

United States  
**Census  
2000**

**The Census 2000  
short form will be  
the shortest form  
in 180 years.**

The census results are used to establish local eligibility for government programs.

# The Long and Short of It

## Why Does the Census Ask So Many Questions?

The questions asked represent the best balance between your community's needs and our commitment to reduce the time and effort it takes you to fill out the form.

The census is as important to our nation as highways and telephone lines. Every question is required by law to manage or evaluate federal programs or is needed to meet federal case law requirements. Federal and state funds supporting schools, employment services, housing assistance, road construction, hospital services, programs for the elderly and more are distributed based on census figures.

## What's New for Census 2000?

Most housing units in the country (about 83 percent) will receive the short-form questionnaire in Census 2000. The Census 2000 short form will be the shortest form in 180 years.

Five subjects that were on the 1990 census short form have moved to the Census 2000 long form: marital status, units in structure, number of rooms, value of home and monthly rent. The long form can reliably collect this information.

Five subjects that appeared on the 1990 census long form were dropped: children ever born, year last worked, source of water, sewage disposal and condominium status. These subjects were not explicitly mandated or required by federal law.

Only one new subject was added to the Census 2000 long form: grandparents as caregivers. This information was needed for the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996 (welfare reform).

## Why Do We Need the Long Form?

The long form provides socio-economic detail needed for a wide range of government programs and federal requirements. Nationwide, it goes out to one in six housing units. But to assure the same level of accuracy everywhere, a larger share of housing units in small towns and rural counties receive this form.

Community leaders use the long form for planning a wide range of activities, including neighborhood revitalization, economic development and improved facilities and services.

To build highways, roads, bridges and tunnels in areas that need them, planners need information about where people live and work and the times they leave for work.

D-3239 (Rev. 6-99)

U.S. Department of Commerce  
Economics and Statistics Administration  
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

**An Equal Opportunity Employer**  
U.S. Census Bureau



**Your participation in Census 2000 is important, safe and easy.**

**Just complete the form and mail it back.**

For additional information about Census 2000, visit the Census Bureau's Internet site at <http://www.census.gov> or call one of our Regional Census Centers across the country:

- Atlanta 404-331-0573
- Boston 617-424-4977
- Charlotte 704-344-6624
- Chicago 312-353-9759
- Dallas 214-655-3060
- Denver 303-231-5029
- Detroit 248-967-9524
- Kansas City 816-801-2020
- Los Angeles 818-904-6522
- New York City 212-620-7702 or 212-620-7703
- Philadelphia 215-597-8312
- Seattle 206-553-5882

To speed disaster relief to the affected areas, emergency management agencies use census numbers to determine the number of people displaced by earthquakes, hurricanes, floods and other natural disasters.

In cities and towns across the country, community leaders use census numbers to decide where to locate police and fire stations and other public services. The census helps local government and community organizations locate facilities such as day-care centers, senior citizen community centers, health-care clinics and even playgrounds.

**What Is Asked on the Short Form?**

The short form asks about six population subjects and one housing subject and takes 10 minutes to complete, on average.

Population

- Name
- Sex
- Age
- Relationship
- Hispanic origin
- Race

Housing

- Tenure  
(whether the home is owned or rented)

**What Is Asked on the Long Form?**

The long form asks about the same subjects as the short form plus 27 more, for a total of 34 subjects. The average household can complete this form in approximately 38 minutes.

Population

- Marital status
- Place of birth, citizenship and year of entry
- School enrollment and educational attainment
- Ancestry
- Residence five years ago (migration)
- Language spoken at home
- Veteran status
- Disability
- Grandparents as caregivers
- Labor force status (current)
- Place of work and journey to work
- Work status last year
- Industry, occupation and class of worker
- Income (previous year)

Housing

- Units in structure
- Number of rooms
- Number of bedrooms
- Plumbing and kitchen facilities
- Year structure built
- Year moved into unit
- House heating fuel
- Telephone
- Vehicles available
- Farm residence
- Value of home
- Monthly rent (including congregate housing)
- Shelter costs (selected monthly owner costs)

**The Law Protects Your Answers.**

By law, the Census Bureau cannot share your answers with others, including welfare agencies, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the Internal Revenue Service, courts, police and the military. Anyone who breaks this law can receive up to five years in prison and \$5,000 in fines. The law works — millions of questionnaires were processed during the 1990s without any breach of trust.