

# It's time. Make yourself count.

Census 2010



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## **The 2010 Census and People Living in Non-traditional Housing: Group Homes, Shelters, Transitory Housing, and the Homeless**

Most Americans will be counted in the 2010 census by completing census forms that will be mailed to every household in the country. The Census Bureau has designed other ways to count people who don't live in traditional homes, like houses or apartments. Census officials will rely on input from local authorities and community-based organizations to make sure that everyone is counted.

### **Group Quarters (Dorms, Military Barracks, Nursing Homes, or Prisons)**

The Census Bureau has special procedures for counting people who live in group quarters such as college dormitories, military barracks, prisons and jails, long-term nursing homes, juvenile institutions, and other such facilities. The Census Bureau will validate the location of group quarters in October 2009. Census workers will visit group quarters in February and March 2010 to work out plans for the headcount with administrators. The actual count will take place using special census questionnaires (called Individual Census Reports) in April and May.

### **Transitory Residences (Hotels, Campgrounds, RV Parks)**

People whose "usual home" at the time of the census is transitory or mobile are counted during a special "transitory enumeration" that takes place in late March and early April. Locations for this special count include RV parks, campgrounds, single-room occupancy hotels, motels, marinas, racetracks, circuses, and carnivals. Transitory locations are identified during the Census Bureau's spring 2009 address canvassing and with the assistance of local officials.

This operation will be especially important for counting people who were displaced by the 2005 hurricanes and have not yet been able to return home, and for people who are losing their homes to foreclosure. Assistance from local officials and community advocates is essential in identifying temporary transitory locations, such as motels that now house families displaced by economic distress (the Census Bureau will not automatically visit every motel and hotel).

### **People Without a Fixed Residence (Homeless)**

People without a usual place of residence will be counted during the "service-based enumeration." This count will take place at soup kitchens, homeless shelters, regularly scheduled mobile food vans, and targeted non-sheltered outdoor locations that have been identified in advance by local census officials with assistance from local advocates and agencies. This enumeration, also known as "Street and Shelter Nights," will take place March 29 – 31.

### **Protecting Shelter Residents' Privacy and Security**

Individuals living in group homes, such as shelters for victims of domestic violence, may be very concerned about the confidentiality of census data. It is safe to be counted. Information collected about individuals is confidential and protected by the strongest privacy laws on the books. No other government agency or private company, not even the courts, can get access to individual census information. Every census worker takes an oath to keep information private, and faces jail time and big fines for violating that oath.

In addition, the Census Bureau never publicly identifies any residence as a group home, and doesn't even publish statistics about the number of people in domestic violence shelters.