

# American Community Survey

## Housing: Question on Units in Structure

Question as it appears in the questionnaire.

**1 Which best describes this building?**  
*Include all apartments, flats, etc., even if vacant.*

- A mobile home
- A one-family house detached from any other house
- A one-family house attached to one or more houses
- A building with 2 apartments
- A building with 3 or 4 apartments
- A building with 5 to 9 apartments
- A building with 10 to 19 apartments
- A building with 20 to 49 apartments
- A building with 50 or more apartments
- Boat, RV, van, etc.

Source: ACS-1(2009)KFI

### MEETING FEDERAL NEEDS

The number of units in the structure subdivides the housing inventory into one-family homes, apartments, and mobile homes. These data are integral components used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to set Fair Market Rents for all areas of the country. When combined with other American Community Survey items such as tenure (whether a home is owned or rented), income, and year structure built, units in structure serves as the basic identifier of housing used in many federal programs. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is required to profile housing unit types for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) eligible households.

# American Community Survey

## Housing: Question on Units in Structure

### COMMUNITY BENEFITS

#### **Housing**

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development uses these data to assess the multifamily housing market in local areas before issuing any funds for assisted housing.

State and local planners use data about the number of housing units by structure type to forecast the need for services such as roads and hospitals.

#### **Health**

The Indian Health Service and local health agencies use these data to assess the potential for the spread of communicable disease.

#### **Emergency Preparedness**

Federal, state, and local officials use these data to identify concentrations of mobile homes in tornado- and hurricane-prone areas in creating emergency-preparedness plans.

#### **Banking**

Data about the type of structure is used to assess fairness in home lending practices.

#### **Energy**

Data about utility costs by type of structure are used to analyze current energy supply and consumption and predict how consumption will change in the future.

[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

# American Community Survey

## Housing: Question on Year Structure Built

Question as it appears in the questionnaire.

**2 About when was this building first built?**

2000 or later – *Specify year* →

1990 to 1999

1980 to 1989

1970 to 1979

1960 to 1969

1950 to 1959

1940 to 1949

1939 or earlier

Source: ACS-1(2009)KFI

## MEETING FEDERAL NEEDS

The year the structure was built determines the age of housing units. These data are integral components used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in the development of Fair Market Rents for all areas of the country. These data are valuable to several federal agencies in developing formulas for allocating funds and determining substandard housing. Funding formulas used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development mandate the use of these data. These data are also used to design the U.S. Department of Energy's legislatively mandated Residential Energy Consumption Survey.

## COMMUNITY BENEFITS

### Energy

The age of housing is used to forecast future energy consumption.

### Housing

These data are used in housing assistance programs as a component of measures of substandard housing. These data are used to allocate funds to local governments under the Community Development Block Grant Program and Public Housing Modernization formulas.

### Banking

The Federal Reserve Board uses these data to implement the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act that requires lending institutions to disclose details of lending practices as a safeguard against unfair housing practices in certain communities.

### Social Services

Local areas use these data about the year structure was built for forecasting the needs for services such as fire protection.

These data are used to profile the ages of the structures lived in by eligible households under the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

# American Community Survey

## Housing: Question on Year Moved into Unit

Question as it appears in the questionnaire.

**3** When did PERSON 1 (listed on page 2) move into this house, apartment, or mobile home?

Month    Year

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
----------------------	----------------------

Source: ACS-1(2009)KFI

### MEETING FEDERAL NEEDS

Data about the year the householder moved into the unit provides information on the specific period of time when mobility occurs, especially for recent movers (those who moved into their current home in the 12 months prior to interview). This item measures neighborhood stability and helps identify transient communities. These data are integral components used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in the development of Fair Market Rents for all areas of the country. Government agencies also use these data to calculate turnover among specified population groups such as elderly and minority households.

### COMMUNITY BENEFITS

#### Social Services

State and local areas use data about mobility to project the need for schools and services such as police and fire protection.

Local agencies use these data to evaluate changes in service requirements in a given area because of migration of older people to or from the area.

#### Housing

State and local planners study and analyze demographic and economic characteristics of households that have recently moved to assess the adequacy of the housing stock to meet shelter needs.

#### Emergency Preparedness

Federal and local emergency management agencies use these data to assess the amount of displacement caused by hurricanes and other natural disasters.

[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

# American Community Survey

## Housing: Questions on Farm Residence

Questions as they appear in the questionnaire.

