

persons who will attend the meeting and require the services of a sign language interpreter should contact the Regional Office at least ten (10) working days before the scheduled date of the meeting.

The meeting will be conducted pursuant to the provisions of the rules and regulations of the Commission.

Dated at Washington, DC, October 14, 1997.

Carol-Lee Hurley,

Chief, Regional Programs Coordination Unit.
[FR Doc. 97-28449 Filed 10-27-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6335-01-P

COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

Agenda and Notice of Public Meeting of the West Virginia Advisory Committee

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to the provisions of the rules and regulations of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, that a meeting of the West Virginia Advisory Committee to the Commission will convene at 12:45 p.m. and adjourn at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, November 19, 1997, at the Raleigh County Public Library, 221 N. Kanawha Street, Beckley, West Virginia 25801. The purpose of the meeting is to plan its project activity for FY '97-'98, and receive information from invited guests on civil rights issues in Beckley, West Virginia.

Persons desiring additional information, or planning a presentation to the Committee, should contact Committee Chairperson Gregory T. Hinton, 304-367-4244, or Ki-Taek Chun, Director of the Eastern Regional Office, 202-376-7533 (TDD 202-376-8116). Hearing-impaired persons who will attend the meeting and require the services of a sign language interpreter should contact the Regional Office at least ten (10) working days before the scheduled date of the meeting.

The meeting will be conducted pursuant to the provisions of the rules and regulations of the Commission.

Dated at Washington, DC, October 20, 1997.

Carol-Lee Hurley,

Chief, Regional Programs Coordination Unit.
[FR Doc. 97-28453 Filed 10-27-97; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Bureau of the Census

[Docket No. 961213356-7236-02]

Census Tract Program for Census 2000—Final Criteria

AGENCY: Bureau of the Census, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of final program.

SUMMARY: Census tracts are relatively permanent small-area geographic divisions of a county or statistically equivalent entity¹ defined for the tabulation of decennial census data and selected other statistical programs. The primary goal of the census tract program is to provide a geographic unit that has stable boundaries between decennial censuses. Other goals include the identification of geographic areas that represent meaningful geographic divisions of a county based on economic or social interaction, significant topographic differences within a county, or a certain degree of demographic homogeneity at the time of original delineation. The Census Bureau uses census tracts to tabulate and disseminate a wide variety of data. For Census 2000, census tracts will be established across the entire area of the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Island Areas (American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Virgin Islands of the United States).

Census tracts first appeared in the 1910 census when local officials in eight of the larger cities delineated these areas. In the 1910, 1920, and 1930 censuses, the Census Bureau published census tract data as special tabulations; in 1940, the Census Bureau began including census tract data in its standard publications. The number of data subjects and the amount of data, as well as the number of counties containing census tracts, increased in every census through 1990. For the 1990 census, the Census Bureau inaugurated complete nationwide coverage and statistics for census tracts or statistically equivalent entities known as block numbering areas (BNAs). For Census 2000, the Census Bureau will combine the similar programs into a single census tract program.

¹ Includes parishes in Louisiana; boroughs and census areas in Alaska; independent cities in Maryland, Missouri, Nevada, and Virginia; that portion of Yellowstone National Park in Montana; districts/islands in American Samoa, the main islands of the Virgin Islands of the United States; municipalities in the Northern Mariana Islands; municipios in Puerto Rico; the entire area constituting the District of Columbia; and the entire area constituting Guam. This notice will refer to all these entities collectively as "counties."

To determine the boundaries and identification numbers of census tracts, the Census Bureau offers a program to local participants, such as locally identified agencies and American Indian tribal officials, whereby they can review and update the boundaries of the census tracts and BNAs delineated for the 1990 census and suggest revisions according to the criteria developed and promulgated by the Census Bureau. The Census Bureau will then review the resulting Census 2000 census tract plans for conformance to these criteria. The Census Bureau does not take into account or attempt to anticipate any nonstatistical uses that may be made of census tracts, nor will the Census Bureau modify the definition of census tracts to meet the requirements of any nonstatistical program.

