

# Supporting Document: Change Rationale and Item Wording

## 1. Revision: 204 Geographic Code

**EXISTING DATA ELEMENT:** 204 Geographic Code (GEOCODE)

### **RATIONALE:**

The current options for Geographic Code do not align with the geographies for which the Census Bureau produces population estimates, which is the stated intent of the data element. In particular, places (e.g., cities and villages) are a different category than county subdivisions (or minor civil divisions, e.g., towns and townships, the terminology for which varies by state and region). Also, the "Metropolitan Area" (MA1 or MA2) was only selected for 18 AEs in FY19, and several of those appear to be in error, so those two categories do not appear to be necessary to retain.

Thus, the new definition below is revised to improve clarity by

- Adding sixteen new categories (PL1, PL2, MP1, MP2, CD1, CD2, MD1, MD2, CO3, MC3, SU1, SU2, SE1, SE2, SS1, SS2)
- Removing six categories (CI1, CI2, MA1, MA2, SD1, SD2).
- Revising the terminology of “exact” and “most nearly” for subcategories to “entirety” and “overlap,” respectively
- Adding a third subcategory for County and Multi-County for situations where the AE serves all residents outside smaller, contained AEs (usually municipal).
- Explicitly indicating that the SLAA is responsible for the determination of the value for each AE, to be consistent with data element 208, Population of Legal Service Area, to which Geographic Code should correspond

Input from SDCs during the December 2021 meeting helped to refine the list of categories. IMLS and AIR will provide data and tools to support SLAAs in transitioning their AE records to the new schema in advance of the FY22 collection opening. This revision will serve as the foundation for improving the usability of PLS data in geospatial analysis.

### **REVISED DEFINITION:**

Choose one of the following types of geography (defined by the U.S. Census Bureau) that best describes the legal service area (LSA) for which the public library has been established to offer services and from which (or on behalf of which) the library derives revenue, plus any areas served under contract for which the library is the primary service provider. The Geographic Code should represent the basis for the Population of Legal Service Area (data element #208), including areas served under contract, and as such should be determined by the state library agency.

Each geography type has at least two subtypes: “entirety” and “overlap.” If the LSA is not coterminous with one of the geography types, select the “overlap” option for the geography type that most overlaps the LSA. For “County or Equivalent” and “Multi-County” geographies, a

third subtype, “remainder excluding AEs of contained geographies,” exists specifically for AEs that serve the areas of counties outside of municipalities with separate AEs.

Note: For further clarification, see the definition of terms published by the U.S. Census Bureau: <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/geography/about/glossary.html>

PL1—Place (e.g., incorporated city or village, census-designated), entirety  
PL2—Place (e.g., incorporated city or village, census-designated), overlap  
MP1—Multi-Place, entirety  
MP2—Multi-Place, overlap  
CD1—Minor Civil Division [MCD] (e.g., town, township), entirety  
CD2—Minor Civil Division [MCD] (e.g., town, township), overlap  
MD1—Multi-MCD, entirety  
MD2—Multi-MCD, overlap  
CO1—County or Equivalent, entirety  
CO2—County or Equivalent, overlap  
CO3—County or Equivalent, remainder excluding AEs of contained geographies  
MC1—Multi-County, entirety  
MC2—Multi-County, overlap  
MC3—Multi-County, remainder excluding AEs of contained geographies  
SU1—School District - Unified, entirety  
SU2—School District - Unified, overlap  
SE1—School District - Elementary, entirety  
SE2—School District - Elementary, overlap  
SS1—School District - Secondary, entirety  
SS2—School District - Secondary, overlap  
OTH—Other

## **2. Revision: 630 Total Views of Asynchronous Program Presentation within 30 Days**

**EXISTING DATA ELEMENT:** 630 Total Views of Asynchronous Program Presentation within 7 Days (TOTVIEWS)

### **RATIONALE:**

Most public libraries I have consulted with about this element added for FY21 have expressed that the 7-day period for this particular type of metric is too limited and is of little local value. Many libraries track (and report to their local governing bodies) a variety of engagement metrics from social media platforms on a monthly basis. Given that most asynchronous views of library programs occur via social media platforms like Facebook and YouTube, tracking an additional 7-day view metric solely for the purposes of reporting on the PLS creates an additional burden for libraries without adding value to that data locally.

The 7-day tracking period is especially problematic for small public libraries. Many of these libraries -- if they are able to devote any staff time to virtual programs at all -- are only able to create one or two virtual programs each month. A 7-day viewing period seems biased toward larger, urban libraries that are better resourced to create and post new program content on a daily or weekly basis.

### **REVISED DEFINITION:**

#### **630 Total Views of Asynchronous Program Presentation within 30 Days (TOTVIEWS)**

The count of views of asynchronous program presentations for a period of **thirty (30)** days after the presentation was posted, even if that period extends beyond the survey reporting period (or fiscal year). For program presentations made available via Facebook, count unique 1-minute views of each video. For those made available via other platforms, count unique views of each video.

For program presentations that are recordings of synchronous virtual program sessions, exclude synchronous attendance; these should be counted under Synchronous In-Person Onsite Program Attendance, Synchronous In-Person Offsite Program Attendance, or Synchronous Virtual Program Attendance (data elements 616, 617, or 618).

### **3. Addition: Current Overdue Fine Policy**

**NEW DATA ELEMENT:** 504 Current Overdue Fine Policy

#### **RATIONALE:**

This proposal adds one data element related to a library’s current overdue fine policy. Some public libraries have recently eliminated overdue fines as one way to improve equity in library services after determining that overdue fines disproportionately affect members of their communities who have few, if any, other options for the kinds of services that the public library provides. The trend in curtailing overdue fines anecdotally appears to have accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic. This proposed data element (along with proposal #4 below) would allow IMLS to report on the status of this trend with comprehensive, national-level data that is not currently available.

This proposed data element was cognitively tested in one-hour interviews with eight respondents from public libraries of various sizes in four different states. (An earlier version was previously tested with nine respondents from public libraries of various sizes in seven different states.) These interviews, along with feedback from SDCs, informed the work of an ad hoc subcommittee of LSWG members and staff from IMLS and AIR to refine the proposed data element definition.

The element focuses on “physical print materials” to avoid confusion for libraries that charge overdue fines for non-print physical items, such as Wi-Fi hotspots or museum passes, but do not charge overdue fines for books.

#### **DEFINITION:**

##### **504 Current Overdue Fine Policy**

**Answer <Y>es or <N>o to the following question:**

*As of the end of the reporting period, does the library charge overdue fines to any users when they fail to return physical print materials by the date due?*

NOTE: Overdue fines are monetary penalties that typically increase according to the number of days the materials are overdue. Overdue fines are not replacement costs for lost or damaged materials.