



**ORGANISATION OF EASTERN  
CARIBBEAN STATES  
STATISTICS  
COMMUNICATION  
AND ADVOCACY GROUP  
(OSCAG)**

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ'S)  
AND ANSWERS**

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# WHEN CONDUCTING A CENSUS OF POPULATION AND HOUSING

## General Questions

### 1. What is a Census of Population and Housing?

The Census is an official count of all residents of [country name] and helps determine the population of [country name]. The NSO of [country name] conducts a Census every ten years. The next Census will take place on [month, day, year]. The Census provides a statistical portrait of the [country name] and its people. In [country name], it is mandatory for all residents to participate in the Census.

The Census will collect information on the demographic, social and economic situation of people across [country name] and the dwellings they live in.

Enumerators will visit households to administer questionnaires using tablets.

### 2. Why do we need to have a Census of Population and Housing?

The information gathered from a Census of Population and Housing, for example, number of people, their distribution, their living conditions and other key data is critical for nation development. This type of data is essential for policy makers to make proper informed decision and know where to invest.

### 3. Why is the Census of Population and Housing important to (insert country name)?

Information from the census will be used by governments, businesses, associations, community organizations and many others to make important decisions for your community or district or parish, and the entire country.

The information you provide will help ensure that the [year] Census accurately reflects [country's name] changing society. Your responses will ensure that your community/ district has the information it needs for planning services such as health care, schooling, social services, housing, agriculture and skills training for employment.

### 4. Why is it important that everyone be counted in the census?

The Census of Population and Housing is one of the most important sources of statistics for a country. In [country name], the Census is the primary source of reliable, detailed data for small geographic areas.

### 5. Are people required by law to complete the census questionnaire?

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All residents of [country name] are legally required to complete the Census Questionnaire, according to the *Statistics Act*.

Additionally, the NSO of [country name] is bounded by law to protect the confidentiality of the information respondents provide in the Census. Only the NSO of [country name] employees who have taken the oath of secrecy have access to Census Questionnaires.

**6. Why do you need my full name?**

Names are needed to ensure that every person in each household is counted only once.

**7. How long does it take to fill out the questionnaire?**

This depends on a number of factors. The amount of persons in the household, if persons are home at the same time or if the Enumerator has to revisit the household. It also depends on person's status in the household.

**8. Will illegal immigrants be counted?**

All persons living in (country name) will be counted regardless of their immigration status. The aim of the Census is to count everyone. Information will only be used for statistical purpose and cannot be divulged to anyone.

**9. Why are questions asked on sex and not gender?**

Questions are asked on sex to distinguish male or female as oppose to gender which is our physical make up. In the OECS our laws have not been changed to state otherwise as it pertains to sex (male or female).

**10. How will my answers be used?**

Answers will be used to do various analysis, better policy formulation etc.

**11. What information does the Census of Population and Housing collect?**

Information is collected on demographics, households, status of employment, unemployment, selfemployment, economically inactive individuals, education, health, communication and noncommunicable diseases, crime, disability etc.

**12. How do I know the person at my door is from the Census Office?**

The person should be uniformed in census attire (polo or t-shirt) with Census Logo printed somewhere on it, has a census picture identification card and a letter from the Census Office.

**13. What month will the Census of Population and Housing be taken?** Census Day will be (insert day, month and year) in (insert country).

**14. Are my answers safe and secure?**

All answers given to Enumerators are secured. The Census Office Staff all have to take an oath of secrecy and if an officer divulge any information they can be brought before the Court and be fined and confined.

**15. Why do you ask questions about what is in my house and all who lives there?**

This data provides important information on housing trend and the contents in the household. Further, it ascertain that each person is only counted once.

**16. Since I am asked to participate in a Census of Population and Housing, what can I expect?**

When the data is analysed you know that the information that was provided is in the information compiled and you would have done your civic duty in being a part of the national exercise.

