



Census 2010 is coming!

Frequently Asked Questions

If I don't return the census form by mail, will someone come to my home?

YES. If you do not fill out and return the 10 questions on the census form, a Census Bureau staff person, called an enumerator, will come to your home to get the information. Up until 40 years ago, home visits were the only way the census was taken. Now, you have the right to fill out the form yourself and decide how you will be counted.

If I don't cooperate with the enumerator or the enumerator can't find me, can the enumerator get information about me from my neighbors?

YES. If you do not fill out the form and are unavailable each time the census worker attempts to contact you, then yes, the census worker may ask your neighbors how many people live in your home.

Is there any harm in my not answering the census?

YES. Not being counted will affect many aspects of your quality of life. The information is used to determine where to build schools and hospitals, where to locate roads, where to send government aid and, just as importantly, the number of congressional seats held by each state. If Minnesota loses a congressional seat, we have less representation at the federal level, which could mean fewer federal dollars that come into our community.

Is it true that some people – like snowbirds who live in Florida in the winter or Native Americans who live in the Twin Cities but are enrolled in a tribe – get counted twice?

NO, THIS IS FALSE. Each person is counted once. The census asks you to specify which location is your "home." People who are members of a tribe are encouraged to participate in partnership with their tribe because the tribe receives federal funding for programs and land.

IT'S IN OUR HANDS

2010 Census: FAQ

Does the census ask if I'm a citizen or legal resident?

NO. The census counts all people who reside within the borders and territories of the United States regardless of status. Everyone counts.

Is it true that that the U.S. Constitution doesn't require me to answer any questions other than the number of people in my home?

No, **THIS IS FALSE**. The Constitution requires everyone who resides within the borders of the United States and its territories to participate. The way the information is gathered or the number of questions asked may change, but everyone is required to participate.

Can I be fined for not participating in the census?

No one has ever been fined or prosecuted for their failure to participate, although the U.S. Code does say that someone can be fined up to \$5,000 for not participating.

Can my personal information be used against me?

ABSOLUTELY NOT. In the past, particularly World War II, information was used inappropriately, but laws have since been passed that protect the privacy of all respondents. No answer to the census may be published, given to anyone – including the President – or given to any government agency, such as the IRS. Title 13 of the U.S. Code says:

- ▲ Private information is never published. It is against the law to disclose or publish any private information that identifies an individual or business.
- ▲ All Census workers are sworn for life to protect your confidentiality and violating that oath is a serious crime - If anyone violates this federal law, he or she will face severe penalties, including a federal prison sentence of up to five years, a fine of up to \$250,000, or both.

For more information see the following link:
http://www.census.gov/privacy/data_protection/federal_law.html



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