

PRESS RELEASE

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March 13 is Text Our Snowbirds Day in Minnesota

St. Paul, Minn. (March 10, 2020) — The Minnesota State Demographic Center is celebrating Text Our Snowbirds Day on March 13. The public's participation is encouraged, to help raise awareness of census response guidelines for people who have multiple residences.

Minnesota is home to over 44,000 snowbirds – people who call this state home, but live elsewhere for part of the year. For Minnesota to achieve a full and accurate count in the 2020 Decennial Census, a robust response from snowbirds is needed. Friends and relatives of snowbirds can help spread the word by taking part in Text Our Snowbirds Day on March 13. Participants will send text messages to snowbirds, encouraging them to respond to the census and to report their address as their usual residence, even if they are elsewhere when they respond.

"We want our snowbirds to remember that they should respond to the census as Minnesotans – even if they're out of state when the count begins," says Dr. Susan Brower, Minnesota's State Demographer. "We created Text Our Snowbirds Day in March, right after the Census Bureau's first mailing goes out, to help capture their attention."

Census Bureau guidelines require that you identify your "usual residence" in your census response – that's the place you live most of the time. For example: if you primarily live in Minnesota but stay in Florida for three months in the winter, your "usual residence" is your home in Minnesota. Under these circumstances, you should use your Minnesota address when you answer the census, even if you are in Florida when responding.

"By accurately reporting your usual residence to the Census Bureau, you help ensure that your home state gets the funding it needs for hospitals, schools, and roads." says Brower. "Census responses will also impact the state's political representation. Minnesota is at risk of losing a seat in congress, but a complete and accurate census count can help us maintain our current level of representation. Every Minnesotan snowbird counts!"

In early March, the Census Bureau will send mail to households across the country, inviting residents to respond to the census online or by phone. In mid-April, forms will be mailed to people who have not yet responded.

- Starting March 12, snowbirds can easily respond to the census online by visiting my2020census.gov, or over the phone by calling 844-330-2020.
- Respondents will be asked for the Census ID printed on mail they received from the Census Bureau, or to provide their address if they do not have the ID. It is important to understand that the unique tracking code will be tied to the address to which it is mailed.
- Snowbirds should use the Census ID from Census Bureau mail delivered to their usual residence, or enter their usual address if they do not have access to that ID. They should NOT use the Census ID from mail delivered to their winter home.

Snowbirds often receive census forms at both their usual and their seasonal addresses. Minnesota snowbirds who prefer to respond to the census in writing should complete the questionnaire delivered to their Minnesota residence instead of the one at their seasonal address.

If they use the form that was mailed to their temporary seasonal residence, they could be counted as a resident at that address – even if they write their Minnesota address on the form.

To learn more, visit mn.gov/admin/demography or follow MN2020Census on Twitter, Instagram & Facebook.