



Milwaukee's Future:

IT'S IN OUR HANDS

April 1, 2010 is Census Day!

www.milwaukee.gov/2010census

Talking Points and General Background Information - The 2010 Census

TALKING POINTS

Our community has a lot to gain or lose in the 2010 census. We must make sure every person living here is counted.

- The federal government uses census information to decide where and how to spend almost \$400 billion every year on health, education, transportation, and more.
- State governments use census information to decide which communities need money, and what kind of nonprofit services to support.
- Businesses use information to decide where to invest in new factories, distribution centers, and stores.
- Every person who goes uncounted could cost our community thousands of dollars a year. If a lot of people don't get counted, we could lose out on millions that our communities need and deserve. It could make the difference between getting or losing a school, health clinic, senior center, or job training site.
- Census information is also the basis for political representation. Census counts are used to decide how many representatives each state gets in Congress and how those districts are defined. States use the same information to draw legislative districts.
- Communities where people don't get counted will lose political representation and influence to communities where everyone does get counted.

It takes a little bit to accomplish a lot – a little time now brings 10 years of benefits.

- The census questionnaire covers just six topics and shouldn't take most people very much time to fill out. But the benefits last for 10 years. That's a great investment.
- Every household is required by law to complete a census form. People who fill out and return their form by April 1 won't be contacted by a census worker; the Census Bureau will try multiple times to get in touch with people who don't complete the form.
- Anyone with questions about the form can get free help by calling a census hotline, which will be available in many languages, or getting information and assistance from local organizations working to get a complete count.

The census is an opportunity we get only once every 10 years. It's time. Make yourself count.

- Census information has a huge impact on our communities: how we're represented in local, state, and national government; how much money our communities get for schools, health care, and other services; where new money gets invested in transportation or roads; how effectively our educational and economic opportunities and civil rights are protected.

- Making sure everyone in our communities gets counted will benefit us for the next 10 years. If everyone doesn't get counted, we'll be hurting ourselves for 10 years.
- It's a big job to count every person. In the past, millions of people have been missed. We can't afford to let anyone go uncounted. So we're working to make sure it's done right.

The census is a chance to build leadership in our community.

- Helping make the census a success is a great next step for people who got involved in 2008 by registering voters.
- Activists can get training in organizing and communications skills that will help them be effective community leaders after the census is complete.
- How many chances does an individual activist have to help bring millions of dollars to their community?

Your privacy is protected. There's no need to fear the census.

- Census responses are completely confidential, protected by the strongest national privacy laws on the books. Any census worker or other government official who violates census confidentiality can be imprisoned for up to five years and fined \$250,000.
- No other government agency – not even law enforcement or the courts – can get any person's individual census information for the next 72 years.
- No private company – no landlord, employer, bank, or creditor – can get any person's individual census information, even with a court order.
- Every census worker has to swear an oath to keep information confidential for life, or they face big fines and jail time.

The census is a time to build respect, influence and power for our community.

- In 2008, we wanted to be sure every vote was counted. In 2010, we need to make sure every person is counted.
- We can't just count on the Census Bureau. It's up to us to take responsibility for making sure that everyone in our community is counted.
- Numbers matter. In the past, minorities and low-income people have been more likely to be passed over in the census. Getting everyone counted will demonstrate the strength of our communities and will give us a bigger voice in government, business, and decisions that affect our lives and families.
- Census information helps identify places where people are being denied opportunities and where action is needed to help protect civil rights.

GENERAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Education

The accuracy of the 2010 census has significant implications for the education of the nation's schoolchildren. The ACS provides the U.S. Department of Education with the most comprehensive data on school enrollment and educational attainment. Census population figures are used to draw school district boundaries and determine funding allocations for many education programs. Data from the census provide federal, state, and district governments with benchmarks for evaluating the need for and effectiveness of policies that affect the well-being of children, for determining program eligibility, and for applying financial aid allocation formulas. Census information is needed for the following:

- Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities State Grants that provide support to state education agencies for a variety of drug and violence prevention activities focused primarily on school-age youth;
- Special Education Preschool Grants for children ages 3 through 5. Funds under this program are also used to cover the costs of related services including the salaries of special education teachers, speech therapists, and psychologists;
- Reforming elementary and secondary school programs that serve Native American students under the Indian Education Grants to Local Educational Agencies program; and
- Title I Program for Neglected and Delinquent Children that provides grants to states to help provide education continuity for youth in correctional facilities so they can make successful transitions to school or employment once they are released from state institutions.

