



Wisconsin Elections Commission

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DATE: March 17, 2022

TO: Municipal and County Clerks Impacted by New Legislative and Congressional Maps

FROM: WEC Staff

SUBJECT: Wards Split by Legislative or Congressional Districts

This memorandum will explain your municipality's next steps now that new legislative and congressional maps have been provided to the Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC). Analysis of the new district lines show that your municipality or county contains wards that have been split by assembly or congressional district lines. Your governing body is required to take action to acknowledge these splits and approve an amended ordinance that accounts for these changes.

[Wis. Stat. § 5.15\(6\)\(a\)](#) dictates that “no ward line adjustment may cross the boundary of a congressional, assembly, or supervisory district.” [Wis. Stat. § 5.15\(4\)\(c\)](#) further authorizes the numbering of the new wards “with a combination of whole numbers and letters.” Statutory obligations regarding this process are further clarified in the attached document prepared by the Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB) titled [Ward Splits FAQ](#).

WEC staff will hold a one-hour webinar on Wednesday, March 23 to review the contents of this memo and take questions. The Legislative Technology Services Bureau and Legislative Reference Bureau will also be available for questions.

Topic: Redistricting Forum on Split Wards

When: Mar 23, 2022 10:00 AM Central Time (US and Canada)

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81321805964?pwd=ZFFOdjM5a1RGVnRLSm1NbS9qam1oUT09>

Passcode: 140927

Webinar ID: 813 2180 5964

What do you need to do?

New wards created as part of the legislative redistricting process must be re-labeled with either a whole number or combinations of numbers and letters. WisVote staff recommend using the next sequential whole number. The numbers should not exceed three digits. For example, if you have 10 wards and Ward 7 was split, we suggest labeling one as Ward 7 and the other as the next available sequential number, Ward 11.

How do I make the changes?

These changes must be amended within the existing ordinance or resolution pertaining to the creation of the local wards. Municipalities should then coordinate with the county clerk and land information office to submit the changes in the Legislative Technology Services Bureau's (LTSB) WISE-Decade program. Information submitted through WISE-Decade will be provided to WEC by LTSB for implementation into WisVote. WEC staff will complete the updates in WisVote, including creating and renaming wards and district combo records, and reassigning voters to their new ward and district combo.

Wisconsin Elections Commissioners

Ann S. Jacobs, chair | Marge Bostelmann | Julie M. Glancey | Dean Knudson | Robert Spindell | Mark L. Thomsen

Administrator
Meagan Wolfe

How do I work with the data?

A list of impacted wards is attached to this communication titled [Assembly Senate Congressional Ward Splits](#). Links to the Assembly, Senate and Congressional GIS shapefiles are below, as well as a list of impacted wards and blocks. There are also interactive maps available to view the data.

Please find the links to the interactive maps and the metadata below:

- [Interactive Map: Assembly Districts \(Johnson v WEC 2021\)](#)
- [Interactive Map: Senate Districts \(Johnson v WEC 2021\)](#)
- [Interactive Map: Congressional Districts \(Johnson v WEC 2021\)](#)
- [Interactive Map: Redistricting Wards \(Johnson v WEC 2021\)](#)
- [Interactive Map: Redistricting Blocks \(Johnson v WEC 2021\)](#)

Please find the links to download a zip file of the shapefile:

- [Download Shapefile ZIP: Assembly Districts \(Johnson v WEC 2021\)](#)
- [Download Shapefile ZIP: Senate Districts \(Johnson v WEC 2021\)](#)
- [Download Shapefile ZIP: Congressional Districts \(Johnson v WEC 2021\)](#)
- [Download Shapefile ZIP: Redistricting Wards \(Johnson v WEC 2021\)](#)
- [Download Shapefile ZIP: Redistricting Blocks \(Johnson v WEC 2021\)](#)

Municipal clerks should work with county and GIS staff to assign new ward labels and create new ward shapefiles. Once completed, data should be uploaded to WISE-Decade. Please note that submissions by counties must adhere to the normal standards outlined for WISE-Decade submissions. More information may be found in the [documentation here](#).

When should this be completed?

The ordinance must be amended by April 10, 2022 per [Wis. Stat. § 5.15 \(4\)\(a\)](#). Ward update information should be updated in WISE-Decade no later than April 10, 2022. WEC staff must complete the updates in WisVote by April 14th. This task should be completed as soon as possible so that WEC can make the updates in WisVote, which will make it clear to candidates which voters are eligible to sign their nomination papers on the first available day for circulation on April 15th.

How does the 2022 Spring Election affect this process?

There are two areas where the 2022 Spring Election will be impacted by the legislative district updates, however they can be mitigated by following the guidance below.

Do NOT update the **Spring Election – Even** election plan to include the new wards until you've closed the 2022 Spring Election. Doing so will delete your poll book record and election participation records.

DO issue all absentee ballot records in WisVote for the **2022 Spring Election** by April 14th to ensure the ballot is attributed to the correct district combo and election reconciliation record. Ballots created before April 14 may be updated with the final status without issue, it's just important that the ballot record is created before April 14.

If you have additional questions on what is required for WisVote, please contact the Wisconsin Elections Commission HelpDesk at elections@wi.gov or call (608)261-2028.

If you have additional questions on how to use WISE-Decade, please contact the Legislative Technology Services Bureau at GIS@legis.wisconsin.gov.

If you have additional questions on the statutory obligations of this process, please consult your local counsel who may consult with the Legislative Reference Bureau.