#### Census Fast Facts

### The Census is Constitutionally Mandated

"The actual enumeration shall be made within three years after the first meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every sub-sequent term of 10 years, in such manner as they shall by Law direct."

-- Article I, Section 2 of the US Constitution

## Purpose of the Census

The data collected by the decennial census determine the number of seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives and is also used to distribute billions in federal funds to local communities.

# Redistricting

Redistricting is when state officials realign congressional and state legislative districts in their states, taking into account population shifts since the last census and assuring equal representation for their constituents in compliance with the "one-person, one-vote" principle of the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

# **Allocating Federal Funding**

Census information helps to determine how more than \$400 billion dollars of federal funding each year is spent on infrastructure and services like:

- Hospitals
- Job training centers
- Schools
- Senior centers
- Bridges, tunnels and other-public works projects
- Emergency services

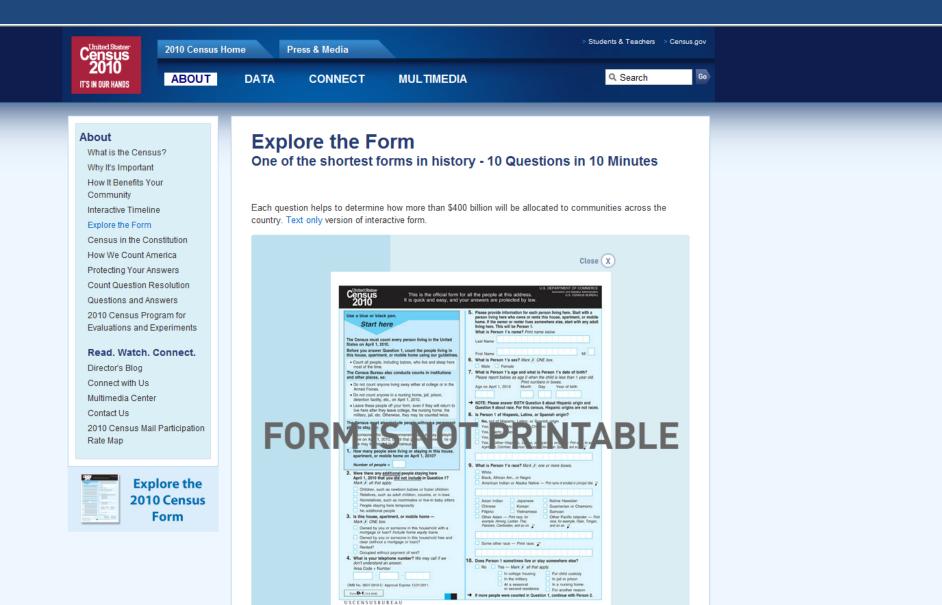
## **Census History**

The first Census was conducted in 1790 under the direction of President Washington and Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson.

The population of the US in 1790 was 3,929,000 – the size of Los Angeles today.

# 2010 Census

- One of the shortest in history "10 questions, 10 minutes".
- The head of household answers how many people live in the residence, whether it is a house, apartment, or mobile home, and provides a telephone number for Census workers to follow up if any information is incomplete or missing.
- Everyone in the household provides: name, gender, race, ethnicity, and whether they sometimes live somewhere else.



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"The 2010 Census represented the most massive participation movement ever witnessed in our country. Approximately 74 percent of the households returned their census forms by mail; the remaining households were counted by census workers walking neighborhoods throughout the United States."

U.S. Census Bureau

## **Census Participation Required**

Your participation is required by law (Title 13, Section 221) of the United States Code.

Although fines are rarely levied for nonparticipation. The Census Bureau prefers to encourage participation, not penalize nonparticipation.

#### 2010 Census Participation Rates (by mail)

- US participation rate: 74%
- New York participation rate: 69%
- Onondaga County participation rate: 79%
- Syracuse City participation rate: 69%

# **Protecting Individual Privacy**

- Title 13 of the U.S. Code also protects confidentiality of personal information and violating this law is a crime with severe penalties.
- The penalty for unlawful disclosure is a fine of up to \$250,000 or imprisonment of up to 5 years, or both.
- It is against the law to disclose or publish any of the following information:
  - Names
  - Addresses including GPS coordinates
  - Social Security numbers
  - Telephone numbers

## American Community Survey

- The American Community Survey (ACS) replaces the Census "Long Form".
- The ACS is part of the Decennial Census Program. While the 10-year census counts the number of people who live in the US, the ACS shows *how* people live — our education, housing, jobs and more.

## American Community Survey

The ACS asks essentially the same questions that used to be on the long form of the census, except it is conducted throughout the year and throughout the decade. This allows the Census Bureau to produce new data every year, instead of only once every 10 years. So, while the old "long form" was a once-a-decade snapshot of an area — one that grew increasingly faded with age — the ACS takes a new picture every year, creating a year-by-year look at how the area is changing.