



STATE OF INDIANA

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For immediate release

Census Results Impact Health Care Across Indiana

Indianapolis (March 16, 2010) – Hoosier households are now receiving their 2010 United States census forms in the mail. The results of the count will have a direct impact on every person in Indiana. This once-a-decade count by the federal government helps determine how much federal funding Indiana and its communities are eligible to receive for the next 10 years.

“We’re asking every Hoosier household to promptly complete and return their census form,” said Mark W. Everson, Commissioner of the Indiana Department of Administration and the official who is directing outreach efforts for the State of Indiana. “The 2010 census will have a real impact on counties, cities and towns across Indiana for years to come.”

Census data helps determine the amount of federal dollars state and local communities are eligible to receive for education, transportation, health care, emergency preparedness and other critical programs. Officials and other decision-makers use the information in planning for hospitals, housing, public safety, and making other public policy decisions.

“Last year, the number of H1N1 vaccine doses Indiana received was based on population estimates from the census,” said Dr. Charles Miramonti, an emergency medicine physician at Wishard Health Services in Indianapolis. “It is not a stretch to say that an accurate count can save lives.” Courtney Scroggins, Wishard pediatric R.N., added, “I’m going to complete my form. I hope everyone else does too.”

Beyond vaccine distribution, census results impact public health delivery in a variety of ways. Indiana receives several billion dollars for health programs where funding is allocated based on census data. These programs include the Supplemental Nutrition program for Women, Infants and Children; special programs for the elderly; community health centers, and water and sewer systems for rural areas.

“Accurate and complete census information is key to the state’s efforts to address health disparities,” said Antoniette Holt, director, Office of Minority Health, Indiana State Department of Health. “As Indiana continues to become more diverse, good demographic data helps us be responsive to the health needs of communities across the state.”

Counting each person in the United States once every 10 years is required by the United States Constitution. On average, it should take a household 10 minutes to complete their census form. The 2010 survey consists of 10 basic questions for each member of a household – including the person’s name, date of birth, age, gender, and race.

“Individual census data is absolutely confidential,” Everson added. The information is not shared with any federal, state or local government agencies – including law enforcement. Every census worker takes an oath to meet this obligation. Anyone convicted of violating this trust is subject to financial penalties and time in federal prison.

Individuals spending six months or more in Indiana during the year should complete the form using their Indiana address. This includes persons who spend part of the year in other locations, such as Florida, during the winter and may be out of state on April 1st. The same applies to college students living at least half of the year in Indiana. Indiana has one of the largest groups of out-of-state college students in the country.

For more information about the census 2010 count, visit www.census.indiana.edu.