How to Access and Use Newly Released ACS State Legislative District Data

March 16, 2023
2:00-3:30 PM ET

INTRODUCTION
Diana Elliott, PRB

OVERVIEW OF THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY (ACS) AND REDISTRICTING DATA PROGRAM
Gretchen Gooding and James Whitehorne, U.S. Census Bureau

USES OF THE ACS STATE LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT DATA
Casandra Hockenberry, CSG

LEGISLATIVE USES FOR ACS DATA
Wendy Underhill, NCSL
Overview of the American Community Survey (ACS) and Redistricting Data Program

How to Access and Use Newly Released ACS SLD Data
March 16, 2023

Gretchen Gooding
Chief, Outreach and Education Branch, American Community Survey Office

James Whitehorne
Chief, Redistricting & Voting Rights Data Office
The U.S. Census Bureau is the federal government’s largest statistical agency.

The U.S. Census Bureau conducts more than 130 surveys and programs each year, including:

- **The Decennial Census** – the once-a-decade population and housing count of all 50 states and U.S. territories

- **The American Community Survey** – the ongoing, annual survey of the social, economic, housing, and demographic characteristics of the nation’s population

- **The Economic Census** – the official five-year measure of American businesses

- **The Census of Governments** – identifies the scope and nature of the nation’s state and local government sector

Our mission is to serve as the nation’s leading provider of quality data about its people and economy.
Overview of the ACS and Redistricting Data Program

Outline

• **American Community Survey (ACS) basics**

• ACS data products

• The Redistricting Data Program
  • State Legislative District Boundary Collection Cycle
  • Geographic Support Products
  • Voting Rights Data
    • CVAP & Section 203 Language Determinations
    • Timing of Data Availability

• Stay in touch
The American Community Survey is on the leading edge of survey design, continuous improvement, and data quality

- The nation’s most current, reliable, and accessible data source for local statistics on critical planning topics such as age, children, veterans, commuting, education, income, and employment
- Surveys 3.5 million addresses and helps informs the distribution of hundreds of billions in federal funds each year
- Covers 40+ topics, supports over 300 evidence-based federal government uses
- Three key annual data releases:
  - 1-year Estimates (for large populations, geographies of 65,000+ population)
  - 1-year Supplemental Estimates (for small populations, geographies of 20,000+ population)
  - 5-year Estimates (for very small populations, geographies down to Census Tracts and Block Groups)
The American Community Survey

**Census & ACS**

- **1790-1830 Census**: one form to all households
- **1940-2000 Census**: short form & long form
- **1996-2004 ACS**: demonstration period
- **2005-present ACS/PRCS**: annual estimates for all geographies
- **2010 Census and future**: short form only

United States Census Bureau
## The American Community Survey

#### How is the American Community Survey Different From a Census?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACS</th>
<th>Census</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample estimates</td>
<td>Official counts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collects</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detailed social, economic, housing, and demographic characteristics</td>
<td>Basic demographics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Produces</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population and housing characteristics</td>
<td>Population and housing totals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Data Every</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data Reflect</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period of time</td>
<td>Point in time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The American Community Survey
Data Collection Process

- SELF-RESPONSE
- NONRESPONSE FOLLOWUP
# The American Community Survey

## Content Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POPULATION</th>
<th>ECONOMIC</th>
<th>HOUSING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL</td>
<td>DEMOGRAPHIC</td>
<td>Computer &amp; Internet Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancestry</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Costs (Mortgage, Rent, Taxes, Insurance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship</td>
<td>Hispanic Origin</td>
<td>Heating Fuel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizen Voting Age Population</td>
<td>Race</td>
<td>Home Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>Relationship</td>
<td>Occupancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Attainment</td>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Plumbing/Kitchen Facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fertility</td>
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<td>Structure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grandparents</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tenure (Own/Rent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Class of Worker</td>
<td>Utilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>Commuting</td>
<td>Vehicles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Migration</td>
<td>Employment Status</td>
<td>Year Built</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Enrollment</td>
<td>Food Stamps (SNAP)</td>
<td>Year Moved In</td>
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<tr>
<td>Veterans</td>
<td>Health Insurance</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Income</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Industry &amp; Occupation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weeks Worked</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The American Community Survey
Selected Census Geographic Concepts

- NATION
  - ZIP Code Tabulation Areas (ZCTA)
  - Regions
    - Metropolitan and micropolitan areas
    - Urban areas
  - Divisions
    - Places
    - School districts
    - Congressional districts
  - States
    - Public Use Microdata Areas
    - Alaska Native regional areas
    - State legislative districts
  - Counties
    - Census tracts
  - Block groups