- 4** How many acres is this house or mobile home on?
- Less than 1 acre → *SKIP to question 6*
  - 1 to 9.9 acres
  - 10 or more acres
- 5** IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS, what were the actual sales of all agricultural products from this property?
- None
  - \$1 to \$999
  - \$1,000 to \$2,499
  - \$2,500 to \$4,999
  - \$5,000 to \$9,999
  - \$10,000 or more

Source: ACS-1(2009)KFI

## MEETING FEDERAL NEEDS

America's farm population is identified based on the number of acres and volume of sales of agricultural products. The U.S. Department of Agriculture allocates funds to states based on the farm population and uses this information from the American Community Survey to identify farms for the Census of Agriculture.

## COMMUNITY BENEFITS

### Rural Development

The U.S. Department of Agriculture uses these data to allocate federal funds to states based, in part, on the farm residence population, as determined by the American Community Survey.

The Economic Research Service uses these data to produce economic and social service information to help Congress and the administration develop and evaluate rural policies.

[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

# American Community Survey

## Housing: Questions on Value

Questions as they appear in the questionnaire.

**4** How many acres is this house or mobile home on?

- Less than 1 acre → *SKIP to question 6*
- 1 to 9.9 acres
- 10 or more acres

**16** About how much do you think this house and lot, apartment, or mobile home (and lot, if owned) would sell for if it were for sale?

Amount – Dollars

\$												.00
----	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	-----

**6** Is there a business (such as a store or barber shop) or a medical office on this property?

- Yes
- No

Source: ACS-1(2009)KFI

## MEETING FEDERAL NEEDS

The value of home and property is an important measure of neighborhood quality, housing affordability, and wealth. By asking about acreage and a business or medical office, these data can be tabulated for units without excessive land, or commercial or medical activities that may distort the value of the property. These data provide socioeconomic information not captured by household income and comparative information on the state of local housing markets. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development uses these data to develop housing assistance plans for elderly and low-income households. The U.S. Department of Transportation uses the information for the development of transportation plans, policies, and programs. The Bureau of Economic Analysis uses these data in preparing the value of housing services for the national and regional accounts. Value data are incorporated in annual reports to Congress on housing production, occupancy, and tenure, and in analyses of housing needs.

# American Community Survey

## Housing: Questions on Value

### COMMUNITY BENEFITS

#### **Housing**

Statistics about housing value are used by local agencies in determining the adequacy of housing units for older people, the cost of maintaining owned units, and the potential usefulness of home equity conversion programs.

#### **Banking**

Data about home values are used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as an independent check of appraised values for determining the amount of mortgage to be financed.

#### **Social Services**

These data are used to allocate funds for home mortgage insurance for the elderly, and lower- and moderate-income and displaced families in programs under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Local social service organizations use these data for locating service areas and identifying clients wanting specific services, such as thrift and discount stores, to be located nearby.

#### **Transportation**

These data are used in developing transportation plans for local areas by assessing the impact on the value of homes affected by road, bridge, and subway construction, and related problems such as noise and pollution.

[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

# American Community Survey

## Housing: Question on Rooms

Question as it appears in the questionnaire.

**7 a. How many separate rooms are in this house, apartment, or mobile home?**  
*Rooms must be separated by built-in archways or walls that extend out at least 6 inches and go from floor to ceiling.*

- *INCLUDE bedrooms, kitchens, etc.*
- *EXCLUDE bathrooms, porches, balconies, foyers, halls, or unfinished basements.*

Number of rooms

Source: ACS-1(2009)KFI

### MEETING FEDERAL NEEDS

Data about the number of occupants per room is used to measure the extent of overcrowding among our nation's households. A housing unit is often considered crowded if it has more than one person to a room. Many federal agencies use data about crowding to set and implement policies. The U.S. Department of Energy uses data on the changing size and structure of homes to forecast future energy demand. The number of rooms in a home also is used as a measure of housing-unit size in the absence of information on square footage by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Bureau of Economic Analysis uses this information in conjunction with other American Community Survey data to develop its state per capita income estimates used in the allocation formulas or eligibility criteria of more than 20 federal programs.

### COMMUNITY BENEFITS

#### Housing

Data about the number of persons per room are used to allocate funds for housing assistance to local governments.

City and community officials use data about the number of persons per room to determine housing deficiencies in neighborhoods.

