

# 2020 Census Participant Statistical Areas Program (PSAP) Information Guide

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## What Is PSAP?

The 2020 Census Participant Statistical Areas Program (PSAP) allows invited participants to review and update selected statistical area boundaries for 2020 Census data tabulation following U.S. Census Bureau (Census Bureau) guidelines and criteria. The Census Bureau also will use the statistical areas defined for the 2020 Census to tabulate data for the annual American Community Survey (ACS) estimates and the Economic Census.

There are two types of statistical geographies available for review under the PSAP. The first is standard statistical geography; the second is tribal statistical geography.

Standard statistical geographies include:

- Census tracts.
- Block groups.
- Census designated places (CDPs).
- Census county divisions (CCDs), in selected states.

Tribal statistical geographies include:

- Tribal census tracts (TCTs).
- Tribal block groups (TBGs).
- Census designated places (CDPs).
- Alaska Native village statistical areas (ANVSAs).
- Oklahoma tribal statistical areas (OTSAs).
- OTSA tribal subdivisions.
- Tribal Designated Statistical Areas (TDSAs).
- State Designated Tribal Statistical Areas (SDTSAs).

The Census Bureau initially solicits PSAP participation from our 2010 Census PSAP participants. Where no previous partner exists, the Census Bureau attempts to solicit new partners. The Census Bureau strongly recommends PSAP participants seek input from other census data users and stakeholders regarding 2020 Census statistical area delineations.

The Census Bureau may modify, and if necessary, reject statistical geographic areas and/or their boundaries submitted by participants that do not meet established criteria and guidelines.

## Why Participate in PSAP?

The PSAP is the only opportunity prior to the 2020 Census for regional planning agencies (RPAs), councils of governments (COGs), Alaska Native Regional Associations (ANRAs), and tribal, state, county, and local governments (including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico) to review and update the selected statistical areas. The Census Bureau uses the statistical areas defined for the 2020 Census to tabulate data for the ACS throughout the decade. This data is used to:

- Grant applications to fund community and regional development, education, agriculture, energy, and environmental programs, as well as other needed community improvements and enhancements.
- Plan for future community needs. The next opportunity to review and delineate statistical areas is planned for the 2030 Census.

## What Is New for 2020 Census PSAP?

- The former Tribal Statistical Areas Program (TSAP) is included as part of the PSAP for the 2020 Census. Federally recognized tribes and state tribal liaisons have the opportunity to update tribal statistical geographies in 2020 Census PSAP.
- To reduce participant burden, the Census Bureau anticipates creating 2020 Census statistical area suggestions for review and update by all PSAP participants. Participants may accept the Census Bureau's 2020 Census proposed statistical areas, update the 2020 Census proposed statistical areas, or use the 2010 Census Statistical area geography as a base to make updates.

## What Is New for 2020 Census PSAP? cont.

- Participants reviewing standard statistical area geographies are required to use the Census Bureau’s Geographic Update Partnership Software (GUPS) to delineate updates. The GUPS runs in QGIS, which is an open source Geographic Information System (GIS), and it contains all functionality required to make PSAP updates, executes automated checks for program criteria compliance, and creates standardized data output files for Census Bureau processing. The GUPS is available on DVD or available for download from the Census Bureau’s Web site <website>.
- Tribal participants reviewing TBGs, TCTs, or CDPs may elect to use the GUPS or Census Bureau provided paper map products to review and edit tribal statistical geographies.
- Participants reviewing ANVSAs, OTSAs, OTSA tribal subdivisions, TDSAs, or SDTSAs are provided Census Bureau paper map products to review and edit tribal statistical areas.
- Participants using the GUPS to update their statistical areas must use the [Secure Web Incoming Module \(SWIM\)](#) to send their updates. The SWIM is the official web portal for uploading partnership materials to the Census Bureau.

## PSAP Schedule

2020 Census PSAP Schedule	
Date	Event
March - May 2018	Contact 2010 Census PSAP participants to inquire about 2020 Census PSAP participation.
July 2018	PSAP invitation materials sent to PSAP participants.
January 2019	PSAP delineation phase begins. Participants have 120 calendar days to submit updates.
February 2019	PSAP Webinar trainings begin.
July 2019	Send PSAP participants communication notifying closeout of delineation phase.
January 2020	PSAP verification phase begins. Participants have 90 calendar days to review updates.

