



## Bedford County Sheriff's Office

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Committed to Excellence

### SHERIFF BROWN WARNS OF CENSUS 'SCAMMERS'

There has been much controversy about the U.S. Census questionnaire that all residents should have received in the mail by now. The census is made up of ten questions that pertain to how many people live in your household. There are no questions concerning income, bank account numbers, or anything that could jeopardize your identity.

However, the U.S. Better Business Bureau has warned consumers to be on guard for telephone, online and in-person census fraudsters.

There have been reports of people identifying themselves as Census takers, contacting senior citizens and trying to extract their financial information from them.

Senior citizens are most at risk since they may be lonely and more willing to talk with strangers on the phone or in person. And many seniors have money that they have accumulated through their lives.

Here is a summary of common frauds occurring throughout the country:

If you receive a 2010 Census form in the mail and it is asking for personal financial information, do not respond, just throw it away.

If someone visits or calls you claiming to be from the Census and asks you to divulge personal financial information, do not supply any information to that person. Even if your caller ID says "US Census" don't believe it. There are devices that are used to disguise their origin.

If you are online and receive an "official looking email" from the Census asking you to fill in your personal information, do not reply, just delete.

*"Never divulge any personal banking information, social security number, passwords or credit card numbers to anyone who claims to be gathering Census information", says Sheriff Brown. "Unfortunately there are people out there who prey upon those that are too trusting of strangers".*

Call the Sheriff's Office at 540-586-4800 with any questions if you are suspicious of a census mailing. If you are visited by someone claiming to be a census taker, asking for information, money or anything you feel is out of line, **call 911 immediately.**

