

Precinct

pre·cinct

Noun

O.C.G.A. § 21-2-2 (28)

“Precinct” is synonymous with the term “voting precinct” and means a geographical area, established in accordance with this chapter, from which all electors vote at one polling place.

Polling Place

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Noun

O.C.G.A. § 21-2-2 (27)

A polling place is the room provided in each precinct for voting at a primary or election.

Are precincts and polling places synonymous?

No. A precinct is a geographical area, from which all electors vote at one polling place. A polling place is the room provided in each precinct for voting at a primary or election.

When should you begin the plan of consolidation or making changes to precincts or polling places?

Now. Plan to spend 2015 making all the changes so that you, your county and your voters are ready for the 2016 elections.

When should you tell your governing authority and voters in your community the new plan?

Now. Engage everyone today about the goal and plan, make everyone a part of the conservation. If you plan to make major changes to precincts or polling places, make sure you talk to your liaison and KSU before you begin.

What will help to engage the community ?

The decision concerning drawing or redrawing precinct boundaries is left up to the local election and voter registration officials. * However, in selecting polling places or drawing precinct boundaries, election officials should take into consideration the convenience of the voters and the public interest.

There are many reasons to consider changing a polling location of a precinct, whether it is a division , re division, alteration, formation or consolidation of precincts. You will probably be asked to provide information regarding any changes to a polling place or precinct. First gather your data for the last few elections. Calculate the cost of operating with the current precincts and polling locations. Calculate the number of voting days and number of voters that voted on each day at each location. This should provide the information that clearly shows whether Early Advance In Person Voting allows significantly more people to vote prior to Election Day, thus negating the need for so many polling locations on Election Day. Create a map showing where the registered voters live, on this map show the proposed Polling Locations. This map should clearly illustrate the easy accessibility of the Polling Locations. If you are proposing less rural locations, might we suggest you show the banks, grocery stores and post office on the map as well. You can create a professional well thought out presentation showing the map, how the change can benefit the voters and the public interest.

Precincts

What code refers to changes to precincts?

If you are considering making any changes to precincts, please read the following codes sections:

O.C.G.A. § 21-2-260 – O.C.G.A. § 21-2-264; O.C.G.A. §21-2-226(e); SEB rule 183-1-7-.01

Who may alter the bounds of any precinct in a county or municipality?

O.C.G.A. § 21-2-261(a) The county superintendent* or the governing authority of a municipality may, as provided in O.C.G.A. § 21-2-262, alter the bounds of any precinct.

***O.C.G.A. § 21-2-262(d)** In any county having a population of more than 250,000 according to the United States decennial census, the powers and duties conferred upon the superintendent by O.C.G.A. § 21-2-261; 21-2-261.1 and 21-2-262 shall be exercised and performed by the governing authority of the county.

Who may initiate the alteration of precinct boundaries? O.C.G.A. § 21-2-262

- **The superintendent** may direct the board of registrars to investigate altering the bounds of any precinct and report to the superintendent its findings and recommendations. If the board of registrars finds that a division, redivision, alteration, formation, or consolidation of precincts will promote the convenience of the electors and the public interests, it shall make the recommendation and shall accompany its report with a map, plat, or draft of the new election precinct or precincts proposed by it.
- Upon the petition of **20 electors** or of the **county executive committee of a political party** to the county superintendent, praying for the alteration of the bounds of any precinct, the superintendent shall refer such petition to the board of registrars, which shall make a full investigation of the facts and shall promptly report to the superintendent its findings and recommendations.
- The **board of registrars** may also petition the superintendent for the alteration of the bounds of any precinct, accompanying its petition by a description of the proposed new precincts and by a map, plat, or draft thereof.
- After the presentation of any petition by the board of registrars or upon the filing by the board of its report and recommendations as to any investigation, the superintendents may make such order for the alteration of the bounds of precinct as will, in the superintendent's opinion, promote the convenience of electors and the public interests.

When can precinct boundaries be altered?

O.C.G.A. §21-2-261(c) Precinct boundaries shall not be altered on election day, or during the period of 60 days prior to any general primary or election, or during the period of 30 days prior to any special primary or election.

What must be filed with the Secretary of State and the Legislative and Congressional Reapportionment Office when precinct boundaries are altered? O.C.G.A. § 21-2-261.1

1. A map reflecting any changes in precincts within 20 days after changes are made.
2. A copy of any communications to or from the United States Department of Justice relating to any precincts within 20 days after such communication is sent or received.
3. A copy of any pleading initiating a court action potentially affecting any precincts within 30 days after it is filed.
4. A copy of any court order affecting any precincts within 20 days after it is entered.
5. For precincts that use the boundaries of a restricted access residential community, a map clearly delineating the boundaries of the community and, clearly depicting the streets contained within such community and the address ranges of such streets.
6. Any other documentation necessary to allow the Secretary of State to maintain a current listing of all precincts in this state.

As a result of the Shelby vs. Holder Supreme Court decision, you are no longer required to submit precinct changes to the Department of Justice for preclearance.

Will I need to go into the Redistricting Module to change the boundaries of a precinct?

Most often, precinct boundaries will need to be made in the Redistricting Module. Please contact your liaison and KSU if you plan any changes in to precinct boundaries.

