

2026 Population Census

The Census and Statistics (2026 Population Census) Order (the Order) was published in the Gazette today (February 14) to enable the conduct of a population census from January 1 to December 31, 2026.

The Order was made by the Chief Executive in Council under section 9 of the Census and Statistics Ordinance (Cap. 316) to specify the dates for and purpose of conducting the 2026 Population Census; the persons, premises and vessels in respect of which particulars are to be obtained; and the deadline for destroying the completed questionnaires. The Schedule to the Order also specifies the matters in respect of which respondents are required to give particulars.

A Government spokesman said, "The purpose for conducting a population census is to obtain up-to-date benchmark information on the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the population of Hong Kong. Such information is important to the Government for planning and policy formulation, and the private sector and academia for business and research purposes respectively. As a major step to modernise and reform Hong Kong's population censuses, several re-engineering initiatives will be implemented from the 2026 Population Census, such that about nine-tenths of the population will no longer be required to fill out any questionnaire as only the sampled one-tenth population will be subject to detailed enquiry by 'long form' questionnaire. In addition, government administrative data will be used more extensively to supplement survey data with a view to reducing the reporting burden of respondents. A Small-scale Test Survey for the 2026 Population Census will be conducted from April to July this year."

The spokesman added, "Sampled households are encouraged to participate in the Census by means of online questionnaires. Households may also choose to provide the requested information by telephone interview. Census officers of the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) will visit households who have not yet completed their questionnaires to collect the requested information."

The spokesman reminded members of the public that households selected to participate in the Census will receive a household notification letter issued by the C&SD. If households have not provided the C&SD with their telephone numbers, the C&SD will not initiate calls to the households. When visiting households, census officers will wear a vest uniform and carry a Government Identity Card/Enumerator Identity Card and a Census Officer Certificate of Identity issued by the C&SD for identification purposes.

"To protect the privacy of respondents, the C&SD will implement strict procedures to handle all data collected and will only release statistics that do not reveal the identity of the individuals involved," the spokesman said. All completed questionnaires, in both paper and electronic forms, will be destroyed on or before December 31, 2027.

The Order will be tabled at the Legislative Council for negative vetting next Wednesday (February 19).