



PVPC Complete Count Communications Outline

Overview

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission is organizing a two-county Complete Count initiative to bolster both federal U.S. Census and statewide efforts led by the Secretary of State to count all residents in Hampden and Hampshire counties for the 2020 Census.

The campaign will engage local communities and community-serving organizations to identify, inform and motivate residents (citizens and non-citizens residing in the region) to participate in the effort to accurately count all those living in the region. Population counts impact federal funding, political representation and allocation of public resources that are vital for the economic and social health of the region.

Obstacles

There are a number of populations that are chronically hard to reach (seniors having a seasonal residence out of the area, immigrants, college students, homeless) and represent a challenge for the U.S. Census to reach.

Reaching hard-to-identify populations to respond to the U.S. Census is the task of PVPC's Complete Count initiative and requires engagement on a region-wide and grassroots level.

For the first time, the primary method of conducting the U. S. population count will be through a secure online portal. While the use of online counting will create new efficiency, many in the population are reluctant, and have been warned in public information campaigns, to use caution when sharing vital information online. Likewise, the debate and confusion around inclusion of citizenship on the Census form (rejected by the courts) may have made non-citizens reluctant to participate.



Plan for Engagement

The recommended plan for engaging the public and key stakeholders includes a comprehensive toolbox of tactics that include:

- ▶ Clear messaging that is consistent with both the U.S. Census and Massachusetts Secretary of State public campaigns, and specific to our region
 - Messaging to community partners
 - Messaging to the broader public and targeted populations
- ▶ Localized message for use by all local partners and community-serving organizations
- ▶ Localized “info sheet” with Spanish (and other) language version; digital version provided to partners for use on demand
- ▶ Use of “free media” alerting the public about the need to accurately account for all residents; encouraging all to fully participate
- ▶ Development of regional Complete Count icon for use in new and existing communications vehicles; with possible supporting tagline
- ▶ Hosting of a launch event
- ▶ Engagement of community and cultural media outlets
- ▶ Development of “speaker’s bureau” to share the message
- ▶ Identification of “trusted sources” in the community and in community-serving organizations or local government(s); identify sectors, and players within each sector (i.e. Square One in early education sector)
- ▶ Identify “mobile sites” for filling out Census survey in the community
- ▶ Hiring events hosted by local organizations for U.S. Census jobs to assist the count
- ▶ Engage school systems and their communications networks with parents/families
- ▶ Engage public power entities—Holyoke, Chicopee, Westfield—to spread message through billing and communications channels
- ▶ Piggyback on existing or planned community events

Campaign Elements

Messaging will provide:

- 1) Concise message and rationalization about the vital importance of participation; aimed at the general public as well as those community-serving and trusted organizations that will be engaging the population
- 2) Messaging that is localized for the regional public but supports a broader message provided by the U.S. Census and Massachusetts Secretary of State frameworks

Communications materials:

- ▶ Info sheet – translated
- ▶ E-newsletter and e-news updates
- ▶ Uniform suggested email messages; email footer message
- ▶ Press releases and media advisories



Media Engagement

- ▶ Media event – community kick-off
- ▶ Public Service Announcements (PSAs); leveraging any “paid media” the U.S. Census and Massachusetts Secretary of State may be placing in the market
- ▶ Public affairs programming to include:
 - In Focus TV22
 - Mass Appeal TV22
 - WGBY/Connecting Point
 - Univision
 - Telemundo
 - WFCR/New England Public Radio
 - WAMC/Northeast Public Radio
 - WTCC
 - WMAS-FM
 - WAQY-FM
 - Focus Springfield Community Television, produce show; utilize reciprocal agreements to air program in all cable systems in two-county area
 - Other avenues
- ▶ Columns/articles/Op Eds (authors to be drawn from pool of influencers) for use in
 - The Republican
 - Daily Hampshire Gazette
 - Westfield Evening News
 - Reminder Publications
 - College newspapers
 - La Voz Hispana
 - El Pueblo Latino
 - African American Point of View
 - Pioneer Valley Radio
 - White Eagle Media (Polish)
 - Other
- ▶ Role of social media (existing channels, suggested messages)

Spokespersons/Speakers Bureau

- ▶ Identify persons of influence (representing an organization or representative of a community group) to share message
- ▶ Spokespersons representing community, cultural and faith communities
 - Conduct training and info seminar for spokesperson
 - Partner organizations to help identify influencers
 - Spokespersons to be available/appear on public affairs programming and available for media interviews



Regional Icon/Supporting Visual

- ▶ Region-specific icon/mark to complement and be used with U.S. Census and Massachusetts Secretary of State
- ▶ Region-specific tagline
- ▶ Regional “brand” and message for use in following media:
 - Website
 - E-newsletter
 - Email footers
 - Info sheet
 - Media outreach
 - PSAs (localized)

Launch Event(s)

Options:

- ▶ One central event; media invited
- ▶ Series of smaller events (a la launch of ValleyGives)

Event content:

- ▶ Highlight influencers at events
- ▶ Demonstration of how to be counted