

## Census Taker Scam Artists

Now that the federal government has started collecting data for the 2010 census, scam artists are trying to con people into sharing personal information. PERSI does not want its members to become victims of identity theft or fraud.

Consumers are being warned against giving their personal information to solicitors, whether they call or show up at your front door. Households are required to provide information to the Census Bureau workers, but scammers may try to trick people into giving out information in phone conversations, emails, or in person. Some consumers have let down their guard because they believe they are speaking with a government worker. Since scam artists know people are willing to share personal data when taking part in the census, they may pose as government employees to obtain sensitive financial information.

The first phase of the census began with the verification of household addresses across the country. More than 140,000 U.S. Census workers are checking addresses to ensure that every household receives a survey when they are mailed in March 2010. Starting in April 2010, census workers may come to your home.

### Telling The Difference Between a Con Artist and a Legitimate Census Taker

- A legitimate census taker who comes to your door will have a badge, a hand-held device, a Census Bureau canvas bag, and a confidentiality notice. **Consumers should ask to see the badge before answering any questions. Never invite strangers into your home.** At this time, census takers are only verifying your address information. *Do not give your Social Security number, credit card or banking information to anyone*, even if they claim it is needed for the U.S. Census. Legitimate census takers **will not** ask for this kind of information.
- Eventually, a census worker may contact you by phone, mail, or in person at your home. You may also receive an email from the Census Bureau regarding your participation in a survey; however, the Census Bureau **does not** request detailed personal information through email. The Census Bureau **does not** send emails requesting Social Security numbers or PIN codes, passwords, or similar access information for credit cards, banks or other financial accounts.

If you receive an email or find a Web site you suspect is falsely representing the Census Bureau, forward the email or Web site URL to the Census Bureau at [itso.fraud.reporting@census.gov](mailto:itso.fraud.reporting@census.gov). After you forward the email, delete the message.

If you have questions regarding the legitimacy of a census survey questionnaire received in the mail, a phone call, or visit by a Census Bureau worker, call the Regional Census Bureau office toll-free at 1-866-226-2864.