

## Is Your County Ready for Redistricting?

Now that the 2020 Census results for redistricting have been distributed by the Census Bureau, county commissions need to redraw the lines of their commission districts to ensure equal population. All county commission districts must be approved through a local Act of the General Assembly. The following steps outline the local redistricting process, which is different from the process used after the 2010 Census. It is very important that your county understands the process for this redistricting cycle. Additional information is available through the [ACCG Local Redistricting Toolkit](#), on the [ACCG 2020 Census Page](#), and on the [Legislative and Congressional Reapportionment Office website](#).

### Redistricting Overview

1. Obtain a legislative sponsor in order to work with the Reapportionment Office and have that legislator notify the Reapportionment Office by official email or letterhead. Regardless as to whether the county governing authority is working directly with the Reapportionment Office to draw maps or drawing maps in-house or through a consultant, all county governing authorities involved in redistricting will need to have a legislative sponsor to work with the Reapportionment Office.
  2. Determine if the maps will be drawn by the Reapportionment Office, the county governing authority, or consultant.
  3. Maps drawn by the county governing authority or consultant must be technically reviewed and certified by the Reapportionment Office **BEFORE** being adopted locally or submitted to the legislative sponsor to prepare legislation. Maps drawn by the Reapportionment Office do not need certification. The technical review process is only for county governing authorities that choose to draw their maps in-house or through a consultant.
  4. Maps drawn by the county governing authority or consultant must be submitted to the Reapportionment Office in an **electronic format** with the statutorily required details provided in O.C.G.A. § 28-1-14.1(d) for the technical review:
    - A. Name, email, and telephone number of the contact person for the proposed plan
    - B. Name of the submitter and of the county, if different
    - C. Electronic map image that clearly shows defined boundaries and a block equivalency file containing two columns:  
  
**First Column:** List the 15-digit census block ID numbers  
**Second Column:** List the 3-digit district identification number.
- Both block and district numbers must be zero-filled text files and be submitted in .xls, .xlsx, .dbf, .txt, or .csv file formats
- D. Statistical plan information including the total population in each district and the population deviations of each district

E. Additional information as required by Reapportionment Staff

5. If no technical issues are found during the technical review, the map will be certified and can be adopted locally. If there are issues, the map must either be corrected by the Reapportionment Office or by the county governing authority/consultant. If it is corrected by the county governing authority/consultant, it must go back to the Reapportionment Office for review and certification.
6. Once the map has been certified, it can be adopted locally, and notification can be provided to the bill sponsor to start drafting the legislation for introduction. Note that the bill sponsor can be different from the legislative sponsor used to work with the Reapportionment Office. It is the county governing authority's responsibility to notify their legislator that the map is ready and not the Reapportionment Office.
7. Review and complete the redistricting checklist provided by the Office of Legislative Counsel (included in the [ACCG Local Redistricting Toolkit](#)) to ensure that all the pertinent information needed to draft the local legislation has been provided. This step is especially important if your county governing authority has changed its form of government, added or removed districts, changed district numbers, or plans to delay the implementation date of your map.
8. A local ad must be published in the legal organ prior to the introduction of the legislation. Local ads can be run up to 60 days prior to legislative session (the next session starts on January 10, 2022) and must run at least one calendar week prior to introduction of the legislation once session begins. A sample ad is included in the [ACCG Local Redistricting Toolkit](#).
9. Local delegations may have special rules that apply to the passage of local legislation or specifically to redistricting legislation. Be aware of these requirements.
10. All local redistricting bills will go through the local legislation process and will be assigned to the Intragovernmental Coordination Committee if introduced in the House and the State and Local Government Operations (SLGO) Committee if introduced in the Senate. Redistricting bills can be introduced in either chamber.
11. All maps for county commission districts must be passed by a local Act of the General Assembly and signed by the Governor, or become law without being signed by the Governor, to become effective. Maps **are not** required to be precleared through the U.S. Department of Justice, unless they are covered by a separate court order entered into under Section 3(c) of the Voting Rights Act.