



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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Administration on Developmental Disabilities

Making a difference in the lives of people with developmental disabilities

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DATE: March 2, 2000

SUBJECT: United States Census 2000

Dear Program Grantee/State Agency:

In partnership with the **Bureau of the Census, the Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD)** is working to identify and remove the barriers that have traditionally made it difficult for people with disabilities to complete their Census forms. We hope that by working together, the Bureau of the Census will obtain the most accurate count, to date, of people with disabilities residing in the United States.

Census 2000 will affect the programs we manage and the people who are served and supported by them. Federal, State, local and tribal governments need accurate information to plan, fund, and implement effective programs and policies for people with disabilities. Knowing more about the social and economic circumstances of people with disabilities will focus greater attention on the need to reduce and remove physical and social barriers that impact self-determination and assistance in life areas like employment; public service and accommodations, transportation, telecommunications, health services, housing, education, and child care.

Our goal is to have individuals with disabilities become aware of the importance of completing and returning their *Census 2000 questionnaire*. Please help us achieve this goal by partnering with grassroots organizations and agencies. You can help to identify and remove barriers that hinder completion of Census questionnaires by people with disabilities. Additionally, you can promote Census 2000 at



your events and exhibits; distribute Census 2000 flyers and promotional materials; and volunteer space at your organization for a *Census 2000 Questionnaire Assistance Center*. Finally, we have been advised that *Census 2000* may very well present a valuable employment opportunity for people with disabilities. Please encourage people to become aware of the employment opportunities provided by *Census 2000* and to apply for temporary positions that are available. Temporary opportunities can become more permanent.

It is our understanding that questions about disability will only appear on the long form. A long form questionnaire will be distributed to one in six housing units across the nation. Statisticians maintain that this one in six sample will be statistically significant and large enough to produce reliable information representative of neighborhoods and larger areas. The short form questionnaire, which will not include disability specific questions, will be available in large print, and can also be completed over the telephone and the Internet. The short form questionnaire will be available in thirty-eight languages. If your constituents need assistance in completing a long or short form questionnaire, please encourage them to contact the local *Census Office* or the local *Questionnaire Assistance Center*.

Please encourage grantees and other partners to become familiar with the importance of Census 2000 and to cooperate with the Bureau of the Census as they carry out this constitutional responsibility. In the very near future, you will be receiving posters from the Census Bureau with a disability theme encouraging everyone to be counted. We ask that you distribute those posters and display them prominently to promote participation in the census process.

If you need additional information concerning the census and counting people with disabilities, please contact: Glenn D. Gross, Ph.D. (215) 597- 8313.

If you wish to discuss our partnership with the Census Bureau in further detail, please feel free to contact: Nancy McCullough (202) 401-6970.

Sincerely,

/signature/

Sue Swenson
Commissioner
Administration on Developmental Disabilities



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