

It's time.  
Make yourself count.

Census 2010



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Train-the-Trainer Toolkit

## Census & Civil Rights

### Why is the census an important civil rights issue?

An accurate census directly affects our nation's ability to ensure equal representation and equal access to important governmental resources for all Americans, and thus must be regarded as one of the most significant civil rights issues facing the country today.

Low-income people, people of color, children, immigrants, people with disabilities, and people living in urban areas are most likely to be undercounted. In contrast, college students living away from home, people who own more than one home, non-Hispanic Whites, suburban residents, and higher-income people are more likely to be counted twice, leading to an overcount of these population groups.

Despite more resources and better planning, the 2000 census missed about 16 million people. Low-income communities, particularly low-income communities of color, were disproportionately undercounted in the census. As a result, many individuals were denied an equal voice in their government and many communities were shortchanged on federal and state funding for schools, crime prevention, health care, and transportation.

If that pattern of undercounting and overcounting happens during the 2010 census, people in undercounted communities will be unfairly denied representation and resources for the next 10 years, directly affecting access to health care, education, employment and job training services, veterans' services, economic development, and more. Undercounted communities are also underrepresented in local, state, and national government, which means they have less influence than they deserve over decisions affecting their lives, families, and neighborhoods. That's why the census is a civil rights issue.

### Why are people of color and low-income people disproportionately undercounted?

There are several reasons for the persistent and disproportionate undercount of people of color and low-income people, including:

- Lower response rates for mail and door-to-door collection methods in lower-income areas;
- Lower education levels, higher rates of illiteracy, and limited English proficiency make it harder for some people to understand the census process and questionnaire;
- A general lack of understanding about how important census participation can be to individuals and their communities; and
- Distrust or suspicion of government, leading to a fear that census responses may be used by immigration or law enforcement officials to detain or deport people, may be given to landlords or creditors, or may affect eligibility for social welfare programs.

### What is the relationship of the census to voting rights?

Undercounting some communities leads to underrepresentation at many levels of government. Census data are used to determine how many representatives each state gets in the U.S. House of Representatives for the next 10 years. Census data are also used to draw lines for voting districts for Congress, state legislatures, school boards, and city councils. In addition, census information is used to assist enforcement of the Voting Rights Act (VRA), which outlaws drawing of legislative districts with the intention of diluting the concentration of minority voters. Failing to accurately account for local concentrations of minority groups in a census count hampers fair redistricting efforts since voting power would not be properly allocated on the basis of population.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Who is counted?

- The census counts every person in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories such as Puerto Rico and Guam.
- People are counted at the location where they live and sleep most of the time.
- The census counts both citizens and non-citizens, including undocumented immigrants. It does not ask any questions about legal status.
- Even people without traditional "homes" are counted, including people who are homeless, prison inmates, and residents of nursing homes and long-term care facilities.
- Military personnel and federal civilian government employees stationed overseas and their dependents are counted as part of the "overseas population" for purposes of congressional apportionment only.

### When is the census conducted?

- The Constitution requires that a census be taken every ten years. The next census will take place on April 1, 2010.
- Although the census provides a snapshot of the population on one day, the Census Bureau will work throughout the year to make sure everyone is counted.

### How will the Census Bureau count each household?

- Census questionnaires will be mailed to most U.S. households in March 2010, and people will be asked to provide information that is accurate as of April 1, 2010.
- Census workers will visit some addresses to verify the location and drop off a questionnaire.
- Households that do not respond by mail will be sent a second form.
- Census takers will visit households that do not respond to the second form to collect the household's information or determine if an address is vacant.

### How do I complete the form?

- The questionnaire asks only a few basic questions for each person in the household: name, relationship, gender, age, date of birth, race, and whether the respondent owns or rents his or her home. The census does **not** ask about a person's immigration status.
- In areas where there are likely to be a large number of Spanish speakers, the census form will be bilingual in English and Spanish.
- You can call a phone number on the back of the English form to request a questionnaire in Spanish, Simplified Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, or Russian.
- Federal law requires that everyone participate in the census - you cannot "opt out."

