



Census Deadline Approaching

Governor Ducey urges residents to participate in Census

Governor Ducey, joined by members of the U.S. Census Bureau, urged state residents who haven't completed their census responses to do so by September 30th (even though there is a dispute on whether the final date would be September 30th or October 31st).

Census Bureau officials have indicated that Arizona is behind other states in Census response rates. There has been an 89% Arizona response rate which includes both "self-responses," meaning questionnaires independently submitted by households, and "enumerator-collected responses," meaning answers gathered by census workers. As of last week, about 63% of Arizona households had responded independently, lower than the national self-response rate of 66%. The overall national response rate is 93%.

Census data affects the distribution of more than \$675 billion each year to states and cities, so an incomplete count could cost the state dollars for programs such as Medicaid, Title 1 school funding, highway construction and lower-income housing subsidies. The Governor's office has stated that even a one-percent undercount would represent a loss of \$62 million per year, which for the next decade would be at least \$620 million. Federal officials also use census data to determine the number of House seats apportioned to each state, as well as corresponding electoral votes in presidential elections. Historically, Arizona has gained at least one House seat in Congress following each census since 1960, because the state has gained population relative to other states. If Arizona's census numbers don't accurately reflect its fast-growing population, it could lose out on an additional seat in Congress.

Residents can respond to the 2020 Census through September 30th by calling (844) 330-2020 or by clicking [here](#).

For more information on how the 2020 Census impacts Arizona, click [here](#).

AZDHS issues COVID-19 update

Arizona Department of Health Services (AZDHS) officials announced that new antigen test results have led to a higher than normal COVID-19 case count, which is expected to grow in the coming days. Last week, AZDHS reported 1,753 new confirmed COVID-19 cases.

According to a [blog post](#) from AZDHS Director Christ, this exponential increase in new cases is a “result of advancements in testing, and includes recently classified positive antigen cases dating back over the previous several months”. In late August, a fourth antigen test was authorized by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for diagnosing COVID-19. Antigen tests can detect if a person is currently infected by looking for specific parts of the virus from a respiratory sample, like a nasal swab.

AZDHS figures show that 83% of inpatient beds and 78% of ICU beds were in use, which includes people being treated for COVID-19 and other patients. COVID-19 patients were using 7% of all inpatient beds and 8% of ICU beds. Overall, 25% of ventilators were in use. The state has one of the lowest COVID-19 rates of spread (Rt) in the nation at 0.87 (the average number of people a COVID-positive individual will infect). Of known test results from last week, AZDHS reported that 4% have come back positive. A positivity rate of 5% or less is considered a good indicator that the spread is being controlled.

For more information on free COVID-19 testing sites click [here](#).

Arizona unemployment and job growth numbers released

The Arizona Commerce Authority (ACA) announced that the state added nearly 80,000 jobs in August. The private sector recorded a gain of 30,400 jobs, which is 12,200 more jobs than the ten-year average for the month. Job gains were posted across ten private sector areas. The largest increases were seen in education, health services, and trade and transportation.

The state’s unemployment rate dropped to 5.9%, down from 10.7% in July and lower than the overall U.S. rate of 8.4%.

A recent report conducted by *24/7 Wall Street* ranked state economies and listed Arizona at sixth in the nation. To read the report, click [here](#).

Colorado River Basin faces risk

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) officials last week released models suggesting that water shortages in the largest man-made reservoirs in the

United States, Lake Mead and Lake Powell, could drop to critically low levels by 2025.

USBR officials warned that compared with an average year, only 55% of Colorado River water is flowing from the Rocky Mountains down to Lake Powell. Due to below-average runoff, models suggest that the reservoirs are 12% more likely to fall to critically low levels by 2025 than originally projected earlier this year.

In 2019, Arizona signed the Drought Contingency Plan (DCP), a seven-state agreement to balance water supplies in the Colorado River Basin during severe drought. Under the DCP, the state agreed to cut water levels as necessary to address the ongoing drought facing the region. The water level in Lake Mead sits at 40 percent capacity (1,083 feet). When projections fall below 1,075 feet, the state will face deeper cuts mandated by the DCP. Stress test models suggest a 32% chance that Lake Mead will fall below 1,075 feet by 2022 and a 77% chance by 2025.

Renegotiations of the DCP begin in 2023 and must be finalized by 2026.

To review USBR's models, click [here](#).

Arizona Housing report released

According to a new report released by the *New America Foundation*, Arizona had the highest rate of housing loss in the nation, as housing officials in the state prepare for the "tsunami of evictions", which is expected to hit this fall. The study looked at evictions and foreclosures by county across the country and found that Arizona was first for overall housing loss and second for evictions from (2014-2016). The state was third for foreclosures from (2014-2018). In addition, the study said Maricopa County saw an average of 47,000 housing displacements per year from (2014 to 2018). The three main causes of the high rate of losses are low wages, lack of affordable housing, and a high population on fixed incomes.

Governor Ducey in March signed an [executive order](#) (link to the order) putting evictions on hold until July, a moratorium he then extended to October 31st. Critics have noted that these policies do not include rent forgiveness, which could result more evictions once the moratoria end. Researchers compared it to a dam trying to hold back the looming "tsunami of evictions."

To read the report by the *New America Foundation*, click [here](#).



Arizona Update on Issues



[Click here to find COVID-19 resources and volunteer opportunities](#)

[Click here to find the AGA 2020 primary analysis](#)

Legislators' Birthdays



Happy Birthday
Senator Karen Fann (R)
Friday, Sept. 25th

Representing LD1, Senator Fann is one of the most respected leaders at the Capitol. The current Senate President and second woman in state history to hold the position, she was first elected to the Legislature in 2011. Prior to running for state office, Fann was Mayor of the Town of Chino Valley and Mayor Pro Temp of the City of Prescott. Owner & CEO of AZ Highway Safety Specialists, INC, Fann has been a vocal advocate for transportation issues across the state. At the Legislature, she serves



Happy Birthday
Senator Sally Gonzales (D)
Friday, October 2nd

Representing LD3, Senator Gonzales is serving her first term in the Senate. First elected to the House of Representatives in 1997 and later 2015, Gonzales is an educator. After leaving the legislature in 2000, she continued within her profession, serving as the Education Director of the Pascua Yaqui Tribe. Her professional experience includes teaching, teacher training and administration for Tucson Unified School District, Tempe Elementary Schools, Arizona State University, and

as Chairman of the Senate Rules committee. Outside of her duties leading the Chamber, she continues to represent her community by serving as a precinct committeeman and is a member of the Rotary International and Elks. To wish President Fann happy birthday: kfann@azleg.gov

University of Arizona. At the Legislature, Gonzales is a member of the Senate Commerce, Education and Higher Education committees. This session, her top legislative priority was SB1562 which would have appropriated \$3 million from the general fund to support three tribal higher education institutions. To wish Senator Gonzales happy birthday: sgonzales@azleg.gov

Arizona Governmental Affairs

Address:

99 E. Virginia Avenue, #180
Phoenix, AZ 85004
602.296.5966

[E-mail AZ Governmental](#)