



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: WARD SPLITS

This FAQ document is for informational purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice. Consult your municipal attorney for matters specific to your municipality.

1. Are there requirements for naming wards that have to be split?

Generally, under [Wis. Stat. § 5.15 \(4\) \(a\)](#), wards must be designated by consecutive, unique whole numbers beginning with the number one. [Wis. Stat. § 5.15 \(4\) \(c\)](#) authorizes but does not require that wards created to give effect to a new legislative or congressional redistricting plan “may be numbered with a combination of whole numbers and letters.”

2. May municipalities alter wards that are not divided by a new legislative or congressional district boundary?

The statutes provide only for altering wards that are split by a new legislative or congressional redistricting plan. Specifically, [Wis. Stat. § 5.15 \(4\) \(a\)](#) provides that if such a plan establishes a district boundary that does not coincide with a ward established under a municipality’s ordinance or resolution, the municipal governing body must amend the ordinance or resolution “to the extent required” to effect the legislative or congressional redistricting plan.

3. Should the municipality amend the existing ordinance or resolution, or pass a new ordinance?

[Wis. Stat. § 5.15 \(4\) \(a\)](#) requires the municipality to “amend the ordinance or resolution.”

4. Is there a deadline for a municipality to amend its ordinance or resolution?

[Wis. Stat. § 5.15 \(4\) \(a\)](#) provides that the municipal governing body must amend the ordinance or resolution no later than April 10 of the second year following the year of the census (April 10, 2022).

5. Do the statutory population ranges for wards apply to wards created in the amended plan?

No. [Wis. Stat. § 5.15 \(2\) \(b\)](#) exempts wards created to effect a new legislative or congressional redistricting plan from the statutory population ranges that would otherwise apply.

6. Do city aldermanic or county supervisory districts need to be adjusted?

No. [Wis. Stat. § 5.15 \(4\) \(a\)](#) provides, “Nothing in [the relevant statutory provisions] shall be construed to compel a county or city to alter or redraw supervisory or aldermanic districts” to effect a new legislative or congressional redistricting plan.