Additionally, the census and ACS provide comprehensive demographic data that support the informed development of education policy. Data on school enrollment (including whether individuals attend public or private schools) and educational attainment can be cross-tabulated with information on the nation's student population and the households in which they live (including location, age, sex, income, family structure, labor force status, and disabilities) to help educational policymakers address specific needs and challenges students might face in their communities.

Census data are also used for a number of critical education functions, including drawing school district boundaries, providing direct aid to schools that serve children with limited English proficiency, determining illiteracy levels among language minorities, profiling the socio-economic conditions of school-age children, and measuring changes in education levels across communities so employers can determine where to locate new jobs. Furthermore, census data are used to help allocate approximately \$26 billion annually in education funding (FY 2007):

- The census is used to disperse Title I grants for state educational agencies to improve the education of economically disadvantaged children and to distribute funding for the Rehabilitation Services-Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants program and the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities program;
- Other U.S. Department of Education programs that use the data in their allocation formulas and eligibility determinations include: Special Education - Grants for Infants and Families with Disabilities; Improving Teacher Quality Grants; Education Technology Grants; Rural Education; Even Start State Educational Agencies; and Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration.

There is no comparable comprehensive source of information about the population to support U.S. Department of Education initiatives.

People of Color

The decennial census collects data on Hispanic origin and race in order to comply with nondiscrimination legislation, address racial disparities, and provide statistics to federal agencies. In particular census data are used for the following:

- Ensuring enforcement of language assistance rules and creating legislative districts under the Voting Rights Act;
- Identifying population segments that need medical services under the Public Health Service Act;
- Monitoring and enforcing equal employment opportunities under the Civil Rights Act; and
- Funding programs at historically black colleges and universities to foster equal opportunity through post-secondary education for African Americans.

Immigrants

The ACS collects information on place of birth, citizenship, year of entry, and language spoken at home in order to better serve the needs of immigrants and refugees. Knowing the characteristics of immigrants helps policy makers understand how different immigrant groups are assimilated. The data also help fund programs specifically geared towards those who have difficulty with English. Decennial census data are used to:

- Allocate funds to public and private nonprofit organizations to provide employment resources aimed at making the foreign-born economically self-sufficient;
- Assist states and local agencies with developing health care and other services tailored to the language and cultural diversity of immigrants;
- Evaluate voting practices of government subdivisions, such as states, counties, and school districts, under the Voting Rights Act;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of equal opportunity employment programs and policies under the Civil Rights Act;
- Allocate grants to school districts for children with limited English language proficiency; and
- Develop health care and other services tailored to the language and cultural diversity of the elderly under the Older Americans Act.

People with disabilities

Census data directly affect funding for many programs critical to individuals with disabilities including programs for education, health care, transportation, employment training, and housing. The federal government uses census information to guide the annual distribution of approximately \$15 billion in services to people with disabilities (FY 2007). For example, the information is used to:

- Help state and county agencies plan for eligible recipients under the Medicare, Medicaid, and Supplemental Security Income programs;
- Distribute funds and develop programs for people with disabilities and the elderly under the Rehabilitation Act;
- Distribute funds for housing for people with disabilities under the Housing and Urban Development Act;
- Allocate funds to states and local areas for employment and job training programs for veterans under the Job Training Partnership Act, Disabled Veterans Outreach Program;
- Ensure that comparable public transportation services are available for all segments of the population under the Americans with Disabilities Act;
- Award federal grants, under the Older Americans Act, based on the number of elderly people with physical and mental disabilities;
- Allocate funds for mass transit systems to provide facilities for people with disabilities under the Federal Transit Act;
- Provide housing assistance and supportive services for low-income individuals with HIV/AIDS and their families under the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program; and
- Make available special education for children ages 3 through 5 through Special Education Preschool Grants.

