



2010 CENSUS: IT'S IN OUR HANDS

2010 Census – It's Easy, Safe and Important

Every 10 years, as mandated by the U.S. Constitution, our nation conducts a census — an effort to count every person living in the United States. The Decennial Census is the largest peacetime mobilization effort of the American public, requiring years of planning and more than a half million temporary workers. The key to this endeavor is having every household fill out and mail back a completed census form. Participation in the 2010 Census is easy, safe, and important to the future of every community.

The 2010 Census is easy. Questionnaires will be mailed to households across the country in March 2010. With only 10 questions, the 2010 Census questionnaire is one of the shortest ever. Households are asked to provide key demographic information, including: whether a housing unit is rented or owned; the address of the residence; and the names, genders, ages and races of others living in the household.

The 2010 Census is safe. Title 13 of United States Code is the law under which the Census Bureau operates. The law guarantees the confidentiality of census information, and establishes penalties for disclosing this information. By law, the Census Bureau cannot share respondents' answers with the FBI, the CIA, Welfare, Immigration, or any other government agency. No court of law can access individual responses. The same law prevents the Census Bureau from selling or giving away addresses. Census workers are sworn to secrecy. They know that if they give out any information, they can face a \$250,000 fine and a jail term of up to five years.

The 2010 Census is important. The federal government uses census data to allocate billions of dollars in federal funds annually for programs and services such as education, housing and community development, health care services for the elderly, and much more. In addition, state, local and tribal governments use data for planning and allocating funds for public building construction, highway safety and public transportation systems, location of police and fire departments, and many other projects. Community organizations use census information to develop social service programs, senior lunch programs and child-care centers. Population counts also determine Congressional apportionment – the amount seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives – and states use the data to allocate seats in their state legislatures.

In April 2010, the Decennial Census will take a snapshot of everyone residing in the United States, regardless of age, race, or immigration status, delivering accurate information about our diverse and growing population. What we learn from this new portrait of American will transform what we know about ourselves. The 2010 Census is easy, safe, and important. Be Counted.

For further information about 2010 Census operations and activities visit www.2010census.gov or contact the Census Bureau at Boston.PDSP@census.gov or (617) 223-3610.