### What happens to the information?

- Federal law mandates that information you provide on your census form is **completely confidential** and cannot be disclosed for 72 years. Only aggregate statistics, providing a profile of our population and housing, are published.
- The Census Bureau does not share your personal information with courts, the police, or other federal departments such as the Internal Revenue Service or the Department of Homeland Security.
- All Census Bureau employees take a lifetime oath to protect confidentiality and if they violate this oath, face prison time, a hefty fine, or both.

### What are census data used for?

- 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. That's more than \$4 trillion over a 10-year period.

- States allocate billions of dollars of their own funds to localities and nonprofit organizations using census data.
- Businesses use census information to decide where to make job-creating investments.
- Census data are used to redistribute congressional seats to each state based on population and to draw state legislative districts.
- Census data are used to evaluate and assist with enforcement of civil rights laws.
- 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 for the elderly, where to build new roads and schools, or where to locate job training centers.

## Census Bureau Information

### Census Bureau Timeline

<b>Fall 2008</b>	Recruitment begins for local census jobs for early census operations
<b>March 2009</b>	Census employees go door-to-door to update address list nationwide
<b>Fall 2009</b>	Recruitment begins for census takers needed for peak workload in 2010
<b>October 2009</b>	Remaining Local Census Offices open
<b>February 2010</b>	Questionnaire Assistance Centers open
<b>March 2010</b>	Census questionnaires are mailed and or delivered to households
<b>April 1, 2010</b>	Census Day
<b>April 2010</b>	Non-response follow-up will occur through June

Sample Census Form

United States  
**Census  
2010**

This is the official form for all the people at this address.  
It is quick and easy, and your answers are protected by law.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Economic and Statistics Administration  
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

Use a blue or black pen.

**Start here**

The Census must count every person living in the United States on April 1, 2010.

Before you answer Question 1, count the people living in this house, apartment, or mobile home using our guidelines.

- Count all people, including babies, who live and sleep here most of the time.

The Census Bureau also conducts counts in institutions and other places, so:

- Do not count anyone living away either at college or in the Armed Forces.
- Do not count anyone in a nursing home, jail, prison, detention facility, etc., on April 1, 2010.
- Leave these people off your form, even if they will return to live here after they leave college, the nursing home, the military, jail, etc. Otherwise, they may be counted twice.

The Census must also include people without a permanent place to stay, so:

- If someone who has no permanent place to stay is staying here on April 1, 2010, count that person. Otherwise, he or she may be missed in the census.

1. How many people were living or staying in this house, apartment, or mobile home on April 1, 2010?

Number of people =

2. Were there any additional people staying here April 1, 2010 that you did not include in Question 1? Mark  all that apply.

- Children, such as newborn babies or foster children
- Relatives, such as adult children, cousins, or in-laws
- Nonrelatives, such as roommates or live-in baby sitters
- People staying here temporarily
- No additional people

3. Is this house, apartment, or mobile home — Mark  ONE box.

- Owned by you or someone in this household with a mortgage or loan? (include home equity loans.)
- Owned by you or someone in this household free and clear (without a mortgage or loan)?
- Rented?
- Occupied without payment of rent?

4. What is your telephone number? We may call if we don't understand an answer.

Area Code + Number  
  -   -

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Form **D-61** (1-15-2009)

5. Please provide information for each person living here. Start with a person living here who owns or rents this house, apartment, or mobile home. If the owner or renter lives somewhere else, start with any adult living here. This will be Person 1.

What is Person 1's name? Print name below.

Last Name

First Name  MI

6. What is Person 1's sex? Mark  ONE box.

- Male  Female

7. What is Person 1's age and what is Person 1's date of birth?

Please report babies as age 0 when the child is less than 1 year old.

Print numbers in boxes.

Age on April 1, 2010   Month   Day   Year of birth

→ NOTE: Please answer BOTH Question 8 about Hispanic origin and Question 9 about race. For this census, Hispanic origins are not races.

