



Wisconsin Elections Commission

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DATE: November 18, 2021

TO: Wisconsin County Clerks
Wisconsin Municipal Clerks
City of Milwaukee Election Commission
Milwaukee County Election Commission

FROM: WEC Staff

SUBJECT: 2020 Redistricting Preparations Update 1

Introduction

This communication provides information on the timing of local redistricting updates in WisVote and how this impacts clerk preparations for the 2022 Spring Election cycle. Updates can only be completed if the county has confirmed their final supervisory and ward plans in the WISE-LR software and that data has been provided to WEC.

For additional background, please refer to our previous 2020 Redistricting Preparations clerk communication found under Recent Clerk Communications and at this link:

<https://elections.wi.gov/node/7543>.

WisVote Update Process

On November 11, WEC staff received a file from the Legislative Technology Services Bureau (LTSB) containing the information for 44 counties that confirmed final supervisory and ward plans in Stage 3 in WISE-LR. This final confirmation in WISE-LR is the signal for WEC that at least wards and supervisory districts have been approved at the municipal and county level and are ready to be implemented into the statewide voter registration system (the file also includes aldermanic district information if relevant and created in WISE-LR). **At the time of posting, WEC is anticipating that we will receive an updated file from LTSB on Friday November 19, with the intention to have fully implemented the new districts, districts combos, and maps for the counties made available in that file by December 1.** This aligns with the start of nomination paper circulation for candidates applying for ballot access for the 2022 Spring Election. WEC will inform clerks by email on Wednesday November 24 which counties will be updated by December 1. The email will indicate which counties will be completed and which are remaining to be updated. A notification that the updates are complete will be sent on December 1.

Counties that confirm their final supervisory and ward plans in Stage 3 in WISE-LR by November 23 may be included in the December 1 update if time and resources allow. After the initial updates, WEC will make best efforts to update new county data as it becomes available. Any additional aldermanic

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districts from previously updated counties will also be added in proceeding rounds of updates. While it is not a required step in WISE-LR, municipalities with aldermanic districts should provide their aldermanic maps in WISE-LR as soon as possible, especially if they have aldermanic contests on the ballot in 2022. Municipalities with aldermanic offices at large do not need to submit their aldermanic maps.

It's important to note that while the geography associated with county supervisory and aldermanic districts may have changed, the office position and contest does not change as part of the redistricting process. For example, if County Supervisory Seat Number One is currently filled by John Smith and John Smith no longer lives in that district, they remain in that seat until the end of the term. Additionally, if your county is not in the initial round of updates and County Supervisory Seat Number Two is on the ballot in 2022, candidates can be entered under the contest in WisVote, however *it is the clerk's responsibility as the filing officer for that contest to ensure the candidate's residence is within the new supervisory district.*

Once the data is available, WEC will update the associated maps without disrupting the already entered candidates. Office position changes such as increasing or decreasing the number of supervisory seats should be communicated to WEC so they are reflected in WisVote.

Impacts to WisVote Records

WEC staff are completing the updates in WisVote. The records below are impacted by the updates. *Note that Election Plans will require additional clerk action once the updates are made in WisVote.*

Clerk Updates:

Election Plans: An election plan allows clerks to group wards into reporting units per election type and to set the polling place so that each time the election type comes around, the reporting units and polling place information automatically generates. For example, if you have 7 wards, you may create a reporting unit containing all 7 wards for spring election types. But if 4 wards are in a different congressional district than the other 3 wards, you must create two reporting units for the fall elections.

If a new ward is created as part of the redistricting process, the ward will need to be added to the appropriate reporting unit under the Election Plans tile. If a new ward is created in a municipality with over 35,000 residents or a municipality now has a population greater than 35,000, reporting units will be created per ward and the clerk will need to assign the correct polling place. All clerks are strongly encouraged to review their election plans before each election.

Note: WEC staff will hold a webinar on December 14 on how to revise election plans because of redistricting. Register at the link below.

WisVote Redistricting Updates

Tuesday, December 14, 2021, 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Registration Link: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2425767161525794317>

WEC Updates:

Wards: Wards are the building block of most districts in WisVote. Wards will be updated to match the new shape files provided by LTSB. Most records will simply be updated unless a new ward was created in the redistricting process. Wards are the first records updated or created.

