



## Ohio Revised Code

### Section 3501.18 Division of political subdivision into precincts.

Effective: April 6, 2023

Legislation: House Bill 281

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(A) The board of elections may divide a political subdivision within its jurisdiction into precincts, establish, define, divide, rearrange, and combine the several election precincts within its jurisdiction, and change the location of the polling place for each precinct when it is necessary to maintain the requirements as to the number of voters in a precinct and to provide for the convenience of the voters and the proper conduct of elections. No change in the number of precincts or in precinct boundaries shall be made during the twenty-five days immediately preceding a primary or general election or between the first day of January and the day on which the members of county central committees are elected in the years in which those committees are elected. Except as otherwise provided in division (C) of this section, each precinct shall contain a number of electors, not to exceed one thousand four hundred, that the board of elections determines to be a reasonable number after taking into consideration the type and amount of available equipment, prior voter turnout, the size and location of each selected polling place, available parking, availability of an adequate number of poll workers, and accessibility for persons with disabilities and other accessibility to the polling place.

If the board changes the boundaries of a precinct after the filing of a local option election petition pursuant to sections 4301.32 to 4301.41, 4303.29, or 4305.14 of the Revised Code that calls for a local option election to be held in that precinct, the local option election shall be held in the area that constituted the precinct at the time the local option petition was filed, regardless of the change in the boundaries.

If the board changes the boundaries of a precinct in order to meet the requirements of division (B)(1) of this section in a manner that causes a member of a county central committee to no longer qualify as a representative of an election precinct in the county, of a ward of a city in the county, or of a township in the county, the member shall continue to represent the precinct, ward, or township for the remainder of the member's term, regardless of the change in boundaries.

In an emergency, the board may provide more than one polling place in a precinct. In order to provide for the convenience of the voters, the board may locate polling places for voting or



registration outside the boundaries of precincts, provided that the nearest public school or public building shall be used if the board determines it to be available and suitable for use as a polling place. Except in an emergency, no change in the number or location of the polling places in a precinct shall be made during the twenty-five days immediately preceding a primary or general election.

Electors who have failed to respond within thirty days to any confirmation notice shall not be counted in determining the size of any precinct under this section.

(B)(1) Except as otherwise provided in division (B)(2) of this section, a board of elections shall determine all precinct boundaries using geographical units used by the United States department of commerce, bureau of the census, in reporting the decennial census of Ohio.

(2) The board of elections may apply to the secretary of state for a waiver from the requirement of division (B)(1) of this section when it is not feasible to comply with that requirement because of unusual physical boundaries or residential development practices that would cause unusual hardship for voters. The board shall identify the affected precincts and census units, explain the reason for the waiver request, and include a map illustrating where the census units will be split because of the requested waiver. If the secretary of state approves the waiver and so notifies the board of elections in writing, the board may change a precinct boundary as necessary under this section, notwithstanding the requirement in division (B)(1) of this section.

(C) The board of elections may apply to the secretary of state for a waiver from the requirement of division (A) of this section regarding the number of electors in a precinct when the use of geographical units used by the United States department of commerce, bureau of the census, will cause a precinct to contain more than one thousand four hundred electors. The board shall identify the affected precincts and census units, explain the reason for the waiver request, and include a map illustrating where census units will be split because of the requested waiver. If the secretary of state approves the waiver and so notifies the board of elections in writing, the board may change a precinct boundary as necessary to meet the requirements of division (B)(1) of this section.