

FROM THE DIRECTOR
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

The U.S. Census Bureau wishes to inform you of an issue of importance to you and your constituents, and to solicit your assistance. The Census Bureau is changing the way it will conduct future censuses. In the past, most households received a “short form,” while one household in six received a “long form.” The short form asked seven questions, and the long form asked 46 more. Beginning with the next census in 2010, all households will receive only a short form. The long form questions will be collected on a flow basis beginning later this year and continuing throughout the decade via the American Community Survey (ACS).

The ACS is conducted by mail, telephone, and visits from Census Bureau field representatives. It will be implemented in every county, American Indian reservation, Alaska Native Village, and Hawaiian homeland in the U.S. beginning in July 2004, and will continue every month thereafter.

Like the census, Title 13, United States Code, requires all persons to respond to the ACS. Since the ACS represents a new way of conducting the census, you may receive questions from constituents about the validity of the survey, why certain questions are on the form, and whether response to the survey is required by law.

To assist your staff in responding to constituent inquiries, I am enclosing a binder containing:

- Your ACS data
- Quick facts on the ACS
- A description of ACS survey procedures
- Fact sheets on every question
- A drop-in article that you may put in your newsletter
- Census Bureau regional office contacts
- A list of endorsements for the ACS
- The questionnaire mailing package
- A Questions and Answers brochure

Public cooperation is vital to the success of this new way of conducting the census. We appreciate any efforts your office can make in encouraging your constituents to fulfill their civic responsibility. We stand ready to help you and your staff respond to their concerns and inquiries.

If you need further information about the ACS, please have a member of your staff call the Congressional Affairs Office at 301-763-6100.

Sincerely,

Charles Louis Kincannon

www.census.gov/acs/www

1-800-354-7271

ACS Congressional Tool Kit



Si necesita ayuda para completar su cuestionario,
llame sin cargo alguno al: 1-877-833-5625

U.S. Department of Commerce
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

Helping You Make Informed Decisions



AMERICA IS CHANGING AND SO IS THE CENSUS

Many of you likely are familiar with the 10-year census. The last census occurred in 2000 and every household in the country received a questionnaire. The census is required by the U.S. Constitution and results are used to apportion seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and redistrict state legislatures.

Most households in 2000 received a “short form,” which contained seven basic questions. A sample of households received a “long form,” which contained additional questions and provided information on what a community looks like. For instance, how many residents have high school diplomas or college degrees, where is the greatest need for job training programs, how many persons speak a language other than English, how long does it take to get to work, where in the community are veterans and elderly residents located?

The American Community Survey, part of the U.S. Census Bureau’s effort to streamline and improve the census, will replace the long form and provide communities a vibrant, moving picture every year instead of once every 10 years. One local official said, “We are in very fast moving times now and 10 years is like an eternity. If we wait for data for 10 years, we are spending five years putting in resources where we may not need them and missing places where we really should be putting our resources. The American Community Survey benefits us by providing updated information every year—we don’t have to wait ten years.”

Our community and other communities across the country need this information to help determine where to build new roads, schools and senior centers...where to locate everything from coffee shops and hardware stores to bus stops...which areas need bilingual police officers and paramedics. That's because the Census Bureau is changing the way it does business and its changes will affect—and benefit—you.

Starting in July 2004, one household out of 480 throughout American, in every county, American Indian and Alaska Native area, and Hawaiian Homeland will receive the survey each month, and will be asked to participate. No household will receive the survey more often than once every five years.

Responding to the American Community Survey is mandatory, according to Title 13 of the United States Code. The same law that requires participation also protects the responses on the questionnaire. Census Bureau employees are sworn to protect the confidentiality of information collected in the survey.

For more information about the American Community Survey, visit the Web site:

www.census.gov/acs/www.

-X-

Spring 2004

AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY - DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

The American Community Survey is conducted using three methods of data collection:

1. Mail
2. Telephone
3. Personal Visits

Every household receives:

- A prenotice letter
- The American Community Survey questionnaire
- A reminder card
- A replacement questionnaire if the original questionnaire is not returned in a timely manner

Addresses that do not respond by mail will be contacted using phone or personal visit, or both.

