



## **ABOUT US**

In 2019, California Calls launched the California Black Census and Redistricting Hub, a network of over 30 Black-led and Black-serving organizations across the state focused on maximizing participation in the upcoming census and redistricting process among hard to count Black communities. Using a mix of training, strategic communications, data, grassroots organizing and community engagement, the Black Hub has and will prepare its network of organizations to conduct targeted and tailored civic engagement campaigns to educate, motivate and activate the voices of thousands of Black Californians throughout the census and redistricting process. The Black Census and Redistricting Hub is a project of California Calls, and builds off the 3 year [African American Civic Engagement Project](#).

## **WHY A BLACK REDISTRICTING HUB?**

California has the 5th largest Black population in the United States with 3,011,021 African Americans making up 8% of the state total. Gentrification has sparked waves of displacement and homelessness across California, disproportionately impacting Black communities, pushing many into the streets or out of urban centers like Oakland and Los Angeles, and into new regions, like East Contra Costa, Inland Empire and Central Valley, which often lack civic infrastructure and resources to support civic engagement in the census and redistricting processes. In addition, mass incarceration in Black communities has led to drastic overrepresentation of African Americans in California's prison population, 29% compared to being only 6.5% of California's total population. This not only makes group counts necessary, but also makes the engagement and education of newly returning community members key, who are more vulnerable to economic and housing and instability and a general lack of information about the census and redistricting. These factors combined with a growing distrust in government and limited access to the internet, particularly among seniors, require tailored outreach strategies to ensure a full participation of Black Californians in the 2020 Census and redistricting process.

## **WHO IS THE BLACK CENSUS AND REDISTRICTING HUB**

Black Hub Coalition Members are Black-led or Black-serving organizations that will conduct outreach to engage historically undercounted black communities in the census and redistricting process. Coalition Members are recruited based on their reach and influence within their communities as well as their direct work within key historically undercounted Black communities. The following community-based organizations currently comprise our Black Hub coalition:

- **Sacramento:** Sacramento ACT, Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE) Sacramento
- **Bay Area:** Building Blocks for Kids, Safe Return Project, Oakland Rising, RYSE, Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE) Contra Costa, Black Women Organized for Political Action (BWOPA), Lift Up Contra Costa
- **Central Valley:** Fathers and Families of San Joaquin, Fresno Metro Black Chamber/Fresno County Complete Count Committee, Central Valley Urban Institute, Fresno Street Saints
- **San Bernardino and Riverside:** Time for Change, BLU Educational Foundation, Starting Over, Congregations Organized for Prophetic Engagement (COPE)
- **Los Angeles:** Anti-Recidivism Coalition, Black Women for Wellness, Kingdom Life Church, Los Angeles Community Action Network, A New Way of Life, The Community Action League, Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education (SCOPE), Community Coalition, Los Angeles Black Workers Center, Social Justice Learning Institute, Special Needs Network, AME Ministerial Alliance
- **San Diego:** Pillars of the Community, Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans (PANA), Alliance San Diego
- **Statewide:** California Black Women's Health Project, Black Alliance for Just Immigration

## **Strategic Partners**

The Black Hub has formed strategic partnerships with key academic institutions who will provide technical and research support for our redistricting line drawing. Partners will provide research, technical, and demography support for line-drawing as well as research and analysis of census and other sources of data. Academic and technical partnerships include the following entities:

- Advancement Project California
- University of California-Berkeley's Othering and Belonging Institute
- University of California-Los Angeles's Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies
- University of Southern California's Equity Research Institute (ERI)

### Core Leaders

The Black Hub team consists of four full-time team members and five part-time employees and consultants. Core leaders are listed below:

**Anthony Thigpenn** is Founder and President of California Calls, a powerful alliance of 31 organizations in 16 counties across the state; **James Woodson** is the Policy and Advocacy Manager for the Black Hub and California Calls. He oversees the organization's policy analysis and strategic projects, including 2020 census and redistricting work and implementation of the Voters Choice Act; **Kevin Cosney** is Organizing Director for the Black Hub and California Calls, where he oversees Integrated voter engagement projects, a team of two organizers, and a coalition of 30+ community-based organizations; **LaNae Norwood** is Communications Lead for the Black Hub. Lanae is an activist, organizer, consultant and social entrepreneur with 15 years of experience developing digital and print marketing strategies for campaigns, nonprofits and businesses; **Ama Nyamekye** is the Project Manager for the Black Hub. She brings decades of experience in program and organizational design, fundraising, communications, and organizing; **Kristin Nimmers** and **Osei Agyeman** are Organizing Coordinators for the Black Hub. They work directly with the Hub's coalition members to ensure they are properly trained and prepared to execute the Hub's civic engagement programs and other activities.

### OVERARCHING AIM AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR REDISTRICTING

In 2021, we have a unique opportunity to elevate Black voices in one of the most influential and foundational elements of democracy. Blacks in California are disproportionately affected by the very issues threatening equity in our state--issues like mass incarceration, education opportunity and attainment, homelessness and displacement, and immigration. However, the redistricting process presents the opportunity to ensure Black communities across California are fairly represented and sets the stage for Black communities to advocate for the policy solutions they want to see in their communities.

The California Black Census and Redistricting Hub has convened a coalition of community-based organizations to ensure that redistricting has a strong, consistent community voice that elevates traditionally marginalized Black communities through advocacy, training, coalition building, and demography. The members of the Black Census and Redistricting Hub are organizations that engage, mobilize, and educate Black individuals, families, and communities that are most impacted by these issues. When we elevate the voices and power of those most impacted by these issues, we elevate the solutions and solution makers for our state's most pressing issues.

Accordingly, our process will be anchored in the following core values:

- **Community Empowerment:** We will work to ensure those most negatively affected by inequities are centered and elevated in conversations about policy, funding, and political representation
- **Equity and Inclusion:** Our process and approach will uplift the needs of all Californians who have been impacted by key issues affecting Black Californians including housing, education, criminal justice, immigration, and economic policies and practices.
- **Unity and Collaboration:** Increasing Black political voice and power does not mean decreasing the voice and power of other marginalized and oppressed groups. We proudly link arms with other non-Black organizations to examine census data--the intersections, differences and similarities of our communities in order to develop a process and product that unites instead of divides communities, particularly communities of color.
- **Justice and Fairness:** We believe the redistricting process should be driven by data, guided by community, and facilitated through a process that is just and fair. Our own internal process will be responsive and future-forward in prioritizing the displaced and giving them a fair chance to be included and represented along the lines of community interests and concerns, and we will urge and encourage, in both word and deed, other bodies in the redistricting process to do the same.