

U.S. Census Bureau News

U.S. Department of Commerce • Washington, D.C. 20233



CB10-FFSE.01
March 8, 2010
PDF version

Special Edition

2010 Census by the Numbers

This year, America conducts its 23rd census. The nation's largest domestic mobilization began in a remote corner of Alaska and will continue throughout the rest of the country — and in Puerto Rico and the Island Areas (American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam and the Virgin Islands) — with the goal of counting every resident once, and only once, and in the right place.

Although the 2010 Census questionnaire is simple and easy to fill out, the census is a massive, complex operation involving millions of forms and hundreds of thousands of census workers. To mark this milestone in the nation's history, the Census Bureau presents some of the amazing numbers involved in counting the nation's estimated 309 million residents. Periodically, throughout the duration of the census, we will update and reissue this Facts for Features.

Funds Allocation and Congressional Apportionment

More than \$400 billion

Amount in federal funds distributed each year to states and communities based in part on census population data. <<http://www.census.gov/prod/2009pubs/govsrr2009-1.pdf>>

435

Number of seats in the U.S. House of Representatives to be apportioned according to the 2010 Census. Article 1, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution requires a census once a decade. <http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution_transcript.html#1.2.3>

2010 Census Questionnaire

10

It takes just 10 minutes for the average household to complete 10 simple questions. The census form is one of the shortest in history, asking households to provide the names of residents and their sex, age and date of birth, race, whether of Hispanic origin, relationship to householder, whether the home is owned or rented and telephone number. We also ask two questions needed to ensure an accurate count and good data quality. Note that the form does not ask about citizenship or legal status, or for anyone's Social Security number.

134 million

Estimated number of housing units the Census Bureau will have to contact, either by mail or in person, to conduct the 2010 Census. This total includes:

- **More than 120 million**

Number of questionnaires to be delivered by mail to U.S. residential addresses between March 15 and March 17. Residents are asked to fill out the questionnaire and mail it back.

- **12 million**

Number of addresses, mostly in rural areas, that will have questionnaires delivered to them by census takers starting March 1 and ending March 31. In these areas, residents also are asked to fill out the questionnaire and mail it back.

- **1.5 million**

Number of addresses, in areas with seasonal housing and in very remote areas, in which enumerators will visit and fill out the questionnaire at the door, all in one visit.

99%

Percentage of the population in housing units that will be able to mail back the questionnaire. Approximately 90 percent will receive the questionnaire in the mail; another 9 percent will receive it from a census taker who will drop off the form for the resident to fill out and mail back. About 1 percent of the population will receive a visit from a census taker who will fill out the resident's answers on the questionnaire at the home. This will occur mainly in the case of those living in areas with seasonal housing and in remote areas like many American Indian areas or the colonias along the border with Mexico. (Those living in group quarters will be enumerated separately from those in housing units.)

360 million

Total number of questionnaires that have been printed. Stacked one on top of another, a pile of these forms would stand about 29 miles high – more than five times higher than Mount Everest. Different operations require variations on the basic questionnaire; the questionnaire used in nonresponse follow-up, for instance, differs from the mail-out/mail-back questionnaire because it is designed for an enumerator to use in interviewing a household.

24/7/7

Printing the mail-out/mail-back questionnaires (those delivered by mail to residential addresses) required one printer using three printing presses, with one running 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for seven months and the other two for 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for about seven weeks.

11.6 million pounds

Collective weight of the paper the questionnaires were printed on. The printing of these questionnaires required 295,259 pounds of ink. The questionnaires printed, which fill nearly 425 tractor-trailers, would circle the globe three times if stretched end to end.

236,000

Estimated number of group quarters facilities, such as dormitories, prisons, convents and nursing homes, where residents will be counted beginning in April.

65,000

Estimated number of service locations, such as emergency/transitional shelters, soup kitchens, regularly scheduled mobile food vans and targeted nonsheltered outdoor locations, where people experiencing homelessness will be counted March 29 - 31.

