

## Historical Decennial Census Veteran Status Questions and Enumerator Instructions

### Links:

Census Bureau History

<http://www.census.gov/history/>

Measuring America: The Decennial Census from 1790 to 2000 (PDF Document)

<http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/pol02marv.pdf>

Questionnaires

[http://www.census.gov/history/www/through\\_the\\_decades/questionnaires/](http://www.census.gov/history/www/through_the_decades/questionnaires/)

Index of Questions

[http://www.census.gov/history/www/through\\_the\\_decades/index\\_of\\_questions/](http://www.census.gov/history/www/through_the_decades/index_of_questions/)

### 1890 Census

**Question:** Whether a soldier, sailor, or marine during the civil war (United States or Confederate), or widow of such person.

**Instructions:** Write "Sol" for soldier, "Sail" for sailor, and "Ma" for marine. If the person served in the United States forces add "U.S." in parentheses, and if in the Confederate forces add "Conf." in parentheses, thus: Sol (U.S.); Sail (U.S.); Sol (Conf.), etc. In the case of a widow of a deceased soldier, sailor, or marine, use the letter "W" in addition to the above designations, as W. Sol (U.S.), W. Sol (Conf.), and so on.

The enumeration of the survivors of the late war, including their names, organizations, length of service, and the widows of such as have died, is to be taken on a special schedule prepared for the purpose, as provided for by the act of March 1, 1889, and *relates only to those persons, or widows of persons, who served in the Army, Navy, or Marine Corps of the United States in the late war.* The inquiry concerning the survivors of both the United States and Confederate forces is made on the population schedule so as to ascertain the *number* now living and the *number* who have died and have left widows.

### 1910 Census

**Question:** Whether a survivor of the Union of Confederate Army or Navy

**Instruction:** This question should be asked as to all males over 50 years of age who were born in the United States and all foreign born males who immigrated to this country before 1865. Write "UA" if a survivor of the Union Army; "UN" if a survivor of the Union Navy; "CA" if a survivor of the Confederate Army; and "CN" if a survivor of the Confederate Navy. For all other persons leave the column blank.

### 1930 Census

**Question:** Whether the person is a veteran of the U.S. military or naval forces mobilized for any war or expedition? If yes, which war or expedition?

**Instructions:** Enumerators were to enter "WW" for World War I, "Sp" for the Spanish-

American War, "Civ" for the Civil War, "Phil" for the Phillipine insurrection, "Box" for the Boxer rebellion, or "Mex" for the Mexican expedition.

### 1940 Census

The 1940 census was the first to include a statistical sample. Five percent of people were asked an additional 16 questions. In order to gauge the effect of the Great Depression on the nation's housing stock, a census of occupied dwellings was coupled with the usual demographic questions.

**Long Form Question:** Is this person a veteran of the United States military forces; or the wife, widow, or under-18-year old child of a veteran? (If so enter "Yes")

- If the person is a child of a veteran, is the veteran father dead?
- War or military service

**Instructions:** Enumerators were to mark "W" for World War I; "S" for the Spanish-American War, the Phillipine insurrection, or Boxer Rebellion; "SW" for both the Spanish-American War and World War I; "R" for peacetime service only; or "Ot" for any other war or expedition.

### 1950 Census

The 1950 census population questionnaire asked fewer questions than its predecessor; the full population was asked only 20 questions. As in 1940, a 5 percent sample was asked an additional slate of questions.

**Long Form Question (5% sample):** If male: did he ever serve in the U.S. Armed Forces during...

- a) World War II
- b) World War I
- c) Any other time, including present service

### 1960 Census

For the first time in 1960, the Census Bureau mailed out a combined population and housing questionnaire to all urban residents in the United States. Residents were to complete the questionnaire themselves and hold it until an enumerator came visit and collect the form. Enumerators then gave an additional sample questionnaire to 25 percent of households, with instructions to mail it back to their census office. Rural residents were enumerated by traditional visitation. The census "short form" collected only five questions: age, sex, race, and marital status.

**Long Form Question:** (asked of population 15 and older) If this is a man—Has he ever served in the Army, Navy, or other Armed Forces of the United States? (Yes, No)

If so, was it during the:

- Korean War (June 1950 to Jan. 1955)
- World War II (Sept. 1940 to July 1947)
- World War I (April 1917 to Nov. 1918)
- Any other time, including present service

## 1970 Census

The 1970 census was the first to operate on a true mail-out mail-back system. Because enumerators were only sent out to collect information from non-responding residents, the census questionnaire was designed to be filled out by the members of each household. The first eight questions were asked of every resident. All following questions, including the entire census of housing, were asked of a sample of either five, fifteen, or twenty percent of residents. The second question aims to get at whether the respondent was on active duty in the Armed Forces.

