

§65. Apportionment of county commissioner districts

1. Redistricting, generally. In 2021 and every 10 years thereafter, the apportionment commission established under the Constitution of Maine, Article IV, Part Third, Section 1-A shall review the existing county commissioner districts and, as necessary, reapportion those districts in each county to establish as nearly as practicable equally populated districts. The Speaker of the House is responsible for calling the commission together to review the county commissioner districts. No action may be taken by the commission without a quorum of 7.

A. The apportionment commission shall divide the number of commissioners in each county into the number of inhabitants of the county, excluding foreigners not naturalized, according to the latest Federal Decennial Census or a state census previously ordered by the Legislature to coincide with the Federal Decennial Census, to determine a mean population figure for each county commissioner district. Each county commissioner district must be formed of contiguous and compact territory and must cross political subdivision lines the least number of times necessary to establish as nearly as practicable equally populated districts. Whenever the population of a municipality entitles it to more than one district, all whole districts must be drawn within the municipal boundaries. Any population remainder within the municipality must be included in a district drawn to cross the municipal boundary as long as the population remainder within the municipality is contiguous to another municipality or municipalities included in the district. Any county that already meets the standards and guidelines for equally populated districts, as established by this section, the Constitution of Maine and the Constitution of the United States, need not be reapportioned. [PL 2013, c. 85, §2 (AMD).]

B. Interested parties from each county may submit redistricting plans for the commission to consider. Those plans must be submitted to the commission no later than 30 calendar days after the commission is called together by the Speaker of the House under this subsection. The commission may hold public hearings on plans affecting each county. [PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. C, §106 (NEW); PL 1989, c. 6 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 9, §2 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 104, Pt. C, §§8, 10 (AMD).]

C. The commission shall submit its plan to the Clerk of the House no later than June 1st of the year in which reapportionment is required. The Clerk of the House shall submit to the Legislature, no later than January 15, 2022, and every 10th year thereafter, one legislative document to reapportion the county commissioner districts based on the plan submitted by the apportionment commission. The Legislature must enact the submitted plan or a plan of its own in regular or special session by a vote of 2/3 of the members of each House within 30 calendar days after the plan is submitted to it by the Clerk of the House. This action is subject to the Governor's approval, as provided in the Constitution of Maine, Article IV, Part Third, Section 2. [PL 2013, c. 85, §2 (AMD).]
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2. Supreme Judicial Court. If the Legislature fails to make an apportionment within the 30 calendar days, the Supreme Judicial Court shall make the apportionment within 60 calendar days following the period in which the Legislature is required to act, but fails to do so. In making the apportionment, the Supreme Judicial Court shall consider plans and briefs filed by the public with the court during the first 30 days of the period in which the court is required to apportion. [PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. C, §106 (NEW); PL 1989, c. 6 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 9, §2 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 104, Pt. C, §§8, 10 (AMD).]

3. Funding. The commission shall make equal amounts of money available to the 2 major parties represented on the commission for the purpose of this apportionment. In addition, sufficient funds shall be made available to the chairman of the commission. The commission shall recommend to the Legislature, if that body is in session, otherwise to the Legislative Council, an appropriation sufficient to cover the cost of reapportionment.

[PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. C, §106 (NEW); PL 1989, c. 6 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 9, §2 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 104, Pt. C, §§8, 10 (AMD).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 1987, c. 737, §§A2,C106 (NEW). PL 1989, c. 6 (AMD). PL 1989, c. 9, §2 (AMD). PL 1989, c. 104, §§C8,10 (AMD). PL 2013, c. 85, §2 (AMD).

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