8. Is Person 1 of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

- No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
- Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano
- Yes, Puerto Rican
- Yes, Cuban
- Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin — Print race in Spanish, e.g., *Argentino, Colombiano, Dominicano, Mongolano, Salvadoreño, Español*, and so on. ↗

9. What is Person 1's race? Mark  one or more boxes.

- White
- Black, African Am., or Negro
- American Indian or Alaska Native — Print name of ancestry or principal race. ↗
- Asian Indian
- Japanese
- Native Hawaiian
- Chinese
- Korean
- Guamanian or Chamorro
- Filipino
- Vietnamese
- Samoan
- Other Asian — Print race, for example, *Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian*, and so on. ↗
- Other Pacific Islander — Print race, for example, *Fijian, Tongan*, and so on. ↗

Some other race — Print race. ↗

10. Does Person 1 sometimes live or stay somewhere else?

- No  Yes Mark  all that apply.
- In college housing
- In the military
- At a seasonal or second residence
- For child custody
- In jail or prison
- In a nursing home
- For another reason

→ If more people were counted in Question 1, continue with Person 2.

U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

## Census Messaging & Resources

### Why Community-Based Organizations Should Get Involved

#### *We all have a lot to gain or lose in the 2010 census.*

- Census numbers are used to decide where billions of dollars get spent every year on education, health care, job training and more. They're also used to figure out how many votes each state gets in Congress and to draw legislative districts. Our community loses resources and influence for every person who gets missed by the census. That's why we need to make sure everyone is counted.

#### *We can't just assume that everyone will get counted.*

- The 2000 census missed an estimated 16 million people. The people you serve are most likely to go uncounted, including ethnic and racial minority communities, renters, people with low income, immigrants, and people with limited English proficiency.

#### *The recession makes community-based organizations even more important.*

- State and local governments have less to invest in census public education. If community-based organizations don't help fill the gap, millions of people will go uncounted.

#### *Leaders with local credibility can make a big difference.*

- Some people might not trust the government or fear census information will be used against them. We need trusted voices to explain that individual census information is protected by the strongest privacy laws we have – and that no government agency, law enforcement official, landlord, or employer can get access to that information.

#### *Organizations can benefit from getting involved in the census.*

- Getting involved in the census helps organizations develop leadership, build relationships among activists, and enable individuals to invest in their communities. A successful census campaign can also raise the visibility and influence of your organization with elected officials and other community leaders.

#### *The Census Bureau wants our help. Become an official census partner.*

- The Census Bureau is actively recruiting local governments and community-based organizations to become census partners. The Census Bureau, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund, and other national partner organizations can provide strategies and materials to help you create and run an effective census campaign.

### Major Messages and Talking Points for Outreach Campaigns

#### *Our communities have a lot to gain or lose in the 2010 census.*

- The federal government uses census information to decide where 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. 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 in Congress and at the state and local level. Communities where people don't get counted will lose political representation and influence to communities where everyone does get counted.

### *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 can get free help with the form 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.

### *Your safety and privacy are protected.*

- Census responses are completely confidential, protected by the strongest national privacy laws on the books. That's why national immigrant rights organizations, Latino organizations, and civil rights organizations are telling people to complete the forms.
- Every census worker takes an oath to keep information confidential for life. A 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 immigration officials, 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.
- Participating in the census is simple and safe. The only harm would come from not being counted.

### *The census is a chance to build respect, influence, and power for our community.*

- It's up to us to take responsibility for making sure that everyone in our community is counted.
- 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 where people are being denied opportunities and where action is needed to help protect civil rights.
- How many chances does an individual activist have to help bring millions of dollars to their community?

## **Immigrants and the Census: Myths, Facts and Messages**

*Myth: Undocumented immigrants should not be counted by the census.*

**Fact: Everyone counts in the census, regardless of immigration status.**

- The census is required to count every "person" living in the United States, regardless of legal status.
- Census statistics are used to figure out what kind of services each community needs, including schools, hospitals and health clinics, and jobs.
- Census information is used to figure out which communities have enough people who speak languages other than English so as to require services in other languages.

