The Voting Rights Act
and
other redistricting criteria

California Redistricting Training

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This is not your lawyer
Where to draw the lines?


• Equal population
• Race and ethnicity
• Contiguity
• Neighborhoods and communities
• Compactness
• Partisan favor
Equal population

District population must be “substantially equal” (< 10% difference)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Deviation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District 1</td>
<td>1,010</td>
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<tr>
<td>District 2</td>
<td>1,035</td>
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<tr>
<td>District 3</td>
<td>980</td>
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<tr>
<td>District 4</td>
<td>940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 5</td>
<td>1,005</td>
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<tr>
<td>District 6</td>
<td>990</td>
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<td>District 7</td>
<td>965</td>
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<tr>
<td>District 8</td>
<td>1,020</td>
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<tr>
<td>District 9</td>
<td>1,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 10</td>
<td>1,005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total population 10,000
Average 1,000

Total deviation 11.0%
 Equal representation: incarceration

Susanville non-prison: 0 % African-American, 24 % Latino
Susanville prisons: 27 % African-American, 35 % Latino

prisons = 48% of total Susanville population
permanent residence often not in Susanville

Credit: Prison Policy Initiative, US Census
Race and ethnicity
Don’t set out to hurt voters based on their race or ethnicity

- No matter if lines are “pretty”
- No matter the ultimate motive

“Cracking”

“Packing”
Rule Two

Comply with the Voting Rights Act

• Are there sizable, relatively concentrated minority communities?
• Do the minority communities have distinct electoral preferences?
• Did (or do) underrepresented minorities face discrimination?
• Can we design districts to give minorities a fair shot?
California Voting Rights Act

Only applies to jurisdictions with at-large elections, not where all candidates are elected from single-member districts
Rule Three

Consider other factors at the same time

Race can only “predominate” if there’s a really good reason
Contiguity

All parts of a district must be connected to each other
Contiguity

Islands should be connected by bridges/tunnels/ferries
Neighborhoods

Minimize division of a neighborhood
Communities of interest

Minimize division of communities of interest, too

“A community of interest is a population that shares common social and economic interests that should be included within a single district for purposes of its effective and fair representation.”
Compactness

Many think of “compactness” in terms of abstract shapes

But that doesn’t fit California law
Compactness

Some think of “compactness” in terms of geometric formulas

- Total perimeter length
- Area v. area of circle with same perimeter (Cox/Polsby-Popper)
- Area v. area of circumscribing circle (Reock)
- Area v. area of circumscribing convex hull (Niemi)
- Diameter of circumscribing circle (Frolov)
- Moment of inertia / distance to center of gravity (Boyce-Clark)
- Significant corners (Kaufman-King)
- Inward-bending v. outward-bending angles (Taylor)
- Shortest path remaining in district (Chambers-Miller)

But that doesn’t fit California law
Compactness

California standard: Don’t bypass nearby population
Candidates and parties

• Don’t draw districts for the purpose of favoring or discriminating against a political party
Further information

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allaboutredistricting.org