

American Community Survey vs. the Decennial Census

- ACS – Long Form (about 50 questions) ([2018 ACS form](#)) ([Promo Video](#))
- Decennial Census – Short Form (10 questions) ([2010 Census form](#)) (the 2020 form has not been finalized)

The ACS is implemented by The Census Bureau which is an office of the Department of Commerce.

The information that the Census Bureau collects through the ACS helps to determine how more than \$675 billion dollars of federal funding each year is spent on infrastructure and services.

Through the ACS, we know more about jobs and occupations, educational attainment, veterans, whether people own or rent their home, and many other topics. Public officials, planners, and entrepreneurs use this information to assess the past and plan the future.

What is the difference between the American Community Survey and the 2020 Census?

The ACS is conducted every year to provide up-to-date information about the social and economic needs of your community. The **ACS shows how people live**--our education, housing, jobs and more. For example, results may be used to decide where new schools, hospitals, and emergency services are needed.

Once every 10 years, **the census provides an official count** of the entire U.S. population to Congress.

Do I have to answer both the American Community Survey and the 2020 Census?

Yes, if the household was selected for the American Community Survey, they must complete it in addition to the 2020 Census. The response to both is important and required by law (Title 13, U.S. Code). They will also help provide local and national leaders with the information they need for planning and for programs.

Why can't you use my census answers for the American Community Survey?

The American Community Survey includes questions that will not be asked the 2020 Census, and the two serve different purposes.

Your answers are confidential.

Every Census Bureau employee takes a lifetime oath to protect your personal identification. Disclosing ANY information that could identify any specific person means 5 years in prison, or \$250,000 in fines, or both.

Other Census Bureau survey's

- Economic Census
- Census of Governments
- Annual Capital Expenditure Survey
- Annual Retail Trade Survey
- National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, & Wildlife-Associated Recreation
- [Here is list of every yearly survey](#)