- American Indian Areas/
  Alaska Native Areas/
  Hawaiian Home Lands
## The American Community Survey

### Availability of Data Products

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated Population of Geographic Area</th>
<th>1-Year Estimates</th>
<th>1-Year Supplemental Estimates</th>
<th>5-Year Estimates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>65,000 or more</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,000 to 64,999</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 20,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Typical Release Month**

(Occurs in the calendar year after data collection)

- **September**
- **October**
- **December**

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census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/news/data-releases.html
American Community Survey (ACS)

The American Community Survey (ACS) helps local officials, community leaders, and businesses understand the changes taking place in their communities. It is the premier source for detailed population and housing information about our nation.

**Featured**

**Respond to the ACS**

Learn the different ways to respond to the American Community Survey -- online, by phone, by email. Read our FAQs or call us for more help with the survey.
Overview of the ACS and Redistricting Data Program

Outline

- American Community Survey (ACS) basics

- ACS data products

- The Redistricting Data Program
  - State Legislative District Boundary Collection Cycle
  - Geographic Support Products
  - Voting Rights Data
    - CVAP & Section 203 Language Determinations
  - Timing of Data Availability

- Stay in touch
The American Community Survey
Data Product Type: Profiles

**Description**
- Offer a broad look at a community’s social, economic, housing, and demographic characteristics
- Generally include many different variables
- Geography or population group is at the center

**Types**
- Data Profiles (DP)
- Comparison Profiles (CP)
- Selected Population Profiles (S0201)

[Link to Census Bureau website](census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data/data-tables/table-ids-explained.html)
The American Community Survey

Data Product Types: Tables

- A precise or detailed view of a subject
- Subject matter is at the center of the table

Types
- Detailed Tables (B or C)
- Supplemental Table (K20)
- Subject Tables (S)
- Ranking Tables (R)
- Geographic Comparison Tables (GCT)

census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data/data-tables/table-ids-explained.html
The American Community Survey
Table/Profile Numbering

• B=Data Product Type (Base Table)
• 06=Subject (Place of Birth)
• 004=Sequential Number (2 or 3 digits)
• A=Race/Hispanic Origin (White Alone)
• PR=For Puerto Rico Geographies Only

B06004APR
census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data/data-tables/table-ids-explained.html
The American Community Survey
2022 State Legislative Districts

• Four Data Profiles will be available for 2022 state legislative districts (SLDs) on March 16, 2023
• Provide snapshots of the social, economic, housing, and demographic characteristics of SLDs
• Available through FTP site and web-based lookup tool
• Based on 2017-2021 ACS 5-year estimates
• 2022 ACS data release will use 2022 SLDs
• Similar tabulation for the new congressional districts was released in January

census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data/congressional-and-state-legislative-districts.html
Overview of the ACS and Redistricting Data Program

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• Stay in touch
Program Mission: Provide states an opportunity to identify the geographic areas for which specific tabulations of population are needed for legislative redistricting and to deliver high quality data for those areas in a timely manner

Identified “geographic areas desired”:
• Census Tabulation Blocks
• Voting Districts (e.g. precincts, wards, etc.)
• Legislative and Congressional Districts

Requirements:
• Establish program criteria
• Identify required tabulations
• Conduct the program in a non-partisan manner
• Deliver the tabulations to the governor and the officers or public bodies having initial responsibility for the legislative apportionment or districting of each State no later than 1 year from Census Day
# Calendar of Boundary Collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Congressional Session/Legislative District Year</th>
<th>Election</th>
<th>Congress Seated</th>
<th>Boundary Collection Starts</th>
<th>Boundary Collection Ends</th>
<th>Geographic Products Finish Publishing (if needed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>120th / 2026</td>
<td>Nov. 2026</td>
<td>Jan. 2027</td>
<td>Nov. 2025</td>
<td>May 2026</td>
<td>Jan. 2027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121st / 2028</td>
<td>Nov. 2028</td>
<td>Jan. 2029</td>
<td>Nov. 2027</td>
<td>May 2028</td>
<td>Jan. 2029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122nd / 2030</td>
<td>Nov. 2030</td>
<td>Jan. 2031</td>
<td>Nov. 2029</td>
<td>Mar. 2030</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>123rd / 2032</td>
<td>Nov. 2032</td>
<td>Jan. 2033</td>
<td>Nov. 2031</td>
<td>July 2032</td>
<td>Mar. 2033</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Some states have odd-year elections. However, the legislative district plans collected by Census reflect what was in effect during the even-year election cycle.*
### Geographic Support Products