The Census Bureau is now publishing final criteria for the delineation of census tracts for Census 2000. These criteria will apply to the 50 states, the District of Columbia, American Indian and Alaska Native areas, Puerto Rico, and the Island Areas. The Census Bureau may modify and, if necessary, reject proposals for census tracts that do not meet the criteria established following this notice.

In addition to these final criteria, this notice includes a description of the changes from the criteria used for the 1990 census and a list of definitions of key terms used in the criteria.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The census tract criteria for Census 2000 become effective November 28, 1997.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Joel Morrison, Chief, Geography Division, Bureau of the Census, Washington, DC 20233-7400, telephone (301) 457-1132, or e-mail (joel.morrison@geo.census.gov).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The census tract delineation criteria have evolved over the past nine decades in response to decennial census practices and the preferences of local participants and data users. After each decennial census, the Census Bureau, in consultation with past participants and data users, reviews and revises these criteria. Then, before the next decennial census, the Census Bureau offers state, tribal, and local officials an opportunity to correct, update, and otherwise improve the universe of census tracts.

In July and August 1995, the Census Bureau issued invitations to local groups and agencies to participate in the delineation of statistical geographic areas for Census 2000. These groups and agencies included regional planning agencies, councils of governments, county planning agencies, officials of

Federally recognized American Indian tribes, and officials of the 12 nonprofit Alaska Native Regional Corporations.

By early 1998, the Census Bureau will provide maps and detailed guidelines to program participants for the review and delineation of census tracts for Census 2000.

Response to Comments

The Census Bureau issued a Notice of Proposed Program Revisions and Request for Comments in the **Federal Register** (62 FR 4246) on Wednesday, January 29, 1997. That notice solicited comments on the proposed criteria for delineating census tracts for Census 2000. The Census Bureau did not receive any comments in response to that **Federal Register** notice and, therefore, is making no substantive changes to the criteria for this program.

Executive Order 12866

This notice does not meet the criteria for a "significant regulatory action" as specified in Executive Order 12866.

Regulatory Flexibility Act

Pursuant to the provisions of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 605(b)), the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation and Regulation, Department of Commerce, certified to the Chief Counsel, Small Business Administration, that this notice will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. The notice sets forth the criteria for the delineation of census tracts for Census 2000. The criteria will be used to determine boundaries for small-area geographic divisions of a county or other statistically relevant entity defined for the tabulation of census data. The Census Bureau uses census tracts to tabulate and disseminate a wide variety of statistical data from the decennial census. Thus, because the delineation of census tracts is solely for statistical purposes to enable the Census Bureau to tabulate and publish data for Census 2000, it will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

Final Program Requirements

A. Criteria for Delineating Census Tracts for Census 2000

The Census Bureau announces the following final criteria for use in delineating Census 2000 census tracts.

1. General Characteristics

- A census tract must meet the population and boundary feature criteria and comprise a reasonably compact, continuous land area

internally accessible to all points by road; the only exceptions are:

- (a) where the tract is defined to include a specific legal or land-use area that itself is discontinuous, in which case discontinuity is allowed at the discretion of the Census Bureau.
- (b) where a discontinuous area or inaccessible area would not meet population size requirements for a separate census tract, in which case the discontinuous or inaccessible area must be combined within an adjacent or proximate census tract.
- (c) where the topography or geographic patterns of settlement are not compact, but are irregularly shaped, in which case a census tract shape can depart from the compactness requirement.

- A county boundary always must be a census tract boundary. This criterion takes precedence over all other criteria or requirements except for the population threshold criteria for census tracts on American Indian reservations (AIRs) in multiple counties.

- Census tracts must cover the entire land and inland water area of each county. In coastal waters, territorial seas, and the Great Lakes, the Census Bureau recommends creating in each county a single census tract covering such water bodies to provide for complete census tract coverage.