**17. Do I have to answer every question in the Census Questionnaire?**

No you do not. Based on your response there will be skip patterns that will become applicable to you in different sections of the questionnaire.

## Recruitment

**18. What kinds of jobs are available for the 2020/2021 Census of Population and Housing?**

Supervisory and non-supervisory jobs are available as well as editors and coders; the majority of positions are for Enumerators/Field Officers (non-supervisory).

Enumerators conduct face to face interviews. Before enumerators go out into the field mappers and listers are required to list the dwellings in each community/parish/district. These positions are parttime. Enumerator jobs start in [census month] depending on the tasks involved and may run until early [month e.g. August].

Supervisors lead and supervise a team of [xx to xx] Enumerators.

**19. What are the responsibilities of Supervisor and Census Enumerators?**

An Enumerator is responsible for an enumeration districts and Supervisors are responsible for [x Enumeration Districts] and [x] Census Enumerators.

Census Supervisors and Enumerators are trained simultaneously.

Census Enumerators are responsible for administering questionnaires with households.

**20. How many people will be employed for the Census of Population and Housing?**

Nearly [insert number] people are hired under the *Statistics Act* for the collection stage of the census, about [insert number] are Census Enumerators who are hired for approximately [xxxx] months. Some [insert number] Supervisors will be hired for approximately [xxxx] to supervise the census Enumerators.

**21. What criteria do I have to meet to work for the [2020/2021] Census?** All candidates must:

- be 18 years or older
- be a citizen of [country name] or eligible to work in [country name]

- be available to work days, evenings, weekends and holidays as required
- have a valid driver's licence and access to a vehicle (required in some areas only)  Pass a written test, reference checks and a criminal record name check.
- Candidates will also be required to pass an interview.
- have computer skills and access to the Internet

## 22. How do I apply for a [2020/2021] Census of Population and Housing job?

Information about how to apply for 2020/2021 Census of Population and Housing jobs is available on the NSO's website and Facebook Page.

**NOTE:** The best way to apply for a census job is to submit an application online or in person.

### Apply online: [insert website link]

Once on the homepage, follow these steps:

[insert steps if necessary]

You can also call the office at x-xxx-xxx-xxxx to enquire about your application. Complete application form can be submitted to email address [insert email]

## 23. When can I apply?

Our website will be accepting applications from [month, date, year]. People are encouraged to apply for census jobs starting during the application period. Application period closes [month, date, year].

## 24. What are the steps in the hiring process?

After an application is received, the hiring process follows the steps listed below.

**Note:** Only those candidates who are successful at each step will be notified and proceed to the next.

**Initial review of application:** This step ensures that applicants meet the screening criteria. The candidate is then contacted to confirm or clarify information on the application if necessary. Candidates who are successful are invited to participate in a training exercise.

**Written test:** The candidates is invited to a take written test.

**Formal supervisory interview:** Supervisory candidates who pass the written test are invited to an interview.

**Offer of employment:** The candidate is called and given a job offer and training dates.

**Oath of office:** Prior to starting work, all NSO [country] employees are required to take an oath or affirmation of office swearing never to reveal to unauthorized persons any information collected in confidence by the NSO [country], as required under the *Statistics Act*. Employees are also asked to sign their terms and conditions of employment at this time.

## 25. Is it necessary to be bilingual to apply for a Census of Population and Housing Job?

Applicants who are bilingual will have an asset working in his/her favour since many respondents are not only English speaking persons. At times the Enumerators need an interpreter to administer the questions to respondents.

**26. What security clearance is required?**

In some instance the NSO may be required to conduct background checks on individuals before they are given clearance to work.

In addition, census workers are sworn to secrecy under the *Statistics Act*. This oath is in effect during their term of employment and for life after that term of employment ends. Penalties exist for revealing personal information of respondents.