47.8 million

Projected number of housing units that will fail to respond to the census by mail and will require a census taker to follow up in person to count the household. Receiving census forms by mail is much less expensive and saves taxpayers approximately \$85 million for every percentage point increase in the national mail participation rate.

6

Number of languages that questionnaires are available in: English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Russian and Vietnamese. (Translated questionnaires are available only upon request.) In 2000, forms were also available in six languages, with Tagalog, rather than Russian, as one of the options.

59

Number of different languages for which Language Assistance Guides are available. These are documents that provide in-language translations of the English census form and that explain in-language how to complete an English-language census questionnaire and are available online at <2010census.gov>. We also have guides available in Braille and in large print.
<<http://2010.census.gov/partners/materials/inlanguage.php>>

13.5 million

Estimated number of bilingual (English/Spanish) questionnaires that will be delivered to housing units in neighborhoods with high concentrations of residents who speak Spanish at home.

\$85 million

For each percentage point increase in the 2010 Census mail-back response rate, the estimated amount of taxpayer money the Census Bureau saves by not having to go door to door to count nonresponding households.

\$0.42 vs. \$56

The cost of obtaining a mailed-back census form (42 cents), compared with the estimated cost of obtaining a household's census responses in person if the household doesn't mail back the form (\$56). (Note: Costs may vary depending on the number of households enumerators will have to visit.)

15

Minimum age a household member must be in order to fill out the census questionnaire.

More than one race

As in Census 2000, people answering the census may select more than one racial category to indicate mixed racial heritage. The groups shown in the census race question collapse into the five race groups required by the federal government: white, black or African-American, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander. The questionnaire also provides a choice of "some other race." Tabulations will be available for 63 race categories — six single race categories and 57 different combinations of two or more races.

March 15-17, 2010

Dates on which most residents will receive questionnaires in the mail. The questionnaire package will also include a cover letter and a return envelope. Residents will receive an advance letter between March 8 and 10 alerting them to look for their questionnaires and explaining the importance of participating in the census. Between March 22 and 24, residents will receive a reminder card. The dates may differ in areas where census workers are dropping off questionnaires.

April 1, 2010

Since 1930, Census Day has been April 1. Census Day is not the deadline for mailing back the questionnaire. As a matter of fact, we hope people will mail the questionnaire soon after they receive it and not wait for Census Day. Census Day is simply the reference date we set for people to report their household information. Households can change composition quickly but we ask that they report the composition as it is or is most likely to be on Census Day.

Recruiting and Hiring

3.8 million

Total number of people recruited for 2010 Census operations during fiscal years 2009 and 2010 (as of March 1). This includes almost 1.2 million people recruited for address canvassing last year. Job information is provided at the census jobs Web site <<http://2010.census.gov/2010censusjobs/>>.

1.2 million

Number of field positions needed to conduct census operations this year. We will hire an estimated 870,000 temporary workers to fill these positions – more than the population of Alaska, North Dakota, Vermont or Wyoming. Some people will work on more than one operation. For the large nonresponse follow-up operation, we expect to hire 635,000 people, who

may also work on other operations; the number hired may vary depending on the size of the follow-up workload. Everyone we hire must pass an FBI name check and submit two sets of fingerprints for further background checks. They also must pass an employment eligibility verification based on their Social Security Number and other information. At the U.S. Census Bureau, the safety of both our workforce and respondents is our top priority.

Facilities

3

Number of data capture centers that will process 2010 Census questionnaires as they are mailed back by households across the nation. These facilities are in Phoenix, Baltimore and Jeffersonville, Ind. During peak processing, the three centers together can capture and process data from 1.9 million mail-returned forms per day and 1.4 million enumerator forms per day. (The latter category refers to forms for which all the answers to the questions have been recorded by the census taker, rather than by the respondent, during the nonresponse follow-up operation.)

