, the Census Bureau will mobilize the Field Division to work in local markets to tailor strategies to suit the nuances and culture of the area.
- **Reminder Phase (May – July 2020)** – During this phase, public relations efforts will be instrumental in supporting the final push to participate in the 2020 Census. Given the goal of this campaign phase—to encourage census response, especially among HTC populations and in areas of low response—outreach will be hypertargeted at the local level. Campaign optimization efforts, which include monitoring response rates, will be coordinated with public relations outreach to facilitate communications encouraging response among people living in tracts with low response rates. This phase will urge target audiences to participate by reminding them that the census is winding down and that census participation is a key opportunity to help shape their communities. The Census Bureau will work with media specialists to provide customized content and localized pitch angles to be served on local television and radio and on appropriate multicultural media outlets. One final media-generating event is planned for this phase to highlight the start of the Nonresponse Followup operation and to remind the population of the importance of responding to the census.

- **Thank You Phase (August 2020 – December 2020)** – Public relations will help sustain public engagement with the Census Bureau after the decennial enumeration is complete. Messages will focus on thanking the public for their participation in the 2020 Census, using preliminary insights from the enumeration (such as response rates) to build engagement for the subsequent data dissemination phase.

- **Data Dissemination Phase (January 2021 – ongoing)** – After the 2020 Census counts have been delivered to the president (by December 2020), insights derived from the census data will provide useful news hooks to further emphasize the importance of data collection efforts. Ongoing story development using these data will generate further support for the Census Bureau, creating a backdrop against which ongoing and intercensal data collections will take place. The aim of public relations communications issued during this phase is to keep recognition of the Census Bureau high, encouraging sustained engagement with census data and further data collections.

### 3.4.4 Evaluation and Close-Out

After the completion of the IPC operation, lessons learned debriefings will be conducted, field staff employment will begin to wind down, assessment reports will be written, the Integrated Communications Contract will be closed out, and a formal evaluation of that contract will be completed. All materials and items left over will be inventoried, and where appropriate, held for use in the intercensal years before the 2030 Census.
3.5 Partnership Program

The Census Bureau relies on the support of partners throughout the country to achieve a complete and accurate count. Partnership outreach is a critical function in our audience-focused approach to encouraging self-response and participation by the public in 2020.

Strong partnerships are critical for reaching HTC audiences that represent a variety of cultures and ethnicities. The Census Bureau engages these audiences by enlisting national and community-based organizations and other partners that have worked hand in hand with these communities and have gained their trust over the years. Partners play a key role in reaching and persuading respondents that the census is relevant to their lives, their communities, and their causes—and that the Census Bureau is committed to ensuring data privacy and security.

Based on the insights of our existing partners and on our experience from previous censuses—seeing what did and did not work well—we developed a flexible outreach and engagement approach that gives all potential partners a chance to contribute. This audience-focused approach ensures that our efforts fit the needs of our partners.

- **National Partnership Program.** NPP is executing partnership engagements with major national corporations, nonprofits, associations, and government entities across the country and providing materials for them to use in reaching their audiences.

- **Community Partnership Engagement Program.** CPEP staff work out of field offices and locations throughout the United States. This network of more than 1,500 partnership specialists knows their audiences well and is poised to engage with local and regional partners. All partnership staff use materials in various languages, but CPEP staff distribute tailored pieces to engage community members on small and very direct levels.

- **Census Open Innovation Labs (COIL).** The Census Bureau’s COIL office focuses on engaging high-impact potential partners and encouraging them to use their own creativity and ideas to promote census completion. COIL has been hosting and will continue to host events and workshops in which leading organizations in digital media, education, and activism brainstorm ways to improve the count. These organizations leave the events with their own action items for fostering participation and further promoting partnership among members of their networks.
These three programs are making requests and suggestions to partners about how to encourage a complete and accurate count within their respective communities. Partnership programs are assisting partners in tailoring their participation based on available time and resources. In direct conversations with partners, the Census Bureau is discussing promotional techniques ranging from low effort to large scale. Further, the breadth of the three-pronged approach ensures that partners’ requests for access to census data, trainings, and subject matter experts are fulfilled while also facilitating opportunities for partners to share what they are doing in their community.

Additional information about the National Partnership Program (NPP) and the Community Partnership Engagement Program (CPEP) can be found in the following program plans:


### 3.6 Foundational Research to Guide Creative Development

The Barriers, Attitudes, and Motivators Study (CBAMS) was the foundation for building an Integrated Partnership and Communications campaign for the 2020 Census. It was comprised of a survey and a series of focus groups designed to better understand the nation’s attitudes toward the 2020 Census, potential barriers that may inhibit participation, and possible motivators of responding. Major findings from the results of the CBAMS can be found in the reports listed in the next section.

#### 3.6.1 Survey Findings

The 2020 CBAMS Survey was designed to understand attitudes and behaviors that relate to census participation across demographic characteristics. The survey was designed to provide
inputs aimed at informing and enhancing the quality of audience-specific messaging for the 2020 Census communications campaign.

The 2020 CBAMS Survey was administered by mail and internet between February and April of 2018 to a sample of households across all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Adults ages 18 and older were eligible to take the survey, which was offered in both English and Spanish. Each household received a prepaid incentive and up to five mailings inviting them to participate in the survey. Approximately 17,500 people responded to the survey, and the results were then weighted to be representative of all householders in the United States ages 18 and older.

The 2020 CBAMS Survey responses were used to compare barriers, attitudes, knowledge levels, and motivators related to participation in the 2020 Census. Across demographic characteristics, with a focus on differences across race, gender, education, and country of birth. Survey results helped us understand the attitudes and knowledge gaps that the 2020 Census campaign need to address for each audience segment.


### 3.6.2 Focus Groups Findings

The qualitative component of the 2020 CBAMS research enabled us to hear directly from people who did not speak English or Spanish; had low literacy levels in those languages; or were otherwise unlikely, unwilling, or unable to respond to the quantitative survey. Focus groups provided deeper and more specific insights than could be obtained through the survey, especially for HTC populations. The Census Bureau drew from its team of multicultural and research experts to plan the design and fielding of the focus groups, which were conducted with individuals from minority demographic groups and other audiences at risk of low self-response. Particular emphasis of the focus groups was on areas that may be underrepresented in the survey, such as households in rural areas; young, single, mobile individuals; and no- or low-internet proficiency.

The number and makeup of focus groups were based on available funding, recommendations from our multicultural partners, and modeling activities, which helped determine priority audiences. To achieve the most useful results, we selected participants who varied in age, language, race, ethnicity, sex, and technology and media usage.
There were 42 total focus groups that took place in 14 locations between March and April of 2018. Focus groups were held in locations across the country, spanning rural and urban areas and regions from east to west. This range in location, especially, helped to ensure adequate representation of the country’s diverse population and of the campaign’s target audience groups. Among those sampled were HTC racial and ethnic minorities including American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN), Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHPI), and Middle Eastern or North African (MENA). Historically, these groups all have among the lowest propensities to respond to the decennial census, and the focus groups helps ensure that the Census Bureau had sufficient and actionable research to guide outreach to these groups as we moved forward with the 2020 Census communications campaign.