## PSAP Federal Register Notice

The PSAP *Federal Register* Notice is available at <website>. The *Federal Register* Notice includes detailed information on standard and tribal statistical areas geography criteria and guidelines.

## PSAP Preparation Checklist

- ☑ Review the PSAP schedule and determine staffing and budget needs.
- ☑ Identify the primary PSAP contact for your government or organization.
- ☑ Identify the technical PSAP contact for your government or organization.
- ☑ Review the 2020 Census PSAP criteria and guidelines.
- ☑ Seek 2020 Census PSAP stakeholder input.
- ☑ Establish a meeting schedule for stakeholders during the PSAP delineation phase.
- ☑ Conduct research on local housing unit and population data trends.
- ☑ Identify potential CDPs for definition during the 2020 Census PSAP.
- ☑ Attend a PSAP Webinar training.
- ☑ Review and update PSAP delineation materials.
- ☑ Review and update PSAP verification materials.

### Review the PSAP schedule and determine staffing and budget needs.

Plan in advance of PSAP materials receipt (January 2019) the number of staff needed for PSAP planning, review, and update.

### Identify the Primary PSAP Contact.

The primary PSAP contact will coordinate the PSAP review and update activities. Past primary PSAP contacts have included planning directors, executive directors, COG presidents, or other persons with decision-making authority.

### Identify the Primary PSAP Technical Contact.

The technical PSAP contact will conduct the technical review work or manage the technical staff. Consider whether this person will be available for the verification phase of the 2020 Census PSAP.

### Review the 2020 Census PSAP Criteria and Guidelines.

Review the 2020 Census PSAP criteria and guidelines for census tracts, block groups, CDPs, and, if applicable to your state, CCDs. Tribal participants should review the 2020 Census PSAP criteria and guidelines for tribal statistical geographies for which they are eligible to review. Criteria and guidelines for all 2020 Census PSAP statistical areas are published in the *Federal Register Notice* at <website>.

### Seek 2020 Census PSAP Stakeholder Input.

Contact local governments and planning organizations in your service area for input into the review and update of statistical areas for the 2020 Census PSAP.

### Establish a meeting schedule for stakeholders

### during the PSAP delineation phase.

Conduct stakeholder meetings during the delineation phase to review the Census Bureau's 2020 Census proposed statistical areas, and subsequent updates, to seek consensus among stakeholders.

### Conduct research on local housing unit and population data trends.

Conduct research to determine where housing unit and population growth or decline have occurred since 2010. Determine whether there are areas of future change that may affect the delineation of statistical areas based on housing unit and population criteria beyond the 2020 Census.

### Identify potential CDPs for definition during the 2020 Census PSAP.

Work with local stakeholders to identify potential CDPs. CDPs can be defined for the 2020 Census PSAP for unincorporated, named places with concentrations of housing units or population.

### Attend a PSAP Webinar training.

Training workshops will offer "hands-on" experience using the PSAP materials. Self-training aids and Webinars will be available online on the PSAP Web site. In addition, the PSAP Respondent Guide will contain detailed instructions and examples for conducting your statistical area review.

### Review and update PSAP delineation materials.

You have 120 calendar days from receipt of materials to conduct your PSAP review and return updates to the Census Bureau. The time it will take to complete your PSAP review and submit your updates depends on the geographic territory and number of changes.

### **Review and updated PSAP verification materials.**

After updating statistical areas based on PSAP participants' submissions, the Census Bureau will provide verification products to participants. You have 90 calendar days from the receipt of your verification materials to conduct the PSAP verification review and respond to the Census Bureau.

### **Questions**

For more information about PSAP, call 1-844-788-4921, e-mail us at [<GEO.PSAP@census.gov>](mailto:GEO.PSAP@census.gov), or visit our Web site at [http://www.census.gov/programs\\_surveys/decennial-census/about/psap.html](http://www.census.gov/programs_surveys/decennial-census/about/psap.html).

