



# County of San Mateo

## Inter-Departmental Correspondence

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**Department:** COUNTY MANAGER

**File #:** 19-1046

Board Meeting Date: 11/5/2019

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**Special Notice / Hearing:** None  
**Vote Required:** Majority

**To:** Honorable Board of Supervisors  
**From:** Michael P. Callagy, County Manager  
**Subject:** Agreement with JobTrain for Census 2020 Outreach and Support

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt a resolution authorizing an agreement with JobTrain to provide Census 2020 Outreach and Support for the term of November 5, 2019 through October 31, 2020 in an amount not to exceed \$150,000.

**BACKGROUND:**

Every 10 years, the federal government is required to count all people residing in the United States through a national census. The United States Census Bureau has designated April 1, 2020 as National Census Day, the official start date of the 2020 census response period.

Ensuring a complete count of San Mateo County residents is essential for many reasons. The decennial census serves as the cornerstone of our democracy and is written in the U.S. Constitution. It was included to ensure that everyone is equally represented in our political system and government resources are allocated fairly. It is also used to make important community decisions, like where to build homes, parks, schools, and roads and where to offer health, childcare, and transportation services. Also, businesses rely on census data to determine where to open facilities, what products to develop, and how to market their services.

There are several challenges facing the upcoming census and Census 2020 is at high risk for undercount. Despite declining self-response rates, the Census Bureau will be required to conduct the Census 2020 at a lower cost per household than in 2010. There will be fewer local offices, less field staff, and the primary strategy for data collection will be via internet.

The Census Bureau has historically faced challenges counting certain households and population groups, regardless of budget and staffing. These include recent immigrants, households with limited English proficiency, households with low income, racial/ethnic minorities, children under 5 years old, persons who are disabled, rural residents, renters, and those with unstable or unconventional housing.

California has been the hardest-to-count state in the nation. In 2016, about 75% of all Californians belonged to one or more groups that tend to be undercounted. The County of San Mateo is home to

many of these hard-to-count groups.

In addition, there are new barriers facing the Census 2020 that will require significant efforts to address:

**Distrust & Data Privacy:** There is a widening distrust of government among diverse segments of the population (immigrant and nonimmigrant alike), raising concerns about how census data will be used and whether it will remain confidential.

**Online Survey:** For the first time, the bulk of census responses are expected to be collected online (approximately 12% of San Mateo County residents to receive paper version in initial mailings). Heightened data privacy concerns now exist and in addition to security challenges, this poses barriers for vulnerable community and populations without digital access and computer literacy.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The projected self-response rate for Census 2020 is 55%, significantly lower than 63.5% in 2010, as reported by the Committee on Oversight and Government House of Representatives on October 12, 2017. An undercount in the Census 2020 could have significant impact on the State of California and San Mateo County, affecting federal funding for critical community programs, representation at all levels of government, and data used for decision-making across sectors. If segments of the County are not counted in 2020, their voices may not be fully considered when making important budget, program, and policy decisions.

The County's goal for Census 2020 is to maintain or surpass the 75% self-response rate achieved in 2010, despite the additional challenges. A critical component of achieving this goal is partnering with trusted community-based organizations to educate, motivate, and activate historically hard-to-count and least likely to respond (HTC/LLTR) residents in participating in the census.

The County seeks to contract with JobTrain to achieve the following objective: Educate, motivate, and activate all residents to complete their Census 2020 survey.

A Request for Proposals was issued on July 10, 2019. Ten responses were received and JobTrain was selected to perform the services because they will conduct outreach and education that is socio-culturally and linguistically tailored to residents in East Palo Alto and Menlo Park. JobTrain has over 54 years of experience conducting outreach and providing services to East Palo Alto and Menlo Park. JobTrain has strong ties to the local community and will use their existing channels of communication, combined with their partner's communication channels, to leverage the impact of this project.

The agreement and Resolution have been reviewed and approved by County Counsel as to form.

### **PERFORMANCE MEASURE:**

JobTrain will meet regularly to plan and monitor outreach activities using tools provided by the County. JobTrain will gather and report metrics to track progress in educating, motivating, and activating residents to participate in Census 2020. Reporting metrics will include:

<b>Reporting Metrics</b>	
Advance Census outreach through schools, libraries, churches, food banks, service providers, and community groups	To reach a target goal of 10,000 people by June 30, 2020

Promote regional text tool (text to <b>650-200-2743</b> to receive information about Census 2020)	To reach a target goal of 1,200 pledges by May 30, 2020
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**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The term of this agreement is November 5, 2019 through October 31, 2020 for a not to exceed amount of \$150,000. This agreement has been included in the FY 2019-20 Adopted Budget.