2. Identification

- A census tract has a basic census tract number composed of no more than four digits and may have a two-digit decimal suffix.
- Census tract numbers must be unique within each county.
- The range of acceptable basic census tract numbers for Census 2000 is 1 to 9989; census tracts delineated specifically to complete coverage in territorial seas and the Great Lakes will use the number 0000 in each county.
- Census tracts delineated within or to encompass an AIR that crosses county or state and county boundaries, where the intent is for the census tract to ignore the county or state boundary for tabulation in an American Indian geographic hierarchy, will use numbers 9400 to 9499.
- The range of acceptable census tract suffixes is .01 to .98. The Census Bureau reserves the .99 suffix to identify civilian and military ships as "crews-of-vessels" census tracts.

3. Boundary Features

The Census Bureau recommends that most census tract boundaries follow visible and identifiable features. This makes the location of census tract boundaries less ambiguous. The Census

Bureau also permits the use of legal boundaries in some states and situations to allow for census tract-to-governmental unit relationships where the governmental boundaries tend to remain unchanged between censuses. The following features are acceptable as census tract boundaries for Census 2000:

- All state and county boundaries (always required).
 - Visible, perennial natural and cultural features, such as roads, rivers, canals, railroads, above-ground high-tension power lines, and so forth.
 - All minor civil division (MCD) boundaries (generally towns or townships) in Connecticut, Indiana, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont.
 - Those MCD boundaries not coincident with the boundaries of incorporated places that themselves are MCDs (being either coextensive with an MCD or independent of MCDs) in Illinois (townships only, not election precincts), Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri (governmental townships only), Nebraska (townships only, not election precincts), North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.
 - Barrio, barrio-pueblo, and subbarrio boundaries in Puerto Rico, census subdistrict boundaries in the Virgin Islands of the United States, MCD-county and island boundaries in American Samoa, municipal district boundaries in the Northern Mariana Islands, and election district boundaries in Guam.
 - All incorporated place boundaries in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont.
 - Conjoint incorporated place boundaries in other states; that is, the boundary separating two different incorporated places.
 - American Indian reservation and trust land boundaries.
 - Alaska Native village statistical areas and Alaska Native Regional Corporation boundaries, at the discretion of the Census Bureau, insofar as such boundaries are unambiguous for allocating living quarters as part of Census 2000 activities.
- When the features listed above are not available for selection, the Census Bureau may, at its discretion, approve other nonstandard visible features, such as ridge lines, pipelines, intermittent streams, fence lines, and so forth. The Census Bureau also may accept, on a case-by-case basis, the boundaries of selected nonstandard and potentially

nonvisible features such as the boundaries of national parks and national forests, cemeteries, or other special land-use properties, the straight-line extensions of visible features, and other lines of sight.

4. Population Thresholds

The Census Bureau proposes the following population criteria for census tracts (see Table 1):

- In the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands of the United States: 1,500 to 8,000 inhabitants, with an optimum of 4,000 inhabitants.

- In American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands: 1,500 to 8,000 inhabitants, with an optimum of 2,500 inhabitants.

- On American Indian reservations: 1,000 to 8,000 inhabitants, with an optimum of 2,500 inhabitants. (The population criteria for American Indian reservations apply to the entire reservation, including American Indian reservations in multiple counties or states.)

- In all counties, for census tracts delineated to enclose an institution, a

military installation, or other "special place" population: at least 1,000 inhabitants, with no optimum average or maximum (no change from 1990). (A special place includes facilities with resident population, such as correctional institutions, military installations, college campuses, workers' dormitories, hospitals, nursing homes, and group homes. A special place includes the entire facility including nonresidential areas and staff housing units, as well as all group quarters population.)

