

# 2010 Census

## It's in South Carolina's Hands to Be Counted

The U.S. Constitution mandates a head count of everyone residing in the United States. The first US decennial census in 1790 established the concept of "usual residence" as the main principle in determining where people were to be counted. This concept has been followed in all subsequent censuses. "Usual residence" has been defined as the place where the person lives and sleeps most of the time. This place is not necessarily the same as the person's voting residence or legal residence. Also, non-citizens who are living in the United States are included, regardless of their immigration status.

Census data is used to apportion seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and to redistrict the state's legislature. Census data directly affects how more than \$37 billion per year in federal and state funding is allocated to communities for neighborhood improvements, public health, education, transportation and much more. Census data are used to appropriate federal monies in over 1,000 programs administered by 26 federal agencies. Most of the funds for these programs are distributed by formulas that use census data such as total population, population by age group, gender, income, housing characteristics, etc. depending on the program. The amount of federal funds distributed to South Carolina has increased from \$19 billion in 1997 to over \$37 billion in 2007. In 2007, 71% of direct funding to South Carolina was for medical assistance programs, Medicare programs, low income housing programs, food stamps, highway construction, education programs, school lunch program, and temporary assistance for needy families.

The 2010 Census will be a **short-form only** census and will ask for name, sex, age, date of birth, race, ethnicity, relationship and housing tenure.

The more detailed socioeconomic information is now collected through the **American Community Survey (ACS)**. The survey provides current data about your community every year, rather than once every 10 years. It is sent to a small percentage of the population on a rotating basis throughout the decade. No household will receive the survey more often than once every five years. The ACS collects detailed information on the characteristics of population and housing that was collected in previous censuses by the decennial census long form. ACS is part of the 2010 Decennial Census Program. Every question in Census 2010 is required by law to manage or evaluate federal programs or is needed to meet legal requirements stemming from U.S. court decisions such as the Voting Rights Act.

Since 1990, the U.S. Census has been conducted primarily by mail: mail out and return. Census forms will be mailed to housing units (A single-family house, townhouse, mobile home or trailer, apartment, group of rooms, or single room that is occupied as a separate living quarters) and to group quarters (persons residing in group situations such as college dormitories, nursing homes, military barracks, prisons, juvenile institutions, migrant worker dormitories, convents, and group homes) on a master address list developed by the Census Bureau and the U.S. Postal Service.

South Carolina counties and cities participated in the **Local Update of Census Address** program (**LUCA**), a decennial geographic partnership program that allowed local governments to contribute to a more complete and accurate census for their community by reviewing and commenting on the list of housing unit and group quarters addresses that the Census Bureau will use to deliver questionnaires within their community for the 2010 Census and yearly American Community Survey. The program added over 150,000 addresses to the master address file. The number of households in South Carolina is projected to be over 1.8 million with a population of 4.5 million by 2010.

Census forms will be printed in a number of languages and the Bureau of the Census will have outreach programs targeted to the hard to count groups in the state. The Census Bureau will mail questionnaires in March 2010; send a second form to households that do not respond to the initial questionnaire, and for households that still do not respond they will be visited by a Census worker. By law, Census Bureau delivers population counts to the President for apportionment by December 31, 2010.

Finding where people live and convincing them to answer the census is not new for South Carolina. During the first census in 1790 South Carolina was the last state to return their census count, five months after all others states were completed. South Carolina had the second lowest response rate for people returning census forms in the country in 1990 (57%) and in 2000 (59%). Follow-up questionnaires and visits from Census workers is expensive and increases the likelihood that South Carolinians are not counted. South Carolina had undercount rate of 2 percent (71,739 persons) in 1990 and 1.2 percent (48,335 persons) undercount rate in 2000. Each person missed in the census is a potential loss in federal funds to the state.

South Carolina is committed to making the 2010 Census a success for our state. While the U.S. Bureau of the Census will promote participation in the decennial count, a successful census also depends on active state and local government participation. Non-response and undercounts can be decreased through state and local government's promotion of the 2010 Census. The public must be reassured that the information asked by the Bureau of the Census is important and the confidentiality of their answers. A complete and accurate census count is important to every residence of South Carolina.

