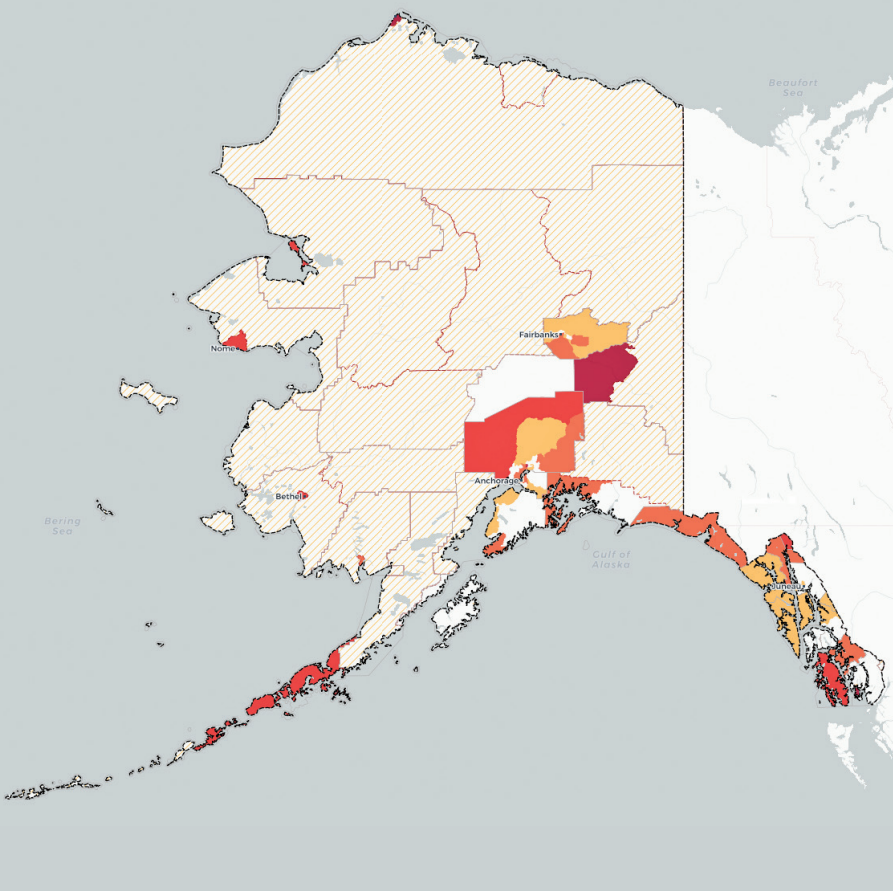


As the country's largest and least densely populated state, Alaska has one of the hardest populations to count in the decennial U.S. Census. In 2010, some census tracts in Alaska had a mail-in response rate of less than 30%, compared with the national average of 74%. In 2020, as in past censuses, many areas of Alaska will require special in-person counting methods used only in the country's most difficult-to-reach areas. And even tracts with high response rates in Alaska require costly in-person follow-up due to the state's geography. All of this is to say that counting all Alaskans is no easy feat—and requires sufficient resources and specific enumeration methods. Data from the 2010 Census highlights why resource allocation will be vital to ensuring an accurate count of all Alaskans in 2020.

Challenges of an Accurate Count in Alaska: Lessons from 2010

This map from HTC 2020 shows the mail-in response rates for each Census tract in Alaska in the 2010 U.S. Census



Enumerate Tracts

Many of Alaska's Census tracts are considered special-enumeration tracts, meaning they require special in-person counting methods. These areas are especially difficult to count. The 2010 U.S. Census undercounted populations in these tracts by an estimated 8%.

Hard-to-Count Tracts

Census tracts with a mail-in response rate of less than 73% (the bottom 20% of response rates nationwide) are considered hard-to-count (HTC). Alaska has many of these tracts, highlighted here in yellow, orange, and red. HTC tracts require costly in-person follow-up.

Normal Response Rate Tracts

The majority of census tracts in the U.S. had a response rate above 73% in 2010. In Alaska, these tracts are often found in urban areas such as Anchorage and Juneau. However, in Alaska, even these tracts require more costly follow-up than in other parts of the country.