



St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Census Day is April 1, 2010: St. Johns Counts! *St. Johns County residents urged to fully participate in Census*

St. Augustine, FL – (February 4, 2010) – As the April 1, 2010 Census Day approaches, St. Johns County residents are being urged to fully participate in the 2010 U.S. Census. The Census collects population data only once every ten years. This statistical data then determines St. Johns County's representation in the Florida and United States legislatures and is also used to allocate more than \$400 billion in federal funding during the next decade.

Population Growth in St. Johns County: During the past decade, St. Johns County has been among the fastest growing counties in the United States. In 2008, the county's population was estimated to be 181,540 persons – a 47.4 percent increase from the official 2000 Census count of 123,135. That compares with state-wide growth for the same period of only 14.7 percent. This dramatic increase in population means St. Johns County has a lot to gain from a complete count in the Census, both for financial allocations and congressional representation.

Congressional Representation: The Census is an opportunity for St. Johns County to be fully represented in both the state and national legislatures. Florida currently has 25 of the 435 seats in the United States House of Representatives, and some projections suggest Florida may gain up to four additional seats following the 2010 Census. State representation is also impacted by Census data, making it crucial that all of St. Johns County is fully counted.

Funding: Data from the Census also heavily influences how more than \$400 billion federal dollars will be allocated during the next ten years. Full participation in the Census is the best way to ensure federal tax dollars paid by St. Johns County residents are returned to our local communities. The dollars are returned in many ways, including grants for parks and libraries, transportation projects, education programs, college financial assistance, social services, health care facilities, job training programs, housing and much more. Census participation may result in as much as \$2,900 per person per year being returned to St. Johns County.

(more)

Easy. Important. Safe. The 2010 Census is easy, important and safe. Unlike previous Census forms that were long and tedious, a single form is being used for everyone this year. The form has only 10 questions and should only take 10 minutes to complete.

The forms are geo-coded and will be mailed to every address in St. Johns County in March. The forms should be filled out and returned in the mail on April 1, 2010. As long as the form is filled out and returned, no Census takers will knock on your door. If a form is not returned, Census workers will visit households May through July.

All personal information collected in the Census is confidential for 72 years. Census employees are strictly forbidden to disclose any information that could identify a respondent, including illegal aliens, with penalties for violations including a jail term, substantial fine or both. Not even the President of the United States has access to the information.

Learn More About the Census: For more information on the 2010 U.S. Census, including a sample questionnaire form and a list of the ten questions, visit www.census2010.gov or www.stjohnscounts.com. Together, we can ensure St. Johns Counts!

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