Telephone Interviewing - the telephone operation is conducted approximately six weeks after the questionnaire is mailed. The Census Bureau will attempt to obtain telephone numbers and conduct telephone interviews for all households that do not respond by mail. Census Bureau telephone interviewing staff will conduct these interviews.

Personal Interviewing - Following the telephone operation, a sample will be taken from the addresses which remain uninterviewed. These addresses will be visited by Census Bureau field representatives, who will conduct the interview.

Quick Facts on the American Community Survey

The survey is conducted under the authority of Title 13, United States Code, Sections 141 and 193. That law requires that it be completed.

- All answers are **confidential**. Any Census Bureau employee who violates that confidentiality is subject to a jail term, a fine, or both.
- Addresses are selected at random to represent similar households in their area.
- The survey will be sent to approximately 2½ percent of U.S. households per year.
- The survey is conducted by mail, telephone, and personal visit.

Benefits for Congress

- The ACS is the only source for annual demographic, social, economic, and housing information for Congressional Districts.
- Current information for decision-making and policy development.
- Current information for allocation of funds.
- Current information for program evaluation.

Benefits for State and Local Governments

- Comparable information across and within states for program evaluation and use in funding formulas.
- Current information for determining where to locate new schools, hospitals, and highways.
- Current information for tracking the health and well-being of children, families, and the elderly.

For your Constituents

- The data will aid federal, state, and local governments distribute tax dollars fairly.
- Telephone questionnaire assistance is available at 1-800-354-7271.
- Spanish language telephone assistance is available at 1-877-833-5625.

POPULATION FACT SHEETS

1. Gender
2. Age and data of birth
3. Relationship
4. Marital status
5. Hispanic/Latino
6. Race
7. Place of birth
8. Citizenship
9. Year of entry
10. School enrollment
11. Educational attainment
12. Ancestry
13. Language spoken at home
14. Residence one year ago
- 15/16/17. Disability
18. Children born past 12 months
19. Grandparents as care givers
20. Veteran status
21. Period of service
22. Length of service
- 23/29/30/31/32. Labor force
24. Place of work
- 25/26/27/28. Journey to work
- 33/24. Work status last week
35. Class of worker
- 36/37/38. Industry
- 39/40. Occupation
- 41/42. Income

HOUSING FACT SHEETS

1. Units in structure
2. Year structure built
3. Year householder moved in
4. Acreage
5. Agriculture sales
6. Business or medical office on property
7. Number of rooms
8. Bedrooms
9. Plumbing
10. Kitchen
11. Telephone
12. Vehicles
13. Heating fuel
14. Cost of utilities
15. Food stamps
16. Condominium
17. Tenure
18. Rent
19. Value
20. Real estate taxes
21. Insurance
22. Mortgage
23. Second mortgage
24. Mobile home costs
25. Seasonal residence



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. Census Bureau
Washington, DC 20233-0001
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

Dear Resident:

In a few days your household will receive a questionnaire in the mail for a very important national survey, the American Community Survey. When the questionnaire arrives, please fill it out and mail it back promptly. The U.S. Census Bureau is conducting this survey and chose your address, not you personally, as part of a randomly selected sample.

The American Community Survey collects information about various topics like education, housing, and jobs. Information from this survey is used by federal, state, local, and tribal governments to meet the needs of communities across America. For example, community leaders use this information to decide where schools, highways, hospitals, and other services are needed. The survey also is used to develop programs to reduce traffic congestion, provide job training, and plan for the healthcare needs of the elderly.

If you have access to the Internet and want to learn more about the American Community Survey, please visit the Census Bureau's Web site:
www.census.gov/acs/www.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

Charles Louis Kincannon
Director, U.S. Census Bureau



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. Census Bureau
Washington, DC 20233-0001
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

Dear Resident:

I recently sent a letter to your household about the American Community Survey. Enclosed is a questionnaire and information about the survey. Please complete the questionnaire and mail it back as soon as possible in the postage-paid envelope.

