Greetings
A Message From the Director

I want to thank you personally for taking the time to review the American Community Survey (ACS) Information Guide. Please use this booklet as your reference for any questions that may arise about the ACS.

The ACS is a nationwide survey that collects and produces information on demographic, social, economic, and housing characteristics about our nation’s population every year. This information provides an important tool for communities to use to see how they are changing. When people fill out the ACS form, they are helping to ensure that decisions about the future of their community can be made using the best data available. Decision makers require a clear picture of their population so that scarce resources can be allocated efficiently and effectively.

Every year, the U.S. Census Bureau contacts over 3.5 million households across the country to participate in the ACS. To help those responding to the ACS, this booklet contains information on the survey aspects that affect the American public the most: ACS collection procedures, questions asked in the ACS, uses and importance of each question, and how to access the ACS estimates produced.

The Census Bureau staff and I look forward to serving you. We will continue to collect and publish ACS estimates every year and, thereby, provide the statistics your community needs in the years to come. I thank you for your interest in the American Community Survey.

Sincerely,

Thomas L. Mesenbourg, Jr.
Senior Advisor Performing the Duties of the Director
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Introduction
This handbook provides an overview of the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS). The purpose is to help explain how ACS data are collected, the importance of completing the ACS survey, and the uses and benefits of ACS statistics.

Short History of the ACS
Every 10 years since 1790, Congress has authorized the government to conduct a national census of the U.S. population, as required by the U.S. Constitution. James Madison ensured that the Constitution gave Congress the authority to collect additional information beyond the population count in order to “enable [future legislators] to adapt the public measures to the particular circumstances of the community.”¹ In the twentieth century, the questions were divided between a “short” and “long” form. Only a subset of the population was required to answer the long-form questions. The most recent census consisted of a short form, which included basic questions about age, sex, race, Hispanic origin, household relationship, and owner/renter status. After the 2000 Census, the long form became the ACS and will continue to collect long-form-type information throughout the decade. The ACS includes not only the basic short-form questions, but also detailed questions about population and housing characteristics. It is a nationwide, continuous survey designed to provide communities with reliable and timely demographic, housing, social, and economic data every year. Since its start, the ACS has been providing a continuous stream of updated information for states and local areas, and will revolutionize the way we use statistics to understand our communities.

Importance of Participating in the ACS

Most people probably never think about how local planners know where to target new development, or where businesses get the data they need to plan for expansion. Most probably don’t think about where policy makers get the objective information they need to make sure programs are on track, or that local services are keeping pace with their community’s changing demographics. It may not be top of the mind for most of us, but it becomes an important consideration when someone receives the ACS in the mail.

Each completed survey is important because it is a building block used to create statistics about communities in America. The information, collected from all over the United States by the ACS and throughout Puerto Rico by the Puerto Rico Community Survey (PRCS), serve as an impartial measuring stick that is used as the basis for decisions that affect nearly every aspect of our lives. People who receive the ACS have the responsibility of responding so that the statistical portrait of their community is as complete and accurate as possible. Every ACS survey is an opportunity for a respondent to help affect what their community receives.

An individual’s responses are combined with others’ responses to create and publish statistics for communities nationwide, which can then be used by community and local governments and the private sector. ACS estimates are often used to help establish priorities through a needs assessment, to develop general plans, research, education, and advocacy work.

Given competing demands and limited resources, it is more important than ever that communities base their governance decisions on an accurate portrait of the current nation. ACS estimates can be analyzed to prioritize proposed initiatives and to reassess existing programs. Local governments also receive requests for help and assistance from a variety of community groups and civic organizations that need to be assessed—ACS estimates are an extremely useful tool for evaluating these requests.
Federal Agencies:
Throughout the federal government, agencies use ACS estimates to inform public policymakers, distribute funds, and assess programs. For example, the U.S. Department of Justice, the U.S. Department of Labor, and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission use ACS estimates to enforce employment antidiscrimination laws. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs uses ACS estimates to evaluate the need for health care, education, and employment programs for those who have served in the military, and the U.S. Department of Education uses ACS estimates to develop adult education and literacy programs.

State and Local Agencies:
Information from the ACS is critical to state and local agencies. Planners and policymakers use the up-to-date estimates to evaluate the need for new roads, hospitals, schools, senior services, and other basic services. For example, emergency response planners use the ACS estimates to model the characteristics of area housing and population so they may evaluate the support needed in the event of a natural disaster.

