

MEDIA GUIDELINES FOR COVERING 2010 CENSUS OPERATIONS

The U.S. Census Bureau is committed to working with the media to ensure that the public receives accurate and timely information about census operations. Census Bureau staff are available both at Census Bureau headquarters and in the regional census centers to help facilitate reporting to the extent possible. As the Census Bureau turns to the door-to-door enumeration phase of the 2010 Census, it is important to understand how federal confidentiality law impacts media coverage of census operations.

THE LAW PROTECTS RESPONDENT CONFIDENTIALITY

The U.S. Census Bureau knows that privacy and confidentiality are critical to ensuring a complete and accurate 2010 Census count. Title 13 of the U.S. Code guarantees respondents that their personal information will be kept confidential. Census workers swear an oath for life not to divulge any respondent information. Therefore, the Census Bureau adheres to the strict procedures to ensure the protection of respondent information as required by Federal law.

As applied to the media, this means that no reporter, photographer or video crew is permitted to directly observe or record any activities or documents dealing with material covered by [Title 13](http://www.census.gov/privacy/files/data_protection/002777.html) (http://www.census.gov/privacy/files/data_protection/002777.html). Media representatives are not permitted to have access to any office workspace devoted to these activities, even for casual observation. When a local census office is hosting an open house or media event, media representatives are not permitted access to any physical space that has Title 13 data on computer screens or in printed form.

We ask that you observe the following requirements as you go about covering your stories:

- **MEDIA MAY** contact the Regional offices or the Public Information Office (PIO) at the U.S. Census Bureau Headquarters to request interviews with census workers. In such interviews, staffers are prohibited by Title 13 to reveal such specific information as individual addresses of dwellings, respondents, or other information that would compromise the confidentiality of the information they have gathered.
- **MEDIA MAY NOT** follow census staff while they are working. They have instructions to stop their work and notify their supervisors if media representatives approach them for interviews or ask to follow them as they work.
- **MEDIA MAY NOT** have access to any regional or field office workspace devoted to activities involving any Title 13 protected respondent information.

MATERIALS AVAILABLE TO THE MEDIA

These guidelines are particularly important regarding video camera crews and still photographers. With the advanced capabilities of today's video and camera equipment, the potential for violation of Title 13 provisions is greatly increased. PIO has developed a package of stock shots in both video and photo formats to ensure confidentiality is maintained.

Video. PIO maintains a master library of stock shots, or “B-roll” footage, which includes simulated footage of enumerator work. A slate or description notifying news directors and editors that the content is simulated precedes each of those scenes. In addition, B-roll includes a Title 13 confidentiality disclaimer at the beginning of the tape. These videos are available at <http://mediadownload.census.gov/>

Still Photos. PIO offers an extensive stock photo file of census operations which field staff can offer newspaper and magazine representatives for situations in which access must be denied to photographers. This allows PIO to offer the most current inventory of photos without maintaining large files of prints and the delay of mailing copies to satisfy requests. Regional offices can download the latest index and images at any time and refer media representatives to the appropriate file to download. These photos are provided in a digital format at <http://www.census.gov/pubinfo/www/broadcast/photos/>.

Radio. Though the nature of this medium presents fewer opportunities for Title 13 problems, *radio reporters may not accompany field staff on their assignments.*

If you have questions regarding these guidelines or materials, please contact the <regional census centers> <http://www.census.gov/regions/> or the U.S. Census Bureau Public Information Office at (301) 763-3691, pio@census.gov.