**27. Can I add information to my job application after it's been submitted?**

You will be able to ask about adding information to your application when you are called by a recruiter to an interview. Recruiters perform their preliminary calls using basic information. However, if you are concerned that the missing information will result in your being screened out of the hiring process, you may call our office at X-XXX-XXX-XXXX.

**28. Can I cancel my job application after it's been submitted?**

Your job application can be cancelled by calling X-XXX-XXX-XXXX. Please note that there may be a slight delay before your request can be processed. In the meantime, it is possible that you will receive a call from one of our employees, regarding your application. If so, please tell him or her that you wish to cancel your application.

**29. When will I be notified if I got the job?**

Only successful candidates will be notified. Retained candidates will be informed a few days prior to the start of training.

**30. How many questions should I complete per week?**

The NSO [country] will give Enumerators a realistic quota to complete within a week. However, requirements will vary according to assignment and location for some Enumerators. Applicants must be able to commit to at least 20 hours per week.

**31. How do I find out the status of my application?**

We cannot confirm the status of your application. The screening process will start in late [insert year] and continue for several months.

Only eligible candidates who have been screened will receive a call.

Processing of applications may be prolonged due to the high volume of applicants.

**32. Can I work for the census if I have another job?**

Yes, depending on how many hours you are available for and at what time of the day and week. When completing your census job application form, you will indicate whether or not you are currently employed. During the interview you will be ask about your availability to work for the census.

### 33. Do I get a travelling or transport allowance?

Employees are paid a fixed rate as transport and travelling allowance for the data collection period of the Census.

## Confidentiality

### 34. How does the NSOs ensure that census and survey data are kept confidential?

- NSO [country name] places the highest priority on maintaining the confidentiality of individual questionnaires. Stringent instructions and procedures have been implemented to ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times.
- All employees are sworn to secrecy when they are hired. The *Statistics Act* states persons can be penalized for revealing personal information.
- Private contractors do not have access to confidential data.
- Only a limited number of NSO employees have access to personal and confidential information. Those employees are responsible for the collection, handling or processing of completed questionnaires.
- For the [year] census, questionnaires will be administered using tablets. Once an interview is completed the information is protected through a number of security measures.
- Census data are processed and stored on a highly restricted internal network and cannot be accessed by anyone who has not taken the oath of secrecy.
- Data releases are screened so that anonymity is assured.
- Names, addresses and telephone numbers are not part of the census database used for dissemination but is used as a means of validating the data collected.

### 35. What has the NSO done to stop hackers or other unauthorized people from accessing census information?

Statistics [country's name] takes every precaution to minimize risk and protect your information. Sophisticated security techniques, such as firewalls are used to protect your information. For security reasons, we cannot provide more details about these techniques.

Census data are processed and stored on a highly restricted internal network and cannot be accessed by anyone who has not taken the oath of secrecy.

Data submitted to our web servers are encrypted before being stored, and remain encrypted until they are transferred to the high security internal network.

### 36. Does the NSO sell individual data?

No. The NSO [country name] is bounded by law to protect the identity of individuals in all published data. The NSO [country name] will never release names, addresses or email addresses, alone or in combination with any other information from the census questionnaire. Names, addresses and email addresses will never be given or sold to any individual or organization, nor will they ever be put on any mailing lists.

### 37. How can NSO ensure that Census Questionnaires are confidential when they are captured on tablets?

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NSO's are mandated by law to ensure the security and confidentiality of all questionnaires captured on tablets are protected.

- All the Enumerators who handle tablets have to follow the terms and conditions of their contracts and protect data as it is captured.

**38. Are Enumerators allowed to contact my neighbours to ask them about my personal information?**

Enumerators might ask your neighbours for information such as when you will be returning and how many people live in the house, if your house is vacant. Personal questions such as your age, marital status, income, education, etc. will not be asked.

**39. Are there laws on confidentiality? If so, what do they say?**

The *Statistics Act* specifically requires that information about individuals be protected and kept strictly confidential. Identifiable information cannot be released to anyone outside of the NSO without the written consent of the person who would be identified.

