

# Appleton Redistricting Guide

# 2021

## Committee Members

Kami Lynch, City Clerk

Christopher Behrens, City Attorney

Jacob Woodford, Mayor

DeAnn Brosman, City Assessor

Jessica Schneider, GIS – Community Development

Council President – Matt Reed, District 8

Council Vice President – Katie Van Zeeland, District 5

Aldersperson – William Siebers, District 1

Aldersperson – Vered Meltzer, District 2

Aldersperson – Michael Smith, District 10

## Appleton Redistricting Committee Appointments

Following each Census, an Appleton Redistricting Committee is formed for the purpose of overseeing the citywide redistricting process. The committee is composed of the following members:

- Five members serve by virtue of their roles:
  - City Clerk
  - City Attorney
  - Mayor
  - City Assessor
  - Geographic Information System Specialist
- Five Alderpersons are recommended for appointment (requiring Common Council approval)
  - Council President
  - Council Vice President
  - Alder At-Large
  - Alder At-Large
  - Alder At-Large

Aldermanic appointments will be handled in a manner similar to appointments to the standing committees, commissions, and boards of the Appleton Common Council. The Mayor will recommend appointments, which will be subject to the approval of the Council.

## Redistricting Basics

This section will cover basic terms, concepts and legal requirements of the local redistricting process in Wisconsin with information tailored to the City of Appleton.

### What is redistricting?

Redistricting is the process by which congressional, state legislative, and local electoral district boundaries are redrawn periodically to account for population changes within the state.

After the census is conducted, data is provided to each state with information down to the census block level. This information includes the number of people who reside there, as well as certain attributes of the population including voting age, race, and ethnicity.

The boundaries of local electoral districts must be redrawn upon receiving this new data to ensure that local boundaries continue to adhere to federal and state requirements and principles.

### What is a census block?

A census block is the smallest geographic area in which census data is contained. These blocks, also known as tracts, are what composes Wards. Wards cannot split census blocks.

A CENSUS BLOCK IS THE SMALLEST UNIT FOR WHICH DATA IS REPORTED IN THE CENSUS. IT MAY BE SMALL & SQUARE LIKE A CITY BLOCK, OR LARGE & IRREGULAR IN MORE RURAL AREAS.

### What is a ward?

Wards are the units from which larger electoral districts are built, including our aldermanic districts and county supervisory districts. Ward boundaries are supposed to be “as permanent as possible” and only change to accommodate population, municipal boundary adjustments, and to satisfy equal population requirements for the electoral districts that they are a part of.

Wards themselves are **not** electoral districts, just administrative subunits that are combined into larger electoral districts. Because of this, wards do not have to meet the same equal population requirements.

## RULES GOVERNING WARDS [WIS. STAT. § 5.15]

BE COMPOSED OF WHOLE CENSUS BLOCKS.

BE CONTIGUOUS.

SUIT THE CONVENIENCE OF VOTERS.

BE DESIGNATED BY CONSECUTIVE, UNIQUE WHOLE NUMBERS.

LIES ENTIRELY WITHIN ONE MUNICIPALITY AND ONE COUNTY.

COMPLY WITH STATUTORY POPULATION RANGES

THE POPULATION OF A WARD SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED AT A POINT WITHIN THE REQUIRED POPULATION RANGE SO THAT IT ALLOWS FOR FUTURE POPULATION INCREASES OR DECREASES, BASED ON TRENDS.

As a city with a population between 39,000 and 149,999 people, Wis. Stat. § 5.15 (2) (b) determines that wards within the City of Appleton should have populations of: 800 to 3,200 people.

POPULATION EXCEPTIONS EXIST FOR:

- WARDS LOCATED IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS OR COUNTIES THAT DIFFER FROM THE S.D. OR COUNTY WHERE THE MAJORITY OF THE MUNICIPALITY IS LOCATED.
- ISLAND TERRITORY.
- MUNICIPAL BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENTS

### Federal Requirements for Redistricting

#### Equal Population

The concept of equal population and therefore equal representation is one of the most fundamental ideas in the American electoral system. Several United States Supreme Court cases have upheld that the Constitution mandates that each person's vote should have the same weight as another person's vote. This concept is known as **one person one vote**.

There are a few ways to calculate the degree of population equality amongst electoral districts in a plan.

**IDEAL POPULATION** = TOTAL POPULATION ÷ NUMBER OF DISTRICTS

*THE TARGET POPULATION FOR EACH DISTRICT IN A REDISTRICTING PLAN.*

**ABSOLUTE DEVIATION** = DISTRICT POPULATION – IDEAL POPULATION

*THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE ACTUAL POPULATION OF DISTRICT AND IT'S IDEAL POPULATION*

**RELATIVE DEVIATION** = ABSOLUTE DEVIATION ÷ IDEAL POPULATION

THE PROPORTION BY WHICH THE DISTRICT'S ACTUAL POPULATION DIFFERS FROM THE IDEAL POPULATION.

