

American Community Survey

Group Quarters Data Collection

The American Community Survey (ACS) is a national survey that collects responses to questions from a random sample of about 3.5 million addresses each year, and approximately 20,000 Group Quarters facilities, such as correctional facilities for adults, nursing homes, college/university student housing, military quarters, and group homes.

PARTICIPATING IN ACS GROUP QUARTERS OPERATIONS IS IMPORTANT.

Estimates created from responses to the ACS provide vital information that public officials, planners, and entrepreneurs use to assess the past and plan the future.

When a facility responds to the ACS, it is doing its part to provide an accurate portrait of its community to data users in government, nonprofit organizations, academia, and businesses. Local governments use ACS estimates for budgeting, evaluating programs, and planning for community development projects, such as those for the older population, hospitals, and senior centers. Other organizations use this information to provide services to the community and to plan or establish new facilities, buildings, and programs. Administrators at your own facility may use ACS estimates.

Participating in the ACS is also required by law (Title 13, U.S. Code). Your cooperation, and assistance in collecting survey information, is essential to the success of the ACS.

HOW IS THE ACS CONDUCTED IN GROUP QUARTERS?

When a facility is selected to participate in the ACS, data collection occurs in two phases:



Phase One: U.S. Census Bureau field representatives will conduct an interview with a facility contact person to verify information about

the facility, as well as to randomly select residents to participate in the ACS.



Phase Two: Field representatives conduct personal interviews with a random sample of 10–15 residents, though a paper questionnaire (self-

response) may be used in some cases.

Large facilities (mostly college dorms and correctional facilities) may be selected to participate several times throughout the data collection year.

ARE ACS RESPONSES CONFIDENTIAL?

Yes, information that could identify residents is kept absolutely confidential.

The Census Bureau is not permitted to publicly release responses in a way that could identify this institution or its residents. We know that your facility may also have special privacy regulations, such as HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act) and FERPA (Family Education Rights & Privacy Act).

These regulations do not prevent you or the residents of the facility from participating in the ACS.

In fact, if residents are unable to complete the survey because of a health-related issue, an organization or facility covered by HIPAA is permitted under the Privacy Rule to disclose information to the Census Bureau for survey purposes.

Group Quarters Population by Type of Group Quarters and Selected Characteristics: 2016

(In percent)

Characteristics	Total group quarters population ¹	Adult correctional facilities	Nursing facilities/skilled nursing facilities	College/university housing
Total population	8,079,879	2,189,913	1,498,858	2,689,356
SEX AND AGE				
Male	60.9	90.9	36.7	45.3
Female	39.1	9.1	63.3	54.7
Under 15 years	0.8	X	X	X
15 to 17 years	1.7	0.2	X	1.1
18 to 24 years	41.2	13.7	0.2	96.5
25 to 34 years	12.9	33.2	0.6	2.1
35 to 44 years	9.4	25.5	1.1	0.3
45 to 54 years	8.1	17.0	4.0	0.1
55 to 64 years	7.0	8.0	10.9	0.1
65 to 74 years	5.0	2.0	17.7	0.0
75 to 84 years	5.6	0.3	25.7	X
85 years and over	8.3	0.0	39.8	X
Median age (years)	29.4	35.9	81.5	19.7
RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN				
One race	7,791,452	2,096,835	1,485,409	2,579,979
White	67.8	52.2	80.8	73.6
Black or African American	22.9	38.7	14.9	14.0
American Indian and Alaska Native	1.1	2.1	0.5	0.5
Asian	4.6	0.9	1.9	9.8
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.2
Some other race	3.4	5.8	1.7	1.9
Two or more races	288,427	93,078	13,449	109,377
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	13.2	20.4	5.9	9.9
Not Hispanic or Latino	86.8	79.6	94.1	90.1
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	56.9	37.5	76.1	63.8

X Not applicable.

¹ Includes other types of group quarters not shown separately.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 ACS 1-Year Estimates, Table S2601B available at factfinder.census.gov.

For more information about the American Community Survey, please visit census.gov/acs.