**40. Who sees completed Census of Population and Housing Questionnaires?**

Only a very limited number of the NSO employees, whose job requires them to work with the questionnaires, may see individual ones that have been completed.

All [country name] NSO's employees must take an oath of secrecy, which remains in effect for life, even after employment is completed, and are subject to fines and/or imprisonment should they reveal identifiable information derived from the census. Any possible breach of the confidentiality of census questionnaires is an exceedingly serious matter which would be investigated immediately and thoroughly and be subject to the full force of the *Statistics Act*.

**41. If a respondent receives a telephone call about the census questionnaire, how can they know the call is legitimate?**

All Enumerators who call respondents will clearly identify themselves on the telephone and explain the purpose of their call. You can always verify an Enumerator's identity by contacting the NSO X-XXX-XXXXXX.

Enumerators at the door will always present their official identification card and/or identification letters.

**42. Why does the NSO ask for names, addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses?** The NSO requires this information for a number of reasons:

- Names, addresses and telephone numbers are needed to ensure that every person in each household is counted only once.
- If a questionnaire has not been answered completely, a telephone number allows the census Enumerator to contact the household to obtain the missing information for the appropriate person.
- An email address provides an alternate method of communication with the household should follow-up be required.
- If more than one questionnaire is used for a household, the address is important so that all replies from that household can be processed together.

**43. Can a person use an alias instead of a real name?**

Respondents should not use an alias when completing their census questionnaire. In cases where questionnaires are incomplete, real names are needed so that the NSO can clearly identify whose information is missing during follow-up.

**44. How does NSO [country name] ensure the confidentiality of the information it publishes for free or for sale?**

The NSO is bounded by law to protect the identity of individuals in any data it publishes. Publications and electronic data releases are screened so that anonymity is assured.

## Collection procedures

**45. I forgot to include someone on my Census Questionnaire. What should I do?**

Simply contact the NSO. The enumerator responsible for the interview will make contact with you to update the information.

**46. I made an error and included someone on my Census Questionnaire who should not have been counted. Can this be corrected?**

No. It is NSO [country's name] policy that submitted answers cannot be changed or deleted. After the release of the population and dwelling counts, errors are occasionally uncovered in the data. Users can, however, obtain the population and dwelling count amendments, listed by census subdivisions and other levels of geography, by visiting [Country's name] website.

**47. Can I change the answers that I gave when completing my Census Questionnaire, once my questionnaire has been submitted?**

No. It is NSO [Country's name] policy that answers to Census Questions cannot be changed, since those answers must reflect a respondent's situation on reference day. Moreover, given the nature of our processing systems, the volume of Census Questionnaires, and the removal of many individual identifiers, updating answers that have been sent to [Country's name] is not feasible.

**48. Who will be included in the Census of Population and Housing?**

Every household in [country name] is included, as well as [country name] and their families who are working abroad.

**49. Who should complete the Census Questionnaire?**

The Census Questionnaire should be completed by an adult in the household. The person who completes the questionnaire is designated as "Person 1", and all other people in the household are described in relation to "Person 1".

**50. How often do Census Enumerators make contact with each household?**

All households will be contacted by an enumerator to complete the census questionnaire.

**51. Do respondents have to let Census Enumerators into their homes?**

Respondents do not have to let Census Enumerators into their home, though they are obliged to complete a census questionnaire.

If a respondent wishes to speak with an Enumerator in the privacy of their home, they should always ask to see the person's official identification first. Every Enumerator carries an ID card with the NSO's logo, as well as his or her name, ID number and photo.

**52. How do I know the Enumerator is a legitimate Census employee?**

Every Enumerator carries an identification card that features the NSO's logo along with his or her name, ID number and photo. Residents can contact the NSO at X-XXX-XXX-XXXX if they wish to confirm the identity of the Enumerator at their door.

