

How to help people experiencing homelessness participate in the 2021 Census

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) estimates that more than 116,000 people were experiencing homelessness on Census night in 2016. That's 1 in 200 people.

The ABS understands it needs to provide different options for people experiencing homelessness to complete the Census form. We're supporting this with targeted communications about the Census so people experiencing homelessness can understand the importance of participating.

This fact sheet will help you answer questions that people experiencing homelessness might ask about the 2021 Census.

Types of homelessness include:

Rough sleepers



People without shelter or typical accommodation, for example people living in their car or on the street

People staying in crisis accommodation, shelters, refuges and boarding houses



Couch surfers



People who are between homes, staying temporarily with friends or family

People living in severely crowded homes



Questions people experiencing homelessness might ask

How does the Census benefit me and my community?

The Census provides important information about the people in Australia and their housing. Government, service providers, community organisations and businesses all use Census data. They use it to plan services and support programs for people experiencing homelessness, such as emergency shelters, domestic violence programs, transitional housing and programs for young people.

I'm 'sleeping rough'. How will I be counted?

The ABS employs Census staff, many from the homelessness sector, to help people sleeping rough complete the Census. Census staff will visit areas where people are known to sleep rough. They will interview and record responses on a specially designed Census form. This will take place over one week during August, including Census night, **Tuesday 10 August 2021**. The ABS will also help people with the Census at homelessness drop-in or intake centres.

How do I answer the 'usual address' question?

If you have no usual address, write 'NONE' in the Suburb/Locality part of the 'Where does the person usually live?' question on the Census form. You should also write 'NONE' under 'Suburb/Locality' if you are away from home due to eviction or a family dispute.

If a housing or homelessness service has put you up in a hotel, motel or caravan park temporarily, write 'NONE – CRISIS' under 'Suburb/Locality' on the Census form your accommodation provider gives you.

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| 12 Where does the person usually live? <ul style="list-style-type: none">For people who usually live in another country and who are visiting Australia for less than one year, mark 'Other country'.For other people, 'usually live' means the address at which the person has lived, or intends to live, for a total of six months or more in 2021.For people who have no fixed or return address (for example, due to family conflict or eviction), write 'NONE' in the 'Suburb/Locality' box.For boarders at boarding school, write the address of the boarding school or college.Mark box, like this: <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> Same as in Question 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Elsewhere in Australia (please specify address) Apartment/Flat/Unit number (if any) Street number Street name Suburb/Locality NONE |
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I'm staying in a boarding house, refuge or hostel. How will I be counted?

The ABS will work closely with homelessness service providers and organisations to count the number of people staying in these places on Census night. If you haven't received a form by Census night, call us on **1800 512 441**.

I'm between homes, staying temporarily with friends or family. How will I be counted?

Census instructions will be delivered to the house you are staying in, either by mail or by a Census field officer. You will need to write 'NONE' in the Suburb/Locality part of the 'Where does the person usually live?' question on the Census form. If you want to keep your details private, you can get a personal form. From early August, you can request one by calling the 24-hour automated paper form request service on **1800 130 250**, or going to www.census.abs.gov.au.

I live with a lot of other people. How will I be counted?

The online form has room for 25 people and the paper form can fit 6 people. From early August, if you receive a letter, you can call the 24-hour automated paper form request service on **1800 130 250** to get a paper form, more forms or a form to keep your details private. You'll need the 16-digit Census number from your Census letter if you have one. You can also speak to us on **1800 512 441**.

Do I have to do the Census?

Yes. The Census is compulsory*. Every household and every person in Australia on Census night must be included, excluding foreign diplomats and their families. You should complete the Census wherever you are on Census night.

*See the 2021 Census Privacy Statement at www.census.abs.gov.au/privacy

Can the information I give in the Census be shared with anyone else?

No. Your personal information isn't shared with anyone. This includes other government agencies such as police, Centrelink and housing offices. The information you provide in the Census is protected by law.

Help and resources



www.census.abs.gov.au/help



1800 512 441