*Myth: Immigrants can avoid the census by not completing their census form.*

**Fact: The census bureau will follow up in person to households that don't return forms.**

- People who don't return a form by April 1 could have census workers come to their home up to six times to try to get a form completed.
- People who return a completed census form will not be contact by the Census Bureau.

*Myth: Immigrants don't benefit from the census.*

**Fact: Everyone, including immigrants, benefits from investments in education, health care, and jobs that are distributed based on census information. And census data are also used in ways that are of special importance to immigrants, including:**

- Funding for nonprofit organizations to provide job assistance aimed at making foreign-born people economically self-sufficient.
- Helping states and local agencies develop services tailored to the language and cultural diversity of immigrants, including health care.
- Protecting the right to vote by evaluating voting practices of states, counties, and school districts under the Voting Rights Act.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of equal opportunity employment programs and policies under the Civil Rights Act;
- Allocating funds to school districts for children with limited English language proficiency.

*Myth: Answering the census could get me in trouble with immigration or my landlord.*

**Fact: Your safety and privacy are protected.**

- The census form does not ask about immigration status.
- Census responses are completely confidential, protected by the strongest national privacy laws on the books. That's why national immigrant rights organizations, Latino organizations, and civil rights organizations are telling people to complete the forms.
- Every census worker takes an oath to keep information confidential for life. A 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 immigration officials, 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.
- Participating in the census is simple and safe. The only harm would come from not being counted.

*Myth: Immigrants can gain influence by threatening to boycott the census.*

**Fact: Boycotting the census can only hurt immigrant communities and limit their influence.**

- Boycotting the census is a terrible idea – it doesn't do anything to help us. If the census shows smaller numbers of people in our communities, it will mean fewer resources and services for the next 10 years.
- 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. Everyone should be counted, no matter what their legal status.
- Census information helps identify where people are being denied opportunities and where action is needed to help protect civil rights. If immigrants are under-reported, civil rights enforcement could be weakened.
- Participation in the census is required by law; ignoring the law is a bad way to build influence with lawmakers and other policymakers.

## **Gulf Coast Communities and the Census**

*The census is especially important to people whose communities were devastated by the natural and man-made disasters of Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath.*

Communities that were hard-hit by Katrina have a lot at stake in getting counted accurately and getting the services, financial help, and investments that they need to continue on the road to recovery. It's extremely important to show that people are returning home and rebuilding. At the same time, communities affected by Hurricane Katrina face unique hurdles to getting an accurate count, including houses and neighborhoods that are still waiting to be rebuilt and the large number of people who are still displaced from their homes and living in temporary housing.

Here's what's at stake: In fiscal year 2007, Louisiana received \$11.6 billion; Mississippi, \$5.6 billion; and Alabama, \$5.9 billion in federal funds for a wide range of critical programs and services, based at least partly on census data. On average, states receive roughly \$1,200 annually, or \$12,000 over a decade, for each person counted in the census; for some states in distress, such as Louisiana, that can be as high as \$2,695 per person every year in funds that contribute to transportation, education, housing, health care, public safety, and more.

*An accurate census count would ensure that states and communities hit by Hurricane Katrina are fully represented in Congress and state legislatures, where important decisions are made about programs to help displaced families and businesses. An inaccurate count would leave people with less of a voice in their government and their future – and leave Gulf Coast communities less able to get resources needed for rebuilding*

For example, New Orleans lost more than half its population after Katrina hit in 2005. Before the flooding, New Orleans had 484,674 people. In the past couple of years, the city has been growing again, and the Census Bureau estimated that between the middle of 2007 and the middle of 2008, it was the fastest growing city in America and had reached a population of 311,853.

But that growth is concentrated in wealthier areas; poorer neighborhoods are experiencing slower return and rebuilding, and in some parishes the number of vacant and blighted residences has actually increased. According to a Brookings Institution report published in January 2009, "tens of thousands of residential, commercial and institutional buildings remain damaged and unoccupied."