District Combos: Wards, school districts, and sanitary districts are layered onto each other to create unique “district combinations” or district combos. Most address-driven processes like ballot assignment, what should be printed on an absentee label, and what district a voter lives in are dependent on district combos. Most records will simply be updated unless a new ward was created during the redistricting process. District combos are the second records updated or created.

Addresses: Addresses are records of unique locations where voters may register. Addresses are associated to the appropriate district combo based on their pin placement. These records remain active and intact even when a voter is not registered at the address. Addresses are the final records to be updated in redistricting. Clerks should continue to work through address exceptions and warnings as they appear in data quality reports.

Voters: Voters register at a specific address and are associated to an address record. When the district combo on the address changes, the voter district combo is automatically updated.

Absentee Applications: Voters may have an absentee application on file for their existing address. When the district combo on the voter’s home address changes, the absentee application district combo is automatically updated.

Reporting Units: A reporting unit is made up of one or multiple wards. A reporting unit has their election results from all wards within that reporting unit reported together. The reporting unit record in WisVote also holds the information for which polling place voters in the wards vote at. Reporting units are automatically generated for future elections based on the election plan setup.

Assisting Candidates

December 1, 2021 is the start of nomination paper circulation for the 2022 Spring Election. Candidates may expect to file their papers with your office and may ask for “walk-lists” of addresses in their district. You may always direct candidates to <https://badgervoters.wi.gov> where they can purchase a voter list for voters in their district.

Some clerks prefer to handle requests for “walk-lists” in their office using the Voter Search function in WisVote. Clerks may pull voter lists for candidates using the “District Focus” section which will return addresses in the new districts once data is updated on December 1 (unless your county is not in the initial update). It is important to note that the function used to pull participation from previous elections, using “District Focus” and “Election Focus”, will reference the districts in use during that election. For example, if a candidate requests the data for Wards 1-3 from the 2021 Spring Election, the voter records returned will be the voters with addresses in Wards 1-3 created during the 2010 redistricting process.

As mentioned above, candidates can be entered under contests in the 2022 Spring Election at any time after December 1. If updates have been applied, the contest will be associated with the new geography (district combos). If updates have not been applied, candidates can be entered under the appropriate contest as determined by the clerk's read of the 2020 districts – the updates will be applied as they are available without altering the entered candidates.

FAQs

1. I'm not sure where to start, where can I find more information about my role?

Currently, the only clerk responsibility under elections is that clerks review "Invalid" or "Warning" pin addresses for accurate pin placement. If you are a Relier, consider reaching out to your Provider to verify their responsibility for this data.

Beyond WEC responsibilities, please find the resources below from LTSB and LRB:

[Redistricting in Wisconsin 2020: The LRB Guidebook](#) (PDF)

[2021 WISE-LR Software Training for Municipal Clerks](#) (video)

[2021 WISE-LR Software Training for County Clerks](#) (video)

[WISE-LR Help Documentation](#) (PDF)

2. I'm interested in notifying my voters of polling place changes via letter or postcard of changes related to redistricting. Will WEC be providing any materials to support this?

WEC staff believe the posting of the Type D notice sufficiently meets the statutory requirement to communicate polling place changes to voters. However, in response to clerk feedback, WEC is considering development of either a mail merge and/or WisVote report to help facilitate this outreach. WEC is also considering a template for this communication with voters that will focus on providing the new polling place for the Spring Election and that points them to MyVote as the trusted source for polling place locations for future elections.

Additional Resources

Local Redistricting Legal Questions:

Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB)

<https://legis.wisconsin.gov/LRB/nav/elections/>

LRB-Redistricting@legis.wisconsin.gov

(608) 504-5898

Local Redistricting Software Questions:

GIS Team

Legislative Technology Services Bureau (LTSB)

<https://legis.wisconsin.gov/ltsb/local-redistricting/>

GIS@legis.wisconsin.gov

(608) 283-1830

U.S. Census Questions:

Dan Veroff
UW-Applied Population Lab (APL)
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(608) 265-9545

We understand that this process is very complex and wish to assist you with your elections-related responsibilities. If you have any questions regarding WEC's 2020 redistricting preparations, please contact the Elections Help Desk at elections@wi.gov or 608-261-2028.