

Complete Count Committee

Issued October 2009

Best Practices



IT'S IN OUR HANDS

www.census.gov/2010census

U S C E N S U S B U R E A U



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United States
Census
2010

FORM A COMPLETE COUNT COMMITTEE (CCC) IN YOUR COMMUNITY!

- Elected officials and community leaders often form CCCs because they want to help assure a complete and accurate count in the 2010 Census so their community receives its fair share of federal funds and congressional representation. A CCC can lead community outreach, launch awareness campaigns that inform residents about the importance of achieving an accurate count, and encourage participation in the 2010 Census.
- CCCs plan and implement focused projects that help to increase the mail back response rate of their constituents, emphasizing the importance of being counted in the 2010 Census. These efforts uniquely address the special characteristics of each community because the CCC members bring local knowledge and expertise to the process.
- Working together on a CCC forms a strong sense of community pride. CCCs can host community and/or cultural events that encourage residents to fill out their questionnaires and mail them back. Community leaders can also encourage businesses to carry the 2010 Census message that “Everyone Counts” and “It’s In Our Hands.”

EASY STEPS TO GET STARTED

- Become familiar with the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2010 Census Website (www.2010census.gov) and find a variety of resources including a CCC Guide for Local Leaders, Fact Sheets, Tool Kits, Jobs at the Census, and Census in Schools Materials.
- Send a letter to elected officials and community leaders announcing your intention to form a CCC to create interest and support. In the letter, propose several meeting dates and ask all invited guests to RSVP with the date and time that would work best for them. Attach the meeting agenda to your invitation.
- Include representatives of Government, Business Groups, Faith-Based Organizations, Colleges and Universities, Education, Healthcare, Elderly, Homeless, Ethnic Groups, Human Services, Independent-Living, Youth, Neighborhood Organizations, Media & Promotions, Persons with Disabilities, Housing Organizations, and Refugees. This will help in the future when the CCC focuses on specific community outreach.
- Provide a conference call-in number for any guests who cannot attend the CCC meeting or hold a separate conference call later. Meet regularly until census operations end.

- Analyze all of the hard-to-enumerate areas and hard-to-count populations in your community and include leaders from those communities on your committee. Review 2000 Census statistics and response rates, as well as the most current population stats, to give your committee a good perspective of the work that needs to be done in order to improve the questionnaire mail back response rate and to increase participation in 2010.
- Develop an action plan to implement local outreach efforts to publicize the importance of the 2010 Census in your community. Include a list of leaders from state, local, and tribal government, community-based organizations, faith-based groups, schools, businesses, the media, and hard-to count populations.
- Ask your mayor and every elected official to link their website to the 2010 Census and consider including links to the 2010 Census Questionnaire and Language Assistance Guides.
- Add the 2010 Census to the agendas of existing city-wide network meetings.

CCC KICK-OFF EVENTS

- Schedule, advertise, and promote a Complete Count Committee Kick-Off Meeting event to announce your support of the 2010 Census to the entire community, including press.
- Ask your mayor or elected officials to issue a proclamation or public endorsement for the 2010 Census at your CCC Kick-Off, and send the endorsement to all members, chapters, affiliates, and press.
- Work with your mayor and elected officials to make your CCC Kick-Off a media event. Ask your local cable station to film your event and air it repeatedly until the 2010 Census has been conducted. This will provide much more visibility to the CCC and the 2010 Census.
- Work with a Partnership Specialist to learn if a Census Bureau representative is available to speak at or attend your event.
- Be sure to contact your Census Bureau Partnership Specialist to check the availability of census materials (folders, fact sheets, brochures, promotional items, banners, table cloths, etc.) for the event.

HAVE FUN PROMOTING THE 2010 CENSUS!