Nongovernmental organizations:
ACS estimates are available to the public, and are routinely used by researchers, nonprofit organizations, and community groups. These groups produce reports, research papers, business plans, case studies, datasets, and software packages. Some of these activities are designed to inform the public, some are designed to further business ventures, and some are used to apply for funding in the form of grants and donations for community projects.

Emergency Planners:
Emergency planners use ACS estimates to find local statistics critical to emergency planning, preparedness, and recovery efforts. When severe weather threatens or a natural disaster has occurred, ACS estimates provide important characteristics about the displaced population such as size, age and disability status, and the characteristics of housing that may be damaged or destroyed.

American Indians and Alaska Natives:
ACS estimates are available for tribal planners and administrators, as well as national organizations serving American Indians and Alaska Natives, to use in planning for future economic development, housing needs, and access to health and educational services. In combination with information from tribal administrative records, ACS estimates complete the portrait of the community and provide an enhanced view of a community’s current and future needs.
**Businesses:**
Businesses use ACS estimates to inform important strategic decision-making. ACS statistics can be used as a component of market research. They can provide information about concentrations of potential employees with a specific education or occupation, communities that could be good places to build offices or facilities, and information about people that might need their products or services. For example, someone scouting a new location for an assisted-living center might look for an area with a large proportion of seniors and a large proportion of people employed in nursing occupations.

**Educators:**
ACS estimates are available for educators to teach concepts and skills, such as statistical literacy, social studies, geography, and mathematics. Because the ACS is updated annually, it provides timely information for students every year.

**Journalists:**
Journalists use ACS estimates to highlight and investigate the issues that are important to each community. Articles frequently appear, across the country, on topics such as commuting and transportation, unemployment and earnings, education, and home ownership. Additionally, the wealth of ACS statistics allows journalists to paint a portrait of small communities as they respond to changes in population, employment, and housing needs.

**Public:**
People use ACS estimates to answer questions they have about their own community and other communities. If a person wants to see how they compare with their neighbors or find a new place to live, they can look to the ACS to provide a wealth of information. The ACS provides useful statistics about the median income of an area, the median age of the residents, the median house value, and monthly household expenses. The ACS is a good source of information on commute to work times and types of transportation used by the community. These statistics and more are available to the public for communities across the United States.
How the ACS Works for Your Community

The ACS is an official Census Bureau survey that is part of the Decennial Census Program. It is sent to a small percentage of U.S. households monthly.

About 1 in 38 U.S. households per year receives an invitation to participate in the ACS.

Respondent

Individuals can complete the questionnaire for their household either online or on a paper form.

Collection

Your Community

Processing & Dissemination

Census Web Sites

Reports, Tables & Applications

U.S. Census Bureau

Data Combined into Statistics

Personal information removed and kept confidential

Government agencies use these statistics to help with decision-making and to allocate over $400 billion each year back to your community.

Federal Government Agencies, States, and Local Communities

$400 Billion Per Year

Schools

Roads

Hospitals

Civic & academic institutions, and businesses use the ACS for a variety of purposes.

Your Community

The ACS is an official Census Bureau survey that is part of the Decennial Census Program. It is sent to a small percentage of U.S. households monthly.
ACS Subjects and Data Products

Data profiles
Provide broad social, economic, housing, and demographic profiles.

Comparison Profiles
Similar to data profiles but show data side-by-side from the 5 most recent years of the ACS.

Selected population profiles
Provide broad social, economic, and housing profiles for a large number of race, ethnic, ancestry, and country/region of birth groups.

Ranking tables
Provide state rankings of estimates across 86 key variables.

Subject tables
Similar to data profiles but include more detailed ACS data, classified by subject.

Detailed tables
Provide access to the most detailed ACS data and cross tabulations of ACS variables.

Geographic comparison tables
Compare geographic areas other than states (e.g., counties or congressional districts) for key variables.

Summary files
Provide access to the detailed tables through a series of comma-delimited text files on the Census Bureau's FTP site www2.census.gov.

Public Use Microdata Sample files
Provide access to ACS microdata for data users with SAS and SPSS software experience.

