Redistricting in Tennessee
A Decade’s Worth of Demographic Shifts Signify Changes for Many Communities

Census Estimates Show Changes Ahead
The U.S. Census Bureau expects to deliver the data states need to begin the redistricting process by August 16. Tennessee legislators will use this data to redraw electoral boundaries for the U.S. House of Representatives, the Tennessee House of Representatives and the Tennessee Senate, and county leaders will use it to redraw local districts.

But we don’t need to wait until then to understand what redistricting might mean for our state. 2020 Census data estimates available now show big changes may be ahead for many Tennessee communities.

The Bigger the Growth, the Smaller the District
To ensure each Tennessean’s vote has the same weight, legislators are required to draw districts that include as close to the same number of people as possible. That means districts with communities that have gotten significantly larger or smaller will need to be redrawn.

Districts with large population losses can expect to include a larger geographical area, and those with large population gains can expect to be geographically smaller.

2020 estimates show Tennessee’s population grew by 8.5% since 2010. To incorporate this growth, overall district populations will need to be larger.

Geographically Smaller Districts Ahead in Middle and East Tennessee, Larger Districts in West

Middle Tennessee and parts of East Tennessee saw the most growth. Legislators will need to find a way to shrink legislative districts in those Grand Divisions.

Because West Tennessee’s population decreased, legislators will need to make those districts geographically larger.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, County Population Totals: 2010-2020