**Long Form Question:** (asked of population 15 and older) If the person is a man- has he ever served in the Army, Navy, or other Armed Forces of the United States? Was it during the...

- Vietnam Conflict (since Aug. 1964)
- Korean War (June 1950 to Jan 1955)
- World War II (Sept. 1940 to July 1947)
- World War I (April 1917 to Nov. 1918)
- Any other time

In April 1965 was this person...

- Working at a job or business (yes, no)
- In the Armed Forces (yes, no)
- Attending College (yes, no)

## 1980 Census

**Long Form Question:** (asked of population 15 and older)

In April 1975 (*five years ago*) was this person-

- On active duty in the Armed Forces? (yes, no)
- Attending college? (yes, no)
- Working at a job or business? (yes, no) If yes, full time or part time?

Is this person a veteran of active-duty military service in the Armed Forces of the United States? Was active duty military service during-

- May 1975 or later
- Vietnam era (August 1964 - April 1975)
- February 1955 - July 1964
- Korean conflict (June 1950 - January 1955)
- World War II (September 1940 - July 1947)
- World War I (April 1917 - November 1918)
- Any other time

## 1990 Census

The 1990 census asked only seven population and seven housing questions. A sample of respondents received the "long form," which included 23 more population inquiries.

**Long Form Question:** Has this person ever been in active-duty military service in the Armed Forces of the United States or ever been in the United States military Reserves or the National Guard? *If service was in Reserves or National Guard only, see instruction guide.*

- Yes, now on active duty
- Yes, on active duty in past, but not now

- Yes, service in Reserves or National Guard (skip to 18)
- No (skip to 18)

Was active-duty military service during—*Fill a circle for each period in which this person served.*

- September 1980 or later
- May 1975 to August 1980
- Vietnam era (August 1964 - April 1975)
- February 1955 - July 1964
- Korean conflict (June 1950 - January 1955)
- World War II (September 1940 - July 1947)
- World War I (April 1917 - November 1918)
- Any other time

In total, how many years of active-duty military service has this person had? (Years)

## 2000 Census

The 2000 census short form asked eight questions to all respondents. The long form, which combined housing and population questions into a single questionnaire, asked an additional 45 questions, all respondents were asked Questions 1 - 6 and Question 33.

**Long Form Questions:** Has this person ever served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, military Reserves, or National Guard? *Active duty does not include training for the Reserves or National Guard, but DOES include activation, for example, for the Persian Gulf War.*

- Yes, now on active duty
- Yes, on active duty in past, but not now
- No, training for Reserves or National Guard (skip to 21)
- No, never served in the military (skip to 21)

When did this person serve on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces? *Mark a box for EACH period in which this person served.*

- April 1995 or later
- August 1990 to March 1995 (including Persian Gulf War)
- September 1980 to July 1990
- May 1975 to August 1980
- Vietnam era (August 1964 - April 1975)
- February 1955 - July 1964
- Korean conflict (June 1950 - January 1955)
- World War II (September 1940 - July 1947)
- Any other time

In total, how many years of active-duty military service has this person had?

- Less than 2 years
- 2 years or more

## 2010 Census (Island Areas Only)

The 2010 Census had one of the shortest census questionnaires in the history of the United States. The 2010 Census only collected data on the “short form” in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. It asked for name, age, sex, race, ethnicity, relationship, and whether you own or rent your home. The 2010 census in the Island Areas was conducted using the “long form” and was similar to the American Community Survey questionnaire. The U.S. Island Areas include the U.S. Virgin Islands, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, and Guam.

**Questions:** Has this person ever served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, military Reserves, or National Guard? *Active duty does not include training for the Reserves or National Guard, but DOES include activation, for example, for the Persian Gulf War.*

- Yes, now on active duty
- Yes, on active duty during the last 12 months, but not now
- Yes, on active duty in the past, but not during the last 12 months
- No, training for Reserves or National Guard only
- No, never served in the military

When did this person serve on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces? *Mark (X) a box for EACH period in which this person served, even if just for part of the period.*

- September 2001 or later
- August 1990 to August 2001 (including Persian Gulf War)
- September 1980 to July 1990
- May 1975 to August 1980
- Vietnam era (August 1964 to April 1975)
- March 1961 to July 1964
- February 1955 to February 1961
- Korean War (July 1950 to January 1955)
- January 1947 to June 1950
- World War II (December 1941 to December 1946)
- November 1941 or earlier

Does this person have a VA service-connected disability rating?

- Yes (such as 0%, 10%, 20%, ... , 100%)
- No

What is this person’s service-connected disability rating?

- 0 percent
- 10 or 20 percent
- 30 or 40 percent
- 50 or 60 percent
- 70 percent or higher