

1 **STATE OF ALABAMA**
2 **REAPPORTIONMENT COMMITTEE GUIDELINES**
3 **FOR REMEDIAL LEGISLATIVE REDISTRICTING**
4 April 2017

5 **I. POPULATION**

6 The total Alabama resident state population of 4,779,736 persons, and the
7 population of defined subunits thereof, as reported by the 2010 Census, shall be
8 the permissible data base used for the development, evaluation, and analysis of
9 proposed redistricting plans. It is the intention of this provision to exclude from
10 use any census data, for the purpose of determining compliance with the one
11 person, one vote requirement, other than that provided by the United States
12 Census Bureau.

13 **II. EQUAL POPULATION REQUIREMENT: ONE PERSON, ONE VOTE**

14 In accordance with the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth
15 Amendment to the United States Constitution, legislative districts will be drawn
16 to achieve "substantial equality of population among the various districts."

17 a. A redistricting plan considered by the Reapportionment Committee shall
18 comply with the one person, one vote principle of the Equal Protection Clause of
19 the 14th Amendment of the United States Constitution.

20 b. In every redistricting plan submitted to the Reapportionment
21 Committee, individual district populations should not exceed a 2% overall range
22 of population deviation. The Reapportionment Committee will not approve a
23 redistricting plan that does not comply with this requirement.

24 **III. VOTING RIGHTS ACT**

25 Districts shall be drawn in in compliance with the Voting Rights Act of 1965.
26 A redistricting plan will not have either the purpose or the effect of diluting
27 minority voting strength, and shall comply with Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act
28 and the United States Constitution.

1 **IV. CRITERIA FOR LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS**

2 1. No district will be drawn in a manner that subordinates race-neutral
3 districting criteria to considerations that stereotype voters on the basis of race,
4 color, or membership in a language-minority group.

5 2. Legislative districts will be composed of contiguous and reasonably
6 compact geography.

7 3. The following requirements of the Alabama Constitution shall be
8 complied with:

9 a. Sovereignty resides in the people of Alabama, and all districts should be
10 drawn to reflect the democratic will of all the people concerning how their
11 governments should be restructured.

12 b. House and Senate districts shall be drawn on the basis of total
13 population, except that voting age population may be considered, if necessary, to
14 comply with Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.

15 c. The number of Senate districts is set by statute at 35 and, under the
16 Alabama Constitution, may not exceed 35.

17 d. The number of Senate districts shall be not less than one-fourth or more
18 than one-third of the number of House districts.

19 e. The number of House districts is set by statute at 105 and, under the
20 Alabama Constitution, may not exceed 106.

21 f. The number of House districts shall not be less than 67.

22 g. All legislative districts will be single-member districts.

23 h. Every part of every district shall be contiguous with every other part of
24 the district.

25 4. The following redistricting policies are embedded in the political values,
26 traditions, customs, and usages of the State of Alabama and shall be observed to
27 the extent that they do not violate or subordinate the foregoing policies
28 prescribed by the Constitution and laws of the United States and of the State of
29 Alabama:

1 a. Contests between incumbent members of the Legislature will be avoided
2 whenever possible.

3 b. Contiguity by water is allowed, but point-to-point contiguity and long-
4 lasso contiguity is not.

5 c. The integrity of communities of interest shall be respected. For purposes
6 of these Guidelines, a community of interest is defined as an area with recognized
7 similarities of interests, including but not limited to racial, ethnic, geographic,
8 governmental, regional, social, cultural, partisan, or historic interests; county,
9 municipal, or voting precinct boundaries; and commonality of communications.
10 The Reapportionment Committee will attempt to accommodate communities of
11 interest identified by people in a specific location. It is inevitable, however, that
12 some interests will be advanced more than others by the choice of particular
13 district configurations. The discernment, weighing, and balancing of the varied
14 factors that contribute to communities of interest is an intensely political process
15 best carried out by elected representatives of the people.