IDEAS

- Host creative and fun community and cultural events that encourage residents to fill out their questionnaires and mail them back. Have information tables at all events.
- Ask each Complete Count Committee member to suggest two events that the CCC and/or Census Bureau can participate in to promote the 2010 Census.
- Have a census rally or parade, or ask cities and towns in your community to include the 2010 Census in scheduled parades, festivals, sporting events, and popular attractions.
- Play census games! Play “Answer a Question About the 2010 Census & Win a Prize!” All players learn and discuss why the 2010 Census is important to their community!
- Have a 2010 Census “Be Counted” or “Everybody Counts” concert. Invite local musicians and artists to create and perform original 2010 Census songs.
- Host a census data access workshop luncheon with community leaders to learn how to access and utilize census data in ways that are relevant to daily needs of the community. For example, many organizations use census data to justify need when applying for grants. Marketing companies frequently use census data to understand demographics. The U.S. Census Bureau provides data workshops free of charge.
- Sponsor a “2010 Census Everybody Counts Essay Contest.” Separate K-12 students into categories and ask students to answer the following question: “Why is the 2010 Census important to your community, and what can you do to ensure that everyone in your neighborhood is counted in 2010?” Announce the contest to every school and community organization (i.e. Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Boy Scouts & Girl Scouts, local sports teams, YMCA, YWCA, etc.) and select 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners in each category. Ask local businesses to provide prizes. Be sure to launch the contest publicly at a popular student attraction, and make it a fun media event!
- Have a college or art school contest and ask students to design 2010 Census posters for different language, ethnic, or hard-to-count populations. Post the winning poster on a billboard for everyone to see, and distribute them throughout the community.
- Organize and conduct a census unity forum for youth and students to discuss why the 2010 Census is important to students and the ways that students can come together to ensure that they are counted.

IDEAS

- Make it cool! To capture the public's attention in 2000, one city Complete Count Committee launched a successful "It's Cool to be Counted" campaign that involved "Census Guy," who became a recognizable icon appearing on census materials throughout the school district.
- Another city CCC worked to promote the census through a program called "2000 Street Theatre," which became a very popular local attraction. The city had a producer/director write two plays concerning the census, in Spanish and English. The short skits were carried out in parks, restaurants, at local trolley stations, and other public meeting places. The theater group made about 70 presentations addressing concerns about confidentiality and other issues that sometimes cause people to not participate in the census.
- Ask all public libraries, schools, free technology centers and cafes, and recreation centers to make the 2010 Census a screensaver on all computers. Additionally, they can post 2010 banners, use 2010 Census mouse pads, and distribute 2010 Census bookmarks.
- On April 1, 2010, have all of the cities and towns in your community use Reverse 911 and Connect-Ed phone calls and text messages to remind all of the residents in your community to fill out their census questionnaires.
- Ask all local utility companies to include 2010 Census information in bills to customers.
- Organize an interfaith breakfast and weekend events with local faith-based leaders, and encourage each organization to become a 2010 Census Partner.
- Establish a Universal Faith-Based Community Census Day, or Census Sundays, with all of the faith-based organizations in your community. Ask each organization to distribute 2010 Census information to their members, and post information in church programs and bulletins and on websites and service video screens.
- Fill a clear plastic container with a specific number of candies (taffy or lollipops work well). Create a sign that reads "Can you guess how many candies are in the jar? To know for certain, they need to be counted. The United States 2010 Census. Be Counted. Spring 2010." Place the sign and the jar in a prominent location in your city. If anyone guesses correctly, give them a small prize or coupon. Explain that the Census Bureau cannot guess the number of U.S. residents; therefore, we conduct a complete count of the population every 10 years as mandated by the U.S. Constitution.

- Recruit, appoint, and train “Census Ambassadors” for every language spoken in your community, who can emphasize the confidentiality and importance of the 2010 Census.
- Organize a 2010 Census Partnership event with a cross-section of organizations and ask each attendee to sign a 2010 Census Partnership Agreement, and commit to one activity or event to promote the 2010 Census. Invite a Census Bureau Partnership Specialist.

