



NEWS RELEASE

Volusia County Complete Count Committee

**VOLUSIA COUNTS.
EVERYBODY COUNTS.**

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Volusia County Complete Count Committee

Joie Alexander
Committee Chair
(386) 740-5224

Mary Swiderski and Betty Holness
Intergovernmental Subcommittee
Co-chairs

Jim Cameron
Businesses Subcommittee Chair

Missy Kelly
Community/Social Organizations Subcommittee Chair

Gwen Azama-Edwards
Faith-Based Organizations Subcommittee Chair

Sue Habel
Education Subcommittee Chair

Damien Richards
Housing/Homeowners Associations Subcommittee Chair

K Hanis
Agriculture Workers Subcommittee Chair

Pat Kuehn and Molly Justice
Marketing and Communications Subcommittee
Co-chairs

Jeanne Willard
News releases

Countywide committee kicks off census-awareness campaign

Volusia counts. Everybody counts.

With that message, Volusia County's Complete Count Committee is kicking off a major public-awareness campaign to encourage all residents to complete and return their 2010 census questionnaires. All persons who live in Volusia County at least six months a year are counted.

Chaired by Joie Alexander, Volusia County Council vice chair and at-large representative, the newly formed volunteer committee includes eight subcommittees representing local governments, education, businesses, housing, community organizations, faith-based organizations, migrant and farm workers, and marketing and communications.

"The committee's primary focus will be on education and awareness throughout the county," Alexander said. "So much is counting on the counting. We stand to lose millions of dollars if our census figures do not include everyone. It's not a one-time loss; it's a loss every time state or federal money is divvied up for the next 10 years."

Dozens of community representatives started meeting in early August to coordinate outreach efforts and address the unique characteristics of the county's diverse communities. They will make a special effort to contact hard-to-reach populations such as the homeless, migrant workers, minorities, renters and people living below the poverty level.

The committee will get the word out that responses are confidential and are not shared with any agencies, including the FBI, Internal Revenue Service and U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services.

According to Alexander, the committee will work with individual cities, agencies and businesses to ensure a coordinated and unified response.

The U.S. Census Bureau will mail census questionnaires to every household in the United States in mid-March, and residents are required by law to complete and return the forms by April 1. Data will affect how more than \$400 billion in federal funds will be distributed to state, local and tribal governments each year. It also will be used to draw state legislative districts and determine the number of seats each state has in the House of Representatives.

In 2000, 67 percent of households in Volusia County returned their census forms, compared to state and national return rates of 63 percent.

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“We can’t be satisfied with a 67-percent response rate,” Alexander said. “This does not reflect our needs when we are seeking state and federal funding, and we can’t continue to have a baseline below our needs. We must have everyone counted.”

The census form, one of the shortest in history, asks for name, age, gender, race, date of birth, relationship to the head of the household, and whether the respondents own or rent their home. It can be completed in 10 minutes.

Plans for the census awareness campaign between now and Census Day, April 1, include community outreach, advertising, news releases and a centralized Web site.

The news media are encouraged to become campaign partners by including 2010 Census information in news coverage, public service announcements and on Web sites.

For more information about the U.S. Census, go to www.census.gov/2010census. For more information about the county’s Complete Count Committee, please contact staff liaisons Betty Holness at (386) 736-5920, ext. 2603; or Pat Kuehn (386) 822-5062, ext. 2934.

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2000 Census response rates*

City	Response	Population
Daytona Beach	59%	64,112
Daytona Beach Shores	50%	4,299
DeBary	77%	15,559
DeLand	66%	20,904
Deltona	74%	69,543
Edgewater	75%	18,668
Holly Hill	64%	12,119
Lake Helen	67%	2,743
New Smyrna Beach	60%	20,048
Oak Hill	46%	1,378
Orange City	70%	6,604
Ormond Beach	72%	36,301
Pierson	60%	2,596
Ponce Inlet	51%	2,513
Port Orange	76%	45,823
South Daytona	69%	13,177
Volusia County	67%	443,343
Florida	63%	15,982,378

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau