



District Maps: 1925 Legislative Manual

General Information on the Congressional and State Legislative Redistricting Process and Timeline.

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Redistricting in the United States is the process of changing political borders. This often means changing electoral district and constituency boundaries, usually in response to periodic census results.

In 36 states, the state legislature has primary responsibility for creating a redistricting plan, in many cases subject to approval by the state governor. To reduce the role that legislative politics might play, five states (Arizona, Hawaii, Idaho, New Jersey and Washington), carry out congressional redistricting by an independent or bipartisan commission. Two states, Iowa and Maine, give independent bodies authority to propose redistricting plans, but preserve the role of legislatures to approve them. Seven states have only a single representative for the entire state because of their low populations; these are Alaska, Delaware, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont and Wyoming.

Congressional Redistricting Official Notification. January 25, 2011 is the last day as required by federal law for the Clerk of the House of Representatives to notify each state government of its entitled number of seats.

In the first week of the incoming 2011 Congress the President will send an official transmission to the Chief Clerk as to the national census data and apportionment of congressional seats. It is not official until the Governor receives the letter from the Chief Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives that Washington State has or has not gained a congressional seat (Title 2, section 2a USC).

Redistricting in Washington State – (Article 2, Section 43, Washington State Constitution and RCW 44.05)

Timeline for current Redistricting Process:

January 15, 2011 – The leadership of each of the four caucuses appoint a commission member.

January 30, 2011 – Three of the four members chose the fifth non-voting member.

January 1, 2012 – Final redistricting report due to the legislature with no less than a 3/4th vote by the Commission.

February 10, 2012 – Legislature must make revisions or the plan will stand as is. A 2/3rds vote required for any boundary change.

August 14, 2012 - Primary day in which new boundaries are used in an election.

Pertinent Redistricting Points:

- January of each year beginning in “1” a commission is formed to redistrict Legislative and Congressional boundaries.
 - Five members
 - Four chosen by each political caucus leadership by January 15th
 - The fifth non-voting member must be selected by 3 of the four members by the 30th of January.
 - No currently elected official may serve on the commission.

- Must be a registered voter.
- Commission members previously elected to office must have a two year break from when they last served.
- Cannot have served as a lobbyist for one year prior to the appointment.
- Members will be paid \$100.00 a day while serving on the commission.
- Commissioners may not seek political office for two years after the effective date of the plan.
- Commission must make district population based on official 2010 census data.
 - Do not include non-resident military (even though census data from the federal government will include non-resident military).
 - Population, not number of registered voters, serves as the basis for redistricting both federal and state seats.
 - Legislative District size is currently 138,000 based on OFM Estimate of 6.6 million. That will be finalized with the official census data.
 - Districts must be contiguous – all in one district.
 - Separated from other districts by geographical barriers, artificial barriers (Highways, ect), and/or political subdivisions.
 - Cannot discriminate against any one political party or “group.” (Section 43-5)
- Must complete work no later than January 1, 2012 with the approval of 3 of the four voting members.
 - If approval does not happen, the Supreme Court shall approve a plan by March 1, 2012 (RCW 44.05.100).
- Legislature may amend plan by the 30th Legislative Day in 2012 (Feb 10th) by a 2/3 vote of both houses. The plan becomes law on the 10th of Feb. amended or not unless the Commission cannot reach the 3/4th consensus.
- The Supreme Court is the only court which may hear challenges to the redistricting law.
- No changes can be made to a district after the acceptance date until the 2021-22 redistricting process.
- The legislature may provide for the creation of the commission, staffing and otherwise (RCW 44.05)
 - Secretary of State as the Chief Elections Officer will make available to the commission maps, data and other information in order to complete their duties.
 - The Secretary of State, State Treasurer and Attorney General shall make personnel and facilities available as requested by the commission.
 - Legislature shall provide a budget.
 - The Secretary of State will receive all the materials, research documentation and all other items generated from the commission upon completion of their work, which become a permanent part of the state archives. The office then distributes the new district maps and provides the legislature and local election officials with the new maps for purposes of future elections. The first election held using the new districts will be in 2012.