Population
Age
Ancestry
Citizenship
Disability
Education
Fertility
Field of Degree
Food stamps/SNAP
Grandparents as caregivers
Health insurance
Hispanic origin
Income
Industry, occupation, and class of worker
Labor force status
Language
Marital history and status
Migration
Period of military service
Place of birth
Place of work and journey to work
Race
Relationship to householder (e.g., spouse)
Residence 1 year ago
Sex
Undergraduate field of degree
Veteran status
Work status last year
Year of naturalization

Housing
Bedrooms
Computer and Internet use
Farm residence
House heating fuel
Value of housing units
Kitchen facilities
Plumbing facilities
Rent
Rooms
Selected monthly owner costs
Telephone service available
Tenure (owner/renter)
Units in structure
Vehicles available
Year moved into unit
Year structure built
How ACS Data Are Collected

Address Selection

One important fact to remember about the ACS is that the forms are not mailed to specific people, but rather to specific addresses. The sample is designed to ensure good geographic coverage and does not target individuals. By focusing on quality geographic coverage, the ACS can produce a good picture of the community’s people and housing by surveying a representative sample of the population.

The Census Bureau selects a random sample of addresses to be included in the ACS. Each address has about a 1-in-480 chance of being selected in a month, and no address should be selected more than once every 5 years. The Census Bureau mails questionnaires to approximately 295,000 addresses a month across the United States. This is a small number of households considering there are more than 180 million addresses in the United States and an address that receives ACS instructions will not likely find a neighbor or friend who has also received them.

Address Contacted by Mail

The Census Bureau informs people living at an address that they have been selected to participate in the ACS. Shortly thereafter (for most U.S. addresses), instructions for completing the survey online are mailed. In Puerto Rico and some hard to reach areas in the U.S., only a paper questionnaire is mailed. Households are asked to complete the survey online or to mail the completed paper questionnaire back to the Census Bureau’s National Processing Center in Jeffersonville, Indiana. If the Census Bureau does not receive a completed survey within a few weeks, it will mail an additional paper survey questionnaire.
Telephone Follow-Up for Surveys Not Completed

The telephone follow-up operation is conducted approximately 6 weeks after the survey instructions are mailed. The Census Bureau will attempt to obtain telephone numbers and conduct telephone interviews for all addresses that have not responded online, by mail, or by telephone.

The telephone calls are assigned to operators at one of the three Census Bureau call centers located in Hagerstown, Maryland; Jeffersonville, Indiana; or Tucson, Arizona. Census operators make numerous attempts at different times of the day, evening, and on weekends to contact an address to complete the survey over the phone.

Personal Visit for People Living in Group Housing

A sample of people living in group quarters facilities, such as college dormitories, nursing homes, and prisons, are also interviewed in person to ensure coverage of everyone in the country.

Telephone Follow-Up for Forms Returned Incomplete

After the returned forms are delivered to the Census Bureau’s National Processing Center and via the Internet, they are reviewed for completeness. Forms with missing items are referred to the telephone call centers for telephone follow-up. Census Bureau operators make numerous attempts at different times of the day and evening to contact an address to collect the missing information. All items on the form are important and the Census Bureau makes every effort to collect complete information from every address in the sample.

Personal Visit Follow-Up for Surveys Not Completed or Addresses With Post Office Box Mail Delivery

Following the telephone operation, a sample is taken from the addresses that have not responded online, by mail, or by telephone, and for those addresses with post office box mail delivery. These addresses are visited by Census Bureau field representatives, who will conduct the interview in person.

Most U.S. addresses selected for the ACS will receive in the mail:

- A prenotice letter
- Instructions to complete the ACS online
- A reminder card
- A replacement ACS questionnaire packet (if the questionnaire is not completed online within 2 weeks of mailing)
- A second reminder card (if a survey is not completed within 4 weeks of initial mailing)
The U.S. Constitution, Title 13, and the ACS

Conducting the ACS is covered by the constitution. The U.S. Constitution states that “[An] Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct.” Pursuant to this constitutional directive, Congress passed separate laws for each decennial census and specified the information to be collected. In 1954, Congress codified earlier census acts and all other statutes authorizing the decennial census as Title 13, U.S. Code. From the very first census act, Congress sought the collection of more information than just a headcount.

The current legal authority for collecting these data resides in Title 13 of the U.S. Code or the “Census Act.” The Census Act provides the Census Bureau with legal authority to conduct the decennial census and delegates broad discretionary authority to the Secretary of Commerce for determining the manner of conducting the census. This authority has been redelegated by the Secretary to the Director of the Census Bureau. Even though Congress has granted this broad discretionary authority, the questions asked in the census and ACS are determined by what statistics are needed to implement a vast array of federal programs.

Courts routinely have upheld the constitutionality of collecting census data, characterizing as unquestionable the power of Congress to require both an enumeration and the collection of statistics in the census. The courts have held that the Constitution, including the fourth and fifth amendments, does not prohibit the gathering of other statistics in addition to the enumeration every 10 years.
The U.S. Census Bureau Oath of Nondisclosure

Census Bureau employees are sworn to keep your information confidential.

