

Decennial Redistricting

Redistricting is the process of redrawing the boundaries of districts that elect representatives who serve specific geographical areas. Redistricting is required every 10 years following the United States decennial census and is the responsibility of state and local governments. Redistricting is governed by Federal and State constitutional and statutory laws. In Virginia, redistricting is required for localities that elect candidates from a district or ward system. The purpose of decennial redistricting is to equalize, as nearly as practical, representation in the election districts on the basis of population.

The 2020 Census results show that Greensville County decreased in population since the 2010 Census, from 12,243 people to 11,391 people. This is a decrease of 852 people. Because Greensville County elects Board of Supervisors and School Board candidates by district, the County is required to undergo redistricting following every decennial census. Further, and because the Greensville County population decreased, each election district needs to be balanced to ensure equal representation. In this regard, the Greensville County Board of Supervisors makes the final decision on how district boundaries are drawn.

Timeline

As a result of the coronavirus pandemic, the 2020 Census was delayed which also delayed redistricting schedules. In the Commonwealth, Virginians voted for a Redistricting Commission to redraw legislative boundaries. The Redistricting Commission did not reach a consensus on state redistricting maps; as a result, the Virginia Supreme Court selected “special masters” to draw the state redistricting maps. The final state redistricting maps were completed and approved by the Court at the end of December 2021.

Once the state completed redistricting, localities could begin local redistricting if applicable.

What are the Legal Requirements for Local Redistricting?

- Districts may not have split precincts. This is why localities wait to begin redistricting until the state concludes its efforts.
- Districts must be compact in shape and contiguous in geographic area.
- Voting district population must be substantially equal in apportionment. For example, for a population of 20,000 people there would be approximately 5,000 people per district.
- Redistricting must use census blocks or higher for determining population.
- Districts are to be drawn based on clearly observable boundaries, ex: natural waterways, highways, etc.