

# REDISTRICTING



BOCC Workshop | October 19, 2021  
Janette S. Knowlton, County Attorney



CHARLOTTE COUNTY  
FLORIDA

# What and How?

Redistricting is the process by which the legislative body equalizes differences in the population of districts by making adjustments to district boundaries.



# Why?

Examination of the need to redistrict after each decennial census is required by Florida Constitution and Chapter 124, Florida Statutes

County Charter Section 2.2 B. on Redistricting states “Commissioner districts shall be changed only after notice and a public hearing”.

Furthers the principal of “one person, one vote”

- 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment (1868)
- 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment (1870)
- Voting Rights Act (1965)

# General Guidelines - Population

As equal in population as “possible” or “practicable”

Article VIII, Section 1(e)

After each decennial census, the board of county commissioners shall divide the county into districts of contiguous territory as nearly equal in population as practicable.

# General Guidelines - Population

As equal in population as “possible” or “practicable”

Chapter 124, Florida Statutes:

(3) The board of county commissioners shall from time to time, fix the boundaries of the above districts so as to keep them as nearly equal in proportion to population as possible; provided, that changes made in the boundaries of county commissioner districts pursuant to this section shall be made only in odd-numbered years.

# General Guidelines

- **Equal (almost) in population**
- Don't dilute minority voting strength
- Follow census blocks
- Follow significant boundaries
- Must be contiguous
- Should be compact
- Should preserve communities of interest
- May consider existing boundaries

**\*AS EQUAL IN POPULATION AS “POSSIBLE”  
OR “PRACTICABLE”**

Absolute population equality is impossible.

- ✓ Minimize the deviation from the mean – less than 3% over/under ideal is good

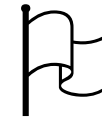
Population ≠ Registered Voters

Two districts with population differences over 10 percentage points raises red flag

# \* AS EQUAL IN POPULATION AS “POSSIBLE” OR “PRACTICABLE”

Two districts with population differences  $\geq 10$  percentage points raises red flag

District #	Average Population	Actual Population	Actual Deviation	Percent Deviation
1	2,952	3,108	156	5.28%
2	2,952	2,741	(211)	-7.15%
3	2,952	3,066	114	3.85%
4	2,952	3,113	161	<b>5.45%</b>
5	2,952	2,733	(219)	<b>-7.42%</b>



Deviation =  
12.87 points



# Use Census Blocks

Readily available

Smallest unit of “building blocks”

Presumed to be valid.

Total population vs. 18+ years



# Follow Significant Boundaries

Follow major natural or man-made boundaries—waterbodies, arterial roads, etc.

- ✓ Easier to understand
- ✓ Less disruptive to precincts
- ✓ Coterminous with census blocks



# END



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