#### Environment

Data about the average number of rooms are used in feasibility studies for developing waste treatment facilities.

#### Social Services

Data about the number of rooms are used to allocate funds to local areas for home energy assistance to low-income individuals and families under the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)



# American Community Survey

## Housing: Question on Bedrooms

Question as it appears in the questionnaire.

**b. How many of these rooms are bedrooms?**

*Count as bedrooms those rooms you would list if this house, apartment, or mobile home were for sale or rent. If this is an efficiency/studio apartment, print "0".*

Number of bedrooms

Source: ACS-1(2009)KFI

## MEETING FEDERAL NEEDS

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development uses bedrooms as an essential variable in calculating Fair Market Rents and in allocating funds for Section 8 certificates and housing vouchers. These data are useful in tracking changes in the physical characteristics of the housing inventory over time. The number of bedrooms also is an indicator of housing-unit size. The U.S. Department of Energy uses data on the changing size and structure of homes to forecast future energy demand.

## COMMUNITY BENEFITS

### Housing

Data about the number of bedrooms are used to allocate funds to states, counties, and cities under the Community Development Block Grant Program.

State and local planners use these data to evaluate the adequacy of the housing stock to shelter the population.

City and community officials use data about the number of bedrooms to determine housing deficiencies in neighborhoods.

[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

# American Community Survey

## Housing: Question on Kitchen Facilities

Question as it appears in the questionnaire.

<b>8 Does this house, apartment, or mobile home have –</b>		Yes	No
a.	hot and cold running water?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b.	a flush toilet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c.	a bathtub or shower?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d.	a sink with a faucet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e.	a stove or range?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f.	a refrigerator?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g.	telephone service from which you can both make and receive calls? <i>Include cell phones.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: ACS-1(2009)KFI

### MEETING FEDERAL NEEDS

Complete kitchen facilities are defined as a sink with piped water, a range, and a refrigerator. These data are integral components used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in the development of Fair Market Rents for all areas of the country. Federal agencies use this item to identify areas eligible for housing assistance and rehabilitation loans and as an indicator of housing quality.

### COMMUNITY BENEFITS

#### Housing

Data about complete kitchen facilities are used to evaluate the Community Development Block Grant Program, a program that provides grants to states and local governments for the rehabilitation of privately owned property that is intended to be rented as residences.

These data are used to distribute federal funds for housing assistance to local governments.

City and community officials use these data about complete kitchen facilities to determine housing deficiencies in neighborhoods.

#### Social Services

Under the Older Americans Act, these data are used to determine the number of older people who live in inadequate housing and who may be candidates for housing assistance programs or placement in alternative housing.

City and community agencies use these data to pinpoint areas that need special programs, such as Meals On Wheels.

[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

# American Community Survey

## Housing: Question on Plumbing Facilities

Question as it appears in the questionnaire.

8 Does this house, apartment, or mobile home have –		Yes	No
→ a.	hot and cold running water?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
→ b.	a flush toilet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
→ c.	a bathtub or shower?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	d. a sink with a faucet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	e. a stove or range?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	f. a refrigerator?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	g. telephone service from which you can both make and receive calls? <i>Include cell phones.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: ACS-1(2009)KFI

### MEETING FEDERAL NEEDS

Complete plumbing facilities are defined as hot and cold running water, a flush toilet, and a bathtub or shower. These data are essential components used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in the development of Fair Market Rents for all areas of the country. Federal agencies use this item to identify areas eligible for public assistance programs and rehabilitation loans. Public health officials use this item to locate areas in danger of ground water contamination and waterborne diseases.

### COMMUNITY BENEFITS

#### Housing

Data about complete plumbing facilities are used to allocate Section 8 and other federal housing subsidies to local governments. These programs help American families afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development uses these data as a critical variable to assess the quality of the housing stock.

State and local agencies, along with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, identify poor quality housing by measuring the lack of plumbing facilities.

#### Social Services

Under the Older Americans Act, these data are used to determine the number of older people who live in inadequate housing and who may be candidates for home repair or other assistance.

These data are used by the Indian Health Service to identify specific reservations that are in greatest need of housing assistance. This information is included in its annual report to the Congress.

[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

# American Community Survey

## Housing: Question on Telephone Service Available

Question as it appears in the questionnaire.

