



# National Archives and Records Administration

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## 1940 Census Research

The 1940 census will be released digitally on April 2, 2012. The digital images will be accessible at National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) facilities nationwide through our public access computers as well as on personal computers via the internet. No microfilm copies will be made available to the public. For more information about the 1940 Census, visit <http://www.archives.gov/genealogy/census/1940/index.html>.

The 1940 and later censuses are not available for public use because of a statutory 72-year restriction on access for privacy reasons. (92 Stat. 915; Public Law 95-416; October 5, 1978). These records are still in the custody of the U.S. Census Bureau. To request information about yourself or a deceased person for legal or other purposes, complete Form BC-600 (available online at <http://www.census.gov/genealogy/www/data/agesearch/index.html>).

Here is a checklist of things you can do to start your 1940 census research:

1. **Make a list of all the people you want to look for in the 1940 census.** Think broadly--ancestors, their siblings, cousins, etc.--anybody to whom you are related.
2. **Collect addresses for these people from city directories if they lived in a city.** NARA has original Circa 1940 City Directories for Washington, DC. The Library of Congress holds a large nationwide collection of city directories and many libraries hold local directories.
3. **Identify the enumeration district (ED) in which each address was located.** There are currently several ways to do this:
  - Use NARA microfilm publication **T1224**, *Descriptions of Census Enumeration Districts, 1830-1950* (155 rolls), which contains text descriptions of the enumeration districts used by the Bureau of the Census in 1940.
  - Use NARA microfilm publication **A3378**, *Enumeration District (ED) Maps for the Twelfth through Sixteenth Censuses of the United States, 1900-1940* (73 rolls), which show the boundaries for each of the enumeration districts.
  - Use the 1930/1940 ED Converter utility found on [www.stevemorse.org](http://www.stevemorse.org). This can be useful if you found your ancestors in the 1930 census and believe they were living in the same location for the 1940 census.
4. **Find your Native American ancestor in NARA microfilm publication M595**, *Indian Census Rolls, 1885-1940* (692 rolls), if enrolled in a tribe and living on an Indian Reservation.