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CENSUS 2000 INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM NO. 100

MEMORANDUM FOR        Distribution List

From:                    Carol M. Van Horn (Signed)  
                              Chief, Decennial Management Division

Subject:                 Count Question Resolution Program

**Census 2000 Count Question Resolution Program Overview**

This memorandum provides information concerning the Census 2000 Count Question Resolution (CQR) program. This program will be implemented to respond to challenges to the Census 2000 housing unit and group quarter counts received from local and tribal governmental entities in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. The CQR program will become effective on June 30, 2001 and will end on September 30, 2003. Please note this program is currently pending Office of Management and Budget approval.

The CQR start date of June 30, 2001 is coordinated with the release of the Summary File 1 (SF1). SF1 data will be released on a state-by-state basis between June and September 2001 and will contain block-level data on the number of housing units and group quarters population counts. After the release of SF1, some governmental entities may want to challenge these counts. The Census Bureau will respond to all questions and will notify all affected governmental entities of any corrections to their official counts as a result of CQR.

Challenges to the overseas counts of persons in the military and Federal civilian personnel stationed overseas and their dependents living with them will not be accepted. These overseas counts are obtained using administrative records and will be used solely for reapportioning seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and do not provide the sub state geographic information required for the CQR program.

Governmental units challenging the completeness or accuracy of the Census 2000 counts must contact the Census Bureau directly in writing or by electronic mail to initiate the CQR process. All challenges should be sent to the Census Bureau's headquarters. Local and government officials can submit their challenge in writing to:

The U.S. Census Bureau  
Count Question Resolution Program  
Decennial Management Division, Room 2002/SFC-2  
4700 Silver Hill Road, Stop 7100  
Washington, DC 20233-7100

CQR submissions also can be submitted to the following email address:

[Count.Question.Resolution@census.gov](mailto:Count.Question.Resolution@census.gov)

The Census Bureau will respond to all submissions from local and tribal governments, county clerks, city planners, local planning board representatives, and state legislative representatives with redistricting functions within each state and state equivalents who are acting on the behalf of a local or tribal jurisdiction. A local or tribal government must provide documentation of the missing housing unit(s) or group quarter(s) that they believe existed on April 1, 2000. For documentation necessary to initiate the Census 2000 CQR process, refer to the section below, "Documentation Necessary to Initiate and Support the Census 2000 CQR Process".

The Census Bureau will make corrections if the results of our research indicate they are warranted. Our experience has shown that some of the questions received from the local or tribal officials do not reflect errors in census counts, but result from an incorrect or incomplete understanding of the procedures used to take the census. The Census Bureau's determination of whether a correction is necessary will be based on the information provided by local and tribal governmental unit representatives and the results of the Census Bureau's review of the census records. The Census Bureau will investigate challenges to determine whether a housing unit or group quarters that existed on April 1, 2000, was allocated to an adjacent jurisdiction or erroneously excluded during the processing of the data. ***The Census Bureau will not collect new information.***

The CQR program is not intended to create a mechanism or process to challenge the March 6, 2001 decision of the Secretary of Commerce to release unadjusted Census 2000 redistricting data. No changes will be made to the apportionment or redistricting counts as a result of this program. This process will allow the Census Bureau to maintain consistency between data products while maintaining the schedule for timely release of the data. However, the Census Bureau will issue a revised official Census 2000 population and housing unit counts for the affected governmental entity(es), maintain a list of CQR corrected areas on the American Factfinder, and will incorporate any corrections into its Postcensal Estimates program beginning in December 2002.

### **Types of Corrections Acceptable for the Census 2000 CQR Program**

The results of the Census 2000 CQR Program will produce three types of corrections: boundary corrections; geocoding corrections; and coverage corrections:

- ***Boundary corrections***--Census 2000 respects the proper alignment of the jurisdictional boundaries of functioning governmental units as legally in effect on January 1, 2000. The Census Bureau needs to ensure that the geographic assignment information provided does not, in fact, reflect boundary changes made after January 1, 2000. Problems, such as the inaccurate reporting of jurisdictional boundaries and the inaccurate recording of such boundaries by the Census Bureau, will be addressed by the CQR program.

The boundaries of other geographic and statistical areas, such as census designated places, census tracts, voting districts, school districts, and the like are not in the scope of the Census 2000 CQR program.

- ***Geocoding corrections***--placement of living quarters and associated population within the correct boundaries, census blocks, and the like. Even if the CQR process does not result in a change to the total count for a local or tribal jurisdiction, we will send a letter to the local or tribal government official when the Census Bureau moves group quarters or housing units to different blocks within the jurisdiction.
- ***Coverage corrections***--add or remove specific living quarters and persons residing therein that were identified during the Census 2000 process but erroneously included or excluded due to processing errors. Addresses for living quarters that were not found to be erroneously excluded due to processing will be added to the Census address list for use in future statistical programs of the Census Bureau.

### **Documentation Necessary To Initiate and Support the Census 2000 CQR Process**

The Census Bureau will require documentation before committing resources to investigate concerns raised by local and tribal officials or their representatives about boundary and geographic assignment errors or the accuracy of the census housing unit or group quarters population counts. In general, when submitting a challenge, governmental entities must specify whether the challenge disputes the location of a governmental unit boundary or the number of housing units and/or group quarters population counts in one or more tabulation blocks.

