

Why do we have a Census?

The U.S. Constitution requires it. The Census determines representation in the U.S. Congress. Census numbers are also used to allocate federal and state funding and redraw legislative boundaries. The public and private sectors use the numbers for many different planning needs.

When do we complete and return the census questionnaire?

The questionnaires will arrive in your mail box in mid-March, 2010. After completing the form, you should mail it back to the Census Bureau by Census Day, April 1, 2010.

What if I don't respond by April 1?

The Census Bureau will send another questionnaire form and then a postcard. If you still haven't responded by late May, a Census enumerator will come to your home to get your response.

Does the Census Bureau share information with Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Internal Revenue Service, courts or police?

No. It is against the law 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. Anyone breaking this law is subject to jail, a fine, or both.

Who should complete the Census form?

The head of household should complete the form on behalf of every person living in the residence on April 1, 2010, including relatives and non-relatives.

What do I do about people who live with me occasionally?

You should count people who are living in your home on April 1, 2010. Do not include any family members living somewhere else on that date. They will be counted where they are living.

How does the Census Bureau count people who don't have a permanent residence?

Census Bureau workers make every effort to count people living in group quarters, such as college dormitories, military barracks, nursing homes and shelters, as well as those who have been displaced by natural disasters.

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What is on the 2010 questionnaire?

The Census asks four general questions about the household, such as whether you own or rent your home, and six questions about each individual in the household, including name, sex, age, date of birth and race. The Census form is online at

http://2010.census.gov/2010census/pdf/2010_Questionnaire_Info_Copy.pdf.

Why does the Census want our names and phone numbers?

The Census requests your name and phone number to help ensure people are not counted twice and to be able to call you if they can't understand your completed form.

Why does the Census Bureau ask about race and Hispanic origin?

The Census Bureau collects race data in accordance with guidelines provided by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget. Information on race is required for many federal programs and is used to assess health and environmental risks associated with specific race and ethnic groups.

How can I get help completing the form?

For the first time the questionnaire will be mailed in English and Spanish to many Houston Zip codes. Further, language assistance guides are available in 59 languages. Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QAC) will also assist those unable to read or understand the form. A Teletext Device for the Deaf (TDD) program will help persons with hearing disabilities.

The 2000 Census had a long form – what happened to that?

In the past, some households received the “long form,” while all others received a form that is similar to the one being used in 2010. The long form is no longer part of the Decennial Census. The questions that were asked on the long form are now asked in a sample survey, called the American Community Survey.

Where Can I Get More Information?

Contact the City of Houston, Planning and Development Dept. or online at www.houstoncounts.org or www.census.gov/2010census/