- **Block Equivalency Files**
  - Split Block Listings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GEOID</th>
<th>SLDUST</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>11001001021003</td>
<td>002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11001001021004</td>
<td>002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Shapefiles/Geodatabases**
Geographic Support Products

• Relationship Files
  – AIANNH
  – Place
  – Census Tract
  – School District
  – County
  – Zip Code
  – County Subdivision
Geographic Support Products

- State Legislative District Maps
Voting Rights Data
Citizen Voting Age Population By Race & Ethnicity

• Citizen Voting Age Population By Race & Ethnicity (CVAP) was initially created from the Census 2000 long form data and published in 2002.

• In February of 2011, at the request of the Department of Justice, the Census Bureau started publishing annual CVAP estimates using the American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

• The CVAP file contains data aggregations (summarized racial and ethnic categories) based on OMB Bulletin 00-02 which provides guidance for aggregating data for voting and civil rights enforcement.

• Congressional and State Legislative Districts were added for the 2018 and future releases.

• Typically released in the 1st week of February each year
  • LATEST : 2017-2021 CVAP estimates were released on 2/1/23
  • NEXT : 2018-2022 CVAP estimates expected to be released around 2/1/24
## Calendar of Data Availability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Congressional Session/Legislative District Year</th>
<th>Election+</th>
<th>Congress Start</th>
<th>Decennial Summary File Published (if needed)</th>
<th>First Appearance in ACS 5-year Estimates - Date</th>
<th>First Appearance in ACS 5-year Estimates - Vintage</th>
<th>First Appearance in CVAP Special Tabulation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>120th / 2026</td>
<td>Nov. 2026</td>
<td>Jan. 2027</td>
<td>Jan. 2027</td>
<td>Dec. 2027</td>
<td>2022-2026 5-Year</td>
<td>Feb. 2028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122nd / 2030</td>
<td>Nov. 2030</td>
<td>Jan. 2031</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Dec. 2031</td>
<td>2026-2030 5-Year</td>
<td>Feb. 2032</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

+ Some states have odd-year elections. However, the legislative district plans collected by Census reflect what was in effect during the even-year election cycle

* Planned publication date
Voting Rights Data
Section 203 Language Determinations

• Language groups covered by Section 203
  • Alaska Native
  • American Indian
  • Asian
  • Spanish/Hispanic/Latino

• New language determinations are published every 5 years
• Determines counties or townships where language assistance is needed for voting
• Calculated using the American Community Survey 5-year estimates and other census data
• Last published in the Federal Register 12/8/2021
• Next publication planned for 12/2026
Redistricting Data Program
Where to get the data.

Decennial Census of Population and Housing

Redistricting Data Program
REDISTRICTING & VOTING RIGHTS DATA OFFICE (RDO@CENSUS.GOV OR 301-763-4039)

MAY 05, 2017
Redistricting Data Program Congressional Districts
Guidance and access to information about congressional districts and congressional district products.

MAY 08, 2017
Redistricting Data Program State Legislative Districts
Guidance and access to information about state legislative districts and state legislative district products

MAY 08, 2017
Decennial Census P.L. 94-171 Redistricting Data Summary Files
Guidance and documentation to assist in accessing P.L. 94-171 Redistricting Data

Redistricting Data Program Management
Guidance about and for participation in the Redistricting Data Program for the current and past Decennial Censuses.

State Legislative Data Resources

Voting Rights Data
(Section 203 & CVAP)

WWW.CENSUS.GOV/RDO
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• Stay in touch
• Purpose:
  • Improve understanding of the value and utility of ACS data.
  • Promote information sharing among data users about key ACS data issues and applications.

• Includes users group website and online community

• ACS Data Users Conference
  • May 16-18, 2023

• Membership is free and open to all interested ACS data users

acsdatacommunity.prb.org
Data Dissemination and Training

✓ Bring our data experts to you.
Request a free data training for your organization.

✓ Receive our Data Gems.
These short “how-to” videos are an easy and quick way to increase your knowledge of Census data. Get them in your inbox!

✓ Get access to our Courses.
You will learn-at-your-own-pace with these video-tutorials designed for different skill levels.

✓ Interact with our instructors via Webinars.
Learn about our data releases and tools while attending these live virtual classes.