MEDIA OUTREACH

- Create 2010 Census Public Service Announcements (PSAs) and B-roll with celebrities, local elected officials, community leaders, and students to be broadcast on local cable access stations, television, radio, and the internet. Be sure to include all of the languages spoken in your community, as well as each hard-to-enumerate population.
- Host a media luncheon. Invite all local newspapers, television stations and shows, local cable access networks, radio stations, college media, and social media organizations in your community to a 2010 Census round table discussion.
- Send press releases and invitations to the media announcing every 2010 Census event, and write letters to the editors about why participation in the 2010 Census is important to the community.
- Ask local television, cable, radio, and college stations to conduct shows about the importance of the 2010 Census to your community. Ask newspapers to publish drop-in articles.
- Create highway and subway billboards and posters.
- Buy media advertisements.

USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO PROMOTE THE 2010 CENSUS!

- Ask all Complete Count Committee members, 2010 Census Partners, and the entire community to take the 2010 Census message to the internet by using social media and Web 2.0 tools to spread the word about the 2010 Census.
- Social Networking: Many committee members are already on a social network (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, LinkedIn, Dig, etc.) Ask everyone to tell their friends and family about the 2010 Census, and start a 2010 Census group or fan page at their organization or school.

- Post Digital Content: Did you capture photos or video from your last Complete Count Committee meeting, tweet meet, or student census group? Post them on a content-sharing site so others see your enthusiasm for the 2010 Census.
- Blog about the Census: Post 2010 Census information on your organization's blog, or your personal blog. This is a great opportunity to delve deeper into why you support the 2010 Census and how a complete count will positively impact your community.
- Link your website to www.2010census.gov or embed video and other features about the Decennial Census. Ask all 2010 Census Partners and community organizations to do the same. Contact the Boston RCC (Boston.PDSP@census.gov) for instructions for linking to 2010 Census materials.
- Use YouTube! Link to the U.S. Census Bureau's YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/user/uscensusbureau or create you own channel.

ADD A MESSAGE & SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT THE 2010 CENSUS!

Add one of the following 2010 Census messages to your publication, bulletin, newsletter, website, or blog:

- **Census 2010: Easy, Safe, and Important. Everyone Counts!**
Just 10 Questions, 10 Minutes, in 2010! Fill it out and mail it back!
- **Did You Know? Census data affect funding in your community!**
Census data directly affect how more than \$400 billion per year in federal funding is allocated to communities for neighborhood improvements, public health, education, transportation, and much more. Spending just a few minutes to fill out your census questionnaire will help ensure your community gets its fair share of funding.
- **Did You Know? Census data affect your voice in Congress!**
Mandated by the U.S. Constitution, census data are used to determine how many seats each state receives in the U.S. House of Representatives, and states use census data for redistricting.
- **Did You Know? Census data affect your representation in state and local government!**
Census data are used to define legislative districts, school district assignment areas, and other important functional areas of local government.

- **Did You Know? Census data inform your community's decisions.**
The census is like a snapshot that helps define who we are as a nation. Data about changes in your community are crucial to many planning decisions, such as where to provide services to the elderly, where to build new roads and schools, and where to locate job training centers.
- **Or, Create Your Own 2010 Census Message!**

RECORD ONE OF THESE PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Filling out and mailing back the 2010 Census questionnaire next spring is an easy, safe, and important way to ensure that you and your community receive a fair share of congressional representation and federal funding. The 2010 Census: Be Counted.
- The 2010 Census is about money and power: it helps determine federal funding and political representation for your community. A short questionnaire will be mailed to your home next March. Fill it out and mail it back. Your answers are protected and may not be shared with anyone or any agency. It's the law. The 2010 Census is easy, safe, and important.
- The 2010 Census is just around the corner, so make sure you are counted! The questionnaire is just 10 questions long, but it will help decide how the federal government distributes hundreds of billions of dollars each year. Be counted in 2010! It's easy, safe, and important.

CONTACT THE CENSUS BUREAU

If you would like learn more about Complete Count Committees or if you have any other questions, please contact the Boston Regional Census Center at 617-223-3610 or Boston.PDSP@census.gov.