**53. What happens if a person is away from home on Census Day?**

If the respondent is away from home on census day [enter date] and returns home the day after [enter date], the respondent should find a call back card. This card will have .....

If you are travelling overseas during the Census and have your own apartment or dwelling in {country's Name] where you normally reside, then you should complete a questionnaire for that dwelling once you are back in the country.

**54. How does NSO (Country) ensure that people are counted only once?**

For the [insert year] Census, double-counting of persons will be detected electronically by searching the Census database for duplicate records with high matches on sex, date of birth and name. Both exact and probabilistic matching techniques will be used.

**55. Are babies and small children included in the Census?**

Yes. Babies and children should be included in the Census. Babies born before [insert date month, day, year,] should be included in the Census Questionnaire for their household. Census data on children are very important—these data help governments and organizations assess the need for community programs and services, such as daycare centres and schools.

**56. Will a person who dies on Census Day be counted in the Census of Population and Housing?**

If the death occurs on [insert census date], the deceased person is still counted in the Census. In contrast, persons who die on [insert day before census], or before are not included in the Census.

**57. Should people who do not live with me full time be counted?**

- **Children in joint custody** should be included in the home of the parent where they live most of the time (more than 50% of the time). Children who spend equal time with each parent should be included at the address where they stayed on the night of [ insert date e.g. month, day to month, day year]
- **Students** who live elsewhere while away at school, or for their summer job, but return to live with their parents at other times of the year, should be included on their parents' questionnaire as part of the regular household. Students living year-round in an apartment, or in a shared apartment, and who do not return to live at their parents' home, should be included on the questionnaire for their usual place of residence.

- **Room-mates, lodgers, employees, and any other person(s)** who spent the night of [insert date e.g. month, day to month, day year] at this address **and** who have no other usual place of residence elsewhere in Canada, are included on the household questionnaire.
- **Persons in an institution** who have been in an institution for less than six months (e.g. in a home for the aged, a hospital or a prison) should be listed at their usual residence.
- **A spouse or common-law partner temporarily away** who stay elsewhere while working or studying should be listed at the main residence of their family, if they return periodically?

**58. Where should people who own multiple dwellings (for instance, a primary residence and a second house or apartment) complete the Census questionnaire?**

Respondents must provide the information on your household at the dwelling where you reside most of the time.

## Refusals

**59. Is there a legal requirement to complete the Census?**

All residents of [country name] are legally required to complete the Census questionnaire, according to the *Statistics Act*.

**60. How does NSO [country name] determine who is and is not a refusal?**

A person is considered a refusal if he or she has refused to complete a Census questionnaire when asked to do so by a Census Enumerator or a Supervisor. The NSO will provide information to non-respondents to ensure they understand the consequences of a refusal.

**61. What penalties can be imposed for refusing to complete the Census of Population and Housing?**

The *Statistics Act* stipulates that a person who refuses to complete a census questionnaire can be fined up to (xxxxxxxxxx).

## Dissemination

**62. When will Census data be available?**

The schedule for the release of census information is as follows:

	Population and dwelling counts
	Age and sex Type of dwelling
	Disability Health

	Families, households, fertility, marital/ union status
	Economic Activity/ Income Agriculture
	Immigration Housing
	Education Training Labour

**63. Why does it take so long to release Census data?**

Data start to become available approximately six months after the end of field work. Thereafter, various quality and validation checks are done and preliminary information can be drafted.

The NSO is committed to providing [country name] with high quality data; each step must therefore be completed and certified before the data are released.

**64. Can I be notified once the Census data is available?**

Once the data is available persons will be notified on the NSO's website.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

Some Statistics Office uses different terminologies when speaking about various topics but most times they are referring to the same product.

For example:

1. Census of Population and Housing is the same as Population and Housing Census or 2020/2021 Census.
2. National Statistics Office is the same as Central Statistics Office or Statistics Division.