“I will not disclose any information contained in the schedules, lists, or statements obtained for or prepared by the Census Bureau to any person or persons either during or after employment.”

(Under federal law, Census Bureau employees who break this oath are subject to a fine of not more than $250,000 or imprisonment for not more than 5 years, or both.)

The Essential Role of the ACS

- The ACS serves the nation by providing a consistent and cohesive collection of population, social, housing and economic characteristics that are comparable across all U.S. geographies.
- For over 160 years, the Federal Government has used data on socioeconomic characteristics to guide policy decisions.
- Federal agencies use ACS statistics to determine the equitable distribution of a substantial portion of federal assistance to the states, particularly in the form of grants.
- The ACS is a federally funded statistical product that Census makes available to the public through online access tools, documentation, and support programs for data users.

Title 13, U.S. Code, §141(a). “The Secretary shall, in the year 1980 and every 10 years thereafter, take a decennial census of population as of the first day of April of such year, which date shall be known as the “decennial census date,” in such form and content as he may determine, including the use of sampling procedures and special surveys. In connection with any such census, the Secretary is authorized to obtain such other census information as necessary.”

Title 13, U.S. Code, §193. “In advance of, in conjunction with, or after the taking of each census provided for by this chapter, the Secretary may make surveys and collect such preliminary and supplementary statistics related to the main topic of the census as are necessary to the initiation, taking, or completion thereof.”
You can use ACS estimates in different ways and for different reasons. Each one of our downloadable PDF Compass handbooks helps a particular group with specific how-to instructions and/or case studies.

[www.census.gov/acs/www/guidance_for_data_users/handbooks/]

**General Users:** Here are the basics of the ACS, with the opportunities and challenges of using these estimates. Learn to access and use ACS data on the Census Bureau’s Web site. Plus find concrete examples of how ACS data can answer real-world questions about our society.

**Business:** Income and housing statistics by geographical areas can help you gauge the sales potential of products and services. Find out what data products are available and how to access them with step-by-step instructions and examples.

**Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS):** PUMS files are an extraordinary resource for researchers. Learn how to access PUMS files, create PUMS tables using general statistical software, create tables using DataFerrett, and measure statistical accuracy, margin of error, and confidence intervals.

**State and Local Governments:** ACS estimates can help state and local governments establish priorities, assess needs, develop plans, and implement policies. Several real-life case studies demonstrate how best to use and interpret 1-year and multiyear data.

**Media:** Writers and editors search ACS estimates for statistics and trends. Here’s how, with step-by-step examples of how journalists have used the ACS to uncover and enhance hard news and feature stories.


The ACS Compass Products online tutorial is for respondents, data users, and others who want basic information on the ACS. The tutorial has lessons on the purpose and benefits of the ACS and shows how to access a variety of data products and resources. There are five separate sections that together take about an hour to complete.

You may access the ACS Compass Products online tutorial at [www.census.gov/acs/www/guidance_for_data_users/e_tutorial](www.census.gov/acs/www/guidance_for_data_users/e_tutorial).
Presentations

ACS Compass Products presentations provide important information on various aspects of the ACS. They were developed for two main purposes: (1) for individuals to learn more about the ACS and (2) to provide a wide audience with the tools needed to conduct training on the ACS. Each presentation consists of approximately 35 slides and the accompanying speakers’ notes.

You may access the ACS Compass Products presentations at: www.census.gov/acs/www/guidance_for_data_users/training_presentations.

1 “An Overview of the American Community Survey.” Basics of the ACS program and Web site, with information on content, survey methodology, and data products. How the ACS supplements the 10-year census with continuous social, economic, housing, and demographic data.

2 “Data Products From the American Community Survey.” Examples and suggestions for using four types of data profiles, four types of tables, thematic maps, and Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) files. How period estimates and sampling error measures could affect your results.

3 “Things That May Affect the Estimates From the American Community Survey.” How four different measures of sampling error are calculated, what they mean, and how you can use them to draw appropriate conclusions. Plus a brief look at nonsampling error and population controls.

4 “Understanding Multiyear Estimates From the American Community Survey.” Explains 1-year, 3-year, and 5-year period estimates and when to use each one. Introduction to interpreting the data and making comparisons using multiyear estimates.

5 “Geographic Areas and Concepts for the American Community Survey.” Get the most out of ACS estimates by knowing how geographic areas are defined in different ways and in different estimates. The difference between legal and administrative areas is important.

