



Research Brief

April 10, 2009

Census Workers to Verify Addresses in Pennsylvania *First Major 2010 Census Operation to Employ Nearly Five Thousand in Pennsylvania*

PENN STATE HARRISBURG – The first wave of Census 2010 activities has begun, and Pennsylvania residents may begin seeing Census employees in their community. The Pennsylvania State Data Center would like pass along this important information from the U.S. Census Bureau:

The Census Bureau is launching a massive operation this week to verify and update more than 145 million addresses as it prepares to conduct the 2010 Census.

Nationwide, more than 140,000 census workers are participating in the address canvassing operation, a critically important first step in assuring that every housing unit receives a census questionnaire in March 2010. In Pennsylvania, more than 4,900 people will carry out the operation. The official one year out countdown to the 2010 Census started April 1.

“A complete and accurate address list is the cornerstone of a successful census,” said Fernando Armstrong, Philadelphia regional director at the U.S. Census Bureau. “Building on the achievements of 2000 Census, we have been testing and preparing for the 2010 count all decade and we’re ready to fulfill our Constitutional mandate to count everyone living in the United States.”

The first publicly visible activity of the 2010 Census is ahead of schedule. Address canvassing kicked off April 6 in Bucks, Montgomery, Philadelphia, Cameron, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, Jefferson, Lawrence, McKean, Mercer, Potter, Venango, and Warren counties. All other counties start their operations April 18. Address canvassing efforts should conclude by mid-July.

The operation will use new hand held computers equipped with GPS to increase geographic accuracy. The ability to capture GPS coordinates for most of the nation’s housing units will greatly reduce the number of geographic coding errors caused by using paper maps in previous counts.

“The primary goal of the census is to count everyone once, only once, and in the right place,” Armstrong said. “Because the census is used for reapportioning seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and the distribution of more than \$300 billion in federal dollars every year to state and local governments, it’s essential to get this first step right.”

Over the last several years, the Census Bureau has been actively working on updating its geographic databases and master address files. From implementing the Local Update of Census Address (LUCA) program where more than 11,500 tribal, state and local governments participated in a review of the Census Bureau's address list for their area, to increasing the precision of the GPS mapping, many advances have been made to compile the most comprehensive listing of addresses in the nation.

The address canvassing operation will be conducted out of 151 local census offices across the U.S., including those in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, Erie, and Scranton. Most offices will begin operations April 6. In most cases, census workers will knock on residents' doors to verify addresses and inquire about additional living quarters on the premises.

This is the first census to include group quarters (such as dormitories, group homes, prisons and homeless shelters) in the address canvassing operation, which should improve both the accuracy and coverage of the final count.

There will be one final opportunity to add new home construction in early 2010 prior to the mailing of the census questionnaires.

Census workers can be identified by the official Census Bureau badge they carry. During the address canvassing operation, census workers may ask to verify a housing structure's address and whether there are additional living quarters on the property.

2010 Census workers will never ask for bank or social security information. All census information collected, including addresses, are confidential and protected by law. By law, the Census Bureau cannot share respondents' answers with the FBI, the IRS, CIA, Welfare, Immigration, or any other government agency. No court of law or law enforcement agency can find out respondents' answers. All Census Bureau employees — including temporary employees — take an oath for life to keep census information confidential. Any violation of that oath is punishable by a fine of up to \$250,000 and five years in prison.

The Pennsylvania State Data Center is the commonwealth's official source for population and economic statistics. It is based at Penn State Harrisburg's Institute of State and Regional Affairs. The Pennsylvania State Data Center is part of the U.S. Census Bureau's National State Data Center Program.

Media Inquiries: Please contact the U.S. Census Bureau at:

Monica L. Davis
Media Specialist
Southeastern Pennsylvania
(215) 717-1046/(215) 237-5432 (cell)
Monica.L.Davis@census.gov

Pam Golden
Media Specialist
Northeastern, Central, Western Pennsylvania
(412) 589-8620 (cell)
Pamela.W.Golden@census.gov

For demographic data, contact the Pennsylvania State Data Center's State Capital Office at 717.772.2710 or for faculty comment demographic topics, contact Penn State Harrisburg's Public Information Office at 717.948.6029.

PENNSTATE



Harrisburg

Institute of State and Regional Affairs