

2010 U.S. Census provides employment opportunity

Written by Chris Lee

With the 2010 census kicking off, the U.S. Census Bureau is in the process of locating helpers to assist with gathering the necessary information of Holyoke and Phillips County residents.

Leo Mailander is a recruiting assistant in charge of finding applicants to help with the 2010 Census. Saturday, Jan. 23 at either 9 a.m. or 2 p.m. in the third floor meeting room of the Phillips County Courthouse is the last day for the application and testing process.

Applicants must provide a valid driver's license and their social security card. Mailander said a birth certificate will also work. Applicants will fill out an I-9 form to check for U.S. citizenship. Those interested should allow an hour and a half for the application and basic skills testing.

He also mentioned anyone who is fluent in both English and Spanish is encouraged to apply.

Those chosen to act as Census workers will be trained in Greeley before the Census date of April 1.

Mailander estimates the Census process will take 3-4 weeks if things go like they did in 2000.

Watch for scams during 2010 Census

The Better Business Bureau (BBB) advises people to be cooperative, but cautious, so as not to become a victim of fraud or identity theft.

Eventually, more than 140,000 U.S. Census workers will count every person in the United States and will gather information about every person living at each address including name, age, gender, race and other relevant data. The big question is, "how do you tell the difference between a U.S. Census worker and a con artist?"

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The BBB offers the following advice:

—if a U.S. Census worker knocks on the door, they will have a badge, a handheld device, a Census Bureau canvas bag and a confidentiality notice. Ask to see their identification and their badge before answering their questions. However, one should never invite anyone they don't know into the home.

—census workers are currently only knocking on doors to verify address information. Do not give a social security number, credit card or banking information to anyone, even if they claim they need it for the U.S. Census.

—remember, no matter what they ask, one really only needs to tell them how many people live at the address.

—while the Census Bureau might ask for basic financial information such as a salary range, one doesn't have to answer anything at all about current financial situations. The Census Bureau will not ask for social security, bank account or credit card numbers, nor will employees solicit donations. Anyone asking for that information is not with the Census Bureau.

—the Census Bureau has decided not to work with Acorn on gathering this information. No Acorn worker should approach you saying he/she is with the Census Bureau.

Eventually Census workers may contact residents by telephone, mail or in person at home. However, the Census Bureau will not contact people by e-mail, so be on the lookout for e-mail scams impersonating the Census. Never click on a link or open any attachments in an e-mail that is supposedly from the U.S. Census Bureau.

For more advice on avoiding identity theft and fraud, visit <http://www.bbb.org>.