6 “Introduction to the Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) File From the American Community Survey.” Reasons to access PUMS data for small or unique population groups and housing characteristics.

The ACS creates **period estimates**, which means they represent the characteristics of the population and housing over a specific data collection period. These are the 1-year, 3-year and 5-year estimates.

- **1-year estimates**
  - 12 months of collected data
  - Data for areas with populations of 65,000+

- **3-year estimates**
  - 36 months of collected data
  - Data for areas with populations of 20,000+

- **5-year estimates**
  - 60 months of collected data
  - Data for all areas

For more guidance on using ACS data, please visit www.census.gov/acs/www/guidance_for_data_users/guidance_main.
For name and telephone number?

We ask for a person’s names for two reasons. First, we have found over many years of research that it is easier for a respondent to keep track of which person they are reporting for if the names are used. If a respondent is interrupted while completing the survey, it will be easier to resume reporting if they know which person they are working on—particularly in larger households.

The second reason is administrative. In some instances, the returned questionnaires are damaged, difficult to interpret, or missing critical information. If we have the names and phone number of the person who completed the form, we can call back to collect missing information or ask for clarification. By having the names, we can more easily refer to specific information.

Without the names and phone number, we would have to send someone to an address to replicate the information—which is more expensive than a phone call.

About income?

We ask questions about income to get key statistics used to determine poverty levels, measure economic well-being, and gauge the need for economic assistance. State and local governments use this information to assist children in poverty and to allocate funds to counties and school districts for resources and services that improve the education of economically disadvantaged children.

About home value?

We ask about the value of the home to get estimates of home values, regardless of whether homes are not currently for sale or sold recently. Federal programs use this information as an independent check on the appraised values of homes to see if the amounts financed for mortgages are reasonable.

When someone leaves home to go to work?

We ask when a person leaves for work to generate basic information about commuting patterns. The statistics are used by metropolitan planning organizations to design programs that ease traffic problems, reduce congestion and promote car pooling. Public transit agencies use the statistics to identify areas that need transit service, and police and fire departments use the statistics to plan for emergency services in areas where many people work.

About race?

We ask a question about a person’s race because it is critical to many public policies. Policy makers use statistics on race to guide funding decisions in programs that support equal opportunity in education, assess fairness of employment practices under the Civil Rights act, and help ensure everyone has equal access to health care. Federal agencies also use the race statistics to ensure local jurisdiction’s follow the Voting Rights Act.

About disabilities?

We ask questions about disabilities to generate statistics about the number and percentage of people with a disability. Federal, state, county and local governments use this information to assess the impact of policies intended to reduce discrimination and improve participation in community activities, including job training and health care programs. Local transit agencies, under the Americans with Disabilities Act, use the information to make sure public transportation services are as useful for those with disabilities as they are for everyone else.

About health insurance?

We ask questions about health insurance to provide policy makers with accurate information about the insured and uninsured. Planning and implementing public health insurance programs requires accurate state and local information on health insurance status. State and local governments can use these statistics to target outreach and enrollment efforts for programs like Medicare, Medicaid and the State Children’s Health Insurance Program. Measuring health insurance status also helps public health agencies plan to meet current and future health care needs.

About kitchen facilities, telephone service, running water, and flush toilets?

Government agencies use this information to make sure people have affordable, safe and sanitary housing, to determine fair market rates, and to determine whether an area is eligible for housing assistance or loans. Information on kitchen facilities is used to evaluate the effectiveness of programs that provide grants to local government for the rehabilitation of properties used as rentals. Information on plumbing is used by public health officials to locate areas in danger of groundwater contamination and to prevent the spread of waterborne disease. Information on telephone service is used to develop plans for emergency/911 services.
Do I have to respond to the ACS?

Yes. Responding to the ACS is about helping national, tribal, state and local officials make informed decisions with timely and accurate data. Just as people are required to respond to jury duty, get a driver’s license in order to drive, pay their taxes and report their income, they also have the obligation to respond to decennial census surveys.

Someone came to my home to interview me for the ACS. Is this legitimate?

If someone has contacted you about the ACS and you would like to verify that the visit or phone call you received was legitimate, you may call your regional office. You can find contact information for your office at www.census.gov/regions/.

Why was my address selected for the ACS?

Addresses selected for the ACS come from the Census Bureau’s official inventory of known living quarters and selected nonresidential units in the United States and Puerto Rico. Each scientifically selected address represents other households in the surrounding community.

