



State of California – Government Operations Agency
 California Complete Count-Census 2020
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GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
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FINAL REPORT TEMPLATE

General Information

Date of report	9/20/2020
Organization / Entity	Connecting Point on behalf of County of Nevada, CA
Responsible Person / Title	Brett Shady/ Community Engagement Specialist, Connecting Point
Contact Person / Title	
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Narrative Report

- 1) List your goal(s) and objectives as it appears in your strategic and implementation plan. What and how did you revise the objectives due to COVID-19 and the US Census Bureau's operational adjustments?

The County of Nevada contracted with Connecting Point to carry out an outreach campaign to ensure a complete and accurate count of Nevada County residents. Connecting Point committed to an outreach campaign serving the hardest-to-count communities within Nevada County, namely Latinos; Native Americans & Tribal Communities; Immigrants & Refugees; People with Disabilities; Seniors; Homeless Individuals & Families; Children Ages 0-5; Veterans; and residents with low or no broadband access under the following strategic plan:

- Elevate community wisdom. Draw on the knowledge and strength of Nevada County's network of health and human service providers, schools, businesses, and faith-based organizations to identify key messages and messengers, refine outreach strategies, and build momentum around Census 2020 in hard-to-count communities.
- Employ existing assets. Leverage existing County and Connecting Point programs that serve HTC communities to amplify Census 2020 messaging.
- Meet people where they are.
 - Collaborate closely with trusted messengers in HTC communities, locating Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QACs) and Questionnaire Assistance Kiosks (QAKs) at these sites.

[Insert contract partner name]

- Take the Complete Count message to the places where HTC community members live, work, and play.

The only planned strategy that we were not able to carry out exactly as planned was the final objective of meeting people where they are. We held a well-attended QAC/QAK planning meeting on Tuesday, March 10, 2020, just three days prior to what effectively became the last day of work at the Connecting Point offices and the closure of the partner businesses, nonprofits, and County services that had been planning to serve as Questionnaire Assistance Centers due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Following National, State, and/or County Shelter-In-Place orders, QAC/QAK plans and materials were halted, and outreach plans were revised to adhere to CDC orders/guidelines, moving all outreach online for the majority of the 2020 Census Self-Response period. Remaining meetings were carried out online via Zoom, outreach materials were sent digitally, and a phone banking campaign was started using the Census PDI app and Census partner community contacts.

Plans were also added to expand outreach in the following ways:

- Strategic placement of Census banners (in English and Spanish) throughout the HTR Census tracts in eastern and western Nevada County.
- Purchasing and creating Census ads/PSAs for KNCO in Grass Valley (94.1FM, 830AM), KVMR in Nevada City (89.5FM), KTKE Truckee-Tahoe Radio (101.5FM), and Radio Lazer based in Reno, NV (105.3, 107.7FM). Ads in the Tahoe-Truckee area were aired in English and Spanish.
- An agreement was reached with Sierra Theaters in Grass Valley to add Census messaging to the marquee at Sutton Cinemas, located at 399 Sutton Way in Grass Valley.

As an exception to the revised plans, bi-lingual Census flyers were included in every grocery bag distributed by the Nevada County Food Bank and the Interfaith Food Ministry.

- 2) Reflecting on your own operations and outreach strategies throughout the campaign, please provide a response with specific examples for the following questions. Please also indicate which timeframe you are referring to in your response (i.e., education, NRFU period).

Contracted partner's operations

What worked well operationally?

The Connecting Point internal Census team was able to proactively create and adhere to a workflow plan that drew on each employee's strengths within the company. We had regular weekly meetings to review, plan, and assign tasks. Additionally, the Connecting Point Communications Manager, Heather Heckler; our County contact, Taylor Wolfe; and our Region One support person, Lindsey Nitta, were always available and more than happy to answer questions throughout our contract timeline. This ease of communications also led to a relatively smooth

[Insert contract partner name]

transition when operations were suddenly affected by COVID-19 pandemic and changing timeline.

What hindered the operations?

The only hinderance of note, other than the aforementioned COVID-19 Shelter Order and the adjusted timeline, was the interruption of regular Census meetings/tasks by the Jones Fire during the week of 8/17/2020 in which three Connecting Point employees were evacuated, and the PG&E Public Safety Power Shut-Off during the week of 9/7/2020 when all Connecting Point employees assumed new roles for disaster work in the Nevada County Emergency Operations Center.

Contracted partner's outreach

What outreach tactics worked well?

We found some success through tabling at local events and conducting face-to-face outreach; through our website (NevadaCountyCounts.org); and our post-COVID radio ads featuring trusted messengers from the community (hospital representative, county CEO, local indigenous tribe spokesperson, etc...). We also had wonderful and successful partnerships, most notably with the Nevada County Library, Nevada County Food Bank, and the KidZone Museum in Truckee, CA.

What hindered the outreach?

Similarly to the previous question, the COVID-19 pandemic, adjusted operation timeline, and some staff evacuations during the Jones Fire slowed the process of making and/or distributing outreach materials.

- 3) Describe challenges and changes occurring outside or within your organization / agency that had an impact on the outreach work. Describe how you responded to these changes to work toward achieving a complete count.

Throughout the challenges that occurred during outreach operations, mostly due to the COVID-19 pandemic; the changing Census Bureau timeline; and natural disasters; consistent communication between the Connecting Point employees helped mitigate the loss of time and/or resources. Each team member was cross-trained on all duties in order to pivot to another role, as needed. This flexibility proved to be extremely valuable during any unforeseen changes to the outreach plan. In addition, the resignation of two key team members during the NRFU period impacted the productivity of the final month of operations. To help the single remaining employee for the final outreach push, an additional Connecting Point employee was made available to offer support.