- ***Boundary challenges***-- For boundary disputes, indicate on a map the location of the governmental unit boundary in dispute; that is, it must be shown where the Census Bureau incorrectly depicts the boundary and show the correct boundary legally in effect as of January 1, 2000. The Census Bureau will compare the maps and appropriate supporting documentation submitted by the challenging entity with the information used by the Census Bureau to depict the boundaries for Census 2000.

Challenges to boundaries must:

- < show the correct location of the boundary and the portion of the boundary that the Census Bureau depicted incorrectly, including the Census 2000 tabulation block numbers associated with the boundary.
- < provide the Census Bureau with a list of addresses in affected tabulation blocks, indicating their location in relationship to the boundary requiring correction.
- ***Housing Unit challenges***--the governmental official must provide supporting evidence that specifically reflects the validity of any address list source and reflect the residential addresses that existed as viable living quarters on April 1, 2000.

Challenges to housing unit counts must:

- < specify the Census 2000 tabulation block(s) for which the counts are being challenged. SF1 can be used to obtain tabulation block housing unit counts.
- < provide a complete address list for all units that should be included in each contested block.
- < be certified by local and tribal officials that the addresses on their lists existed and could be lived in on April 1, 2000.

- ***Group Quarters challenges*** -- the government official must provide the name of the group quarters and evidence, e.g., a listing of patients that supports the number of persons residing in the XYZ Nursing Home as of April 1, 2000.

Challenges to group quarters population counts must:

- < specify the tabulation block(s) for which the counts are being challenged. Group quarters may have housing units on the premises for staff and/or guests. SF1 can be used to obtain group quarters population counts by tabulation block.
- < provide a complete address list for all group quarters units that should be included in each contested block.
- < be certified by local and tribal officials that the addresses on their lists existed and could be lived in on April 1, 2000.

- ***Types of Acceptable Paper Maps***

Paper Census 2000 Public Law 94-171 County Block Maps--These maps accompanied the Redistricting Data Summary Files. Paper Census 2000 Redistricting Block Maps for Washington, DC. Paper Census 2000 Redistricting Municipio Block Maps for Puerto Rico--These maps will accompanied the Puerto Rico Redistricting Data File.

Paper Census 2000 Block Maps--These maps will be provided to local and tribal jurisdictions and will show tabulation block numbers. They are a companion map for the Demographic Profiles that will contain information on population totals, including group quarters and selected population and housing characteristics.

Paper Maps based on the 2000 TIGER/Line File--These maps may be generated by local or tribal governments based on information from the Census Bureau's 2000 TIGER/Line files using commercial geographic information systems.

Other Paper Maps Showing Census Bureau 2000 Tabulation Block Numbers and Boundaries-- These maps should show geographic boundaries as of January 1, 2000, that identify census tabulation blocks, census tracts, legal and statistical entities and state

boundaries; maps depicting data collection blocks cannot be used. In general, maps should be comparable to Census 2000 maps.

- ***Types of Address Lists***

City-Style Address Lists--Must contain city-style addresses organized by Census 2000 tabulation block within census tract. Housing unit identifiers in multi-unit buildings must be included, if applicable.

Non-City-Style Address Lists--Non-city-style addresses must be keyed to the local or tribal government's map-spotted maps, that is, maps that show the exact location of the housing unit. The list should be focused on the specific area and/ or addresses where the problem exists. All housing units in the disputed block must be map spotted and a description of the housing unit and location must be supplied.

Group Quarters Information--Provide the name, address, and telephone number for the administrative office of the facility as of April 1, 2000. In addition, provide the census tract and tabulation block number for the location of the group quarters.

### **Internal Census Bureau Review**

Changes to the boundaries or counts for a jurisdiction also may result from Census Bureau initiated research and review of census files. The Census Bureau reviews Census 2000 data by checking for data reasonableness, internal and intra-product consistency, and consistency with historical and external data sources. This review process begins with an analysis by Census Bureau staff, the Federal-State Cooperative Program for Population Estimates and others. These reviewers identify, address, and/or explain issues or problems related to coverage, content, processing, and geocoding. Unresolved potential problems will be forwarded to the CQR staff for additional analysis.

Changes made as result of this internal review and/or research will be incorporated into the CQR process and documented in the same way that changes based on jurisdictional CQR challenges will be documented. In cases where changes to the housing unit and/or population counts are made, new official counts will be issued to the affected jurisdictions.

### **Changes That Result in Corrections**

The corrected CQR counts that are issued are based on the housing unit and population counts as of April 1, 2000. The new official census counts may be used by the governmental entities for all programs requiring official Census 2000 data. The Census Bureau will not make corrections to the data concerning the characteristics of the population and housing inventory. The corrected counts will be reflected in the Census Bureau's decennial file modified for use in making postcensal estimates that will be released on a flow basis beginning in December 2002. An inventory of corrections also will be available on the American FactFinder Internet Data Access System (errata) and updated periodically. The base files for the census will remain unrevised so that none of the standard Census 2000 data products will reflect the corrections.

**Challenges That Do Not Result in Corrections**

When a local or tribal government provides evidence that the Census Bureau missed housing units or group quarters that existed on April 1, 2000, but the CQR research and Census 2000 records show that all of the Census Bureau's boundary information, geocoding, and processing were correctly implemented, the Census Bureau will respond by sending a letter to the official or his/her representative stating that the Census Bureau will maintain the documentation for consideration in the context of address list updating activities over the decade.