16
17 d. The Legislature shall try to minimize the number of counties in each
18 district.

19 e. In establishing legislative districts, the Reapportionment Committee shall
20 give due consideration to all the criteria herein. f. The criteria identified in
21 subsections (a)-(e) of this paragraph are not listed in order of precedence, and in
22 each instance where they conflict, the Legislature shall at its discretion determine
23 which takes priority.

24 5. Notwithstanding the above, districts shall comply with Section 2 of the
25 Voting Rights Act, but the Legislature may use race in the drawing of districts only
26 where it has a strong basis in evidence for believing that doing so is a necessary
27 and narrowly tailored response to the Act.

28 V. PLANS PRODUCED BY LEGISLATORS

29 1. The confidentiality of any Legislator developing plans or portions thereof
30 will be respected. The Reapportionment Office staff will not release any
31 information on any Legislator's work without written permission of the Legislator
32 developing the plan, subject to paragraph two below.

1 2. A proposed redistricting plan will become public information upon its
2 introduction as a bill in the legislative process, or upon presentation for
3 consideration by the Reapportionment Committee.

4 3. Access to the Legislative Reapportionment Office Computer System,
5 census population data, and redistricting work maps will be available to all
6 members of the Legislature upon request. Reapportionment Office staff will
7 provide technical assistance to all Legislators who wish to develop proposals.

8 4. In accordance with Rule 23 of the *Joint Rules of the Alabama Legislature*
9 (2015) all amendments or revisions to redistricting plans, following introduction
10 as a bill, shall be drafted by the Reapportionment Office.

11 5. Drafts of all redistricting plans which are presented for introduction at
12 any session of the Legislature, and which are not prepared by the
13 Reapportionment Office, must be presented to the Reapportionment Office for
14 review of proper form and for entry into the Legislative Data Bank.

15 VI. REAPPORTIONMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

16 1. All meetings of the Reapportionment Committee and its sub-committees
17 will be open to the public and all plans presented at committee meetings will be
18 made available to the public.

19 2. Minutes of all Reapportionment Committee meetings shall be taken and
20 maintained as part of the public record. Copies of all minutes shall be made
21 available to the public.

22 3. Transcripts of any public hearings shall be made and maintained as part
23 of the public record, and shall be available to the public.

24 4. All interested persons are encouraged to appear before the
25 Reapportionment Committee and to give their comments and input regarding
26 legislative redistricting. Reasonable opportunity will be given to such persons,
27 consistent with the criteria herein established, to present plans or amendments
28 redistricting plans to the Reapportionment Committee, if desired, unless such
29 plans or amendments fail to meet the minimal criteria herein established.

30 6. Notices of all Reapportionment Committee meetings will be posted on
31 the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth floors of the Alabama State House, the

1 Reapportionment Committee's website, and on the Secretary of State's website.
2 Individual notice of Reapportionment Committee meetings will be sent by email
3 to any citizen or organization who requests individual notice and provides the
4 necessary information to the Reapportionment Committee staff. Persons or
5 organizations who want to receive this information should contact the
6 Reapportionment Office.

7 VII. PUBLIC ACCESS

8 1. The Reapportionment Committee seeks active and informed public
9 participation in all activities of the Committee and the widest range of public
10 information and citizen input into its deliberations. Public access to the
11 Reapportionment Office computer system is available every Friday from 8:30 a.m.
12 to 4:30 p.m. Please contact the Reapportionment Office to schedule an
13 appointment.

14 2. A redistricting plan may be presented to the Reapportionment
15 Committee by any individual citizen or organization by written presentation at a
16 public meeting or by submission in writing to the Committee. All plans submitted
17 to the Reapportionment Committee will be made part of the public record and
18 made available in the same manner as other public records of the Committee.

19 3. Any proposed redistricting plan drafted into legislation must be offered
20 by a member of the Legislature for introduction into the legislative process.

