



Steven Fry, Director
Recovery Community
Affairs

February 3, 2010

Census 2010: Counting on You

A Message from the Office of the Commissioner

An old man was sitting on his porch, when a young man walked up with a pad and pencil in his hand. "What are you selling, young man?" he asked. "I'm not selling anything, sir," the young man replied. "I'm a census taker." "A what?" the man asked. "I'm a census taker. We are trying to find out how many people are in the United States." "Well," the man answered, "you're wasting your time with me; I have no idea."

Corny jokes aside; the 2010 census is serious business. Article I of the United States Constitution calls for an "enumeration of persons" every ten years to determine how government representation and taxes shall be apportioned. Since the first census in 1790, directed by then Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, we have tried to get a headcount of all persons residing in this country. This year the Census Bureau has been ramping up its efforts since last spring to undertake this massive endeavor.

Why is the census important? The census will decide how many Representatives we send to congress, shape voting districts, and determine how **\$400 billion** in federal funds are distributed. That's money for hospitals, schools, transportation, social services and other programs that benefit our communities and are supported by our tax dollars. It is vital, especially in these tough times, that Connecticut gets its fair share.

What can you do? The census process is easy, fast, and completely confidential. Individual information provided to the Census Bureau is not shared with any party - but those total numbers mean a lot.

- When the census form comes to your household in March, fill it out and drop it in a mailbox. This should take about ten minutes.
- Make sure your family, friends, co-workers, your hair stylist, the guy who bags your groceries, and anybody else you know fill out their forms, too.
- Help the people you provide services to understand what the census means and encourage them or assist them in doing their part. This is especially important for people living in group residences, such as hospitals, group homes, recovery houses, and the like, who might not otherwise receive a form.
- Census workers will visit most group residences and those addresses that they do not hear from. Make sure they present their official identification and provide every courtesy in helping them do their job.

If you have any questions about the census you can visit their website or contact the local census office nearest to you. That information can be found here: [Local Census Offices](#).

DMHAS is an official federal partner to the U. S. Census Bureau for Census 2010. The census process is an important part of making sure our democracy works fairly. Let's all work together to make sure some of our hard earned tax dollars find their way home.

For questions and comments contact steven.fry@po.state.ct.us