<b>8 Does this house, apartment, or mobile home have –</b>		Yes	No
a.	hot and cold running water?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b.	a flush toilet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c.	a bathtub or shower?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d.	a sink with a faucet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e.	a stove or range?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f.	a refrigerator?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
→ g.	telephone service from which you can both make and receive calls? <i>Include cell phones.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: ACS-1(2009)KFI

### MEETING FEDERAL NEEDS

The lack of telephone service is an important measure of social isolation. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and local social service agencies use these data to assess the level of need among elderly and low-income households. These data also are valuable to a number of agencies in evaluating how well their policies meet the public's needs. Under the Communications Act, the Federal Communications Commission requires data about the number of households having telephone service to measure the extent of universal access to telephone service.

### COMMUNITY BENEFITS

#### Housing

State and local agencies use these data to develop plans that deliver emergency telephone service. These data help them to assess the extent to which elderly and low-income households have access to communication in case they need emergency medical or crime prevention services.

The Administration on Aging uses data about telephone service as a measure of social isolation, one of the factors cited in the Older Americans Act as a source of "greatest social need."

The Federal Communications Commission uses these data to evaluate its universal telephone service policies.

[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

# American Community Survey

## Housing: Question on Vehicles Available

Question as it appears in the questionnaire.

**9** How many automobiles, vans, and trucks of one-ton capacity or less are kept at home for use by members of this household?

None

1

2

3

4

5

6 or more

Source: ACS-1(2009)KFI

### MEETING FEDERAL NEEDS

Vehicles available describes, for each household, the number of passenger cars, vans, and trucks of one-ton capacity or less kept at home and available for the use of household members. Used in combination with the place-of-work and journey-to-work data collected in the American Community Survey, data about vehicles available are essential for transportation programs. For the U.S. Department of Transportation, data about vehicles available are used to develop policies and to plan a number of transportation programs. The U.S. Department of Energy uses the information to estimate and forecast energy consumption of motor vehicles and for planning and establishing program activities as part of the Alternative Fueled Vehicles Program.

### COMMUNITY BENEFITS

#### Transportation

Based on studies of the typical number of daily trips taken by households with differing numbers of vehicles available, state and metropolitan transportation planning agencies use these data about vehicles available to estimate total vehicle travel and forecast future travel and its effect on their transportation systems.

These data are used to help form the database used by state departments of transportation and the more than 350 metropolitan planning organizations responsible for comprehensive transportation planning activities.

Programs include transportation safety, long-range transportation investments, emergency response, and evacuation planning.

#### Social Services

State and local agencies use these data to determine the need for special transportation services for the elderly and disabled.

Social service agencies use these data to plan for emergency transportation services in areas of high concentrations of households with no vehicle available, such as isolated rural communities.

[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

# American Community Survey

## Housing: Question on Housing Heating Fuel

Question as it appears in the questionnaire.

**10** Which **FUEL** is used **MOST** for heating this house, apartment, or mobile home?

- Gas: from underground pipes serving the neighborhood
- Gas: bottled, tank, or LP
- Electricity
- Fuel oil, kerosene, etc.
- Coal or coke
- Wood
- Solar energy
- Other fuel
- No fuel used

Source: ACS-1(2009)KFI

### MEETING FEDERAL NEEDS

The type of primary house heating fuel has long been used as a basic indicator of the adequacy of the American housing stock. Over the decades, there has been a dramatic shift in the fuels used to heat America's homes. The U.S. Department of Energy uses these data to provide information on energy supply and consumption. Also, the U.S. Department of Energy uses these data to design the Residential Energy Consumption Survey (RECS), a legislatively mandated survey required to provide information on residential and commercial energy use. These data are widely used by the Environmental Protection Agency for planning and impact assessment.

### COMMUNITY BENEFITS

#### Housing

Local planners use these data to identify areas that may be at risk for unhealthy air quality as a consequence of reliance on less efficient and clean home heating fuels.

State and local environmental agencies interested in promoting alternative fuels, such as solar energy, use these data to identify areas with favorable growth potential.

#### Energy

Utility companies and fuel oil distributors use these data to forecast the need for additional power facilities such as

generating plants, long distance pipelines for oil or natural gas, and long distance transmission lines for electricity.

The Environmental Protection Agency uses these data to assess the adequacy of energy resources to meet present and future needs of the general public.

