

Dear Resident,

Your address has been selected by the U.S. Census Bureau to participate in the American Housing Survey (AHS). The Census Bureau conducts the AHS to help Federal, State and local governments, businesses and non-profits understand changes in housing conditions, costs, and other aspects of your community to better design policies and services like schools, roads, and hospitals. Soon, a Census employee from your area will contact you to collect your response to the AHS.

Here's what you should know:

- **Every two years, a select number of households are chosen to represent thousands of others like theirs.** Don't miss this opportunity to have your voice heard!
- **The Census field representative will show you their badge when they visit your home.** If they call you, they will provide their name and Regional Office information to confirm employment with the Census Bureau.
- **U.S. householders paid a median of \$1,037 per month on housing costs in 2017.** You can look at the enclosed data wheel to see how your area compares.
- **Answers to the most frequently asked questions about this survey are included on the back of this letter.** If you have other questions or want to learn more about the survey, please go to [www.census.gov/programs-surveys/ahs/about/respondent-information.html](http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/ahs/about/respondent-information.html) or call your U.S. Census Bureau Regional Office at 1-800-262-4236.

***Our commitment to you:***

We promise not to publicly release your responses in a way that could identify you.

We promise that we will use every technology, statistical methodology, and physical security procedure available to protect your information.

Thank you in advance for your help with this important survey.

Sincerely,

Steven D. Dillingham  
Director

La Oficina del Censo de los EE. UU. se encuentra realizando la Encuesta de Viviendas de los Estados Unidos en su comunidad y su dirección fue escogida para participar. Sus respuestas son confidenciales y, pronto, un representante local se pondrá en contacto con usted para completar su encuesta. Si usted prefiere que la entrevista se realice en español, comuníquese con nosotros al 1-800-262-4236 o por correo electrónico a [Philadelphia.Regional.Office@census.gov](mailto:Philadelphia.Regional.Office@census.gov) o escríbanos a esta dirección: Regional Director, U.S. Census Bureau 100 S Independence Mall W #410, Philadelphia, PA 19106-2320.

## **WHAT IS THIS SURVEY ABOUT?**

The American Housing Survey (AHS) collects up-to-date information on housing quality and costs in the United States. To measure housing quality, the survey includes questions about equipment breakdowns, leaks, and other problems. To measure housing costs, the survey includes questions about mortgage and rental costs, utility costs, and repair and remodeling costs. The AHS also asks about your household, including demographic and income questions. Combining household information with housing quality and cost information helps to measure the housing challenges faced by homeowners and renters. The information also helps to measure important changes in our housing stock as it ages, and when it is eventually remodeled or replaced.

## **HOW WAS I SELECTED FOR THIS SURVEY?**

The U.S. Census Bureau chose your address, not you personally, to participate in this survey. We randomly selected a sample of addresses throughout the United States. We need a response from every home in our sample to get a complete picture of housing quality and costs across the country. Your answers represent not only your home, but also thousands of other homes like yours. If you move, this address will stay in the survey and we will interview the household that moves here.

## **I COMPLETED THIS SURVEY BEFORE. WHY ARE YOU ASKING ME TO DO IT AGAIN?**

It is important that someone at this address completes the survey again so that we may measure the changes (or lack of changes) in the number of homes available in the United States, the physical condition of the housing, and the characteristics of the occupants. Some addresses in the American Housing Survey are asked to complete the survey once every two years. Other addresses are asked to complete the survey every few years.

## **I THOUGHT THAT THE CENSUS BUREAU OPERATED ONLY EVERY TEN YEARS WHEN IT COUNTED PEOPLE. WHAT IS THE CENSUS BUREAU DOING NOW?**

Besides the decennial census conducted every ten years, we collect many different kinds of statistics through other censuses and surveys. We conduct other censuses at regular intervals, including the Economic Census and the Census of Governments. In addition, we conduct various surveys to collect data on a monthly basis in order to provide current information on unemployment rates, retail and wholesale trade, various manufacturing activities, new housing construction, and a number of other topics. Also, we conduct annual surveys on business, manufacturing, governments, family income, health, and education. You may also encounter the Census Bureau conducting collections on behalf of other agencies, like the AHS, which the Census Bureau conducts for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

## **IS THIS SURVEY AUTHORIZED BY LAW? WHAT PROTECTION DO I HAVE?**

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development is authorized to collect this information under the Housing and Urban-Rural Recovery Act of 1983 (12 U.S.C. 1701z-1, 1701z-2(g), and 1701z-10a). The Census Bureau conducts the survey on behalf of HUD under the authority of 13 U.S.C. 8(b). The U.S. Census Bureau is required by law to protect your information. The Census Bureau is not permitted to publicly release your responses in a way that could identify this household. Federal law protects your privacy and keeps your answers confidential (Title 13, United States Code, Section 9(a)). Your answers may be combined with information that you give to other agencies. By law, the Census Bureau can only use your responses for statistical research. For more information, please visit the Census Bureau's website on combining data: [www.census.gov/about/what/admin-data.html](http://www.census.gov/about/what/admin-data.html). Per the Federal Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015, your data are protected from cybersecurity risks through screening of the systems that transmit your data. Disclosure of the information provided to us is permitted under the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. § 552a) and may be shared with other Census Bureau staff for the work-related purposes identified in this statement. Disclosure of this information is also subject to the published routine uses as identified in the Privacy Act System of Records Notice COMMERCE/Census-3, Demographic Survey Collection (Census Bureau Sampling Frame). Furnishing this information is voluntary. Failure to provide this information may affect the Census Bureau's ability to collect information on U.S. housing quality and costs.

## **HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?**

We estimate that completing the American Housing Survey will take 40 minutes on average. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Director, Housing and Demographic Analysis Division, Office of Policy Development and Research, Office of Economic Affairs, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Washington, DC 20410. This information collection is authorized by OMB control 2528-0017 (expires Month Day, Year). If this number were not displayed, we could not conduct this survey.