Interviewing a small sample of addresses, 3.5 million, rather than all addresses in the United States, allows the Census Bureau to measure the whole population while limiting the cost of the survey and reducing the overall impact on respondents.

What if I don’t know the exact answer to an ACS question?

On the ACS, if no one in your household knows the answer to a question, and the information cannot be referenced in a bill or other document, please give your best estimate.

I am concerned about identity theft. How does the Census Bureau protect my ACS information?

We understand concerns about identity theft and privacy. We will ensure that only authorized persons with a work-related need-to-know view your personal information. When we process the information collected by the ACS, individuals’ names and other personal identifiers are deleted from the files used to tabulate these data. We do not maintain a national database with the names, addresses, and personal information collected by the ACS.

Additionally, we employ statistical methodologies to ensure that the statistics we release do not identify individuals or businesses. These methods include extensive review and analysis of all our data products, as well as disclosure avoidance methodologies (such as data suppression and modification) to screen out data that might identify a specific individual or business.

Please note that the ACS does not ask for Social Security numbers, mother’s maiden name, or specific information regarding bank accounts or credit cards—the information typically used for identity theft.

Doesn't the government already have the information requested on the ACS?

The Census Bureau does use statistics from other government agencies for research and evaluations to improve our surveys and censuses and better understand the information we are collecting. We also use such information to help develop estimates of the population between census years. However, we cannot use other agencies’ information in place of actual responses to the ACS for several reasons:

- These statistics—called administrative records—do not contain information for everyone.
- We cannot obtain all of the required information from administrative records.
- Information from administrative records may not be usable because of differences in collection periods or definitions.
- The ACS was designed to provide up-to-date information for federal and state agencies. Administrative records usually are not as current as the information that we collect.

For more information go to https://ask.census.gov.
Find out more about your community through new tools for the ACS

**QuickFacts** is the best online tool to find interesting facts fast. Start with a map to quickly find data about your community from the ACS and other data sources. Want to know the median income for your city? The median age for your hometown? Access QuickFacts today to get started.  
[http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/](http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/)

**APIs** (Application Programming Interface) and the **Developer Forum** are made available by the Census Bureau to improve public access to published dataset and to encourage innovative use of data products. We invite developers to use these APIs, join our Developer Forum, and provide feedback to help Census move forward with continued API development. Use the forum site to submit questions, provide feedback, and share ideas with the Census Bureau.  
[www.census.gov/developers](http://www.census.gov/developers)  

**Easy Stats** is a new census.gov data tool that allows the user to create their own custom tables on the fly, with a menu of variables the user can select, and almost instantaneously create their own custom table which can be downloaded into an Excel file.  
[www.census.gov/easystats/](http://www.census.gov/easystats/)

**American FactFinder (AFF)** is an online data access tool developed by the Census Bureau for the public. Data users of all skill levels use AFF to search billions of ACS and other Census Bureau statistics. AFF allows users to drill down to needed statistics, create custom data tables, download data files, and create customized maps.  
[www.factfinder2.census.gov](http://www.factfinder2.census.gov)

**DataFerrett** is a unique data analysis and extraction tool—with recoding capabilities—to customize ACS data to suit your requirements. Using DataFerrett, you can develop an unlimited array of customized spreadsheets that are as versatile and complex as your usage demands.  
[www.dataferret.census.gov](http://www.dataferret.census.gov)
Four Ways to Find Help With ACS Statistics

Ask Census
https://ask.census.gov
Click the FAQ link at the top of any Census.gov page. Locate “American Community Survey” on the left hand menu and select to view questions and answers on the ACS.

Partnership and Data Services
Call or visit Partnership and Data Services in your Census Bureau regional office for local data and assistance, workshops, and presentations. See map to the right for your regional office contact information.

Customer Service
Call the Census Bureau’s Customer Services Center first at 301-763-INFO (4636) or 1-800-923-8282 during normal business hours, Eastern time.

ACS Web site
www.census.gov/acs
The ACS Web site provides a wealth of up-to-date information about the ACS program, data collection and research.

Contact Information

How do I complete the survey online?
Please call 1-800-354-7271 for assistance.

How do I complete the paper form?
Please call 1-800-354-7271 for assistance.

Did the Census Bureau call me?
Census Bureau calls originate from one of three call centers:

Hagerstown, MD: 1-800-392-6975
Jeffersonville, IN: 1-800-523-3205
Tucson, AZ: 1-800-642-0469

Did the Census Bureau visit me?
Please contact your regional office to verify a visit from a Census Bureau employee. See contact information to the right.