

Important Contacts and NCAI Resources

The goal in designing the 2010 Census was to keep it simple. There are only a few straight-forward questions. The wording of these questions was thoroughly tested to be sure that everyone understands them the same way. Only 10 minutes is required for the average household to fill out the Census form.

But sometimes even the simplest questions can be complicated. Every household's situation is different. Individual circumstances may not fit the questions. For example, the instructions on the form say not to count those who are living away at college. What about younger students in boarding school?

Other things can happen. Maybe you misplaced your questionnaire. Maybe your grandmother never got one. When issues like these arise, where can you go for help?

To begin with, there are probably people nearby that can help.

- **Questionnaire Assistance Centers** will be available on many reservations. These are places in a tribal office or community building, staffed by Census workers and volunteers, where anyone can go to get information on the 2010 Census. The staff can help to explain the questions on the form, get forms for those who didn't get one or misplaced it and perhaps help to explain the Census questions and process in the native language. The Questionnaire Assistance Centers should open in February of 2010 and remain open until well after Census Day on April 1st. If such a Center is available in your community, it's probably the first place you should go for help.
- The Census Bureau has invited every tribal government to appoint a **Tribal Liaison Person**. That person serves as the official connection between the tribe and the Census Bureau. He or she has received special training in what the Census is about and how it's conducted. Checking with that person at the tribal offices may get you the help you need or at least point you in the right direction. Tribal Liaisons are on the job now.

One of the main ways to get help is to call the Census 2010 telephone hot line. The general number is toll-free: 1-866-872-6868. Census Bureau staff will answer your questions.

**The line will be in operation 8 AM to 9 PM, local time, from February 25th to July 30th of 2010.
There is also a toll-free number for the hearing impaired: 1-866-783-2010.**

- It's possible that a friend or relative may have a job as a temporary Census worker. If so, you can ask them to explain anything you don't understand. They will have received special training on the Census form and Census procedures.

The Census Bureau and NCAI can help in a number of ways.

- The Census Bureau is opening local offices to help take the count. Check the phone listings in your area under US government to see if there's a **Census Bureau Local Office** nearby. Also check www.IndianCountryCounts.org and register with your email and zip code to find resources in your Census Region, including Regional Census contact information, Tribal Partnership Specialists, and Complete Count Committees.
- In the more remote rural areas, **Census workers will come to the door** to deliver the questionnaire. You can ask them questions at that time. Census workers will also do door-to-door follow up visits to households that don't return the Census form.
- Online: One of the most important sources of help directly from the Census Bureau is the agency's Web site: www.census.gov. The Web site has a list of hundreds of "Frequently Asked Questions" and their answers. These will tell you more than you ever thought there was to know about the 2010 Census.

There are lots of ways to get help concerning the Census. Some, like the Telephone Assistance Center and www.IndianCountryCounts.org and www.census.gov/2010census, don't even require you to leave your house. Don't let an unanswered question keep you from being counted in the 2010 Census.

Other Census Resources:

Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund (LCCREF): www.civilrights.org/census -- NCAI is part of the LCCREF Public Education and Outreach Campaign on the 2010 Census along with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Asian American Justice Center, and the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials. Their website provides a comprehensive Census 2010 toolkit with a civil rights focus on being counted in 2010.

The Census Project: www.thecensusproject.org -- A collaboration of a number of census stakeholders representing a broad range of organizations and issue areas. The Census Project website includes daily news updates, fact sheets about hard-to-count communities, podcasts with census experts, and contact information for national organizations who are working to ensure an accurate count. The Census Project also has a blog at <http://censusprojectblog.org/>.