

EVERYONE WINS WHEN **EVERYONE IS COUNTED**



CALIFORNIANS WITH DISABILITIES COUNT!



According to the American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates spanning 2013 to 2017, there are currently 4,088,523 Californians with disabilities.¹

Californians with Disabilities make up 10.6% of California's population. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that people with disabilities make up 22% of the US population.² Individuals with Disabilities fall into nearly all of California's "hard to reach" populations, including Black/African Americans, Young Children, Muslim Americans, LGBTQ Americans, Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders, American Indians/Alaskan Natives, Latinx Individuals, Asian Americans³, Immigrants, and Californians Experiencing Homelessness.

UNIQUE BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION³

Field research conducted in the Los Angeles and Inland Empire area in Fall of 2018 indicated that the number one reason people with disabilities do not participate in the census is that they have never been asked.

Other survey participants stated that they were unsure of the census' impact on their life, that they were uncomfortable sharing personal information, that they had trouble completing forms, and that they worried that information would be used against them (for example, to deny or reduce benefits).

Disability may also affect individuals' ability to access survey information. For example, people with sensory disabilities may need content to be screen reader friendly or translated into American Sign Language. Similarly, people with learning or intellectual disabilities may need content to be put into plain language.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS⁴

Efforts to boost census participation among individuals with disabilities should center on trust and on connecting census participation with its outcomes. Primarily, community groups and organizations with an established connection to the disability community should spearhead census participation outreach and assistance. Trusted groups can host outreach events and informational sessions that are responsive to the specific concerns of the individuals they know and serve, and can ensure that these events are conducted with any necessary physical accommodations, assistive technology, and/or translation or interpretation. Highlighting the availability of accommodations can help to establish that outreach is being conducted in a thoughtful manner.

Furthermore, groups and organizations conducting outreach should emphasize the connection between census participation and funding for numerous housing, employment, education, and health care programs and services that individuals with disabilities may benefit from. For example, special education, vocational rehabilitation, community mental health services, disabled veteran outreach, and pro bono legal services for individuals with disabilities are just a few of the areas whose funding is contingent on census participation.

By establishing this connection, trusted messengers can help to establish the narrative that census participation is a way for individuals with disabilities to empower themselves, their families, and their communities by amplifying their voices and demanding recognition on a state and federal level.



ENDNOTES

- 1 https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?_af=ACS_17_5YR_S1810&prodType=table
- 2 <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2018/p0816-disability.html>
- 3 Disability Rights California and Disability Rights Education Fund, 2020 Census Disability Toolkit.
- 4 <https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial/2020/program-management/working-papers/Uses-of-Census-Bureau-Data-in-Federal-Funds-Distribution.pdf>

For more information about the
Census Policy Advocacy Network,
please contact
CPAN@AdvanceProj.org or visit
AdvancementProjectCA.org/CPAN