This survey collects critical up-to-date information used to meet the needs of communities across the United States. For example, results from this survey are used to decide where new schools, hospitals, and fire stations are needed. This information also helps communities plan for the kinds of emergency situations that might affect you and your neighbors, such as floods and other natural disasters.

The U.S. Census Bureau chose your address, not you personally, as part of a randomly selected sample. You are required by U.S. law to respond to this survey. The Census Bureau is required by U.S. law to keep your answers confidential. The enclosed brochure answers frequently asked questions about the survey.

If you need help filling out the questionnaire, please use the enclosed guide or call our toll-free number (1-800-354-7271).

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Charles Louis Kincannon
Director, U.S. Census Bureau

Enclosures

ACS-13(L)SM (12-2002)

U S C E N S U S B U R E A U
Helping You Make Informed Decisions

www.census.gov



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. Census Bureau
Washington, DC 20233-0001
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

Dear Resident:

About three weeks ago, the U.S. Census Bureau sent an American Community Survey questionnaire to your address. I asked you to help us with this very important survey by completing it and mailing it back. But, we have not received it yet.

If you have already mailed your questionnaire, thank you very much. If you have not mailed the questionnaire, please send it soon. I have included another questionnaire with this letter. This survey is so important that a Census Bureau representative may attempt to contact you by telephone or personal visit if we do not receive your questionnaire.

The information collected in this survey will help decide where new schools, hospitals, and fire stations are needed. The information also is used to develop programs to reduce traffic congestion, provide job training, and plan for the healthcare needs of the elderly.

The Census Bureau chose your address, not you personally, as part of a randomly selected sample. You are required by U.S. law to respond to this survey. The Census Bureau is required by U.S. law to keep your answers confidential. The enclosed brochure answers frequently asked questions about the survey.

If you need help filling out the questionnaire, please use the enclosed guide or call our toll-free number (1-800-354-7271).

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Charles Louis Kincannon
Director, U.S. Census Bureau

Enclosures

ACS-14(L)SM (12-2002)

U S C E N S U S B U R E A U
Helping You Make Informed Decisions

www.census.gov

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. Census Bureau

Jeffersonville, IN 47132-0001

ACS-20S (1-2003)

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Penalty for Private Use, \$300

PRESORTED
FIRST-CLASS MAIL
POSTAGE & FEES PAID
U.S. Census Bureau
Permit No. G-58



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. Census Bureau
Washington, DC 20233-0001
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

Dear Resident:

A few days ago, you should have received an American Community Survey questionnaire. If you have already mailed it back, thank you. If you have not, please send it soon.

Local and national leaders use the information from this survey for planning schools, hospitals, roads, and other community needs.

If you need help filling out the questionnaire or have questions, please call our toll-free number (1-800-354-7271).

Sincerely,

Charles Louis Kincannon
Director, U.S. Census Bureau

Endorsements for the American Community Survey

National Elected Officials Organizations

1. Conference of Mayors
2. National League of Cities
3. National Conference of State Legislatures
4. National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Educational Fund
5. National Conference of Black Mayors, Inc.
6. National Association of Counties (NACO)
7. National Association of Towns and Townships
8. National Association of Black County Officials (NABCO)
9. National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials
10. International City/County Management Association
11. National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) (4)
12. National Association of Black County Officials (NABCO) (2 letters)
13. National Association of Regional Council, F. Wayne Hill (3)

