



FACT SHEET

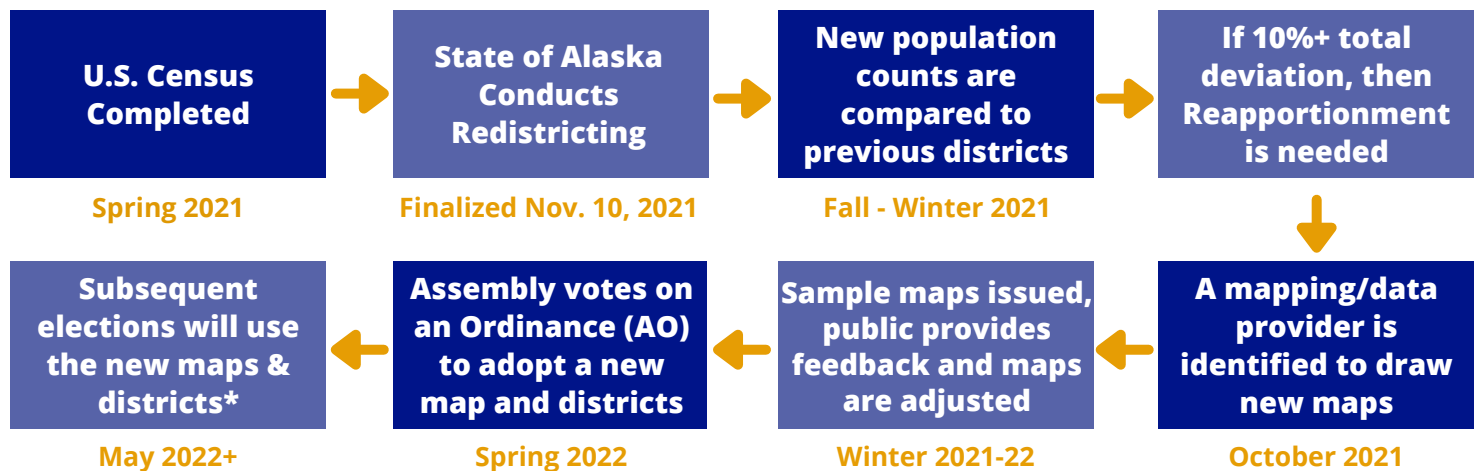
REAPPORTIONMENT

Every ten years after the U.S. Census is complete, governments across the country update their election districts to match the new population data. In Anchorage, the process is called Reapportionment and is led by a Reapportionment Committee, which is charged with reviewing the State final redistricting plan, taking public input, and developing proposed maps for the Anchorage Assembly to consider for adoption to realign the boundaries of the six Assembly Election Districts to ensure fair and equal representation.

When is Assembly Reapportionment needed?

According to the Anchorage Charter § 4.01, the Assembly must conduct Reapportionment whenever it becomes malapportioned. The Charter mandates Assembly review for malapportionment after the state adopts its redistricting plan, which happens every ten years with the completion of the U.S. Census (art. VI, sec. 10, Constitution of the State of Alaska). Within two months of the final state redistricting plan, the Assembly must declare by resolution (AR) whether or not it is malapportioned. If it is malapportioned, it has six months to reapportion itself. In addition to the requirement to conduct an analysis following the state redistricting plan, this Reapportionment is unusual in that it will also take into account the addition of a new 12th Assembly seat that was approved by Municipality of Anchorage voters in 2020.

What does the process look like?



*Some possible, but unusual, consequences of new boundaries:

- If a new district excludes a substantial number of constituents previously represented, or includes numerous new voters, the Assembly may put the seat in the following election, even if that seat is not yet up for re-election.
- Some Assembly Members may no longer live in the district they were elected to represent (and now two existing Members with the same term may live in the same district). If this happens, the Assembly may decide to put that Member's seat up for election, or may let them serve out the remainder of the term.
- If some seats are put up for election before the three-year term for reasons above, the newly elected person only serves the remainder of the term in order to maintain the staggered terms of the Assembly seats.

What determines Assembly Malapportionment?

The size of each Assembly district is determined by a population calculation:

- Total MOA population/# of elected representatives (now 12) = Target population per representative
- From there, the population within each district is compared to the Target population -- the difference is the district's % deviation from the Target population
- If the TOTAL deviation between all districts is more than 10%, the Assembly is malapportioned

MOA	2002 boundaries	2010 Census data		
Section	tapersons	target	Dev	Diff
1	25861	26530	-2.5%	-669
2	54974	53059	3.6%	1915
3	51066	53059	-3.8%	-1993
4	53676	53059	1.2%	617
5	50303	53059	-5.2%	-2756
6	55946	53059	5.4%	2887
	-291791	291826	-0.01	0

For example, in the 2012 Reapportionment table above, when the population from the previous (2002) boundaries was compared to the 2010 census data, there was a 10.6% total deviation (District 5 was 5.2% *under* target and District 6 was 5.4% *over* target), which triggered reapportionment.

How is the new Assembly election district map determined?

The Municipality's Reapportionment contractor designs sample maps using GIS software to meet the requirements of federal, state and local laws. Perfectly equal districts are not always possible, so multiple maps that are close to the ideals are drawn to present different options for the public and Assembly to review. After considering community feedback, the Assembly votes to adopt a final plan and map.

Here are some factors that are considered:

- Districts must be compact, contiguous and a relatively integrated socioeconomic area (Anchorage Charter 4.01).
- The principle of equal protection and "one person, one vote" must be maintained.
- The total deviation in actual population to target population must be less than 10% (federal law).
- A single district with an over 5% deviation must have a compelling reason.
- The new boundaries can't be racially discriminatory (federal law).

How does the federal Voting Rights Act affect the process?

The federal Voting Rights Act (VRA) of 1965, although modified over the years, still prohibits discriminatory voting practices. Although the preclearance requirement of Section 4 of the VRA, which applied to Alaska, was ruled unconstitutional in 2013, the rules for ensuring newly drawn election district boundaries do not impermissibly discriminate against minority groups remain in place. Assembly reapportionment cannot have the effect, in a totality of the circumstances analysis, of causing an inequality in the opportunities for minority voters to elect their preferred representatives.

Additional Resources

Learn more and get involved! Democracy works best when everyone is informed and participates.

- Anchorage Assembly Reapportionment Committee: www.muni.org/Departments/Assembly/Pages/Municipality-and-Assembly-Reapportionmant-Committee.aspx
- State of Alaska Redistricting Board: www.akredistrict.org