*Accurate census data could prevent still-suffering communities from being further disadvantaged by an undercount. At the same time, that data may provide solid evidence that some communities are being underserved by current rebuilding and recovery efforts.*

We are calling on the Census Bureau to commit sufficient resources to deal with the extraordinary problems that rapid and uneven population growth and recovery pose to getting an accurate count. But we simply cannot count on the Census Bureau and cash-strapped state and local governments to solve this problem. It is vitally important for community-based organizations in Gulf Coast communities to partner with the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund to make sure that everyone who is returning and rebuilding get counted – and to be sure that households and neighborhoods are not written off just because it's difficult to determine where people are living.

People who have been let down by their government have a chance to stand up for themselves and their communities by helping to make sure that they and their neighbors are counted in the 2010 census.

## The Recession, Economic Hardship and the Census

Community organizations are particularly important during an economic downturn because state and local governments have less money to invest in getting in accurate count. For example, California spent about \$25 million to encourage participation in the 2000 census, but because of the state's budget crisis, it will spend less than one-tenth of that money in 2010. If community organizations don't help to overcome this gap, the state and its harder-to-count communities could lose out on billions of dollars over the next decade.

Nationally, millions of Americans have lost their jobs and many have lost their homes. Many are struggling to deal with debts and creditors and may fear that giving information to the Census Bureau could expose them to debt collectors or others. Some people may have moved in with relatives or are sharing housing in violation of leases or local ordinances and may fear that answering honestly about their living arrangements could get them in trouble. Community-based organizations can provide a trusted source of information about the confidentiality of the census and the importance of an accurate count to people with financial difficulties.

People who are struggling financially have a big stake in getting counted.

- Census information is used to direct resources -- like unemployment insurance, job training, adult education programs, and housing loans for people with low and moderate income -- to areas where they are most needed. Here are some federal programs and the amount appropriated each year based on projected need (2007 figures):
  - Food stamps – \$30.4 billion
  - Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers – \$16.1 billion
  - National School Lunch Program – \$8.6 billion
  - Head Start – \$6.2 billion
  - State Children's Insurance Program – \$5.5 billion
  - Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program – \$5.3 billion
  - Foster care – \$4.5 billion
  - Child Care – \$2.9 billion
  - School Breakfast Program – \$2.1 billion
- Communities hit hard by the economic crisis have the most to lose if individuals are not counted and communities miss out on funding for economic development, job training, schools and vocational education, and private business investment
- People who don't get counted can cheat themselves and their neighbors out of services they need, and political representation that could help their communities in the long run.

Individuals' census information is completely confidential. Government agencies, banks, employers, and credit agencies cannot get access to any person's responses.

- Individuals' census information is protected by the strongest privacy laws we have.
- No other government agency – not even law enforcement or the courts – can get any person's individual census information for 72 years.
- No private company – no landlord or employer or debt collector – can get any household's census information, even with a court order.
- No other law or agency can override census privacy protections – not the Patriot Act, the IRS, Homeland Security, or ICE.
- Every census worker takes an oath to keep information confidential for life or face big fines and jail time.
- The only thing to fear about the census is not being counted.

## **Counting Homeless People**

Counting homeless people is a significant challenge for the Census Bureau, which identifies people and households by addresses. The Census Bureau has specific strategies for identifying people at service-based locations like emergency and transitional shelters, soup kitchens, regularly scheduled mobile food vans, and pre-identified non-shelter outdoor locations. Be Counted forms will also be made available at locations throughout the community for people who believe they haven't been counted.

## **Counting People with Disabilities**

People with disabilities rely on many programs whose funding is directly affected by census data. Organizations that serve or represent people with disabilities should make sure that they understand the importance of a full and accurate count and provide them with information about how to access any assistance they might need in completing the census form.

In fiscal year 2007, the federal government used census information to guide the distribution of approximately \$15 billion in services to people with disabilities.