TABLE 1.—POPULATION THRESHOLDS FOR CENSUS 2000 CENSUS TRACTS

Area description	Population thresholds		
	Optimum	Minimum	Maximum
United States, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands of the U. S.	4,000	1,500	8,000
American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands	2,500	1,500	8,000
American Indian reservation	2,500	1,000	8,000
Special place census tract	none	1,000	none

5. Comparability and Implementation

As in previous censuses, the Census Bureau generally will not accept newly proposed census tracts that do not meet the required minimum population. However, with appropriate justification, the Census Bureau may grant exceptions on a case-by-case basis. For example, to facilitate census tract comparability over time, any 1990 census tract or BNA (except a "sliver" census tract/BNA—see 6. Sliver Census Tracts) that is virtually unchanged (that is, having less than five percent of the 1990 population affected by a boundary revision) may be recognized as a Census 2000 census tract even if its population falls below the minimum required population or above the maximum allowable population. The Census Bureau, however, recommends combining low population census tracts and splitting large population census tracts to meet the goal of providing meaningful small-area data.

6. Sliver Census Tracts

The Census Bureau will not retain, or continue to recognize for Census 2000, any 1990 "sliver" census tracts or BNAs. After the Census Bureau inserted the 1990 census tracts into the Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing System (TIGER) database, sliver census tracts resulted from:

- County boundary changes or corrections.
- Special land-use boundary changes or corrections (military reservations, national parks, and so forth).

- Local requests to correct errors in the insertion of 1990 areas into the TIGER database.

Sliver census tracts usually cover a very small area, and in most cases involve little or no population or housing. The Census Bureau has adopted new rules for establishing tabulation geographic areas in Census 2000 by separating the collection areas from the tabulation areas. This change will eliminate the need for such sliver census tracts in Census 2000.

In 1990, the Census Bureau established rules to assign special numerical suffixes to identify sliver census tracts, generally beginning with .98 and continuing in descending order. The Census Bureau applied the suffix to both the original census tract that lost territory and the newly created sliver census tract. For Census 2000, we recommend that local participants dispense with the sliver suffix for legitimate census tracts, but will not require a change if specifically requested by the local participant for comparability purposes.

B. Changes to the Criteria for Census 2000

Most provisions of the census tract criteria remain unchanged from those used in conjunction with the 1990 census, with the few exceptions summarized below:

1. The Census Bureau is combining the census tract and BNA programs to create a single census tract program. The major differences between the 1990 census tracts and BNAs were: (1) representatives of the states or Census

Bureau staff were responsible for the delineation of BNAs rather than local census statistical areas committees, and (2) census tracts were delineated mainly according to population criteria, while BNAs were delineated to meet data collection criteria based on the number of housing units rather than population. For Census 2000, the Census Bureau will contact local officials for the delineation of census tracts, and there will not be a housing unit criterion, thus bringing both areas under a single standard.

2. The Census Bureau is increasing the number of governmental units that have boundaries acceptable to use as census tract boundaries. The added areas are: all MCDs in Indiana and selected MCDs in Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin; the MCD-county and island areas of American Samoa; and villages in New York.

3. The Census Bureau now allows officials of Federally recognized American Indian reservations meeting the 1,000 minimum population threshold to delineate census tracts without regard to state or county boundaries. Although the Census Bureau will tabulate data for each state-county-census tract part, it also plans to provide summed data for all components of each census tract bearing the same numeric identifier within a Federally recognized AIR.

4. The Census Bureau will use census tracts only as tabulation areas, thus allowing late corrections to census tract boundaries as a result of legal county

boundary changes or to correct errors without having to create unique sliver census tracts for such areas.

Definitions of Key Terms

Alaska Native Regional Corporation (ANRC)—A corporate entity established under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1972, Public Law 92-203, as amended by Public Law 92-204, to conduct both the business and nonprofit affairs of Alaska Natives. Twelve ANRCs cover the entire State of Alaska except for the Annette Islands Reserve.

Alaska Native village statistical area (ANVSA)—A statistical entity containing the densely settled extent of an Alaska Native village that constitutes an association, band, clan, community, group, tribe, or village recognized pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1972, Public Law 92-203, as amended by Public Law 92-204.

American Indian reservation (AIR)—A Federally recognized American Indian entity with boundaries established by treaty, statute, and/or executive or court order and over which American Indians have governmental jurisdiction. Along with reservations, designations such as colonies, communities, pueblos, rancherias, and reserves apply to American Indian reservations.

