

Colorado Redistricting: Submitting Written Public Comment

In 2018, Colorado voters approved Amendments Y and Z, which created two citizen-led independent redistricting commissions charged with drawing congressional and state legislative maps. Each 12 member commission will be composed of 4 Democrat, 4 Republican, and 4 Unaffiliated commissioners. Maps approved by the commission must be submitted to the Colorado Supreme Court for final approval and adhere to the following criteria:

Federal Criteria: Districts must have equal population (for Congressional map) and comply with the Voting Rights Act.

State Criteria: As reasonably possible, districts should be contiguous, preserve whole communities of interest, preserve political subdivisions, be compact, and, for state legislative maps, have no more than 5% deviation between most and least populous districts.

Additional Criteria: Thereafter, maximize the number of competitive districts.

Unconstitutional

Criteria: Prohibition on incumbent protection, partisan gerrymandering, or racial gerrymandering.

Opportunities for Public Participation

“Within the **first twenty days after the commission has convened**, any member of the public and any member of the commission **may submit written comments** to nonpartisan staff **on the creation of the preliminary plan and on communities of interest** that require representation in one or more specific areas of the state.”

(Colo. Const. art. V, §44.4 §1) & (Colo. Const. art. V, §48.2 §1)

2021 Colorado redistricting 20-day written public comment periods:

- Congressional Redistricting Commission: March 16 - April 5*
- Legislative Redistricting Commission: March 31 - April 19*

What is a Community of Interest?

The Colorado Constitution defines a Community of Interest as:

“Any group in Colorado that **shares one or more substantial interests** that may be the subject of federal legislative action, is composed of a reasonably proximate population, and thus should be considered for inclusion within a single district for purposes of ensuring its fair and effective representation.

Such interests include but are not limited to matters reflecting: shared public policy **concerns of urban, rural, agricultural, industrial, or trade areas**; and shared public policy **concerns such as education, employment, environment, public health, transportation, water needs and supplies, and issues of demonstrable regional significance**.

Groups that may comprise a community of interest include racial, ethnic, and language minority groups...”

(Colo. Const. art. V §44(3)(b)) & (Colo. Const. art. V §46(3)(b))

Submitting Written Public Comment

Develop your written public comment:

- Step 1: Thank Commission staff and tell them your name.
- Step 2: Describe your community of interest based on the community of interest definition in the Colorado Constitution.
- Step 3: Describe what you want to be reflected in the preliminary map.
- Step 4: Submit your written public comment by visiting: redistricting.colorado.gov/public_comments/new or emailing them to colorado.redistricting2020@state.co.us.

A fair and transparent redistricting process in Colorado that prioritizes public engagement depends on the strength and support of our volunteers, partners, and grassroots network. This is an all-hands-on-deck effort and moment. If you're interested in joining, partnering, or volunteering with All On The Line Colorado, please visit allontheline.org/colorado or email us at dorado@redistrictingaction.org.

**Tentative dates contingent on when Commissions are convened and any potential changes by commissions.*