Here are some examples of the ways that census data are used:

- 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
- Make available special education for children ages 3 through 5 through Special Education Preschool Grants

Census materials can be requested in large type and Braille formats. There is a TDD program for the hearing impaired.

## Encouraging Community Members to Complete Census Forms

### Partnering with the Census Bureau

Partnering with community-based organizations is an important part of the Census Bureau's overall strategy to get a complete count, especially among communities that are considered harder to count. The Census Bureau and its national partners are working together to help local organizations design and carry out effective outreach campaigns that will encourage people to learn about and participate in the census.

Consider becoming an official census partner and creating or joining a local Complete Count Committee. Then you can tap into the campaign plans, materials and templates, and other information being developed that you can tailor for your community and your needs.

Also, the Census Bureau has dedicated some resources for small grants to supply community-based organizations with materials for local events. To be eligible for such resources, your organization must be signed-up through the Census Partnership Program.

For information, materials and to sign up for the partnership program, go to <http://2010.census.gov/partners>.

### Outreach Materials

As you develop your outreach strategies, it is important to create materials, like flyers or brochures, which will resonate with your target community and link individuals to community assistance, such as local assistance centers and telephone hotlines, which will be available in a number of languages. The Census Bureau has some templates for materials available online, and will add more as we move toward early 2010. Materials are also available through the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund.

Types of information to provide (see Messages section for information on target audiences):

- General Census Information: What and when the census occurs. Why it's important. How people's confidentiality is protected by strong privacy laws;
- Information about local services and organizations that depend on funding affected by the census
- Sample census forms;
- Information about telephone hotlines, local assistance centers, and other resources.

### Letters to the Editor

The letters to the editor section is one of the most widely read features of any newspaper. That makes the letters page a great way for your campaign to get its message out. Most papers print short letters, so you're better off if you can get your message across in fewer than 200 words. Letters are more likely to be printed if they are responding to an event or a story that ran in the paper.

Keep an eye out for news stories on topics that are relevant to the census, and respond regularly.

- After a story about people without access to health care, you can point out that federal and state health funds will be distributed to communities based on census figures.
- Stories about school funding or poor local road conditions give you an opportunity to point out that funding for key services and infrastructure are based on population figures from the census.

You don't have to be complaining about coverage to get printed. A letter to the editor can reinforce a good story and get its messages into the paper one more time. Most papers don't want to run a lot of letters from the same person, so use different community leaders and advocates to write letters.

Here is one example:

To the Editor:

The recent story on cuts to city services (“State budget cuts slam city coffers,” January 10) makes it clear why the upcoming census is so important. Every resident who goes uncounted will cost the city thousands of dollars in federal and state funding every year for the next 10 years. If a thousand people go uncounted, we’ll lose out on millions of dollars for schools, job training, health care or transportation. There are millions of reasons to fill out your census questionnaire when it comes in the mail this spring, and no good reason not to.

Joe Doe

### **Service Provider Organizations**

Direct service organizations have a special role to play in increasing census participation. Community-based organizations that provide direct services to people in harder-to-count communities are uniquely positioned to:

- Raise awareness of the critical need for an accurate census count;
- Assist families in completing census forms;
- Answer questions, provide reassurance and overcome resistance to participation;
- Directly empower clients and benefit communities by helping all clients make themselves count.

#### **Tips**

- Add census information to current programs. If you have a parent or youth leadership program, focus on the census during one session. If you have a health promoters program, talk about the importance of the census in funding health and nutrition programs.
- Include census information as part of your intake procedures. Ask clients if they know about the census or if they want to know more about the census.
- Use staff meetings to raise awareness of the census among staff. Recruit staff members to be core volunteers for census outreach activities.
- Become an official partner organization and get access to materials and campaign plans.
- Consider setting up a temporary census assistance center in your facility if you have space.
- Encourage friends and colleagues at other service organizations to get engaged.

### **Community Calendar and Events**

Like other civic engagement campaigns, a census outreach campaign should reach people through a variety of community events and outlets.

