



California Complete Count – Census 2020 Council on American-Islamic Relations – California Middle East & North African

California's Middle East and North African (MENA) population is vast and diverse and requires culturally congruent messages for the various populations represented. Population estimates suggest that about 732,262 Californians belong to the MENA community. Of this population, an estimated 67.9 percent are foreign-born, and 27.9 percent are limited English proficient. Distrust and fear of government is a common concern among numerous MENA populations as well as limited knowledge of the Census, therefore leveraging trusted messengers are key to remove barriers for the MENA population to achieve a complete count.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations, California (CAIR-CA) has served MENA, refugee and immigrant populations for the past 25 years in the areas of legal services (civil rights and immigration), education, civic engagement, coalition building, and youth empowerment. To raise awareness of the Census, CAIR-CA is coordinating over 70 MENA-serving organizations across the state. Efforts will be targeted at the larger MENA communities representing most of the California MENA population, including Iranian, Iraqi, Egyptian, Armenian, Israeli, Palestinian, Lebanese, Syrian, Afghani, Jordanian, Yemeni, Moroccan, and Assyrian. Among the languages they will cover are Arabic, Armenian, Farsi, Dari, and Pashto.

CAIR-CA and their partners have provided in person trainings for organizations and individuals on Census and created in language PSAs with trusted messengers. With the shelter-in-place, they have launched a comprehensive phone-banking campaign targeting over 700,000 phone numbers across the state. A multi-lingual virtual Questionnaire Assistance Center provides information from trusted messengers about the Census, including how to complete the question on race. Diverse influencers – faith leaders, women, elders, and young people -- host webinars encouraging community members to take the Census. During the shelter-in-place, they are conducting outreach at food distribution sites, social service agencies, ethnic markets, and houses of worship.

WEBSITE

<https://www.2020becounted.org>

FUNDING ALLOCATION

\$650,000

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