

Summit County aims to highlight the census at Monday town hall

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<https://www.parkrecord.com/news/summit-county-aims-to-highlight-the-census-at-monday-town-hall/>
acramer@parkrecord.com

If you go

What: Census town hall

When: 6-8 p.m. Monday, Jan. 13

Where: Christian Center of Park City, 1283 Deer Valley Drive
Alaska's Toksook Bay is a rural village on the Bering Sea that is normally not thought of as being on the front line of innovation.

But according to the U.S. Census Bureau, the village that can only be reached by dog sled, snow machine or bush plane when the ground is still frozen will be the kickoff site for the 2020 census, months ahead of when most U.S. homes will receive invitations to participate in mid-March.

A group of partners are organizing a town hall to ready Summit County's citizens for the decennial census from 6-8 p.m. Monday, Jan. 13, at the Christian Center of Park City, 1283 Deer Valley Drive.

Organizer Diego Romo said the Christian Center is donating a full brisket dinner and there will be activities to keep children busy as adults learn more about the census.

Dinner will start around 6 p.m., with the presentation and question-and-answer session starting about 45 minutes later. The talk will be offered in both English and Spanish.

Romo said that all Summit County residents are welcome to attend, but that the event is targeted to communities that are harder to count, like renters who don't own their homes and the county's Latinx community.

He added that there is some fear regarding the census after the Trump administration floated the idea of adding a citizenship question to it, and he hopes to get the word out that there are federal protections in place to safeguard participants' data.

The census is important in determining Utah's political power by apportioning congressional seats, Romo said, as well as determining how about \$1 trillion in federal funds are distributed. It also plays a role in local economies when larger chain restaurants and retailers are looking for new locations.

He said the event is sponsored by Park City Television and Summit County, which are partnering with the Christian Center, the local chapter of the League of United Latin American Citizens and the American Civil Liberties Union of Utah.

The ACLU will have a voting rights coordinator on hand, as well as a staff attorney, to answer questions, Romo said. The League of Women Voters will be registering voters on-site, as well.

In 2000, Summit County had a 44% response rate for the census and Utah lost out on an extra congressional seat by 81 votes, according to data supplied by the county.

In 2010, the rate was up to 55%. If the same holds true in 2020, the county stands to lose about \$45 million from the federal government in the next 10 years compared to what it would receive if everybody participated.

The Census Bureau hires thousands of workers every 10 years, and is the nation's largest peacetime mobilization effort, according to the bureau.

Information about those jobs is available at 2020census.gov/jobs or by calling 855-JOB-2020.