#### **Tips**

- Take advantage of school events. Consider reaching parents through back-to-school nights, parent-teacher associations and events. You can work with the Census Bureau’s Census in the Schools program.
- Look at calendars of community events and decide which ones give you a good opportunity to reach people by having an information table, getting a spokesperson for your campaign to speak, or having volunteers distribute materials and answer questions.
- Think about all the community organizations and religious congregations that regularly produce newsletters, and work with the editors to get information on the census and/or an interview with a campaign spokesperson into as many as possible.
- Consider which community events might work as news stories for your media outreach.

## Providing Direct Assistance

The Census Bureau hopes that many people will be able to complete the 2010 form in 10 minutes. But many people will have questions about how to answer certain questions on the four-page form, such as: What is the difference between race and ethnicity? How do I list the relationships of all the people living in my home? My son or daughter lives with me part-time; how do I account for that?

There are a couple of options for community-based organizations to consider in helping people complete the forms that they should be receiving in the mail in March 2010.

## Creating a Census Assistance Center

If your organization has a small space that you can set aside for several weeks or a couple of months in early 2010, consider becoming a Census Assistance Center – a place where people can drop in to get information, ask questions, and get help understanding and completing a form. To become an official Census Bureau Assistance Center, you must first sign up as a Census partner, which you can do online at <http://2010.census.gov/partners/> or by getting in touch with the Census Bureau regional office in your area; you can find contact information for the regional offices in the resources section of this toolkit.

Things to consider about setting up an assistance center.

- Make sure you have a staff member trained to answer census questions or establish access to a census partnership specialist. You can work with your local census office or partnership specialist to arrange “office hours” for the Census Bureau to answer any questions community members or clients might have.
- Make sure your staff knows when they can refer clients or community members to meet with someone knowledgeable about the census. It’s a good idea to have a schedule posted near the receptionist or outside the office when the census staff or your staff will be available to meet and answer questions.
- Publicize your assistance center in your newsletter, on your website, in community calendars and in public areas like libraries. Ask local business owners, like grocery stores or beauty salons, to post a flyer or poster. See if a local radio station will run a public service announcement.

## Holding a Census Assistance Event

Another option is to hold an assistance event – a well-publicized chance for a lot of people to get hands-on help in completing and returning the census form. It’s essentially a bigger-scale, one-time version of an assistance center, designed to help boost participation among hard-to-count communities. (You may be familiar with citizen application workshops where legal permanent residents complete their N400 forms with the assistance of trained staff, volunteers and attorneys. This is the same idea.)

Your assistance event could be a half-day or full-day event in a school gym or other room with space for people to move about. The week of March 22-27, which is the National Census Week of Action, is a particularly good time to conduct assistance events. Here are recommended stations to set up:

- Station 1 – Welcome and Introduction. Here families will learn about the process for the day, get answers to basic questions, and find out what assistance is available on languages other than English.
- Station 2 – Know Your Rights. Groups divided by language preference will be given a “know-your-rights” presentation that will review the privacy provisions of the census. A knowledgeable volunteer will answer any questions related to privacy or other concerns.
- Station 3 – Everyone has a Census Form. At this station volunteers will make sure each family has a census form. (This is also a waiting area.)
- Station 4 – One-on-One Assistance. The majority of volunteers will be placed at this station. Here, a person or family will receive assistance in completing their census form.
- Station 5 – Copy Station. There should be at least two copy machines available to make a copy

- of the completed census form for the family.
- Station 6 – Postal Service Drop. This is where families turn in their completed census forms to the U.S. Postal Service or drop boxes.
  - Station 7 – Resource fair for families to receive:
    - Voter registration information
    - Citizenship information
    - Health services etc.

The Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund will offer media outreach help to events organized by its partner organizations.

## Additional Resources

**The Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund (LCCREF)** is working with national and local partners to publicize the importance of an accurate census as a civil rights issue. LCCREF is providing training, materials, strategic advice, and communications support to local partner organizations through the “It’s Time. Make Yourself Count” campaign.

