

Getting the 2010 form

What if I don't receive the form?

If you did 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.) The lines will be open from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. (your local time) seven days a week from February 25, 2010 through July 30, 2010. For the hearing-impaired, TDD 1-866-783-2010 (during the times noted above).

What if I don't have a permanent address?

The 2010 Census form will be delivered to your primary residence — the place where you live and sleep most of the time. Roommates and other types of shared households should fill out one form for the entire address.

What if I don't have a home?

At the Census Bureau we understand that these can be challenging times for many people. Because of this, we created the Service Based Enumeration (SBE) operation. The SBE is designed to provide an opportunity for people experiencing some form of displacement or lack of permanent address to be included in the census, by counting them at service-based locations, such as homeless shelters, soup kitchens, etc. The Be Counted form is another way people can take part in the census. Be Counted forms are census forms that are available at various community locations for use by people who either did not receive a census form in the mail or who believe they were not otherwise included on any other census form.

How do I get a form in a different language?

Language Assistance Guides are available in 59 different languages to help people fill out the English version of the census form. Also, both English and English/Spanish versions of the census form will be available. In addition, the census provides other guides to help ensure forms are filled out. These include Large Print Assistance Guides, Braille Assistance Guides and a Language Reference Dictionary.

Is there another way to get the form other than the mail?

Be Counted forms are census forms that are available at various community locations for use by people who either did not receive a form in the mail or whose information was not collected on any other form. Be Counted forms are available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese and Russian. These forms can be picked up in various community locations and mailed back in the attached postage-paid envelope.

Completing the 2010 form

Can I fill the form out online?

No, not this time. The Census Bureau is experimenting with Internet response options for the future.

What if I don't fill in the form?

Residents who do not complete and return a 2010 Census form will receive a replacement form. After that, if no form is mailed back, residents can expect a personal visit from a census taker some time after March 2010. The census taker will ask you the questions on the form, record your answers and then submit the form for your household.

What if I make a mistake on the form?

If you checked the wrong box, just draw a line through it and mark the correct box for the question. If the error is in a write-in box, carefully draw a line through the incorrect entry and write the correct information as close as possible to the entry.

What if I lose the form?

If you lost or misplaced your 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.) The lines will be open from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. (your local time) seven days a week from February 25, 2010 through July 31, 2010. For the hearing-impaired, TDD 1-866-783-2010 (during the times noted above).

Do I have to fill the form in?

Yes. Respondents are required by law to answer all questions to the best of their ability.

What if I provide false information?

According to Title 13, Chapter 7, Subtitle 2, anyone who willfully gives an answer that is false could be fined up to \$500.

Privacy & Confidentiality

How do I know the form I received isn't counterfeit?

Any request for census information from the Census Bureau will be clearly identified as coming from the U.S. Census Bureau and as OFFICIAL BUSINESS of the United States. Before your household receives a mailed form, a phone call or a visit from the Census Bureau, you will be given a few days' notice with a letter from the Census Bureau Director.

Security: Who sees my information?

By law, the Census Bureau cannot share respondents' answers with anyone, including the IRS, FBI, CIA or any other government agency. All Census Bureau employees take the oath of nondisclosure and are sworn for life to protect the confidentiality of the data. The penalty for unlawful disclosure is a fine of up to \$250,000 or imprisonment of up to 5 years, or both. Read more about Privacy & Confidentiality.

Can my neighbor see my information?

No. It is unlawful for the Census Bureau to give personally identifiable information about an individual to any other individual or agency until 72 years after it is collected for the decennial census. Additionally every Census Bureau employee has taken an oath to protect your information and is subject to a jail term, a fine—or both—if he or she discloses ANY information that could identify you or your household.

Census Takers

I filled out and returned the form but a census taker visited my home anyway.

Quality checks are used to assure our procedures are working and that our staff is doing the job they were assigned to do. These checks require that some households be visited more than once. Additionally, if you returned your form late, your response might not be logged before a census taker is sent out.

Why does the census taker visit my home more than once?

Census takers visit local homes up to three times to record resident information for 2010 Census. The census taker leaves a door hanger, featuring a phone number, each time, if the residents they're trying to reach aren't home. Residents can then call the number to schedule the visit. In addition, quality checks to ensure that census procedures are working and census staff is doing their job will require that some households be visited more than once.

Boycotting the Census?

I have a friend who is boycotting the census as a political protest, and I'm concerned it will hurt my community.

Not participating in the census could hurt your community. The U.S. census inherently benefits the people who are counted:

- The numbers give political representation to those who are counted Federal dollars are distributed based on the population count for services like education, transportation, health care and job training
- Participating in the census is one of the most powerful ways of having a voice in the United States.

Boycotting the census hurts you and your community.