21 4. A redistricting plan developed outside the Legislature or a redistricting
22 plan developed without Reapportionment Office assistance which is to be
23 presented for consideration by the Reapportionment Committee must:

24 a. Be clearly depicted on maps which follow 2010 Census geographic
25 boundaries;

26 b. Be accompanied by a statistical sheet listing total population for each
27 district and listing the census geography making up each proposed district;

28 c. Stand as a complete statewide plan for redistricting, or, if presenting a
29 partial plan, fit back into the plan which is being modified, so that the proposal
30 can be evaluated in the context of a statewide plan (*i.e.*, all places of geography
31 must be accounted for in some district);

1 d. Comply with the guidelines adopted by the Reapportionment
2 Committee.

3 5. Electronic Submissions

4 a. Electronic submissions of redistricting plans will be accepted by the
5 Reapportionment Committee.

6 b. Plans submitted electronically must also be accompanied by the paper
7 materials referenced in this section.

8 c. See the Appendix for the technical documentation for the electronic
9 submission of redistricting plans.

10 6. Census Data And Redistricting Materials

11 a. Census population data and census maps will be made available through
12 the Reapportionment Office at a cost determined by the Permanent Legislative
13 Committee on Reapportionment.

14 b. Summary population data at the precinct level and a statewide work
15 maps will be made available to the public through the Reapportionment Office at
16 a cost determined by the Permanent Legislative Committee on Reapportionment.

17 c. All such fees shall be deposited in the state treasury to the credit of the
18 general fund and shall be used to cover the expenses of the legislature.

19 Appendix.

20 ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION OF REDISTRICTING PLANS
21 REAPPORTIONMENT COMMITTEE - STATE OF ALABAMA
22

23 The Legislative Reapportionment Computer System supports the electronic
24 submission of redistricting plans. The electronic submission of these plans must
25 be on either a flash drive or CD ROM. The software used by the Reapportionment
26 Office is the Esri Redistricting Online (RO) Solution.
27

28 The electronic file should be in DOJ format (Block, district # or district #,
29 Block). This should be a two column, comma delimited file containing the FIPS
30 code for each block, and the district number. The Esri RO Solution has an

1 automated plan import that creates a new plan from the block/district
2 assignment list.

3
4 Web services that can be accessed directly with a URL and ArcView
5 Shapefiles can be viewed as overlays. A new plan would have to be built using this
6 overlay as a guide to assign units into a blank RO Solution plan. In order to analyze
7 the plans with our attribute data, edit, and report on, a new plan will have to be
8 built in the RO Solution.

9
10 In order for plans to be analyzed with our attribute data, to be able to edit,
11 report on, and produce maps in the most efficient, accurate and time saving
12 procedure, electronic submissions are REQUIRED to be in DOJ format.

13
14 Example (DOJ FORMAT BLOCK, DISTRICT #)

15
16 SSCCCTTTTTBBBBDDDD

17
18 SS is the 2 digit state FIPS code
19 CCC is the 3 digit county FIPS code
20 TTTTTT is the 6 digit census tract code
21 BBBB is the 4 digit census block code
22 DDDD is the district number, right adjusted
23
24

25 Contact Information:

26 Legislative Reapportionment Office
27 Room 303, State House
28 11 South Union Street
29 Montgomery, Alabama 36130
30 (334) 242-7941

31 For questions relating to reapportionment and redistricting, please contact:

32 Donna Shanholtzer
33 Supervisor
34 Legislative Reapportionment Office
35 donna@al-legislature.gov
36

1 Please Note: The above e-mail address is to be used only for the purposes
2 of obtaining information regarding redistricting. Political messages, including
3 those relative to specific legislation or other political matters, cannot be
4 answered or disseminated to members of the Legislature. Members of the
5 Permanent Legislative Committee On Reapportionment may be contacted
6 through information contained on their Member pages of the Official Website of
7 the Alabama Legislature.

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