



## STATE OF INDIANA

### Indiana Election Division

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**TO: County Executives, County Election Board, And County Boards of Elections and Registration**

**FROM: Indiana Election Division**

**DATE: August 6, 2021**

**RE: Notice of Census Information Updates to Precinct Descriptions**

Pursuant to IC 3-11-1.5-38.1(c), the Office of Census Data ("Office") in the Legislative Services Agency has filed with the Indiana Election Division ("Division") a list of census blocks comprising the voting tabulation districts (VTDs) used by the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, in reporting the 2020 federal decennial census of Indiana, with supplemental information by the Office, and a shapefile to be used with GIS mapping software depicting the boundaries for each precinct that was established before January 1, 2021.

The Division is immediately required to notify each county executive, county election board, and county board of elections and registration in the state and provide the information filed by the Office for each precinct in your county that was established before January 1, 2021.

A copy of the statewide precinct shapefile is available on the ftp site managed by the Office of Census Data, which each county should have access to, or by contacting IED staff – Lori Clark ([lclark27@iec.in.gov](mailto:lclark27@iec.in.gov)) or Stephanie Davidsen ([sdavidsen@iec.in.gov](mailto:sdavidsen@iec.in.gov)). IED staff also created a statewide map (attached) that documents the slightly revised precinct boundaries as created by the Office ("post-census" shapefile) against the statewide precinct shapefile as it existed before it was sent to the US Census Bureau ("pre-census" shapefile). This map will assist counties in identifying technical corrections, such as "slivers" created by refined boundaries and census block information, though further investigation of slivers after identifying them on the map may be necessary and is encouraged.

Not later than noon, Tuesday, September 7, 2021, the county executive in your county shall notify the Division if the information on the precincts provided by the Division contains errors or is otherwise incorrect or incomplete. For your convenience, a notice is included in this packet for your county to use unless the county executive would prefer to draft their own notice to comply with IC 3-11-1.5-38.1.

In this notice the county executive must state one (1) of the following:

1. The county executive will submit to the Division, not later than January 1, 2022, additional information for or corrections to the provided precinct information, which will become the precinct boundaries for the county for the purposes of an election conducted after January 1, 2022, and until a new precinct is established under IC 3-11-1.5 that changes the boundaries of the precinct.
2. The county executive will adopt a new precinct establishment order according to IC 3-11-1.5.

The purpose of this exercise is to allow county executives to identify “technical corrections” that can occur outside of the formal reprecincting process to draw new precinct boundaries pursuant to IC 3-11-1.5, generally. One such technical correction is the name and number of census blocks making up current precinct boundaries. It is very likely the census blocks names have changed in most, if not all, of the precincts in your county, and possible that the number of census blocks used to make up the current precinct boundaries have increased or decreased.

Counties may want to correct the legal description of their precincts to align with the current census block naming conventions and document it at the county level for your GIS purposes. To do so, the county should respond to this notice by the deadline to indicate your interest in formalizing the changes in census information. IED staff will be assigned to your county to assist you with this process. However, the county can choose to do nothing with the census block information and the census block information in the shapefile provided by the Office will become the official legal description of the precinct on January 1, 2022.

The other permitted technical correction is “slivers,” which can be visually identified when the pre-census statewide precinct shapefile is overlaid with the post-census statewide precinct shapefile. GIS software has improved, and it is possible that the census block or precinct boundaries are further refined to better align with the topography. This creates a “sliver” where the old and new boundaries are not quite in alignment.

The Office has assigned those slivers to a precinct in the post-census GIS shapefile. Counties may disagree with the placement of the sliver and want the sliver to be attached to a different precinct. The procedures in this memo allow the county to move the sliver to their desired precinct without going through the formal reprecincting process. However, counties should be advised that the post-census precinct shapefile is the official shapefile that the Indiana General Assembly will use to draw its state legislative and Congressional District boundaries.

While a county can certainly flag the need to correct the sliver now, in rare instances, it may not be possible to move the sliver to your desired precinct IF the sliver is bounded by a state legislative or Congressional district boundary following the approval of the new districts this fall. Counties who want to formally correct the legal description of their precinct by moving the identified sliver from one precinct to another are encouraged to wait to file their final

corrections until the General Assembly has completed their work to ensure the move will comply with state law. Counties can also choose to do nothing with the identified slivers and the precinct boundaries as identified in the post-census precinct shapefile provided by the Office will become effective on January 1, 2022.

Counties who choose to accept the post-census precinct shapefile and plan to make no changes to precinct boundaries pursuant to the reprecincting procedures should save a copy of the GIS files provided to you for future purposes, as this shapefile will be used for future redistricting and reprecincting in your county.

**This notice does NOT replace the procedures to draw new precinct boundaries under IC 3-11-1.5, generally, if your county determines that revising precinct boundaries is your best option.**

In early July, IED sent a memo to counties related to the reprecincting process and those procedures are to be followed to draw new precinct lines. (If you need a copy of the reprecincting memo and notice, please email [elections@iec.in.gov](mailto:elections@iec.in.gov) to make the request.) The “technical corrections” process as outlined in this memo can work in tandem with the reprecincting process or stand alone.

In other words, counties may want to file IEC-8 forms to draw new precinct lines for some precincts and file a technical corrections document for others to ensure the county has a paper trail for their precinct changes. Or, a county may not need to redraw precinct boundaries in 2021 but choose to formally adopt the technical corrections to have documentation in your records for future purposes.

Questions about the shapefiles can be directed to Lori Clark ([lclark27@iec.in.gov](mailto:lclark27@iec.in.gov)) or Stephanie Davidsen ([sdavidsen@iec.in.gov](mailto:sdavidsen@iec.in.gov)). Counties responding to the notice to make technical corrections to update census block information in each precinct or move a sliver will be assigned to work with Lori or Stephanie, who can provide assistance in filing the necessary information.

cc: Memorandum to Circuit Court Clerk’s and County Election Directors on Procedures and Deadlines for the 2022 Precinct Boundary Changes