

PRESS RELEASE – 6/16/2020:

Athens Township residents! Did you know that the amount of federal funding the township receives directly depends on YOU?? Our federal funding is determined by our township population, so it is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT that you complete your Census forms. This is how the federal government determines how much funding we receive.

Once every decade, the federal government conducts a census of the entire population to count everyone in the United States and record basic information about them. Our nation's founders believed these data were so important that they mandated the decennial census in the Constitution. In 2020, for the first time ever, the U.S. Census Bureau will accept responses online and by phone, but you can still respond by mail if you prefer. **Strict federal law protects your census responses.** It is against the law for any Census Bureau employee to disclose or publish any census information that identifies an individual or business. Census Bureau employees take a lifelong pledge of confidentiality to handle data responsibly and keep respondents' information private. The penalty for wrongful disclosure is a fine of up to \$250,000 or imprisonment for up to 5 years, or both. **No law enforcement agency (not the Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Federal Bureau of Investigation, or any other agency) can access or use your personal information at any time.** Data collected can only be used for statistical purposes that help inform important decisions, including how much federal funding your community receives. **The Census Bureau will never ask for your Social Security number, bank or credit card account numbers, money or donations, or anything on behalf of a political party.** The Census Bureau has a robust cybersecurity program that incorporates industry best practices and federal security standards for encrypting data. To make sure you and your community are counted, learn more about the 2020 Census by visiting: <https://2020census.gov>.

Athens Township Supervisors want to make sure we get an accurate count so we will get our fair share of funding. That helps us to keep local taxes down. Right now only 66.8% of Athens Township residents have completed their census forms. Please help us get everyone counted! If you need help completing your form, submitting your form, or have questions about your form, you can contact the census bureau online at: respondent-advocate@census.gov, or call them at 1-888-609-0563. If you are still having problems with your form, feel free to call the Athens Township Office at 570-888-2325 and we will make every effort to get the answers you need. THANK YOU for doing your part!