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## The Week in Review

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### METRO



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# LOCAL NEWS



PHOTO COURTESY U.S. CENSUS

2020 U.S. Census notices are going out to households everywhere.

## Census Begins with Mail Notice

### No citizenship questions ease concerns

BY BEVERLY CORBELL  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

2020 Census notices are being mailed between now and the end of the week on March 20 and households are being asked to complete a Census count online. If requests are not followed up there will be forms sent by door-to-door Census counts. The results of the Census directly affect what resources the federal government provides to local communities and determine the number of representatives in Congress.

According to the website 2020census.gov, for example, the Census influences what is

allocated from Congress to highway planning and construction for states and municipalities based on population, impact grants for local public transit like TriMet, and determine federal allocations for teachers serving diverse populations, including Head Start and special education.

“The list goes on,” the Census website states, “including programs to support rural areas, to restore wildlife, to prevent child abuse, to prepare for wildfires, and to provide housing assistance for older adults.”

Census data also helps communities respond to natural disasters and secure funding for hospitals and fire departments, libraries, nutrition programs and as well as determining the number of members each state sends to the House of Representatives.

Everyone is required by law to respond to the census, which is conducted every 10 years. About 145 million households will receive an initial invitation by mail to complete the census form. About 112 million households will receive either an invitation to respond online or by phone and about 31 million households in areas with little or no cell phone service or internet access will also receive a paper questionnaire.

Misty Slater, U.S. Census media specialist for Oregon, Nevada and Idaho, said in a phone interview with the Portland Observer that people have several options to respond to their Census form. They can respond via mail, phone or online at my-2020census.gov.

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## Prison Visits Stopped to Fight Virus Spread

The Oregon Department of Corrections has suspended all visiting at all 14 state prisons as a response to the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Oregon. The restriction was imposed Friday following Gov. Kate Brown’s state of emergency and will last for at least 30 days to include non-contact visits where people speak to one another through glass.

“All of us at the Oregon Department of Corrections value visiting and especially the connections that visiting affords to family and friends. We know that relationships reduce the risk of future criminal behavior. However,

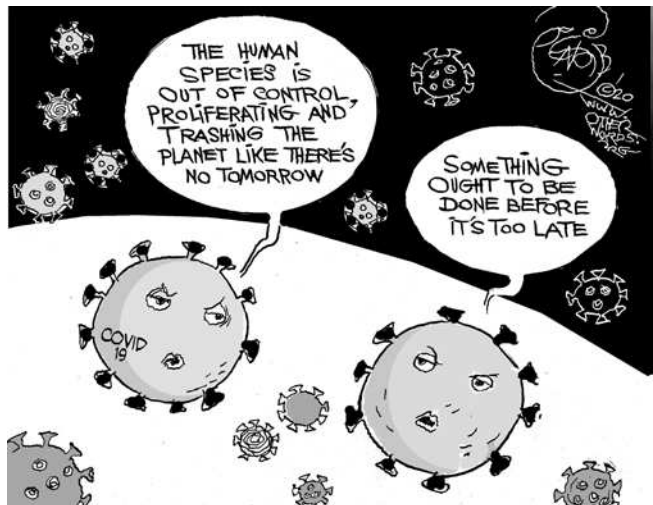
during this State of Emergency, it is critical we take appropriate precautions necessary to protect our employees and those in our care and custody. This decision was not made lightly, and we understand the impact that this necessary action will have on the people in our custody and on their families. We are working hand-in-hand with our state and local partners to keep our institutions as healthy as possible.”

Multnomah County Sherriff Mike Reese also announced that, as of Friday, the sheriff’s office is no longer allowing “social visitation” at the two jails in the county

in an effort to prevent the further spread of the of the coronavirus.

“The outbreak of COVID-19 has far-reaching implications for all of us in public safety,” said Reese, “To be clear, there are no presumptive cases of COVID-19 among our employees at the sheriff’s office or in our jail population.”

The interim restrictions on jail visits will not impact an inmate’s ability to see their attorney, according to Reese. Families and loved ones can still access someone in custody through the jail’s teleconferencing and video conferencing kiosks.



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