



# Research Brief

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## **New Standards For Defining Metropolitan Statistical Areas Announced**

MIDDLETOWN, Pa—The Pennsylvania State Data Center reports that The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has announced the adoption of new Standards for Defining Metropolitan Statistical Areas in the December 27, 2000, *Federal Register*. Recommendations by the Metropolitan Area Standards Review Committee and public comment on those recommendations were the basis of the changes in the standard. Standards for defining Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) were first issued in 1949 and have been modified in 1958, 1971, 1975, 1980 and 1990.

These new standards will apply to Census 2000 data, and OMB will announce definitions based on these standards in 2003. The adoption of new standards will not affect the availability of data. The Census Bureau will tabulate and publish data from Census 2000 for all metropolitan areas in existence as of April 1, 2000, Census Day.

### **New Standards**

OMB will use the following standards to define Core Based Statistical Areas (CBSAs) beginning in 2003. A CBSA is a geographic entity associated with at least one core of 10,000 or more population, plus adjacent territory that has a high degree of social and economic integration with the core. The two categories of CBSAs are Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas. The use of these terms and the collection of this data is for statistical purposes only and is not utilized in the aid or design of federal funding.

**Size Requirements:** A population of 50,000 or more or a Census Bureau defined urban cluster of 10,000 population or more is what will constitute each CBSA.



**Central Counties:** The central county or counties must contain at least 50 percent of their population in urban areas of at least 10,000 or have within their boundaries a population of at least 5,000 located in a single urban area of at least 10,000 population.

**Outlying Counties:** If at least 25 percent of a county's residents who are employed work in the central county or at least 25 percent of the employment in a county is accounted for by workers from a central county, that county qualifies as an outlying county. The counties included in a CSBA must be contiguous and may belong to only one CSBA.

**Merging of Adjacent CSBAs:** Adjacent CSBAs will merge to form one CSBA if the rules pertaining to outlying counties can be applied to the CSBA.

**Identification of Principle Cities:** The Principle City or Cities must be the largest incorporated place with a Census 2000 population of at least 10,000 or, if not 10,000 are present in the CSBA, it must be the largest incorporated place or census designated place in the CSBA. Additionally, any incorporated place or census designated place with a Census 2000 population of 250,000 or in which 100,000 or more persons work qualifies as a Principle City. An incorporated place with a population of 50,000 but less than 250,000 and in which the number of jobs meets or exceeds the number of employed residents will qualify as well. A final criteria for being a Principle City is any incorporated place with a Census 2000 population of 10,000 but less than 50,000 and one-third the population size of the largest place, and in which the number of jobs meets or exceeds the number of employed residents.

**Categories and Terminologies:** A CSBA is a Metropolitan Statistical Area if it contains an urbanized area of 50,000 or more population. Micropolitan Statistical areas are based on urban clusters of at least 10,000 persons but less than 50,000.

### **Current Standards for Defining Multiple Statistical Areas, Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Areas and Primary Metropolitan Statistical Areas**

The 1990 standards provide that each newly qualifying MSA must include at least:

- Ⓒ one city with 50,000 or more inhabitants, or
- Ⓒ a Census Bureau-defined urbanized area (of at least 50,000 inhabitants) and a total population of at least 100,000 (75,000 in New England).

A "central county" is created when that county (or counties) contains the largest city, along with any adjacent counties that have at least 50 percent of their population in the urbanized area surrounding the largest city. Additional "outlying counties" are included in the MSA if they meet specified requirements of commuting to the central counties and other selected requirements of metropolitan character. Population density and percent urban would be two such characteristics.

A CMSA may be created when an MSA has a population of one million or more if separate component areas can be identified within the entire area by meeting statistical criteria specified in the standards and local opinion indicates there is support for the component area. If recognized, the component areas are designated PMSAs, and the entire area becomes a CMSA.

As of June 30, 1999, there were 258 MSAs and 18 CMSAs, comprising 73 PMSAs in the United States. Pennsylvania statistical areas were defined as follows:

| <u>AREA TITLE</u>                     | <u>DEFINITION</u>  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Allentown, Bethlehem, Easton, MSA     | Carbon, Lehigh, & Northhampton Counties                                |
| Altoona, MSA                          | Blair County   |
| Erie, MSA                             | Erie County  |
| Harrisburg, Lebanon, Carlisle, MSA    | Cumberland, Dauphin, Lebanon & Perry Counties                          |
| Johnstown, MSA                        | Cambria & Somerset Counties  |
| Lancaster, MSA                        | Lancaster County   |
| Pittsburgh, MSA                       | Allegheny, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Washington & Westmoreland Counties |
| Reading, MSA                          | Berks County   |
| Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, Hazleton, MSA | Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, & Wyoming Counties                      |
| Sharon, MSA                           | Mercer County  |

| <u>AREA TITLE</u>                             | <u>DEFINITION</u>  |
|---|--|
| State College, MSA                            | Centre County  |
| Williamsport, MSA                             | Lycoming County  |
| York, MSA                                     | York County  |
| Newburgh, NY-PA, PMSA                         | Orange County, NY & Pike County, PA  |
| Philadelphia, PA-NJ, PMSA                     | Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery &<br>Philadelphia Counties plus 4 NJ counties |
| Philadelphia, Wilmington, Atlantic City, CMSA | PA, NJ, DE, MD   |

The Pennsylvania State Data Center is the Commonwealth's official source of population and economic statistics and services. It is based at Penn State Harrisburg's Institute of State and Regional Affairs. The Pennsylvania State Data Center is part of the U.S. Census Bureau's national State Data Center Program.

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Editors: For additional data, contact the Data Center's State Capital Office at 717.772.2710, or for faculty comment on this topic, contact Penn State Harrisburg's Public Information Office, 717.948.6029.

Source of Information:

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U.S. Census Bureau

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