## 2020 Census Statistical Area Criteria

Statistical area		Primary purpose	Nationwide wall-to-wall coverage	Geography nests within	Census 2020 population criteria	Census 2020 housing unit criteria
<b>CENSUS TRACTS (CT)</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Boundary continuity</li> <li>Data comparability</li> </ul>	Yes	County	Optimum: 4,000	Optimum: 1,600
	<b>Tribal (conceptually similar and equivalent to standard CT)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet unique statistical needs of federally recognized AIR</li> <li>Tract level data without the imposition of state or county boundaries</li> </ul>	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Federally recognized American Indian Reservations</li> <li>Off-Reservation Trust Land</li> </ul>	Minimum: 1,200 Maximum: 8,000 (fewer than 1,200 = 1 Tribal CT)	Minimum: 480 Maximum: 3,200 (used to accommodate areas occupied seasonally)
	<b>Special Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distinguish areas of little or no population that have a specific type of land use</li> <li>Large water bodies</li> </ul>	No	County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Population Threshold = Little/None or must be within the standard census tract threshold</li> <li>Area Measurement Thresholds:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Within Urban Area = 1 sq. mile</li> <li>Outside Urban Area = 10 sq. miles</li> <li>Inland water body = 100 sq. miles</li> <li>Water body not coextensive with a water only census tract = none</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>BLOCK GROUPS (BG)</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Form the geographic framework within which census blocks are numbered</li> <li>Smallest area for which demographic characteristics are produced from the American Community Survey (ACS)</li> </ul>	Yes	Census Tract	Minimum: 600	Minimum: 240
	<b>Tribal (conceptually similar and equivalent to standard BG)</b>				Maximum: 3,000	Maximum: 1,200
	<b>Special Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distinguish areas of little or no population that have a specific type of land use AND are coextensive with a special land use census tract</li> <li>Large water bodies</li> </ul>	No	Standard Census Tract or Tribal Census Tract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Population Threshold = Little/None or must be within the standard block group threshold</li> <li>Area Measurement Thresholds:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Within Urban Area = 1 sq. mile</li> <li>Outside Urban Area = 10 sq. miles</li> <li>Inland water body = 100 sq. miles</li> <li>Water body not coextensive with a water only block group = none</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

## 2020 Census Statistical Area Criteria cont.

Statistical Area	Primary purpose	Nationwide wall-to-wall coverage	Geography nests within	Census 2020 population criteria	Census 2020 housing unit criteria
<b>Census County Divisions (CCDs)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide data for sub-county units that have stable boundaries and recognizable names</li> <li>Usually represents one or more communities, economic centers, or major land uses</li> </ul>	CCDs and MCDs together  CCDs exist in 21 states*	County	None	None
<b>Census Designated Places (CDPs)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place-level statistics for well-known, closely settled named localities that are not part of an incorporated place</li> <li>Mix of residential, commercial, and retail areas</li> </ul>	No, CDPs capture distinct communities	State	Should have population during at least one entire season (at least 3 consecutive months) of the year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Should have higher housing unit (or population) density than surrounding area</li> <li>If less than 10 housing units, Census Bureau will ask for an explanation</li> </ul>

\* CCDs exist in the following states:

Alabama	Hawaii	Oregon
Alaska (referred to as census sub areas)		
Arizona	Idaho	South Carolina
California	Kentucky	Texas
Colorado	Montana	Utah
Delaware	Nevada	Washington
Florida	New Mexico	Wyoming
Georgia	Oklahoma	

## Glossary of Terms

**Alaska Native Regional Associations (ANRAs).** The 12 regional non-profit associations in Alaska (incorporated under State Law in 1973) whose boundaries became the basis of the for-profit regional corporations (Alaska Native Regional Corporations (ANRC)) pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) (as amended) (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq. (2000)). Regional nonprofit associations were created to administer social, education and health services for Alaska Native people in their region.

**Alaska Native villages (ANVs).** Constitute associations, bands, clans, communities, groups, tribes, or villages recognized pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 (Public Law 92-203).

