

From: Shontz, Douglas <dshontz@statecollegepa.us>
Sent: Tuesday, January 18, 2022 4:13 PM
To: DCMD PCGQR <dcmd.pcgqr@census.gov>
Cc: Fountaine, Tom <TFountaine@statecollegepa.us>; ccy2@psu.edu <ccy2@psu.edu>
Subject: Group Quarters Review: 2020 Post-Census

ATTN: Census Bureau, Commerce

The following comment is being submitted on behalf of the Borough of State College, PA, and Penn State University. I've included representative from both organizations on this comment.

The Borough of State College, PA, and Penn State University would like to provide comment and support for the Census Bureau to expand the Count Question Resolution (CQR) Program to include considerations for group quarters facilities.

Based on preliminary data analyzed by the Borough of State College, PA, estimates an undercount of the 2020 Census to be around 4,000-5,800 people. Staff utilized new beds and vacancy rates in purpose-built student housing.

These student apartment buildings are being considered as Dormitories or Residences Halls by the United State Postal Service (USPS) and should qualify as a group quarter in the 2020 Census. The USPS confirmed this definition in written correspondence by Postmaster Larry Slane on 11/12/2020. The USPS refuses to deliver mail to these apartment building except through single-point delivery. This USPS definition of private apartment buildings has further exacerbated the issues with accurate counts in the 2020 Census as it precludes mail from being delivered to these tenants. Penn State University did submit 45,277 student records to the Census Bureau. It is not clear if that information was sufficient in ensuring an accurate count of students living off campus in the Borough of State College, PA. Another on-going issue throughout the 2020 Census operations were local enumerators getting access to these off-campus apartment buildings due to the private management companies having strict COVID-19 restrictions in place.

Please note both organizations generally agree with the proposed process outlined for the 2020 Post-Census Group Quarters Review (PCGQR) by the Census Bureau.

A better way to enhance the overall process is access to how the Census Bureau utilized the reported group quarter data from Penn State University. This would assist in ensuring the proper information is provided as part of the PCGQR process to ensure a proper count.

If possible, please explore the use of an online application format for the PCGQR Program to minimize the reporting burden on governmental entities.

The process of participating and completing the PCGQR Program should be free or minimal cost to government entities.

Thomas Fountaine, Manager
Borough of State College
243 S. Allen Street
State College, PA 16801
814.234.7110

Charima C. Young
Director of Local Government and Community Relations
Pennsylvania State University
Office of Government and Community Relations
117 Old Main, University Park, PA 16802
814-863-5397

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