

## Connecticut Better Business Bureau issues warning about census-related fraud

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Agency: **Connecticut Better Business Bureau**



Scams involve attempts at identity theft

Wallingford, CT - May 19, 2009 – As the 2010 Census gets under way, Connecticut Better Business Bureau cautions consumers to be cooperative but careful about providing personal information to would-be census workers who make contact by phone or show up at their front door.

More than 140,000 U.S. Census workers are fanning out across the nation to verify the addresses of households and count and gather information about every person at every address in the U.S., including their age, gender, race and other relevant data.

Connecticut Better Business Bureau President, Paulette Scarpetti, notes many people are cautious about providing personal information to unsolicited phone callers or visitors. While the Census is an exception to the rule, unscrupulous operators are posing as government employees in an effort to get as much sensitive personal information as possible.

“Scammers know citizens are required by law to respond to the U.S. Census Bureau and give out some personal information, but that does not include detailed personal financial information.”

Law enforcement authorities in several states have issued warnings that scammers have begun posing as Census employees and knocking on doors asking for donations and Social Security numbers. Complicating the situation is the fact that Census workers may contact households by mail, telephone and visits.

Connecticut Better Business Bureau offers the following tips on how to tell the difference between a U.S. Census worker and a con artist:

- Legitimate Census representatives will have a badge, handheld device, canvas bag and confidentiality notice. Always ask to see their identification and never invite anyone you do not know into your home.
- Census workers who show up at your door will only verify address information and never ask for personal financial or Social Security information. Do not give those details to anyone, even if they claim to need it for the U.S. Census.
- While Census workers may eventually contact you in a number of ways, they will not contact you by e-mail. Never click on a link or open any attachments in an e-mail purporting to be from the U.S. Census Bureau.

More information on the Census is available at [census.gov](http://census.gov). Consumers also may find more information on avoiding identity theft and fraud at [bbb.org](http://bbb.org).

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Founded in 1928, Connecticut BBB is an unbiased non-profit organization that sets and upholds high standards for fair and honest business behavior. BBB offers objective advice and a wide range of education on topics affecting marketplace trust. BBB also offers complaint and dispute resolution support for consumers and businesses. Today, 128 BBBs serve communities across the U.S. and Canada, evaluating and monitoring more than three million local and national businesses and charities. For more advice on finding companies and businesses, start your search with trust at [www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org).

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