



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. Census Bureau
Washington, DC 20233-0001

Dear Group Quarter Administrator:

The U.S. Census Bureau is underway with its planning efforts for the 2020 Census. We have gleaned lessons learned from the 2010 Census and are excited about streamlining data collection processes and implementing new and improved methods to count the U.S. population for the 2020 Census. This includes taking a different approach to count people in facilities such as yours also known as Group Quarters. Group Quarters (GQs) include college residence halls, residential treatment centers, skilled-nursing facilities, group homes, military barracks, correctional facilities, hospitals, military installations, and locations servicing individuals experiencing homelessness. Critical to our success to accurately count individuals residing in GQs, is to establish and maintain partnerships with you and other group quarter administrators.

The goal of our improved data collection process is to conduct the 2020 Census at a lower cost per group quarter facility than in the 2010 Census, while maintaining high-quality results. This includes the initiative to reduce paper operations and explore the availability and use of administrative records (*internal records that you maintain on a regular basis*). The Census Bureau will also examine the efficiencies provided by receiving these records via a secure electronic transfer protocol and examine the processing of these data for the 2020 Census.

Reducing the burden on you and your staff to report Census data is a driving force and motivating factor in pursuing this streamlined electronic records approach to count individuals in preparation for the 2020 Census. In an effort to cut costs and reduce or eliminate the paper questionnaire, the Census Bureau plans to conduct a **Group Quarters Electronic Transfer Test**. This test will explore the availability of administrative records, the capability of GQ administrators and/or each primary GQ contact under your jurisdiction to electronically send those records directly to the Census Bureau, and for the Census Bureau to process those records.

In preparation for the Group Quarters Electronic Transfer Test, we request your assistance with a short pre-test survey, the Group Quarters Electronic Transfer Capability Survey, that will help us better design the test. Please complete this survey online by going to <https://respond.census.gov/gqetc> and answering the following questions:

1. Do you have the data items listed below readily available electronically for each GQ facility/building under your jurisdiction?
 - *Address information for each GQ facility under your jurisdiction*
 - *Type of each GQ facility under your jurisdiction*
 - *Maximum number of individuals that can stay in each GQ*

The Group Quarters (GQ) Electronic Transfer Capability Survey collection is authorized under OMB number 0607-0725 (Approval Expiration – September 30, 2016).

- *Demographic information for those residing in the GQs to include:*
 - *Name*
 - *Sex*
 - *Age & Date of Birth*
 - *Hispanic Origin & Race(s)*
2. What type of file format can you provide the data items (e.g., Excel, Text, Word, Database format, SPSS, SAS, etc.)?
 3. Do you have the ability to provide and electronically transmit (via Internet) these data to the Census Bureau?

In order to accomplish the goals of the Group Quarters Electronic Transfer Test and the 2020 Census, we need the cooperation and support of our partners (administrators, managers, and proprietors of group quarter facilities), such as yourself. While your response to the pre-test survey is voluntary, it is vitally important. The past cooperation of GQ administrators was instrumental to the overall success of counting the Group Quarters population in 2010, and again, we ask for your support.

Please know that all information is confidential and protected by law, and we cannot share it with anyone or any other government agency.

We would appreciate your response to the online survey within two weeks. If we have not received your response within this timeframe, a staff member from the Special Enumerations Branch (SEB) will contact you. If you have any questions, please email the SEB staff at dcmd.gqetcs@census.gov or call 301-763-9333.

Sincerely,



Lisa M. Blumerman
Associate Director for Decennial Census Programs

Enclosures:
Privacy Act Statement
Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) Statement