

It's time. Make yourself count.

Census 2010



African American Families and the 2010 Census

The census is a count of every person in the United States that the Constitution requires every ten years. The 2010 census will influence the education of African-American children, the health of families, and the economic and political power of African-American communities for the next 10 years and beyond.

The census is used to distribute government money to communities for job training, schools, and hospitals. It's also used by businesses to decide where to open new shops, grocery stores, and restaurants. And it is used to determine representation in Congress, state legislatures, and local governments. Communities that are undercounted lose out in all those areas.

In fact, every person who is not counted could cost the community more than \$14,000 in funds for schools, health care, and jobs – and will diminish African-American influence at all levels of government. Getting counted will bring communities respect, resources, and political representation.

In the past, African Americans have been undercounted at a worse rate than any other racial or ethnic group. Eliminating the gap between African Americans and other Americans in the census count is essential to ensure that African-American communities receive their fair share of federal funds, to ensure full political representation, and to provide for effective enforcement of civil rights laws.

The Census Bureau expects the African-American population to grow by more than 70 percent between now and 2050, so an accurate count in 2010 will help meet the needs of African American communities in the years ahead.

How the Census Affects African Americans

- **Jobs** – Census information influences the distribution of community development block grants and is used by state governments and private companies to figure out where to build new housing, roads, and shopping centers. The census also helps the government monitor for discrimination and enforce the Civil Rights Act of 1965, which ensures equal opportunity in the workplace.
- **Education** – Billions of dollars in federal education funding are distributed based on census figures. Millions of African-American children depend on these programs for nutritious, regular meals.
- **Health Care** – The Public Health Service Act uses data on race and origin to identify populations who may not have access to adequate medical care. Census data influence the distribution of funding for programs such as the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) and Medicaid.
- **Political Power** – The census is used to shape voting districts, which can determine whether African-American communities are fairly represented in Congress and state governments.
- **Voting Rights** - Census information is used to monitor whether people have access to the voting booth. This is particularly important for African-American communities, who have been historically disenfranchised from the voting process.

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[Making Sure Every African American Counts](#)

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights believes that making sure every African American is counted in the 2010 census is a major civil rights priority. We are working with our census partners, including the NAACP and the Urban League, to encourage participation and to support the efforts of local leaders and community based organizations to ensure a full and accurate count.

[The Census and Federal Funding](#)

African-American children and families are disproportionately affected by poverty and federal programs designed to alleviate the impact of poverty. Below are just a few of the major programs influenced by the census that affect African-American children, families, and communities. Unless otherwise noted, figures are for fiscal year 2008 based on analysis by the Brookings Institution.

[Housing and Economic Development](#)

- **Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers Program** - \$15.3 Billion
Section 8 provides housing assistance to low-income renters and homeowners and helps approximately 2 million households secure modest, affordable rental housing in the private market. African-American households are more likely than others to pay more than 40 percent of their income for rent.
- **Community Development Block Grants** – \$4.9 billion
The [CDBG](#) allocates grants to larger cities and urban counties to improve the life of low-income communities through low income housing and expanded economic opportunities. [Research](#) indicates that in FY 2007, African Americans made up 26 percent of participants in CDBG programs.

[Education](#)

African-American students face high dropout rates and the challenge of learning in low-performing schools. In FY 2005, only 55 percent of black students graduated within four years, compared to 78 percent of white students. A 2008 study by the [Alliance for Excellent Education](#) found that school districts with the highest percentages of minority students received an average of \$877 less per student than those with the lowest percentages of minorities.

- **Elementary Secondary Education Act - Title I Education Spending** - \$7.5 billion
Title I provides federal funds to school districts to enhance educational opportunities for children living in concentrated poverty. In school year 2006-07, Title I served more than 17 million children. In a [study](#) of nine large urban school districts from 2005, African-American students had the highest rate of participation for Title I supplementary services.
- **Head Start** - \$5.7 billion
Head Start provides grants to local public and private agencies to provide child development services to economically disadvantaged children and families, with a focus on helping preschoolers develop reading and math skills they need to be successful in school. According to the [Department of Health and Human Services](#), African-American children made up 30.1 percent of the 908,412 children enrolled in Head Start in 2007.

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Health Care

African Americans are less likely to receive employer-based health insurance and more likely to receive benefits from publicly funded health care programs such as SCHIP, Medicare and Medicaid than other racial and ethnic groups. Secure access to medical coverage is crucial to the African-American community, as a disproportionate percentage suffer from hypertension, heart disease, lung cancer, infant mortality, and HIV/AIDS. Despite being only 13 percent of the population, African Americans constituted 49 percent of the estimated 35,962 cases of individuals newly diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in 2007.

- **Medicaid** - \$261 billion
Medicaid is the nation's public health insurance program for low-income Americans, financing health and long term care services for more than [60 million individuals](#). African Americans make up approximately 22.2% of those enrolled in Medicaid.
- **State Children's Health Insurance Program** – \$7.1 billion
SCHIP was created in 1997 to reduce the number of uninsured children by providing subsidized insurance to children of the working poor. SCHIP covers more than 7 million children. African Americans make up the largest racial group participating in SCHIP programs.