

2020 California Citizens Redistricting Commission and Statewide Database Release Free Online District Mapping Tools

SACRAMENTO, CA—Today, the 2020 California Citizens Redistricting Commission (Commission) announced the Statewide Database’s release of two free-to-use tools to help Californians submit redistricting plans to the Commission. These are the only redistricting applications through which users can submit their input directly to the state of California’s official redistricting process.

“The Commission is excited to share these free resources to help people draw their own district maps,” stated Commission Chair Sara Sadhwani. “The success of this decennial process depends on the participation of all Californians. We want to hear from everyone and want to know if our line drawing is heading in the right direction.”

“The Statewide Database is proud to provide two map creation tools that are free of charge,” said Karin Mac Donald, Director of the Statewide Database. “The key to participation is access. These online tools aim to expand access to every Californian in hopes that they have the tools necessary to participate in the redistricting process.”

Tell the CRC about your community today!

The previously released Draw My CA Community allows users to draw a map of and respond to a few simple prompts about their Communities of Interest. When finished, users can submit community input directly to the California Citizens Redistricting Commission for consideration in the statewide redistricting process. (<https://drawmycacommunity.org/>)

Draw My CA Districts is a free-to-use online tool for creating district maps

Through the newly released Draw My CA Districts web application, users can create district maps throughout the state of California and submit those maps directly to the Commission. (<https://drawmycadistricts.org/>)

Draw My CA is a free-to-use plugin for the open-source GIS platform, QGIS

Today’s release of the Draw My CA QGIS plugin allows users to download a California redistricting application to their own computer. With this plugin, users can create redistricting plans for the state of California and submit those maps directly to the Commission while having access to a full GIS platform.

Draw My CA will be available 10/03/2021
at: <https://www.redistrictinggroup.org/installer/>.

To learn more about these tools, please visit <https://drawmycalifornia.org/>.

Both the online district mapping tools (Draw My CA Districts and Draw My CA) include functionality to assist users to comply with population deviation, contiguity and assignment checks.

- % Deviation check - tells the user to what extent any of their districts are above or below the ideal population of the distinct type they are working on
- Contiguity check - lets the user know if their districts are contiguous or not
- Assignment check - lets the user know if they have unassigned areas in their redistricting plan

The Commission must follow the following criteria, in this order, when drawing district maps:

1. Districts must be of equal population to comply with the US Constitution.
2. Districts must comply with the Voting Rights Act to ensure that minorities have an equal opportunity to elect representatives of their choice.
3. Districts must be drawn contiguously, so that all parts of the district are connected to each other.
4. Districts must minimize the division of cities, counties, neighborhoods and communities of interest to the extent possible.
5. Districts should be geographically compact: such that nearby areas of population are not bypassed for a more distant population. This requirement refers to density, not shape. Census blocks cannot be split.
6. Where practicable each Senate District should be comprised of two complete and adjacent Assembly Districts, and Board of Equalization districts should be comprised of 10 complete and adjacent State Senate Districts.

In addition, the place of residence of any incumbent or political candidate may not be considered in the creation of a map, and districts may not be drawn for the purpose of favoring or discriminating against an incumbent, political candidate, or political party.

Every 10 years, after the federal government publishes updated census information, California must redraw the boundaries of its electoral districts so that the state's population is evenly allocated among the new districts.

In 2008, California voters passed the Voters First Act, authorizing the creation of the independent California Citizens Redistricting Commission to draw new State Senate, State Assembly, and State Board of Equalization district lines. In 2010, the Voters First Act for Congress gave the Commission the responsibility of drawing new Congressional districts following every census.

For more information, please visit WeDrawTheLinesCA.org.

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