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## OSCAR THE GROUCH ENCOURAGES NEW YORKERS TO “MAKE YOUR FAMILY COUNT”

*Campaign uses a familiar face to encourage New Yorkers to count all their family members when they respond to the 2020 Census*

Today, the New York City Department of Sanitation, in collaboration with NYC Census 2020, announced a new marketing campaign featuring Oscar the Grouch to encourage New Yorkers to participate in the upcoming 2020 United States Census. The campaign will be produced in partnership with F.Y. Eye and Sesame Workshop. The campaign depicts *Sesame Street*'s Oscar the Grouch encouraging residents to “Make your family count, even the grouches!”

The campaign will feature posters on the sides of more than 2,500 Sanitation trucks and mechanical brooms that provide services to every New York City neighborhood. Funding and other support for the campaign was provided by F.Y. Eye and private contributors.



“Encouraging all New Yorkers to participate in the 2020 Census is an all-hands-on-deck effort,” said **Sanitation Commissioner Kathryn Garcia**. “Our Sanitation trucks are some of the most recognizable parts of the NYC streetscape, and we are proud to put them to work in support of this important cause. We thank our partners for their support as we work to ensure everyone gets counted.”

“Children under five are one of the populations most at risk of an undercount in the 2020 Census,” said **NYC Census 2020 Director Julie Menin**. “We need to make sure this doesn’t happen again, because the more of us who fill out the census, the more money we get for NYC’s schools, roads, bridges, hospitals, housing, and more. That’s why this campaign is such an important reminder that however you live and whoever you live with, we need to count everyone in our households—no matter how young or old, and no matter how much of a grouch!”

“What strikes us is the great irony that children who stand to benefit the most from an accurate census count are the ones most likely to go uncounted,” said **Dr. Jeanette Betancourt, Senior Vice President for U.S. Social Impact at Sesame Workshop**. “We’re honored to work with the Department of Sanitation and its partners to reverse this equation and to do all we can together to make sure every child in New York City counts.”

“It takes all kinds of characters to make New York City the best place in the world—especially the grouches!,” said **F.Y. Eye Program Director Nina Robbins**. “The 2020 Census will impact quality of life for New Yorkers for the next ten years and we need to get it right. By distributing this playful public service announcement featuring everyone’s favorite curmudgeon on garbage trucks that travel to every neighborhood in every borough, F.Y. Eye is amplifying the Census as a critical opportunity to connect New Yorkers to the resources they deserve.”

The United States Census is a count of every person in the United States and is required by the U.S. Constitution to be conducted every ten years. The Census is critical for determining each state’s representation in Congress and the distribution of hundreds of billions in federal funding for vital programs like public education, public housing, roads and bridges, and much more.

In the 2010 Census, the self-response rate in New York was 62 percent, while the national average was 76 percent. In some neighborhoods, self-response rates were as low as 35 percent. New York City has historically been undercounted, putting the City at a disadvantage for political representation and critical federal funding for schools, housing and transportation.

In fact, roughly one million children under five were left off of the 2010 census nationally, making them one of the most undercounted populations in the country. And given that New York City was undercounted in 2010, as well, NYC children are especially at risk of going undercounted again this year. This would have significant ramifications for everything from funding for public schools to nutrition programs, children’s health insurance and countless other programs that serve families and children over the next decade.

As the 2020 Census approaches, City Agencies, community-based organizations, and countless other institutions and volunteers have been working in tandem to reach every New Yorker and

every community. This campaign is an important addition to NYC's efforts to make sure every New Yorker—even the grouches—counts.

This effort supports the City's NYC Census 2020 efforts. The NYC Complete Count Campaign represents a historic and unprecedented partnership between the mayoral administration, the City Council, CUNY, and 157 community-based organizations across all five boroughs, as well as the city's three library systems, labor unions, and civic and private institutions of many types.

Starting March 12, New Yorkers will be able to fill out the census online at [mycensus2020.gov](http://mycensus2020.gov), by phone, or by mail using the traditional paper form.

### **About the New York City Department of Sanitation**

The Department of Sanitation (DSNY) keeps New York City healthy, safe and clean by collecting, recycling and disposing of waste, cleaning streets and vacant lots, and clearing snow and ice. The Department operates 59 district garages and manages a fleet of more than 2,000 rear-loading collection trucks, 450 mechanical brooms and 705 salt spreaders. The Department clears litter, snow and ice from approximately 6,500 miles of City streets and removes debris from vacant lots as well as abandoned vehicles from City streets.

### **About NYC Census 2020**

NYC Census 2020 is a first-of-its-kind organizing initiative established by Mayor de Blasio in January 2019 to ensure a complete and accurate count of all New Yorkers in the 2020 Census. The \$40 million program is built on four pillars: (1) a \$19 million community-based awards program, The New York City Complete Count Fund, empowering 157 community-based organizations to engage historically undercounted communities around the 2020 Census; (2) an in-house "Get Out the Count" field campaign supported by the smart use of cutting-edge data and organizing technology, and a volunteer organizing program to promote a complete count in each of the city's 245 neighborhoods; (3) an innovative, multilingual, tailored messaging and marketing campaign, including a \$3 million commitment to investing in community and ethnic media to reach every New York City community; as well as (4) an in-depth Agency and Partnerships engagement plan that seeks to leverage the power of the City's 350,000-strong workforce and the city's major institutions, including libraries, hospitals, faith-based communities, cultural institutions, higher educational institutions, and more, to communicate with New Yorkers about the critical importance of census participation. Through close partnerships with trusted leaders and organizations across the five boroughs, this unprecedented campaign represents the largest municipal investment in census organizing nationwide and will build an enduring structure that empowers New Yorkers to remain civically engaged.

### **About F.Y. Eye**

F.Y. Eye is a New York nonprofit advertising group that works exclusively with other nonprofits, social enterprises, and government agencies to build public awareness about the wealth of social, civic, educational, legal, financial and health-related resources available to people in need. Since 2005, they have helped more than 95 mission-driven organizations

distribute over 175 campaigns that generate attention and action on issues of public concern. Their keystone program is the F.Y. Eye PSA Network, an ecosystem of digital displays located in high-traffic nonprofits throughout New York, built specifically to promote critical advocacy messages and community programs.

### **About Sesame Workshop**

Sesame Workshop is the nonprofit educational organization behind *Sesame Street*, the pioneering television show that has been reaching and teaching children since 1969. Today, Sesame Workshop is an innovative force for change, with a mission to help kids everywhere grow smarter, stronger, and kinder. We're present in more than 150 countries, serving vulnerable children through a wide range of media, formal education, and philanthropically-funded social impact programs, each grounded in rigorous research and tailored to the needs and cultures of the communities we serve. For more information, please visit [www.sesameworkshop.org](http://www.sesameworkshop.org).