Elected Officials

1. Florida House of Representatives, Representative Ed Jennings, Jr., Gainesville
2. Virginia Municipal League, R. Michael Amyx, Executive Director
3. City of Akron, Ohio, Donald L. Plusquellic, Mayor
4. City of Sugar Land, Texas, David G. Wallace, Mayor
5. City of Hampton, VA, Mamie E. Locke, Ph.D., Mayor
6. Town of Pearisburg, VA, Mayor Donald W. Allen and Kenneth F. Vittum, Town Manager
7. Town of Keysville, VA, Sharon M. Layne, Clerk-Treasurer
8. James City County, VA, Sanford B. Wanner, County Administrator
9. County of Bath, Virginia, Claire A. Collins, County Administrator
10. City of Chesapeake, Virginia, Mayor William E. Ward
11. County of Stafford, Virginia, C.M. Williams, Jr., County Administrator
12. York County, Virginia, James O McReynolds, County Administrator
13. Town of Warrenton, Virginia, Kenneth L. McLawhon, Town Manager
14. Phil Gramm, United States Senator
15. Shirley Dean, Mayor of the City of Berkeley, California
16. South Carolina House of Representatives, State Representative Joe E. Brown
17. City of Tchula Mississippi, Office of the Mayor Yvonne L. Brown
18. Alabama State House, House of Representatives, State Representative Barbara B. Boyd
19. Commonwealth of Virginia, House of Delegates, State Representative Kristen J. Amundson
20. Virginia House of Delegates Resolution No. 761, January 21, 2003
21. National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL)
22. Arkansas House of Representatives, State Representative Joyce Elliott
23. Michigan House of Representatives, Representative Ruth Ann Jamnick

Endorsements for the American Community Survey

24. City of Highland Village, Highland Village, Texas, City Secretary's Office
25. Missouri House of Representatives, Sharon Sanders Brooks, State Representative
26. Arizona State Senate, Gabrelle Griffords, State Senator, District 28
27. Wisconsin State Senator, Gwendolynne Moore, 4th District

State, Local and Tribal Government and Quasi-Government

1. Council of State Governments (Gov. Michael Huckabee, 2003 CSG President and Rep. Daniel Bosley, 2003 CSG Chair)
2. Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties (Washington) Council of Governments
3. State of Wyoming, Department of Administration and Information, Economic Analysis Division
4. Maryland Partnership for Children, Youth, and Families
5. Jacksonville (FL) Community Council, Inc.
6. Commonwealth of Kentucky, Office of the Governor, Kentucky Commission on Women, Betsy Nowland-Curry, Executive Director
7. Fulton County Partnership, Inc., Fulton County, Pennsylvania
8. Southeast Michigan Census Council
9. Cowlitz County and Wahkiakum County Council of Governments, Washington
10. Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Council of Governments, Chair Mary G. Hill, Resolution February 12, 2003
11. Council of State Governments, Daniel Sprague, CSG Executive Director

National Professional and Advocacy Organizations

1. American Planning Association
2. American Sociological Association
3. American Statistical Association
4. Association of Public Data Users
5. Annie E. Casey Foundation
6. American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee
7. Arab-American Institute Foundation
8. Children's Defense Fund
9. Consortium of Social Science Associations
10. Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics
11. Generations United
12. Housing Assistance Council
13. Indian and Native American Employment and Training Coalition
14. John D. Calandra Italian American Institute
15. National Council of La Raza, Raul Yzaguirre, President/CEO
16. National Association of Home Builders
17. National Congress of American Indians

Endorsements for the American Community Survey

18. Population Association of America
19. Population Specialty Group of the Association of American Geographers
20. Rural Policy Research Institute
21. University Consortium for Geographic Information Science

Business

1. ACCRA
2. Baystate Medical Center, Springfield, MA
3. Claritas, Inc.
4. The Houston Chapter of the Texas Economic and Demographic Association
5. Federated Department Stores, Inc.
6. ING/Clarion Partners
7. New York State Small Business Development Center
8. Simon Property Group
9. Johnson & Hedgpeth, Consultants on Kinship Services and Child Welfare Issues, San Francisco
10. Target Corporation
11. Weingarten Realty Investors
12. Environmental Systems Research Institute

Academia

1. University of Wisconsin, Department of Rural Sociology, Dr. Paul Voss
2. Bureau of Business and Economic Research, University of New Mexico
3. Dr. Barbara Bryant, University of Michigan Business School
4. Professor Meredith Minkler, Health and Social Behavior, University of California, Berkeley

