

CENSUS 2010



What is the census?

The census is a count of everyone residing in the United States and includes people of all ages, races, ethnic groups – both citizens and non-citizens. Since 1790 it has been done every 10 years in accordance with the U.S. Constitution and offers a snapshot of our nation's increasingly rich diversity and provides a blueprint for future public policy decisions.

When can I expect to receive a Census 2010 Questionnaire?

Explanatory information will be mailed to all households beginning in February 2010, with the Census questionnaire itself arriving mid-March 2010. The questionnaire is delivered to every household unit for which the Census Bureau has an address.

What questions will be on the Census 2010 Questionnaire?

All households will receive a short form consisting of 10 questions covering six topics. The Census 2010 questionnaire is designed to be answered by the head of each household for each member living there on April 1st. Data historically collected from households receiving the "long form" is being replaced with a survey conducted by the American Community Survey. During the 2010 Census cycle, some households will receive both the ACS survey and the census questionnaire. Both should be completed. An example of the questions the survey will ask can be found at http://www.census.gov/2010census/pdf/2010_Questionnaire_Info_Copy.pdf

What happens if I don't receive a questionnaire?

If your household does not receive a form, call the Telephone Questionnaire Assistance Center at 1-866-872-6868 (If you prefer a Spanish-speaking operator, then dial 1.866.928.2010.) Telephone lines will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., seven days a week from February 25, 2010 through July 30, 2010. The TDD number is 1.866.783.2010.

The Census Bureau will also be coordinating *Be Counted* sites which will be located in highly visible and accessible locations. People who feel they have not been counted can go to a designated site and pick up a blank *Be Counted* questionnaire.

What happens if I don't return my questionnaire?

Federal law requires your return of a questionnaire. Households that do not respond may receive a replacement questionnaire during April 2010. If the questionnaire is not ultimately returned, expect a visit from a census worker. Census takers visit non-responding homes up to three times. Remember, always ask for identification of someone claiming to be a census worker. You are encouraged to complete the questionnaire as soon as you can after it arrives. The cost of follow up with households not returning their questionnaire is nearly \$100.00.

Will I be asked for my social security number or questioned about my immigration status?

Absolutely not.

Are only U.S. citizens counted?

No. The U.S. Constitution and subsequent U.S. Supreme Court decisions have held that all inhabitants of the United States be counted – citizens and non-citizens alike.

Does the information my household provides stay secure and confidential?

Yes. Every single Census Bureau employee takes an oath for life to protect the confidentiality of the information obtained. If this confidentiality is violated, stiff penalties of up to \$250,000 and jail time can be imposed. By law, the Census Bureau cannot share information with ANYONE and the information obtained is not accessible on the Internet.

Will the Census Bureau share information with other governmental agencies such as the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the IRS, the courts or law enforcement?

No. Again the Census Bureau is bound by very specific laws to safeguard your personal information and cannot share it with anyone, including the President of the United States. Information obtained through Census questionnaires is kept confidential for 72 years.

I have a daughter in college. Where will she be counted?

The Census Bureau is working very hard to make sure that everyone is counted only once so it has designed a special outreach program to group quarters such as colleges and other large institutions. Your daughter should be counted where she sleeps most of the time and, in this case, that would be the college she is attending.

How are the homeless counted?

The Census Bureau will count this population in several operations. One will count people where they receive services such as homeless shelters. Another will work with local community advocates to determine where the homeless congregate at night. The Census Bureau will send enumerators to count people at these locations on three specific nights in late March 2010.

Are children counted?

It is important to remember when you fill out your census questionnaire that your responses include every person in your household, including children. In past censuses, children have been one of the largest segments of the population undercounted during a census.

Are there other populations considered hard to count¹?

Yes, among them:

- People of color
- Low income populations/renters
- Highly mobile people
- Immigrants and people with limited English proficiency
- People living in complex households
- Adults without a high school diploma
- Unemployed people

¹Every census tract in the country was assigned a "Hard-To-Count" (HTC) score, summarizing the "measured" degree of enumeration difficulty, based on the 12 variables most highly correlated with non-response rates in 1990 and 2000. HTC scores can range from 0 to 132. The higher the score, the more difficult enumeration is expected to be. Areas with the highest scores (e.g., over 70) are likely to be the areas with relatively high non-return rates and undercount rates while areas with the lowest scores are likely to be areas with low rates.

How does Census information affect my community?

Data collected during Census 2010 will be used for several things; among them the allocation of federal dollars for social and human service programs – public transportation, education, programs for senior citizens, public transportation and road construction and other infrastructure needs - as well as determining the apportionment by state of the 435 seats in the U.S House of Representatives. Remember that if just 100 people in your community fail to respond to the Census 2010 questionnaire, your community loses approximately \$120,000 every year.

In 2007, the State of Illinois received nearly \$15 billion in federal funds to support these important programs.

By the same token, the estimated Census 2000 undercount in Cook County, Illinois was 76,819 resulting in an estimated funding loss to the County of nearly \$200 million.

What is a Complete Count Committee (CCC)?

CCCs are teams of community & business leaders, elected & public officials, social & human service providers as well as individuals interested to ensure that their communities are completely and accurately counted during Census 2010. By using local knowledge, expertise and influence, a CCC can design and implement a census awareness campaign targeted to their municipality, county or state. A CCC should work to make sure that every resident is aware of the importance of Census 2010 and participate by returning a completed census questionnaire. CCCs are encouraged to design specific outreach programs to hard-to-reach populations.

How can I find out if there is a Complete Count Committee in my community?

Contact the League of Women Voters of Illinois at 312.939.5935 x-39.

How much does it cost to conduct the decennial census?

Census 2010 will cost approximately \$14 billion to complete.

What is apportionment?

At the conclusion of each census, the 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives are reapportioned based on the population counts of each state. After the 2000 census, Illinois lost one of its congressional seats. Notably, if 152,000 more people had been counted, Illinois would still have 20 representative districts. It is important to all Illinoisans that we not lose more than the one seat we're expected to lose.

What is *True Count: Everybody Counts*?

True Count is a public education campaign of the League of Women Voters of Illinois to ensure that Illinois is fully and completely counted during Census 2010 and that residents of all ages, races and ethnic groups participate.

The League recognizes that participation in the Census is an act of civil responsibility and engagement; it cares that Illinois is fully represented in Congress; and, wants to make sure the issues about which it cares – education, transportation, child care – receives their fair share of federal dollars.

IMPORTANT CENSUS DATES

February – March 2010

Census questionnaires are mailed or delivered to households

April 1, 2010

Return your household census questionnaire if you haven't already done so

April – July 2010

Census workers visit households that did not return a questionnaire by mail. They will all have official Census Bureau identification.

December 2010

The Census Bureau delivers final population counts to the President of the United States. This data is used to assign seats in the U.S. House of Representatives proportionally among the states.

March 2011

The Census Bureau completes delivery of redistricting data to each state.

Do you have more questions or need additional information?

Contact the League of Women Voters of Illinois at 312.939.5935 x39.