Who, other than the Secretary of State and the Reapportionment Office, must the county superintendent or the governing authority of a municipality notify of any change in precinct boundaries?

O.C.G.A. §21-2-262.1(b) The board of registrars, within 10 days after such changes are adopted.

O.C.G.A. §21-2-226(e) A precinct card shall be issued to the elector, reflecting such changes.

SEB Rule 183-1-7-.01 When the boundary lines of a precinct are altered, all affected voters shall be notified of the change at least 30 days before the next primary or election.

What must be published before precinct boundaries are altered? O.C.G.A. § 21-2-262

The superintendent shall not make any final order for the alteration of precincts until at least 10 days after notice of such change shall have been advertised in the legal organ of the county. The notice should state briefly the alteration of the precinct boundaries and the date upon which the same will be considered by the superintendent and shall contain a warning that any person objecting thereto must file his or her objections with the superintendent prior to such date.

Is there a minimum number of voters in a precinct? O.C.G.A. §21-2-261(b)

No new precinct shall be formed that shall contain less than 100 voters.

Is there a maximum number of voters allowed in a precinct? O.C.G.A. § 21-2-263

No; however, if at the previous general election a precinct contained more than 2,000 electors, and if all those electors desiring to vote had not completed voting one hour following the closing of the polls, the superintendent shall either reduce the size of said precinct so that it shall contain not more than 2,000 electors or provide additional voting equipment or poll workers or both before the next election.

What are the boundary requirements for precincts? O.C.G.A. §21-2-261.1

All voting precincts established or altered under the provisions of this article shall consist of areas which are bounded on all sides only by:

1. Visible features which are readily distinguishable upon the ground (such as streets, railroad tracks, streams, lakes, and ridges) and which are indicated upon official Department of Transportation maps, current census maps, city or county planning maps, official municipal maps, official county maps, or any combination of such maps;
2. The boundaries of public parks;
3. The boundaries of public school grounds;
4. The boundaries of churches;
5. The boundaries of counties and incorporated municipalities; or
6. The boundaries of restricted access residential communities.

Polling Places

What code refers to changes to polling places?

If you are considering making any changes, please read the following codes sections:

O.C.G.A. § 21-2-265 – O.C.G.A. § 21-2-270; O.C.G.A. § 21-2-226€

Who selects the polling place?

O.C.G.A. § 21-2-265(a) The superintendent of a county or the governing authority of a municipality shall select and fix the polling place within each precinct and may, either on his, her, or its own motion or on petition of ten electors of a precinct, change the polling place within any precinct.

What notice is necessary when a polling place is changed?

O.C.G.A. § 21-2-265(a); O.C.G.A. § 21-2-226(e)

- Notice of the proposed change shall be published for once a week for 2 consecutive weeks in the legal organ for the county or municipality in which the polling place is located.
- On the first election day following such change, a notice of the change shall be posted on the previous polling place and at three other places in the immediate vicinity.
- The occupant or owner of the previous polling place, or his or her agent, shall be notified in writing of such change at the time notice is published in the legal organ.
- A precinct card shall be issued to the elector, reflecting such changes.

As a result of the Shelby vs. Holder Supreme Court decision, you are no longer required to submit polling place changes to the Department of Justice for preclearance.

When may a superintendent establish a polling place for a precinct outside the boundaries of the precinct?

O.C.G.A. § 21-2-265(e) The superintendent may establish the polling place for a precinct outside the boundaries of the precinct if there is no suitable facility within the precinct which could be used as a polling place and if, by so doing, such polling place would better serve the needs of the voters.

What are the requirements for Polling Places?

- O.C.G.A. § 21-2-265(c)** Provides for the polling place to provide adequate space for all parties conducting their primaries.
- O.C.G.A. § 21-2-265(d)** Provides for suitable and appropriate access for disabled electors in polling places.
- O.C.G.A. § 21-2-266(a)** Provides for wherever practicable and consistent with O.C.G.A. 21-2-265(d), using schoolhouses, municipal buildings or rooms, or other public buildings as polling place.
- O.C.G.A. § 21-2-266(b)** Provides for using portable or movable polling facilities of adequate size for any precinct.
- O.C.G.A. § 21-2-266(c)** Provides for using boundaries of a restricted access residential community as boundaries for a precinct and a polling place is established within that community.

What code sections provide that the board of registrars may establish additional sites for the purpose of receiving absentee ballots?

O.C.G.A. § 21-2-382, O.C.G.A. § 21-2-385, SEB Rule 183-1-14-.08 The board of registrars may establish additional sites for the purpose of receiving absentee ballots under Code Section § 21-2-381 and for the purpose of voting absentee ballots under O.C.G.A. § 21-2-385. For definition of government building generally accessible to the public, see SEB Rule 183-1-14-.08

Will I need to go into the Redistricting Module to change a Polling Place?

Most often, you will NOT need to go into the Redistricting Module to make polling place changes. If you are making changes to precincts and polling places, you will make the precinct changes first, in Redistricting. Once you are out of Redistricting, then you will make the polling place changes. Contact your liaison and KSU if you plan to make polling place changes.