#### Social Services

These data are needed to determine the type of fuel used by low-income persons and families who receive assistance under the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)







# American Community Survey

## Housing: Questions on Selected Monthly Owner Costs

### COMMUNITY BENEFITS

#### **Social Services**

Data about selected monthly owner costs are used to allocate funds for housing for the elderly under the Older Americans Act and for home energy assistance to low-income individuals and families under the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

#### **Energy**

Data about the cost of utilities are used to analyze current residential energy supply and consumption in order to forecast future needs.

#### **Housing**

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development uses these data as one of the selection criteria for urban development grants for cities and counties under the Community Development Block Grant Program.

These data are benchmark statistics used to measure progress toward the congressional declaration of goals for national housing policy: a decent home and suitable living environment for every American family.

[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

# American Community Survey

## Housing: Question on Food Stamps Benefit

Question as it appears in the questionnaire.

**12** IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS, did anyone in this household receive Food Stamps or a Food Stamp benefit card?

Yes

No

Source: ACS-1(2009)KFI

### MEETING FEDERAL NEEDS

Under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services continues to monitor and report state performance on a variety of outcomes including work status, family formation, and food stamp participation. The question on food stamps can help to assess state performance in the current year, food stamp participation rate for low-income working families with children, and the change in the participation rate of such families in the state over the prior year.

### COMMUNITY BENEFITS

#### **Governments**

State and local governments need to compare the number of families and individuals needing food assistance with those receiving food stamps. Special attention needs to be paid to the working poor. Adjusting food stamp eligibility guidelines and instituting supplemental food assistance programs could meet shortfalls that are identified.

#### **Social Services**

Faith-based and other nonprofit organizations use information about food assistance needs that are not being met by government programs to plan and budget for food banks, food kitchens, and other programs.

[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

# American Community Survey

## Housing: Question on Tenure

Question as it appears in the questionnaire.

**14** Is this house, apartment, or mobile home –  
Mark (X) 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? → SKIP to **C**

Source: ACS-1(2009)KFI

### MEETING FEDERAL NEEDS

Tenure (whether a home is owned or rented) is the most basic feature of the housing inventory. Homeownership rates have served as an indicator of the nation's economy for decades. These data are an integral component of the formula used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to establish Fair Market Rents and also are essential for the Federal Housing Authority's mortgage insurance program. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is required to profile the housing tenure of Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) households. The Bureau of Economic Analysis uses this information along with other census data to prepare the value of housing services for the National and Regional Accounts. This information is used to assess the costs of utilities based on the type of home ownership. Tenure also is used in calculating homeownership vacancy rates and rental vacancy rates that federal and local agencies use to evaluate the overall viability of local housing markets.

### COMMUNITY BENEFITS

#### Planning

Local planners use data on tenure to assess neighborhood stability.

#### Banking

Data on tenure are used to distribute funds for mortgage insurance, for rental housing in urban renewal areas, and for national defense housing.

#### Housing

Tenure is one of the integral components used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to establish Fair Market Rents for different localities throughout the country. This information is used to allocate Section 8 and other federal housing program subsidies that assist American families to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing.

[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

# American Community Survey

## Housing: Question on Rent

Question as it appears in the questionnaire.

**15 a. What is the monthly rent for this house, apartment, or mobile home?**

Monthly amount – *Dollars*

\$            .00

**b. Does the monthly rent include any meals?**

Yes

No

Source: ACS-1 (2009)KFI

## MEETING FEDERAL NEEDS

Rent is an essential measure of shelter costs. Rent amounts are critical for the establishment of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Section 8 Fair Market Rents. Fair Market Rents are used for a wide variety of housing programs that assist American families to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing. When compared with income, data about rent offer an excellent measure of housing affordability and excessive shelter costs. Various agencies, including the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, use these data to allocate funds to assist low- and moderate-income families whose rents exceed 30 percent of their household income. The Bureau of Economic Analysis uses this information to prepare estimates of rent paid on tenant-occupied nonfarm dwellings, which are components used to estimate rental income of persons for the National Income and Product Accounts.

## COMMUNITY BENEFITS

### Social Services

Data about rent are needed to review and assess the assistance available to individuals with developmental disabilities.

Data about rent are needed to evaluate the effectiveness of the Community Development Block Grant Program, which provides grants to states and local

governments for rehabilitation of privately owned properties intended for rent as residences.

These data are needed to evaluate a locality's qualification for federal housing assistance.

[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)