Contact us:
Census.askdata@census.gov
1-844-ASK-DATA

Share your ideas and feedback at census.academy@census.gov

Census.gov/Academy
Overview of the ACS and Redistricting Data Program

Continue the Conversation

Website
census.gov/acs
census.gov/rdo

User Support
ACS  acso.users.support@census.gov
RDO rdo@census.gov

Census Customer Service Center
ACS  800-923-8282
RDO 301-763-4039

ACS Email Alerts
https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USCENS
US/signup/12426

Social Media
@uscensusbureau
#ACSdata

Source Us
U.S. Census Bureau, [YYYY – YYYY] American Community Survey
[1/5]-year [estimates/statistics/data release]
USES OF THE ACS STATE LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT DATA

Casandra Hockenberry, Program Manager
A way for the branches to work together

• When we have data like this, we can find ways for the branches and the parties to work together
• Data based forecasting and investment alignment is not partisan
• For example, if we know there is a community that has an aging population, it just makes sense to invest in a Senior Center
• A community with a large population of people with disabilities, perhaps accessible transportation is a good investment
Investment alignment

• This data can be used by the executive and legislative branch for:
  • Investment in infrastructure
    • More accessible public transportation
    • Investing in highways and bridges
    • High speed internet and computer learning services
  • Housing Investment
    • Low-income housing
    • Missing middle housing and zoning modifications
  • Workforce development investment
    • Preparing sites for ready build investments
    • Investment in upskilling and reskilling
Forecasting alignment

• Educational Institutions
  • New or more schools, investing in teacher recruitment, apprenticeships for teaching

• Supportive Services
  • Senior citizen homes, re-entry organizations for those exiting criminal justice involvement, alternative career pathways

• Alternative language initiatives
How Legislators can use this data

• This data is extremely important for legislators to better understand the communities in their constituencies
• This information can help legislators communicate with and advocate for their citizens that may otherwise remain silent
  • Outreach to smaller non-English speaking communities
  • Target community events that bring in a larger number of constituents, particularly those that are historically underrepresented
• Using this information can help legislators set their priorities and support their advocacy with data
Legislative Uses for ACS Data

Prepared for the Population Reference Bureau

Wendy Underhill, Director, Elections & Redistricting

March 16, 2022
What is NCSL?

- The nation’s bipartisan organization serving legislators and legislative staff across the 50 states and U.S. territories
- Services include:
  - Policy Research
  - Training
  - Connections
  - State Voice in D.C.
  - Meetings
Today’s Agenda

What legislatures use ACS data for:

1. Redistricting
2. Describing Districts
3. Policymaking
4. Voting Language Assistance
• Decennial census (used for redistricting) does not include citizenship

• ACS has “citizen voting age population” (CVAP)

• For proposed maps, Texas provides VAP, CVAP and Hispanic CVAP

Redistricting: Citizenship

Redistricting balances the number of people in each district; it can be good to know how many are potential voters—so it is good to know how many are citizens.
• Again—decennial census data is used for redistricting, not ACS
• ACS data helps with background analysis
• Election results help too!

Redistricting: Voting Rights Act Compliance

Districts must be drawn to ensure minority communities are able to elect candidates of their choice.
• COIs are defined by those who live in them based on shared interests
• ACS data can help (so can other data sources)
• Preserving COIs is lower priority than One Person, One Vote and the VRA

Redistricting: Communities of Interest

Some states have preserving “communities of interest” as one criteria among many.
Today’s data release will be the first time legislators see details about their new districts

- Average income
- Housing stability
- Kinds of employment

Legislators are (mostly) not going to find the data on their own so...

Legislators Love ACS Data by District

Statistics are nice, but legislators mostly learn their districts by meeting their constituents.
It’s increasingly common that central staff include data science and GIS experts.

Staff answer legislators’ questions:

- “Can you tell me the median income in my district?”
- “What’s the educational attainment in my district compared to my neighbor’s?”
From Texas:
“The profiles are created by aggregating data at the block group level which allows staff to create updated reports and graphics after redistricting and throughout the decade. The profiles are posted to member webpages and provides their staff with select demographic and statistical information that can be used to assist their constituents with any possible questions.”
-- from a member of the Texas Legislative Council
• Criminal justice
• Education
• Health
• Child welfare
• Workforce Development
• Aging issues
• Veterans

When the goal is evidence-based policymaking, data is essential; pairing data with maps is becoming essential as well.
Language Assistance for Voting

Not all citizens have English-language proficiency, so providing voting assistance in other languages is key.

• The Census Bureau releases lists of jurisdictions that are required to provide language assistance every five years
• The determinations are based on ACS data
• The most recent determinations were released in 2021.
Questions?

Wendy.Underhill@ncsl.org
303.856.1379
Questions?

Type them into the Q&A box.
Thank you!