

# CENSUS 2010

## HOW THE 2010 CENSUS IMPACTS TRANSGENDER PEOPLE.



When people think of The Census, they usually think of the well-known every-ten years (decennial) census that is mandated by the U.S. Constitution to count every person in every household in the country. In 2010, as in every tenth year since the Constitution was enacted, the decennial census will be conducted. The Census Bureau also conducts various other surveys and studies of the U.S. population as well, including a more detailed survey every year called the American Community Survey (ACS) which is done with a sample of the population instead of every household.

A frequent comment NCTE gets from transgender people and allies is that we should be advocating with the Census Bureau so that they “count transgender people in the 2010 Census.” In reality, advocacy by the LGBT community with the Census Bureau has been ongoing for years in regards to the decennial census and the ACS. This advocacy will continue.

### 2010 DECENNIAL CENSUS QUESTIONS ARE NOW FINAL

Importantly though, all decisions on what will be in the 2010 Decennial Census were completed by the last administration and are unchangeable. Because the Decennial Census is such a huge undertaking, the Census Bureau is required by law to have the questions finalized two years prior to the Census so that they can print them, mail them, translate them into dozens of languages, etc. So it is no longer possible for NCTE or any other advocates or census experts to further influence what questions will be on the 2010 Decennial Census. Advocacy will continue though on the ACS for future years as well as on the 2020 Decennial Census.

### THE 2010 CENSUS WILL HAVE ONLY 5 QUESTIONS

When most of us think about the long, complicated census forms we may have seen or completed in the past, we will be surprised to see that the 2010 Census will include questions on only five topics:

1. Age
2. Sex
3. Race/Ethnicity
4. Relationship
5. Tenure (Rent/Own your home)

People filling out the census form in 2010 will be asked to answer those five questions for each person living in their households.

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The detailed information that previously was part of the Census “long-form” is now collected in the annual national survey called the American Community Survey (ACS), which, as we noted earlier, will only be completed by a sample of households around the country.

### **WILL THE CENSUS COUNT TRANSGENDER PEOPLE?**

No. There will be no way to use the census data to estimate the number of transgender people in the United States. Sex will be recorded for every person in every household, but with no way to ascertain transgender status. The following question will be asked for each member of each household:

**6. What is Person 1's sex? Mark  ONE box.**  
 Male     Female

Respondents may choose only one option when answering the question. Transgender people will be counted within whichever sex they choose with no way to express their transgender status.

### **HOW SHOULD TRANSGENDER PEOPLE ANSWER THE SEX QUESTION?**

NCTE will be encouraging transpeople and our household members to select whichever sex they feel best applies to them. NCTE and our allies have offered to work with the Census Bureau to develop clarifying instructions for this question.

### **WILL THE CENSUS COUNT SAME-SEX COUPLES?**

Yes and no. Yes, the Census will show how many people report living in a same-sex partnership, but the data that will be reported from the census will count all same-sex couples as unmarried. The relationship question asks the person filling out the form to identify how all other individuals in the household are related to him or her.

**2. How is this person related to Person 1? Mark  ONE box.**

<input type="checkbox"/> Husband or wife	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent-in-law
<input type="checkbox"/> Biological son or daughter	<input type="checkbox"/> Son-in-law or daughter-in-law
<input type="checkbox"/> Adopted son or daughter	<input type="checkbox"/> Other relative
<input type="checkbox"/> Stepson or stepdaughter	<input type="checkbox"/> Roomer or boarder
<input type="checkbox"/> Brother or sister	<input type="checkbox"/> Housemate or roommate
<input type="checkbox"/> Father or mother	<input type="checkbox"/> Unmarried partner
<input type="checkbox"/> Grandchild	<input type="checkbox"/> Other nonrelative

Couples should identify one partner as either a “husband or wife” or an “unmarried partner” of the person filling out the form. However, regardless of legal marital status or the designation of a partner as a spouse, publically-released Census data will count all same-sex spouses as “unmarried partners”. As of now, official counts will combine these same-sex spousal couples with those who used the “unmarried partner” designation and describe all as same-sex unmarried partner couples.

## **HOW SHOULD TRANSGENDER PEOPLE ANSWER THE RELATIONSHIP QUESTION?**

If you are in a relationship and you consider your partner to be your “husband or wife,” use that option; if you are more comfortable with the term “unmarried partner” then choose that option.

The Census Bureau relies on self-reporting so you should use the designation that is appropriate to you.

## **WHEN WILL CENSUS 2010 BEGIN?**

The Census Bureau will begin mailing Census forms in **March 2010** and the collection period will continue for several months.

## **WHAT IF I CHOOSE NOT TO FILL OUT A CENSUS FORM OR IF I GIVE AN ANSWER THEY CONSIDER WRONG?**

Federal regulations require all residents to answer all questions on the Census truthfully. Regulations allow for the imposition of fines of \$100 for not responding to the Census and \$500 for providing false answers. In reality, though, these fines are very rarely imposed when the person filling out the form acts in good faith. It is extremely unlikely that any transgender person would be prosecuted—or even noticed—for decisions they make in terms of classifying either their sex or their relationship status on census forms.

## **CAN TRANSGENDER PEOPLE WORK FOR THE CENSUS BUREAU?**

Conducting the census is a very large undertaking that requires huge numbers of temporary workers all over the country. For more information about working for the census, go to

<http://2010.census.gov/2010censusjobs/index.php>

## **RESOURCES**

For additional information: [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

NCTE would like to thank the Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law for assistance with this publication.