Block numbering area (BNA)—A small-area, statistical geographic division of a county or statistically equivalent area delineated in 1990 instead of and generally geographically equivalent to census tracts. For Census 2000, the Census Bureau is merging the BNA program into the census tract program.

Coastal water—Water bodies between territorial seas and inland water, the encompassing headlands being more than one mile apart and less than 24 miles apart.

Conjoint—A description of a boundary shared by two adjacent geographic entities.

Continuous—A description of areas sharing common boundaries, such that the areas, when combined, form a single piece of territory. Discontinuous areas form disjoint pieces.

Crews-of-vessels census tract—A census tract created at the time of enumeration for allocating the shipboard population of merchant and military ships and identified with a special numeric suffix equal to .99.

Great Lakes' waters—Water area beyond one mile wide headland embayments located in any of the five Great Lakes: Erie, Huron, Michigan, Ontario, or Superior.

Incorporated place—A type of governmental unit, sanctioned by state law as a city, town (except in New England, New York, and Wisconsin), village, or borough (except in Alaska and New York), having legally prescribed limits, powers, and functions.

Inland water—Water bodies entirely surrounded by land or at the point where their opening to coastal waters, territorial seas, or the Great Lakes is less than one mile across.

Minor civil division (MCD)—The primary governmental or administrative division of a county in 28 states, Puerto Rico and the Island Areas having legal boundaries, names, and descriptions. MCDs represent many different types of legal entities with a wide variety of characteristics, powers, and functions depending on the state and type of MCD. In some states, some or all of the incorporated places also constitute MCDs.

Nonvisible feature—A map feature that is not visible on the ground such as a city or county boundary through space, a property line, a short line-of-sight extension of a road, or a point-to-point line of sight.

Special place—A specific location requiring special enumeration because the location includes people not in households or the area includes special land use. Special places include facilities with resident populations,

such as correctional institutions, military installations, college campuses, workers' dormitories, hospitals, nursing homes, group homes, and land-use areas such as national parks. A special place includes the entire facility, including nonresidential areas and staff housing units, as well as all group quarters population.

Territorial seas—Water bodies not included under the rules for inland water, coastal water, or Great Lakes' waters, see above.

Visible feature—A map feature that one can see on the ground such as a road, railroad track, above-ground transmission line, stream, shoreline, fence, sharply defined mountain ridge, or cliff. A nonstandard visible feature is a feature that may not be clearly defined on the ground (such as a ridge), may be seasonal (such as an intermittent stream), or may be relatively impermanent (such as a fence). The Census Bureau generally requests verification that nonstandard features pose no problem in their location during field work.

Dated: October 10, 1997.

Martha Farnsworth Riche,

Director, Bureau of the Census.

[FR Doc. 97-28430 Filed 10-27-97; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Economic Development Administration

Notice of Petitions by Producing Firms for Determination of Eligibility to Apply for Trade Adjustment Assistance

AGENCY: Economic Development Administration (EDA).

ACTION: To give firms an opportunity to comment.

Petitions have been accepted for filing on the dates indicated from the firms listed below.

LIST OF PETITION ACTION BY TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE FOR PERIOD 09/21/97-09/17/97

Firm name	Address	Date petition accepted	Product
Stanwood Mills, Inc	P.O. Box 195, Fairview Avenue, Slatington, PA 18080.	09/30/97	Greige Goods (Unbleached Fabric of Acetate, Rayon and Polyester).
G.L. Industries of Indiana, Inc ...	2860 North National Road, Columbus, IN 47201.	09/30/97	Injection Molded Plastic Television Cabinets.
Quality Capabilities, Inc	15251 Roosevelt Blvd, Suite 207, Clearwater, FL 34620.	10/03/97	Printed Circuit Assemblies.
Colt Technology Corporation	800 NW Technology Dr., Lees Summit, MO 64086.	10/03/97	Printed Circuit Boards without any Electronic Components Attached.
American Wilcon Plastics, Inc ...	418 North Front Street, Orrick, MO 64077.	10/03/97	Plastic Injection Molded Kitchen Wares and Other Misc. Plastic Molded Parts.