600,000

Projected number of calls from respondents to the telephone questionnaire assistance call centers on the busiest day (possibly March 22 or 23). Assistance will be available in the six questionnaire languages mentioned earlier. Respondents will be able to call with questions.

494

Number of local census offices. Along with the 12 regional census centers, they will collectively take up about 3.5 million square feet of office space. Staff working in and from these temporary offices manage address listing field work, conduct local recruiting and visit living quarters to conduct various census operations, such as nonresponse follow-up.

<<http://2010.census.gov/2010censusjobs/how-to-apply/local-office-map.php>>

About 30,000

Number of questionnaire assistance center sites. These centers provide assistance to those who might have difficulty completing the questionnaire because of language or other barriers. Sites will be posted on <www.2010census.gov>.

<<http://2010.census.gov/2010census/contact/index.php>>

About 40,000

Number of “Be Counted” sites, where people who believe they were not counted can obtain an unaddressed questionnaire. About 30,000 of these sites will be in the same convenient locations as the questionnaire assistance centers. Sites will be posted on <www.2010census.gov>.

Partnership

About 213,000

Number of organizations (as of March 8, 2010) the Census Bureau has formed partnerships with to help get the message out about the importance of mailing back questionnaires and participating in the census.

10,000

Approximate number of complete count committees (as of March 8, 2010). These groups, often named by the highest elected official for that local or state government, spearhead the effort to get the word out in their cities about the importance of the census.

More than 3,000

Number of Census Bureau partnership staff; they have proficiency in 124 different languages. These staff work closely with national and local organizations to support the census. It is critical that they be able to reach all respondents no matter what language the respondents may speak.

\$338.5 million

The value of the free space that 2010 Census partners have donated for the Census Bureau to use for training census workers for the in-person follow-up phase of the census.

Road Tour

13 + 3

Since the start of the year, 13 Portrait of America Road Tour vehicles have been traveling across the nation to educate communities about the 2010 Census and encourage every individual to complete and return their census form. In addition, there are three more that have hit the road more recently. One vehicle is traveling throughout Hawaii and the other two are visiting American Indian areas in Southern California and the mountain time zone.

800

Number of community gatherings, celebrations and sporting events the 13 Road Tour vehicles will be stopping at. Collectively, they will travel for 1,547 days between January and April.

More than 150,000

Number of miles it is expected the Road Tour vehicles will travel collectively. They will be viewed by an estimated 18 million people while in transit.

Paid Advertising

28

Number of languages census advertisements will appear in. This is up from 17 in 2000. The 2010 Census advertising campaign represents the most diverse outreach campaign in U.S. history. No other campaign has gone so deep into the Asian market, with advertising in 13 languages (Chinese-Mandarin, Chinese-Cantonese, Vietnamese, Korean, Hindi, Tagalog, Japanese, Khmer, Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Hindi and Bengali).

\$133 million

Cost of the national advertising campaign to boost participation rates in the 2010 Census.

\$1

The approximate cost per household that the Census Bureau is spending to motivate people to fill out and mail back their 2010 Census forms.

3

Number of phases for the 2010 Census advertising campaign: awareness (January-February), motivational (March-April) and nonresponse follow-up (May-June).

3

Number of NASCAR Sprint Cup races in which the 2010 Census-sponsored No. 16 Ford Fusion (driven by Greg Biffle) will compete: the Kobalt Tools 500 in Atlanta (March 7), the Food City 500 in Bristol, Tenn. (March 21) and the Goody's Fast Relief 500 in Martinsville, Va. (March 28).

“Take 10”

The “Take 10” Challenge Program urges partners, complete count committees and elected officials to better their respective community’s 2000 Census mail participation rates. Starting March 22, the Census Bureau will post on its Web site mail participation rates for geographic areas down to the census tract level; these figures will be updated daily through April. In the case of participation rates, communities can compete with other communities and also with their own 2000 Census performance.