CENSUS BUREAU REGIONAL OFFICES

REGION	REGIONAL DIRECTOR	PHONE
ATLANTA (Alabama, Florida, Georgia)	James Holmes	(404) 730-3832
BOSTON (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York [except NYC and Nassau, Suffolk, Rockland, and Westchester, counties], Rhode Island, Vermont)	Kathleen Ludgate	(617) 424-0500
CHARLOTTE (Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia)	Wayne Hatcher	(704) 424-6400
CHICAGO (Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin)	Stanley D. Moore	(708) 562-1350
DALLAS (Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas)	Alfonso E. Mirabal	(214) 253-4400
DENVER (Arizona, Colorado, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming)	Susan A. Lavin	(303) 969-6750
DETROIT (Michigan, Ohio, West Virginia)	Dwight P. Dean	(313) 259-1158
KANSAS CITY (Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Oklahoma)	Henry L. Palacios	(913) 551-6728
LOS ANGELES (Southern California*, Hawaii)	James T. Christy	(818) 904-6393
NEW YORK (NYC, Nassau, Suffolk, Rockland, Westchester counties, New Jersey [Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Morris, Middlesex, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union, Warren counties])	Lester A. Farthing	(212) 584-3400
PHILADELPHIA (Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey [Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Hunterdon, Mercer, Monmouth, Salem, Ocean counties], Pennsylvania)	Fernando Armstrong	(215) 656-7550

SEATTLE (Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Northern California*, Washington)	Ralph J. Lee	(206) 553-5837
---	--------------	----------------

* **LOS ANGELES** - Southern California: Fresno, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Los Angeles, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Monterey, Orange, Riverside, San Benito, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Tulare, and Ventura counties

* **SEATTLE** - Northern California: All counties except those covered by Los Angeles



Frequently Asked Questions

What is the American Community Survey?

Every 10 years, the U.S. Census Bureau conducts a census. During Census 2000, the population of the United States was counted, and additional information was collected to describe the characteristics of the Nation's population and housing.

The next census in 2010 will count the population, while the American Community Survey collects the information about population and housing characteristics throughout the decade. Based on the American Community Survey, the Census Bureau can provide data about our rapidly changing country more often than every 10 years.

Why don't you use the information I provided on my Census 2000 questionnaire?

We need your response even if you completed a Census 2000 questionnaire, because the characteristics of your household may have changed since Census 2000. As we move further away from 2000, information provided in Census 2000 becomes outdated.

How do I benefit by answering the American Community Survey?

The American Community Survey provides up-to-date information for the Nation, states, cities, counties, metropolitan areas, and communities. By responding to

the American Community Survey questionnaire, you are helping your community to establish goals, identify problems and solutions, and measure the performance of programs.

Communities need data about the well-being of children, families, and the elderly to provide services to them. The data also are used to decide where to locate new highways, schools, hospitals, and community centers; to show a large corporation that a town has the workforce the company needs, and in many other ways.

Do I have to answer the questions on the American Community Survey?

Yes, your response to this survey is required by law (Title 13, United States Code, Sections 141 and 193). Title 13, as changed by Title 18, imposes a penalty for not responding. The survey is approved by the Office of Management and Budget. We estimate this survey will take about 38 minutes to complete.

How will the Census Bureau use the information that I provide?

The Census Bureau can use the information you provide for statistical purposes only and cannot publish or release information that would identify you and your household. Your information will be used in combination with information from other households to produce data for

your community. Similar data will be produced for communities across the United States.

We may combine your answers with information that you gave to other agencies to enhance the statistical uses of these data. This information will be given the same protections as your survey information. Based on the information that you provide, you may be asked to participate in other Census Bureau surveys that are voluntary.

Will the Census Bureau keep my information confidential?

Yes. All of the information the Census Bureau collects for this survey about you and your household is confidential by law (Title 13, United States Code, Section 9). By law, every Census Bureau employee—including the Director as well as every field representative—has taken an oath 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.

Where can I find more information about the American Community Survey or get assistance?

You may visit our Web site www.census.gov/acs/www, or call 1-800-354-7271 if you need assistance or more information.