- 4) For county and ACBO partners, what was the county (or region's) 2010 response rate and what was the 2020 response rate? If the response rate met and exceeded the 2010 response rate, what contributed to that? If it did not meet the 2010 response rate, what were some of the challenges for that? For other partners, please

[Insert contract partner name]

note what data you used and how you used data for your strategies.

As of 9/17/2020, according to Census.CA.gov, the CSRR for Nevada County is 60.7%. The total rate in 2010 was 61.6%, a difference of 0.9%. The contributing factors seem to be split between operational changes (the Census moving online has been a significant challenge to many rural areas of Nevada County due to low or no broadband access, further complicated by the aborted QAC/QAK implementation) as well as outside forces such as the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown; political distractions/distrust of government; and, later in the season, wildfires and periodic power outages.

- 5) Please describe the process and results of your partnership coordination and how it educated and motivated the hard-to-count populations to complete the Census questionnaire.

We were very fortunate to have many interested and engaged partners to help in our Census operations. Our early meetings sought to find committed outreach partners for each of our HTC communities (Latinos; Native Americans & Tribal Communities; Immigrants & Refugees; People with Disabilities; Seniors; Homeless Individuals & Families; Children Ages 0-5; Veterans; and residents with low or no broadband access). We were fortunate to find at least one representative organization to cover each HTC demographic. Once our partners were in place, they received informational materials, sample Census questionnaires, the Nevada County Counts newsletter, and were added to regular email updates, check-ins, and were given opportunities to share ideas and apply for mini-grants to help facilitate their own outreach plans.

- 6) Please provide a list of key partners and describe their contributions of how they made a difference in your outreach efforts.

Out of the many productive partners that helped us in our outreach efforts, the following key organizations expanded our reach considerably and helped spread the word to contribute to a complete count:

- California Heritage: Indigenous Research Project (CHIRP) – The Nisenan tribal population is critically important to Nevada County's history and it was important to us that they be represented accurately. Shelly Covert of CHIRP was instrumental in achieving a near-perfect count of her community.
- First Five Nevada County – Reaching the HTC demographic of children 0-5 is a challenge and the materials and information provided to us by First Five were a big help.
- FREED Center for Independent Living – FREED is a valuable trusted source of information for people with disabilities in Nevada County. Their reach and influence was incredibly helpful to our outreach efforts.
- KidZone Museum, Truckee – An unexpected and extremely fruitful partnership was forged with Nataly Zarate of the KidZone Museum. Nataly was invaluable to us in eastern Nevada County. Not only did she spearhead the phone banking campaign in the Truckee area, she also found and hung Census

[Insert contract partner name]

banners, helped in finding Spanish language radio stations for ad buys, social media posts, outreach to daycares, community business outreach, as well as Census messaging in planned KidZone activities. Nataly was truly an amazing partner.

- Nevada County Food Bank – after the interruption of Census activities by the COVID-19 pandemic, as we were working to pivot our outreach to an almost-total online effort, the Food Bank was instrumental in getting Census messaging out to hundreds of HTC community members during each pickup.
- Nevada County Library – The libraries located in Grass Valley, Nevada City, and Truckee were committed partners throughout the entire outreach period. Through online streaming storytime events, material distribution, social media posts, even producing a Census PSA video, the Nevada County Library was another incredible and engaged partner.

- 7) Please describe how you provided accessible and in-language outreach activities, including how you ensured equal and meaningful access to limited English proficient individuals and people with disabilities?

All of our Census materials, flyers, banners, radio ads, etc. were produced in English and Spanish to meet the local demographics and any/all in-person events were accessible to people with disabilities. Additionally, Spanish-speaking 211 call agents were available 24 hours a day to answer any Census questions.

- 8) Please share a story(s) of how your work has made a difference to Census 2020 and the impact on the community. Please include images and quotes, so we are able to understand the narrative behind the numbers.

In a smaller population like the one in Nevada County, the community already feels close-knit, especially in the world of nonprofits and public service. But we found that once we started connecting over an important, shared project like the Census, we also began forming friendships. These friendships naturally extended to the communities we and our partners serve, and with that friendship, we were able to gain the trust needed to reach the hardest-to-count populations in Nevada County more effectively.

One story that illustrates this is something that happened after the COVID-19 pandemic so drastically altered our community and our world. Our local movie theaters had to close just a few weeks after we began an on-screen ad campaign advertising the 2020 Census. As they were closing their doors, the theater owner offered to clear their marquee to add our Census messaging at no extra charge, because they saw the importance of our message. The message is still there, in the heart of one of our hardest-to-reach areas. (please see below)

[Insert contract partner name]



9) Please add any suggestions for the 2030 Census efforts, including timelines.

The 2020 Census came at a very challenging time, in a year of unprecedented outside influences, so it is difficult to suggest anything beyond a return to normalcy. There were times when more communication from official channels such as the US Census Bureau could have been improved or delivered with a little more clarity, but that most certainly could have been caused by forces beyond the control of the Census office.

Attachments

10) Please confirm that you have submitted the following which will help us better understand the full breadth of the Census work and achievements.

- a) SwORD uploads of completed activities
- b) Updated list of subcontractors

[Insert contract partner name]

- c) Evaluations or analytical reports, if any
- d) Sample products*

* communication collaterals, including those in additional languages; toolkits; newsletters; phone or radio scripts; guidelines; communication analytics; articles; trainings; and other graphics (a digital copy is sufficient, the original copy is not required)

Submission

Please submit your final report and attachments no later than November 16, 2020 to: outreach@census.ca.gov with a copy to the RPM/contract manager. Please include your organization name in the subject line.