You can find more information, including timelines, fundraising resources, talking points, media tips, and the latest census news at [www.civilrights.org/census](http://www.civilrights.org/census) or by calling (202) 466-3434.

### LCCREF’s National Partners

- **Asian American Justice Center** - A community education program help Asian Americans fully participate in the census: <http://www.advancingequality.org/>
- **National Association for Latino Elected and Appointed Officials** - A national initiative to achieve a full Latino count: <http://www.naleo.org/>
- **National Congress of American Indians** – A public education initiative providing tribal leaders access to Census information and data products to use for research, planning, and decision-making purposes: <http://www.ncai.org/>
- **NAACP** – A public education program to help African Americans fully participate in the census: <http://www.naacp.org/>

### Other Organizations Working on Census 2010

- **The Census Project** - A collaboration of a number of census stakeholders representing a broad range of organizations and issue areas. The Census Project website includes daily news updates, fact sheets about hard-to-count communities, podcasts with census experts, and contact information for national organizations who are working to ensure an accurate count: <http://www.thecensusproject.org/>
- **Nonprofits Count** - Engages nonprofits to work to promote a complete census, using their existing contacts and services: <http://www.nonprofitscount.org/>

### Basics: What Can Nonprofits Do?

- **What You Can Do** - NonProfits Count: <http://www.nonprofitscount.org/what-you-can-do.html>
- **Get Involved! A Guide for Stakeholders (pdf)** - The Census Project: <http://www.thecensusproject.org/factsheets/cp-factsheet-getinvolved.pdf>

**The US Census Bureau** is counting on national partners and state, local, and community Complete Count Committees to help make the 2010 census a success. You can find information about partnering with the Census Bureau at <http://2010.census.gov/partners/>. In addition, here are regional office contact numbers for the Census Bureau:

- **Atlanta Region** (*Alabama, Florida, Georgia*): 1-800-424-6974
- **Boston Region** (*Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Vermont*): 1-800-562-5721
- **Charlotte Region** (*Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia*): 1-800-331-7360
- **Chicago Region** (*Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin*): 1-800-865-6384
- **Dallas Region** (*Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas*): 1-800-835-9752
- **Denver Region** (*Arizona, Colorado, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, New Mexico, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming*): 1-800-852-6159
- **Detroit Region** (*Michigan, Ohio, West Virginia*): 1-800-432-1495
- **Kansas City Region** (*Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Oklahoma*): 1-800-728-4748
- **Los Angeles Region** (*Southern California, Hawaii*): 1-800-992-3530
- **New York Region** (*New York*): 1-800-991-2520
- **Philadelphia Region** (*Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Washington D.C.*): 1-

800-262-4236

- **Seattle Region** (*Alaska, Idaho, Northern California, Oregon, Washington*): 1-800-233-3308

### **LCCREF's Materials**

The Leadership Conference is developing several materials, which are available to partner organizations who are working on Census outreach work. A sample request form for these materials is below.

# It's time. Make yourself count.

Census 2010



## Census 2010 Materials Request Form

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact/Shipping Name \_\_\_\_\_

Shipping Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

### Materials Requested

Please enter how many you need of each item.

- **"Train-the-Trainer" Toolkit** *A comprehensive guide to carrying out effective census outreach campaigns. The Toolkit explains the census, includes information on engaging the media, and fundraising for the census campaign (#) \_\_\_\_\_*
- **Posters** *Focuses on how the census helps to create jobs. (#) \_\_\_\_\_*
- **Palmcards**: Soon to come!

To help us provide better materials, please tell us how you will use the materials you are requesting:

### THANK YOU FOR YOUR ORDER!

Please return form to:

Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund (LCCREF)  
Attn: Census 2010 Materials Request, Jheanelle Wilkins 1629 K Street NW, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor,  
Washington, D.C. 20006

Phone: (202) 263-2858 Fax: (202) 785-3859 Email: [wilkins@civilrights.org](mailto:wilkins@civilrights.org)

