



Countdown to the 2020 Census

I WANT YOU



For US Census

The United States (U.S.) Constitution requires a census every ten years. A census is an official count or survey of a population. Though brief in length, the census is to include every single person in America: citizens and non-citizens, in the U.S. and its five territories. Data from the census provide the basis for distributing more than \$675 billion in federal funds annually to support vital programs, such as housing, education, transportation, employment, health care and public policy.

In 2016, Florida received over \$44 billion through 55 federal spending programs guided by data derived from the 2010 census. The economic impact for Palm Beach County equates to \$2.4 billion per year or \$24 billion in a 10-year period. In an effort to create a sense of census urgency as well as facilitate an accurate and successful census, [Palm Beach County](#) is working with local and federal officials throughout the census process.

Aside from the dollars, census data is used to redraw the boundaries of elected officials from the federal level down to your local school board. Census information is vital for governments and communities as a guide for future planning efforts and is a valuable tool for improving communities across the country. When households and its members are not counted, communities may not receive the funding, information and elected representation needed for schools, roads, hospitals and more.

Each household is legally obligated to participate in the census and answer all the questions as accurately as possible. The answers are important! As part of a sample, the household and its occupants represent many other people. All responses to the surveys are confidential and kept classified for 72 years until released by the [National Archives](#). The most recent year available is 1940. The 1950 Census data will be released in 2022 and no doubt be eagerly anticipated by genealogists, historians and researchers.

The first census began in 1790, more than a year after the inauguration of President Washington and shortly before the second session of the first Congress ended. The [next decennial census](#) will take place in 2020. The [U.S. Census Bureau](#) must submit state population totals by December 31, 2020.

Wherever you are on April 1, 2020, I want YOU to participate in the 2020 census. This is the first time that people will be able to respond online in addition to phone and mail. Unresponsive households can expect an in person follow-up by a census worker.

As always, I invite your comments on any issue of interest to you. As your Commissioner, I am here to help you. You may write me at 301 N. Olive Ave., West Palm Beach, 33401 or at MBerger@pbcgov.org. You can call me or my staff at 276-1310 or toll free at 877-930-2205. Please visit me on the Web at www.pbcgov.com/d5.



Yours in Public Service,

Tracy Lou Berger