Census 2010 LGBT Basics

Gary Gates

Census 2010 LGBT Basics

Abstract

This brief provides information for the LGBT community about the upcoming Census 2010.

What's new for Census 2010?
Census 2010 will include questions on only five topics:
1. Age
2. Sex
3. Race/Ethnicity
4. Relationship
5. Tenure (Rent/Own your home)

Detailed information that used to be part of the Census "long-form" is now collected in an annual national survey called the American Community Survey.

How will Census count the LGBT population?
Census 2010 will not include questions about sexual orientation or gender identity. However, there are issues in completing the Census form that may be of particular interest to the LGBT community. This brief provides information about these issues.

How are same-sex couples counted?
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* [X] *ONE box.*

- ☐ Husband or wife
- ☐ Biological son or daughter
- ☐ Adopted son or daughter
- ☐ Stepson or stepdaughter
- ☐ Brother or sister
- ☐ Father or mother
- ☐ Grandchild
- ☐ Parent-in-law
- ☐ Son-in-law or daughter-in-law
- ☐ Other relative
- ☐ Roomer or boarder
- ☐ Housemate or roommate
- ☐ Unmarried partner
- ☐ Other nonrelative

Same-sex 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 an "unmarried partner". 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.

The Census Bureau interprets the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DoMA) to mean that it is not permitted by law to separately enumerate same-sex spouses. An alternative interpretation of DoMA would permit the reporting of same-sex spousal couples so long as it is acknowledged that these couples are not in a marital/spousal relationship recognized by federal law.

What about counting transgender individuals?
Census 2010 includes a question about each person's sex.

6. What is Person 1's sex? *Mark* [X] *ONE box.*
- ☐ Male ☐ Female

Note that respondents may choose only one option. Transgender individuals will be counted within the sex that they choose. But the Census Bureau will not be able to separately identify transgender respondents.

How will Census collect information on race and ethnicity?
Census 2010 will include two questions about race and ethnicity.

8. Is Person 1 of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?
- ☐ **No,** not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
- ☐ Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano
- ☐ Yes, Puerto Rican
- ☐ Yes, Cuban
- ☐ Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin — *Print origin, for example, Argentinean, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spaniard, and so on.*

9. What is Person 1's race? *Mark* [X] *one or more boxes.*
- ☐ White
- ☐ Black, African Am., or Negro
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native — *Print name of enrolled or principal tribe.*

- ☐ Asian Indian ☐ Japanese ☐ Native Hawaiian
- ☐ Chinese ☐ Korean ☐ Guamanian or Chamorro
- ☐ Filipino ☐ Vietnamese ☐ Samoan
- ☐ Other Asian — *Print race, for example, Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian, and so on.* ☐ Other Pacific Islander — *Print race, for example, Fijian, Tongan, and so on.*

- ☐ Some other race — *Print race.*

Note that the question about ethnicity is separate from the question about race. Further, the race question allows respondents to check all boxes that apply.

> **A note to bi-racial/ethnic couples**
> Census reports some statistics on the race/ethnicity of the "household". Bi-racial/ethnic couples should note that this is determined using the race/ethnicity of Person 1, the person who fills out the Census form for the household.

What if I choose not to fill out a Census form?
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.