**Alaska Native village statistical areas (ANVSAs).** Statistical geographic entities that represent the more densely settled portions of ANVs.

**American Community Survey (ACS).** An ongoing survey that collects demographic and housing characteristics data, January through December, to provide every community with the information they need to make important decisions. The Census Bureau releases new data every year, in the form of estimates, in a variety of tables, tools, and analytical reports.

**American Indian reservations (AIRs).** Areas that have been set aside by the United States for the use of tribes, the exterior boundaries of which are more particularly defined in the final tribal treaties, agreements, executive orders, federal statutes, secretarial orders, or judicial determinations. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) maintains a list of all federally recognized tribal governments and makes final determination of the inventory of federal AIRs.

**American Indian tribal subdivisions.** Described as additions, administrative areas, areas, chapters, county districts, communities, districts, or segments and are legal administrative subdivisions of federally recognized AIRs and ORTLs or are statistical subdivisions of OTSAs.

**Block groups.** Statistical geographic divisions of census tracts that generally contain population ranging from 600 to 3,000 and are used to present data and control block numbering within a census tract.

**Census county divisions (CCDs).** Statistical geographic entities in 21 states where MCDs either do not exist or change too frequently for reporting comparable census data over time. The primary goal of the CCD program is to establish and maintain a set of sub-county units that have stable boundaries and recognizable names. In most cases census tracts should nest within CCDs, but in less populated counties CCDs should nest within census tracts.

**Census designated places (CDPs).** Statistical geographic entities representing closely settled, unincorporated communities that are locally recognized and identified by name. CDPs are the statistical equivalents of incorporated places, with the primary differences being the lack of both a legally defined boundary and an active, functioning governmental structure, chartered by the state and administered by elected officials.

**Census tracts.** Small, relatively permanent statistical subdivisions of a county or equivalent entity that provide a stable set of geographic units for the presentation of statistical data. Census tracts generally have a population ranging from 1,200 to 8,000, with an optimum population of 4,000.

**Geographic information systems (GIS).** A collection of computer hardware, software, and geographic data for capturing, managing, analyzing, and displaying all forms of geographically referenced information.

**Geographic Update Partnership Software (GUPS).** A customized GIS, based on the open-source platform QGIS, provided by the Census Bureau to facilitate the participation and submission of tribal statistical area updates for the 2020 Census PSAP.

**Master Address File/Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing (MAF/TIGER) System.** A digital (computer-readable) geographic database that automates the mapping and related geographic activities required to support the Census Bureau's census and survey programs.

**Minor civil divisions (MCDs).** Primary governmental or administrative divisions of a county in many states (parishes in Louisiana) and the county equivalents in Puerto Rico and the Island Areas.

**Off-reservation trust lands (ORTLs).** Areas for which the United States holds title in trust for the benefit of a tribe (tribal trust land) or for an individual American Indian (individual trust land).

**Oklahoma tribal statistical areas (OTSAs).** Statistical entities identified and delineated by the Census Bureau in consultation with federally recognized American Indian tribes that had a former reservation in Oklahoma. OTSAs generally follow the boundaries of former reservations.

**Participant Statistical Areas Program (PSAP).** A decennial census program that allows designated participants, following Census Bureau guidelines and criteria, to review, update, and delineate selected statistical areas.

**State designated tribal statistical areas (SDTSAs).** Statistical entities for state-recognized American Indian tribes that do not have a state-recognized land base (reservation).

**Tribal block groups (TBGs).** Statistical geographic divisions of TCTs that generally contain population ranging from 600 to 3,000 and are used to present data and control block numbering within a TCT. TBGs are defined independently of the standard county-based block group delineation.

**Tribal census tracts (TCTs).** Small, relatively permanent statistical subdivisions of federally recognized AIRs or ORTLs that provide a stable set of geographic units for the presentation of statistical data. TCTs generally have a population ranging from 1,200 to 8,000, with an optimum population of 4,000. TCTs are defined independently of the standard county-based tract delineation.

**Tribal designated statistical areas (TDSAs).** Statistical entities identified and delineated by federally recognized American Indian tribes that do not currently have a federally recognized land base (reservation or off-reservation trust land).