



ANSWERING THE CENSUS IS SAFE AND PRIVATE

Rest easy, Broward residents. Filling out the 2010 Census is safe and private.

For those who are reluctant to fill out their Census forms or have concern with how the information will be used, Broward County Commissioner, Ilene Lieberman, chair of the Census 2010 Complete Count Committee, wants Broward residents to know that data obtained in Census 2010 cannot be shared with anyone outside the Census Bureau for any reason.

"You should not worry that your privacy may be invaded by answering the Census," she said.

By law, the Census Bureau cannot share individual records with the IRS, FBI, immigration, welfare or any other government agency. No court of law – not even the President of the United States – can access individual responses for 72 years.

Privacy guides everything the Census Bureau does, including hiring, training, planning, procedures and reporting. Census workers are subjected to strict FBI background checks and are fingerprinted. If they disclose any information that could identify a respondent or household, they can face a \$250,000 fine and a five-year prison term.

The Census Bureau also uses sophisticated technology to protect information, including electronic barriers, scrambling devices and dedicated lines, Commissioner Lieberman said.

"No one can connect your answers with your name or address," she said. "It does not ask about citizenship or immigration status, bank account information, salary or income, and will never require your Social Security number."

Answering the Census is important for you, your family and your community. The questions that are asked help planning and funding decisions for the next 10 years.

Census information is used to allocate billions of dollars in funding for housing, public safety, education, human services and community services. Census results are also used to determine representation in the federal and state governments. Under-counting leads to under-representation.

"Answering the Census is important, easy and safe," said Commissioner Lieberman. "Fill out your Census form. It's your best opportunity to make a difference."

Important Census facts to avoid scams:

CENSUS DOES NOT:

- Ask for social security numbers.
- Ask for bank account or personal identification information. They do not need to know where you do your banking, where you have any financial accounts, or where you keep your money.
- Ask for credit card account information. The Census is free, there is no charge to those participating in it, and no reason to need a credit card number. They also do not need to know which, if any, credit cards you have, how long you've had them or when they were last used.
- Ask for any other identifying numbers such as Driver's License, Visa, Passport, or Alien numbers. They simply want to know the names, birthdates, and ages of people living in your household, and nothing else.

- Solicit information via e-mail.
- Solicit pre-Census information.
- Send a representative to your home unless you fail to return the questionnaire via the pre-paid envelope in the mail.
- Ask for the name of your mortgage company or for your landlord's information.

Census forms will begin arriving in mailboxes in mid-March. Anyone contacting you prior to then claiming to have any affiliation with the Census and requesting any of the above information is likely a fraud. DO NOT provide any information to them and contact your local police department immediately.

“Thank you for filling out and returning your Census form,” said Commissioner Lieberman.

For more information, please visit www.broward.org/Census2010.

###