**OVERALL RANGE** = LARGEST POSITIVE ABSOLUTE DEVIATION + LARGEST NEGATIVE ABSOLUTE DEVIATION

MEASURES THE EQUALITY OF POPULATION ACROSS THE REDISTRICTING PLAN AS A WHOLE.

Local redistricting plans must comply with the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and meet the substantial equality standard. Practically, this means that local electoral redistricting plans are constitutional if they have an *overall range* of 10 percent or less.

### Minority Protection

The second federal requirement that applies to all redistricting plans is minority protection. The equal protection clause prohibits separating citizens into different electoral districts based on race without sufficient justification.

In practice this means that you cannot engage in either “packing” or “cracking” minority groups when drawing new district boundaries.

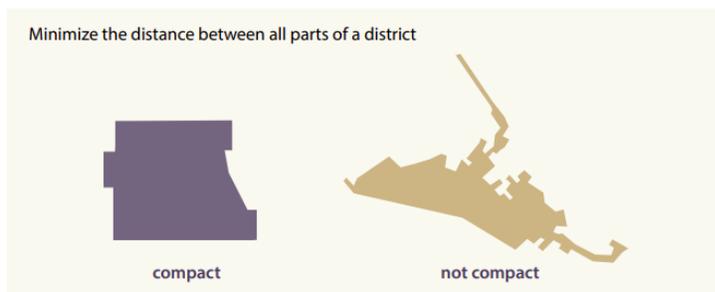
PACKING: PLACING A DISPROPORTIONATELY LARGE POPULATION OF A MINORITY GROUP IN A SINGLE DISTRICT.

CRACKING: THINNING OUT A MINORITY GROUP'S MEMBERS AMONG A NUMBER OF DISTRICTS.

## Redistricting Principles

### Compactness

Compactness means that districts should be reasonably geographically compact, meaning that the distance between all parts of the district is minimized. While there is not a universal standard for this principle, you know it when you see it.



Districts that have dramatically irregular shapes like the district on the right side of the picture may be challenged in court and require an explanation.

Wisconsin state statute explicitly requires that wards & aldermanic districts be compact.

## Contiguity

Applying the contiguity principle means that each area within a district should be physically adjacent to another area within that district.

In Wisconsin, both wards and aldermanic districts are required to consist of contiguous territory, with island territory as the one exception.



## Ideal Population

Ideal population was previously discussed when talking about the federal requirement of equal population. This will be the main method by which the Appleton Redistricting Committee determines whether its redistricting plan satisfies equal population amongst districts. Ideal population must also take into consideration boundary agreements and anticipated growth areas. For example, certain Wards/Districts may be slightly lower in population in comparison to others, but these would account for areas in which significant growth is expected. Remember, this plan is to last us ten years!

CITY OF APPLETON POPULATION = (APPROX) 74,500 PEOPLE  
NUMBER OF ALDERMANIC DISTRICTS = 15 DISTRICTS  
 $74,500 \text{ PEOPLE} \div 15 \text{ DISTRICTS}$   
**IDEAL POPULATION = 4,967 PEOPLE PER DISTRICT**

## 2021 Redistricting Challenges

- **Time**

The delay of the census has condensed the redistricting process into less than two months. Typically, redistricting happens in late spring throughout summer allowing adequate time for the drawing of County Supervisory Districts and determining new municipal Ward and Aldermanic districts.

For 2021, we must complete the process in time to meet statutory publication requirements for the Spring 2022 election and for candidate circulation of nomination papers.

The goal of Council adoption of a Ward and Aldermanic District plan is Wednesday, October 20, 2021

- **Three Counties**

The City of Appleton exists in Calumet, Outagamie & Winnebago Counties. Our final Ward and District plans may not be completed until we receive Supervisory plans from all three counties.

- **Island Territory/Ward Configuration**

Wards are to be contiguous and compact, but some of our growth areas inhibit these principles, therefore we will have some exceptions to Ward configuration, particularly on the North side of the city.

- **Aldermanic District Changes**

Due to boundary changes for Supervisory Districts, coupled with changes in population in Wards, there is expected to be substantial changes in some Aldermanic Districts. Any alderperson displaced from their district due to redistricting may complete their term of service.

- **Congressional & State Legislative Redistricting**

After the local level of redistricting is completed, the State draws lines for Congressional and Legislative district boundaries. It is possible that they may not incorporate the municipal plan. Therefore, following State redistricting the municipality may need to adopt an ordinance to accommodate these new state/legislative districts which would require modifications to the municipal Ward/Aldermanic District plan. This would likely occur in the Spring/Summer of 2022.