



## JOINT PRESS RELEASE

Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President  
Navajo Nation Office of the Speaker  
Navajo Nation Judicial Branch

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 20, 2020

### Navajo leaders sign proclamation encouraging public participation in the 2020 Census



**PHOTO:** Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez, Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne, 24<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council Speaker Seth Damon, and 2019-2020 Miss Navajo Nation Shaandiin Parrish during the proclamation signing ceremony on Feb. 20, 2020 at the Department of Diné Education in Window Rock.

**WINDOW ROCK** – On Thursday, Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez, 24<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council Speaker Seth Damon, and Navajo Nation Chief Justice JoAnn B. Jayne signed a proclamation encouraging the Navajo people to participate in the 2020 Census to ensure a

complete count of all citizens on the Navajo Nation during a ceremony held at the Department of Diné Education in Window Rock, Ariz.

Every 10 years, the U.S. Census Bureau is required by the U.S. Constitution to conduct a count of the U.S. population. The Navajo Nation recognizes the importance of the participation of each Navajo citizen in the census count.

“The 2020 Census is an opportunity to provide a better future for our communities and future generations. The people’s participation and response help shape how billions of dollars in federal funds are distributed each year for tribal programs and grants. The census also shapes how congressional, state, county redistricting is determined, and the Nation’s goal is to strengthen our representation at all levels of government to benefit our citizens and communities,” said President Nez.

He also spoke about the importance of reaching Navajo elders, including those residing in rural areas, to fully inform them and to provide guidance to ensure they are counted in the census process.

The proclamation states, “We, as a Nation, continue to grow and build our future on our traditions and culture taught to us from the beginning of time, and we must ensure our Nation remains strong and will carry us through for many generations, and to ensure our Navajo people make an impact in 2020.”

“Every single Navajo person, whether they’re a newborn or they’re 102 years old and beyond, should be listed and counted on the 2020 Census form. Whether they’re living here on the Navajo Nation or working or going to school away from home, they should be counted. With this proclamation, we want to keep spreading the message that the 2020 Census form should be filled out and submitted by every household on the Navajo Nation. With July 31 quickly approaching – the last day to answer the 2020 Census – we need everyone’s help to make sure the Navajo Nation’s numbers grow. We won’t get this opportunity again for another 10 years. Answer the 2020 Census,” said Speaker Seth Damon.

Speaker Damon added that the Naabik’íyáti’ Committee of the 24th Navajo Nation Council established the Navajo Nation Census 2020 Complete Commission to coordinate and promote the census.

On March 16, census questionnaires will be mailed or delivered to households, and people will have the opportunity to self-report by phone, by mail, or online. Throughout mid-March to May, census takers will visit each household to update address lists and collect information on questionnaires that were not self-reported. The deadline to submit surveys is July 31.

“The Judicial Branch is committed to assisting the Nation in regards to getting the most accurate count for our people through the U.S. Census. These numbers help us with nahata – planning – as we use them to make decisions and plans for our Nation’s future. The greater our numbers, the

greater our strength to help our people improve quality of life - iiná. Please make sure that you and your family are counted this year,” said Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne.

The proclamation states that the Navajo Nation will disseminate census information, participate in events that raise awareness of the census, provide advocates to speak to local government chapters and local events about the importance of the census, support census staff, and encourage all Navajo citizens to participate. For more information on the 2020 Census, visit [2020census.gov](https://2020census.gov).

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## THE NAVAJO NATION

# Proclamation

## Navajo Nation Census Day February 20, 2020

**We**, as a Nation, continue to grow and build our future on our traditions and culture taught to us from the beginning of time, and we must ensure our Nation remains strong and will carry us through for many generations, and to ensure our People make an impact in 2020 we affirm:

**WHEREAS**, the U.S. Census Bureau is required by the U.S. Constitution to conduct a count of the U.S. population every 10 years;

**WHEREAS**, the Navajo Nation supports the goals and ideals of the 2020 census and is committed to ensuring that every Navajo citizen is counted;

**WHEREAS**, the Navajo Nation recognizes the importance of the participation of each Navajo citizen in the 2020 Census;

**WHEREAS**, federal, state, and tribal funding is allocated to local communities based, in part, on census data;


**WHEREAS**, census data is necessary for an accurate and fair redistricting of congressional, state, county, and Delegate voting districts;


**WHEREAS**, information from the 2020 Census is a vital tool for economic development and increased employment;

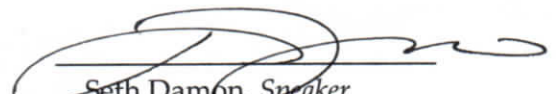
**WHEREAS**, the information collected by the census is confidential and protected by law.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jonathan M. Nez**, Navajo Nation President, and **I, JoAnn B. Jayne**, Navajo Nation Chief Justice, and **I, Seth Damon**, Navajo Nation Council Speaker, do hereby proclaim that in order to ensure a complete count of all its citizens, the Navajo Nation will: A) disseminate 2020 Census information; B) participate in events that raise awareness of the 2020 Census; C) provide advocates to speak to Chapters and local community events about the importance of the 2020 Census; D) Support census takers as they strive to complete an accurate count of all Navajo citizens; and E) encourage all Navajo citizens to participate in the census; and that February 20th shall be declared Navajo Nation Census Day.

Proclaimed this 20<sup>th</sup> day of February 2020.

  
Jonathan Nez, *President*  
The Navajo Nation

  
JoAnn B. Jayne, *Chief Justice*  
The Navajo Nation

  
Seth Damon, *Speaker*  
24<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council