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1-800-354-7271

# Frequently Asked Questions



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

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U S C E N S U S B U R E A U  
*Helping You Make Informed Decisions*



# Frequently Asked Questions

## ***What is the American Community Survey?***

Every 10 years, the U.S. Census Bureau conducts a census. During Census 2000, the population of the United States was counted, and additional information was collected to describe the characteristics of the Nation's population and housing.

The next census in 2010 will count the population, while the American Community Survey collects the information about population and housing characteristics throughout the decade. Based on the American Community Survey, the Census Bureau can provide data about our rapidly changing country more often than every 10 years.

## ***Why don't you use the information I provided on my Census 2000 questionnaire?***

We need your response even if you completed a Census 2000 questionnaire, because the characteristics of your household may have changed since Census 2000. As we move further away from 2000, information provided in Census 2000 becomes outdated.

## ***How do I benefit by answering the American Community Survey?***

The American Community Survey provides up-to-date information for the Nation, states, cities, counties, metropolitan areas, and communities. By responding to

the American Community Survey questionnaire, you are helping your community to establish goals, identify problems and solutions, and measure the performance of programs.

Communities need data about the well-being of children, families, and the elderly to provide services to them. The data also are used to decide where to locate new highways, schools, hospitals, and community centers; to show a large corporation that a town has the workforce the company needs, and in many other ways.

## ***Do I have to answer the questions on the American Community Survey?***

Yes, your response to this survey is required by law (Title 13, United States Code, Sections 141 and 193). Title 13, as changed by Title 18, imposes a penalty for not responding. The survey is approved by the Office of Management and Budget. We estimate this survey will take about 38 minutes to complete.

## ***How will the Census Bureau use the information that I provide?***

The Census Bureau can use the information you provide for statistical purposes only and cannot publish or release information that would identify you and your household. Your information will be used in combination with information from other households to produce data for

your community. Similar data will be produced for communities across the United States.

We may combine your answers with information that you gave to other agencies to enhance the statistical uses of these data. This information will be given the same protections as your survey information. Based on the information that you provide, you may be asked to participate in other Census Bureau surveys that are voluntary.

## ***Will the Census Bureau keep my information confidential?***

Yes. All of the information the Census Bureau collects for this survey about you and your household is confidential by law (Title 13, United States Code, Section 9). By law, every Census Bureau employee—including the Director as well as every field representative—has taken an oath and is subject to a jail term, a fine, or both if he or she discloses ANY information that could identify you or your household.

## ***Where can I find more information about the American Community Survey or get assistance?***

You may visit our Web site [www.census.gov/acs/www](http://www.census.gov/acs/www), or call 1-800-354-7271 if you need assistance or more information.