Census data on age help policy makers target funds and services to senior citizens. The following provide examples of how policy makers use census data to develop programs and allocate approximately \$200 billion in federal funds:

- State and county agencies use the data to forecast the number of people eligible for Social Security and Medicare;

- Planners use it to determine the number and location of hospitals, health service centers, and retirement homes;
- The Nutrition Education Program uses the data to help elderly persons obtain nutritionally sound meals through senior citizen distribution centers or via meals-on-wheels programs;
- Funds are distributed through programs developed for people with disabilities and the elderly under the Rehabilitation Act;
- Equal employment opportunity is enforced under the Age Discrimination and Employment Act;
- Planners use it to ensure that comparable public transportation services are available for all segments of the population;
- Federal agencies require these data to award federal grants, under the Older Americans Act, based on the number of elderly people with physical and mental disabilities;
- Under the Very Low-Income Housing Repair Loans and Grants program, the data enable older people who cannot afford to repay a loan to remove health and safety hazards in their homes;
- The Senior Community Service Employment program, funded under Title V of the Older Americans Act, helps economically disadvantaged individuals aged fifty-five and older with poor employment prospects gain financial independence through employment training, referrals, and counseling;
- The Prevention of Elderly Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation program coordinates state and local adult protective efforts with other state and local service programs that focus on elderly abuse prevention and intervention;
- The Long Term Care Ombudsman Services for Older Americans program allows state and local long term care ombudsmen to speak and act on behalf of the residents of nursing homes by investigating nursing facility complaints and providing community support to those who often cannot speak or act on their own behalf;
- The Indian Program Grants to Indian Tribes and Grants to Native Hawaiians help provide meals, health care, and transportation to elderly Native Americans and Native Hawaiians who are disproportionately poorer than the older population in general; and
- The Supportive Housing for the Elderly Program, administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, supports the creation of housing facilities specifically for older persons.

Business

Businesses of all sizes and types rely on census data to reach decisions that allow them to operate more efficiently. The business community utilizes census data for marketing, hiring, and selecting site locations, as well as forecasting future demand for goods and services. In short, census data help businesses to make more knowledgeable decisions about the people they serve and thereby enhance overall economic performance and improve the standard of living in communities. Census data help businesses in the following ways:

- **Site selection:** Census data assist businesses in choosing where to locate new stores, banks, restaurants, and other retail or service enterprises. Bank lenders and insurance companies use census data to evaluate financial risks and investment planning. Builders and contractors are particularly interested in housing-related census data in order to select sites for new housing construction as well as rehabilitation projects.
- **Understanding the local labor supply:** A major concern to the business community is having an adequate supply of skilled workers. Census data provide this needed information so that businesses are able to determine whether a geographic area has the labor force skills necessary for a specific industry. Census data also are critical in helping administrators, personnel managers, and employees determine whether a firm is complying with federal regulations that promote fair employment practices.

- Understanding consumer needs: Businesses use census data to help them meet specific needs of the populations they are serving in each area. For example, in areas where large numbers of people primarily speak a language other than English at home, businesses can offer bilingual information about their services. In communities with high percentages of senior citizens, businesses can tailor their facilities and train their staff to assist people who may have more trouble hearing or getting around on their own

Community-Based and Social Service Organizations

Community-based and social service organizations rely on census data to reach decisions that allow them to operate more efficiently. Census data guide local decision-makers in important community planning efforts, including where to build child-care and community centers. Community planners and governments rely on census data to determine where there is the most need for additional social services and who gets needed funding, such as community development block grants. Census data can help organizations estimate the number of potential volunteers in communities and the number of residents who may need services and can help them write better proposals for grants. For example, service organizations, such as Big Brothers of America, use data on the characteristics of young men such as age, education, occupation, and income to estimate the number of potential volunteers in metropolitan areas. In short, census data help community-based and social service organizations make more knowledgeable decisions about the people they serve and thereby enhance overall performance.