

# OUR MOMENT TO PAUSE AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE.



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Counting people experiencing homelessness

#### What is the Census?

The Census of Population and Housing (Census) is Australia's largest statistical collection undertaken by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). For more than 100 years, the Census has provided a snapshot of Australia, helping to shape our nation's education, health, transport and infrastructure.

#### When is the Census?

The next Census will be held on August 9.

#### Who is counted in the Census?

Everyone in Australia on Census night, except foreign diplomats and their families, is included in the Census. This includes people experiencing homelessness, such as:

- people living in hostels and refuges
- people without a usual address – staying temporarily with friends, family or in temporary accommodation (e.g. hotel, motel or shelter)
- people living in a single room, with no kitchen or bathroom of its own
- people 'sleeping rough' on Census night.

#### Why are people experiencing homelessness counted?

People experiencing homelessness are part of our community and need to be counted in the Census. Collecting data about this population group is especially vital when forming policy, allocating funding and providing services for the community.

#### Is the personal information provided shared with anyone else?

No. The personal information collected in the Census is not shared with any other government departments or agencies, including the police, Australian Taxation Office or Centrelink.

The ABS is legally bound to protect the privacy of all Australians and will not release information in a way that will identify any individual or household.

#### How are people who are 'sleeping rough' counted on Census night?

The ABS employs Census Field Officers in areas where people are known to be sleeping rough. Census Field Officers will complete a special (short) form by interviewing and recording peoples' responses. This activity may take up to a week to complete, depending on the local conditions.

Census Field Officer positions are filled by:

- the general public
- people from homeless service providers
- people experiencing homelessness

#### How are people who are staying in supported accommodation counted on Census night?

The ABS will work closely with homeless service providers and organisations to locate boarding houses, refuges and hostels in order to count the number of people staying in them on Census night.

When completing the Census form, it is important that all people who have no usual address enter 'NONE' for the suburb part of the question 'Where does the person usually live?', regardless of where they are staying on Census night. For example, they could be 'couch surfing' or staying in temporary accommodation such as refuges or hostels.

People using supported accommodation vouchers or brokerage services to stay in caravan parks and motels should record 'NONE - CRISIS' on the Census form they receive from their accommodation provider.

#### How can homeless service providers support the Census?

Homeless service providers can help achieve an accurate count, by:

- providing information on the extent, locations and services used by people experiencing homelessness in their regions to their Census Regional Management Unit
- encouraging staff and volunteers to apply for Census Field Officer positions and help count people who are 'sleeping rough' on Census night
- encouraging people using their services to take part in the Census, promoting the importance of capturing an accurate snapshot of people experiencing homelessness in Australia.

#### More information

For more information go to [census.abs.gov.au](https://census.abs.gov.au) or if you are experiencing homelessness on Census night and have not received a form call **1300 214 531** from 22 July.



**Census**  
[census.abs.gov.au](https://census.abs.gov.au)

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