Census in Schools

118,000

Number of schools (grades K-12) receiving Census in Schools materials and encouraged to set up a “Census in Schools Week” from January through May to educate approximately 56 million students about the 2010 Census. Census in Schools tries to reach students in all public, charter, private, parochial and tribal schools in the United States, including Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Confidentiality

0

Number of organizations with which the Census Bureau shares confidential information. Title 13 of the U.S. Code prohibits the Census Bureau from sharing confidential information with other government agencies, immigration authorities, law enforcement or any other organization. Census Bureau employees take a lifetime oath swearing to keep information confidential. Penalties for violations include up to five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

72

Number of years individual census records are kept before they are made public by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). Shortly after the census is completed, the Census Bureau turns over the images of the questionnaires to NARA, which in turn keeps them secure for the next seven-plus decades. In 2012, individual records from the 1940 Census will be made available to the public for the first time for genealogical research.

Cost

\$14.5 billion

Estimated cost of the 2010 Census, covering fiscal years 2001 through 2013. The total includes the cost of the American Community Survey for each of these years.

Mark your calendar ...

Here is a schedule of major 2010 Census activities:

2010 Census Calendar

January-May, 2010	Remote Alaska Enumeration	Enumeration of sparsely settled villages before spring thaw
February-April 2010	Questionnaire Assistance Centers	Walk-in centers open to answer respondent questions
February-July 2010	Telephone Questionnaire Assistance	Toll free lines operating to answer respondent questions
Feb. 1-March 19, 2010	Group Quarters Advance Visit	Census takers arrange for ideal dates/times for the enumeration of residents of group quarters
March 1 – April 2	Update/Leave Enumeration	Census takers deliver census questionnaires in rural areas (9 percent of all housing units) for respondents to fill out and mail back
March 8-10 , 2010	Advance Letter for mailout of questionnaires	Households in Mail-out/Mail-back areas (about 90% of the country) receive advance letter announcing census questionnaire is coming in the mail
March 15-17, 2010	Mail-out Questionnaires	Households in mail-out/mail-back areas receive census questionnaires in the mail
March 22- May 29, 2010	Update/Enumerate Operation	Census takers visit housing units in very remote areas (e.g., many Indian reservations) and conduct the census at the door
March 22-24 , 2010	Reminder Card	Postcard sent to remind people to return their Census questionnaires and to thank them if they already did
March 29- March 31, 2010	Service Based Enumeration	Census takers conduct the census enumeration of shelters for people experiencing homelessness, and of other service-based locations
April 1, 2010	Census Day	Reference date for the information recorded on the census questionnaire

April 1-10, 2010	Replacement Questionnaire	Second questionnaire sent in some mailout/mailback areas to increase mail response rates
April-May 2010	Group Quarters Enumeration	Enumeration of group quarters occurs
May 1-July 10, 2010	Nonresponse Follow-Up	All housing units that do not return their questionnaire will be visited by an enumerator, who will conduct the census at the door
July –August 2010	Vacant and Delete Check	Questionnaires classified as vacant or delete during the previous operations are re-visited to verify the status
August-October 2010	Census Coverage Measurement Person Interview	Independent, parallel survey to measure quality of coverage in the census
December 31, 2010	Apportionment Deadline	Delivery of population counts and apportionment of House seats to the President
March 31, 2011	Redistricting Data Deadline	Date by which the Census Bureau is required to provide small-area population counts to the legislature and governor of each state for use in redrawing congressional and state legislative district boundaries
December 2012	Census Coverage Measurement	Results published based on the survey to measure the quality of census coverage

Special Editions of the U.S. Census Bureau’s *Facts for Features* are issued to provide background information for lesser-known observances, anniversaries of historic events and other timely topics in the news.

Editor’s note: Facts for Features are customarily released about two months before an observance in order to accommodate magazine production timelines. Questions or comments should be directed to the Census Bureau’s Public Information Office: telephone: 301-763-3030; fax: 301-763-3762; or e-mail: <pio@census.gov>.