

2010 U. S. Census to Begin

WARNING: 2010 Census Cautions from the Better Business Bureau

During the U.S. Census, households will be contacted by mail, telephone or visited by a U.S. Census worker who will inquire about the number of people living in the house. Unfortunately, people may also be contacted by scammers who are impersonating Census workers in order to gain access to sensitive financial information such as Social Security, bank account or credit card numbers. Law enforcement in several states have issued warnings that scammers are already posing as Census Bureau employees and knocking on doors asking for donations and Social Security numbers.

The big question is - how do you tell the difference between a U.S. Census worker and a con artist? BBB offers the following advice:

- If a U.S. Census worker knocks on your door, they will have a badge, a handheld device, a Census Bureau canvas bag and a confidentiality notice. Ask to see their identification and their badge before answering their questions. However, you should never invite anyone you don't know into your home.
- Census workers are currently only knocking on doors to verify address information. Do not give your Social Security number, credit card or banking information to anyone, even if they claim they need it for the U.S. Census.

While the Census Bureau might ask for basic financial information, such as a salary range, it will not ask for Social Security, bank account or credit card numbers nor will employees solicit donations.

- Eventually, Census workers may contact you by telephone, mail or in person at home. However, they **will not** contact you by e-mail, so be on the lookout for e-mail scams impersonating the Census. Never click on a link or open any attachments in an e-mail that are supposedly from the U.S. Census Bureau.

For more advice on avoiding identity theft and fraud, visit www.bbb.org