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## **Local Census Outreach Efforts Underway**

Bloomington, IL – November 6, 2019 – The 2020 decennial census is around the corner on April 1st, 2020. Every person living in the United States is required to respond to the decennial census. It is imperative that we get the most accurate count of residents as possible in McLean County and in our state. Census participation impacts political representation, and programs and services in our community. \$675 billion federal dollars are allocated per year to state and local governments based on census counts. That funding goes toward critical programs that support education, housing, health and transportation services in our community. Our community loses out on critical federal funding with each resident who does not get counted.

Based on the latest census estimates, approximately 14% of McLean County's current population (or 24,350 people) lives in hard-to-count neighborhoods. Additionally, an estimated 14.4% of McLean County residents have either no internet access or limited access. With the Census being primarily online in 2020 (though there will be options to respond by phone or mail), there is a higher risk of these residents not being counted. Other populations at risk of being undercounted include renters, young children, snowbirds, people with limited English proficiency and college students.

Households will have the option of responding online, by mail, or by phone. Most households will receive an invitation to participate via a postcard in the mail by mid-March 2020.

In order to get the most accurate count of our residents possible, a Complete Count Committee (CCC) for McLean County has been formed in partnership with the U.S. Census Bureau. The primary goal of the McLean County CCC is to count everyone in McLean County during Census 2020. The McLean County CCC is an advisory committee under the McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC). Membership in this group includes government representatives from Bloomington, Normal, McLean County, and rural areas, as well as community leaders from education and libraries, health care and not-for-profit organizations. Working together, these trusted voices will develop and implement a 2020 Census awareness campaign to encourage a positive response from every person in McLean County. See our website at [mcplan.org/census-2020](http://mcplan.org/census-2020).

In conjunction with the McLean County CCC, specialized efforts to target hard-to-count populations are being coordinated through sub-committees, tasked with conducting specialized education and outreach to these populations. The McLean County CCC and its sub-committees will be conducting education and outreach about the census and how to take it in the approaching months as the census dates comes closer. MCRPC will be applying for a state grant to assist with these outreach efforts.

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