

Overview of Redistricting

Legislative Redistricting Committee



Office of Legislative Research & General Counsel

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Why Redistrict?

- The Great Compromise
- Unequal population growth creates inequities
- One person, one vote
- Utah Constitution, Article IX, Section 1:
“... the Legislature shall divide the state into congressional, legislative, and other districts...”

Relative Growth

Absolute numbers are less important than relative numbers:

- Growth slower than average – districts expand
- Growth faster than average – districts contract

Disproportionate Growth Creates Inequity

Reapportionment

435 U.S. House seats are apportioned based on 2020 census results as follows:

- Each state receives one guaranteed Congressional seat
- Remaining 385 seats divided “apportioned” among the states based on population

Redistricting

Redistricting is the process of redrawing new district boundaries for congressional, legislative, and state school board districts.



Redistricting ≠ Reapportionment

Reapportionment: reallocation of 385 Congressional districts among the states based on each *state's reapportionment population*

Redistricting: act of redrawing congressional, legislative, and state school board district boundaries based on each state's *resident population*

Target Population

The Legislature redraws district boundaries based on results of the most recent results of the U.S. Census Bureau **resident population** count. This count is used to determine the target district size of districts by type:

- Congressional
- Utah House of Representatives
- Utah Senate
- State Board of Education



Resident Population

	Districts	2000	2010	2020
Population		2,233,169	2,763,885	3,271,616
Congress	3	744,390		
Congress	4	558,292	690,971	817,904
Senate	29	77,006	95,306	112,814
House	75	29,776	36,852	43,622
School Board	15	148,878	184,259	218,108



Resident Population

District Type	Number	Target District Size	Legal Standard	Committee Standards	
				Deviation From Target	Population Range
Congress	4	817,904	As close as practicable	±0.1%	817,086 – 818,722
School Board	15	218,108	10% overall	±5.0%	207,202 – 229,013
Senate	29	112,814	10% overall	±5.0%	107,174 – 118,455
House	75	43,622	10% overall	±5.0%	41,440 – 45,803



Population

Overview

Congressional Districts – “One person, one vote”

State Legislative Districts – “Substantial equality”



Population

Congressional Districts

One person, one vote

“States must draw congressional districts with populations as close to perfect equality as possible.”

– United States Supreme Court



To challenge – Plaintiff must prove . . .

. . . population differences could have been reduced or eliminated “by a good-faith effort to draw districts of equal population.”

– United States Supreme Court



If plaintiff meets burden – State must prove . . .

. . . “that each significant variance between districts was necessary to achieve some legitimate goal.”

– United States Supreme Court



Redistricting Principal for Congressional Maps

“Congressional districts must be as nearly equal as practicable with a deviation not greater than $\pm 0.1\%$.”



Substantial Equality

The vote of any citizen must be “approximately equal in weight to that of any other citizen in the State.”

– United States Supreme Court



Population

State Legislative and State School Board Districts

Substantial Equality

10% Deviation Standard ($\pm 5\%$)



Redistricting Principle for State Legislative and State School Board

“State legislative districts and state school board districts must have substantial equality of population among the various districts with a deviation less than $\pm 5.0\%$.”



- Voting Rights Act - Majority Minority Districts

District where the majority of the voting age population in the district is of the same minority race, color, or language group.

- Prohibition on using race as the primary factor in drawing a district.