

REDISTRICTING WORK SHEET

1. When does the process start?

Current Language: “Not later than the date of receipt of any federal census,” ...

Suggestion: Not later than January 31 of the year following the federal decennial census,
...

2. Process to obtain applicants for the redistricting commission?

Suggestion: The city secretary shall initiate and widely publicize a 30-day application process, open to all registered voters residing in the city with outreach to diverse communities to encourage participation. Applications must be submitted in writing in accordance with the city’s electronic process.

3. Qualifications to serve on the redistricting commission?

Suggestion:

- a. Applicants must be registered to vote and must have voted in the past two city elections for city council members.
- b. Applicants must have the relevant skills, including:
 - 1. relevant analytical and technological skills,
 - 2. understanding of underlying legal principles of redistricting,
 - 3. the ability to work collaboratively,
 - 4. a capacity to serve with impartiality, and
 - 5. a knowledge and appreciation of the diverse racial and ethnic demographics in Dallas.

4. Disqualification to serve on redistricting commission?

Suggestion: The following persons are not eligible to serve on the commission:

- a. A member or the spouse of a member of the city council or any family member within the third degree of consanguinity or affinity;
- b. A person or the spouse of a person who has been appointed to or elected to any federal, state, county, or city office during the five years before the application date;
- c. The campaign manager, treasurer, or staff member of any campaign for federal, state, county, or city office during the five years before the application date;
- d. A registered lobbyist or spouse of a lobbyist registered with the city, county, state, or federal government;
- e. A person or spouse of a person who has a contractual relationship or who works with or for any member of the city council or the spouse of a city council member; or

- f. A person or spouse of a person who, in accordance with the Charter, city ordinances, or written city policy, is ineligible for appointment to a city board and commission.

5. Selection Process. Who picks? What process?

Current Language: “. . . each member of the city council shall appoint one member of a redistricting commission. The mayor shall designate the chair of the redistricting commission, subject to confirmation by a majority of the city council. In making such appointments, the city council and the mayor shall, as nearly as may be practicable, provide fair and balanced representation of all geographical areas of the city in the redistricting process and provide a total membership that reflects the racial and ethnic makeup of the city's population. Members of the redistricting commission shall be appointed to serve a term that will end upon completion of the commission's work.”

Suggestion:

By April 1, the city secretary's office shall review each application for completeness and shall forward the complete applications to the city auditor's office to determine compliance with the qualifications and to eliminate applicants that do not qualify.

By June 1, the city auditor's office shall forward a list of all qualified applicants to the mayor and city council. The list will indicate the city council district where the applicant lives.

Option 1:

If there are 50 or fewer names on the list, the mayor and each council member may strike one name from the list; if there are 50 to 75 names on the list, there are two strikes per mayor and council member; and if there are more than 75 names on the list, there are three strikes.

The names remaining on the list after the strikes will be put into a container, and the city auditor shall draw fifteen names at an open session of the city council.

Option 2:

If there are 50 or fewer names on the list, the mayor and each council member may strike one name from the list; if there are 50 to 75 names on the list, there are two strikes per mayor and council member; and if there are more than 75 names on the list, there are three strikes.

The city auditor shall draw 7 names at an open session of the city council.

Each Council member shall then select at least 3, but no more than 5, candidates as their top picks from the remaining pool of candidates that will balance the commission to ensure that the commission reflects the geographic, racial, ethnic and gender diversity of the city. From the pool of top picks, the city auditor shall draw 8 names. Should the council duplicate names, the shortage shall be filled by the existing pool of candidates.

Option 3:

If there are 50 or fewer names on the list, the mayor and each council member may strike one name from the list; if there are 50 to 75 names on the list, there are two strikes per mayor and council member; and if there are more than 75 names on the list, there are three strikes.

The names remaining on the list after the strikes will be put into a container, and the city auditor shall draw eleven names at an open session of the city council.

The mayor shall then select four additional members from the list to ensure that the commission reflects the geographic, racial, ethnic, and gender diversity of the city.

Option 4:

If there are 50 or fewer names on the list, the mayor and each council member may strike one name from the list; if there are 50 to 75 names on the list, there are two strikes per mayor and council member; and if there are more than 75 names on the list, there are three strikes.

The city auditor shall draw 8 names at an open session of the city council. The council, as a whole, shall select the remaining 7 names to ensure that the commission reflects the geographic, racial, ethnic and gender diversity of the city.

The mayor shall appoint one of the selected persons to serve as the chair. The commission shall select its own vice chair(s) from the members. The 15 persons selected shall constitute the redistricting commission.

Members of the redistricting commission shall be appointed to serve a term that will end upon completion of the commission's work.

6. What are the guidelines to be used by the commission?

Suggestion: The commission shall draw the districts in compliance with the following guidelines:

- a. The districts shall be substantially equal in population according to the total population count as presented in the census data, except where deviation is required to comply with federal law or is allowable by law.
- b. In addition to the requirements of federal law, there shall be no discrimination on the basis of race, color, or membership in a language minority group, and the voting strength of racial, ethnic and language minorities in the districts shall not be diluted to deprive minority voters of an equal opportunity to elect a candidate of their choice.
- c. The districts shall be geographically compact, to the extent possible, and composed of contiguous territory.
- d. The reconfiguration of districts shall be neutral as to incumbents or potential candidates.

- e. Communities of interest shall be maintained in a single district and attempts should be made to avoid splitting neighborhoods, where possible without violating the other requirements.

7. **Methods to Increase Transparency and Independence?**

Suggestion:

Persons appointed to the commission shall file a written declaration with the city secretary stating that they will not seek election to the city council for five years after the city council's adoption of a final districting plan.

Persons appointed to the commission may not be appointed to any other city board or commission for two years after service on the redistricting commission.

City council members will have no contact, directly or indirectly, with any commission member or with commission staff, except by testimony in an open meeting.

Commission members may not engage in any discussions with city council members, except during an open meeting. If a commission member engages in a prohibited discussion or violates the Open Meetings Act, the commission may, by majority vote, remove the commissioner from the commission.

8. **Training for the commission?**

Suggestion: Before starting service, the city will provide training from knowledgeable and professional trainers on Dallas demographics, the legal principles of redistricting, and the process for performing redistricting, including the use of computer software to draw district lines.

9. **Staffing and Support?**

Suggestion: The city shall provide support staff and equipment and other resources, as necessary for the commission to perform its duties.

10. **Commission Process?**

Current language: "The redistricting commission shall promptly convene in such sessions as are necessary, including public hearings, to develop, prepare, and recommend a districting plan that proposes the respective boundaries of the various districts comprising the city council under this Charter."

Suggestion: The Commission shall solicit broad public participation in the redistricting process. The hearing process shall include hearings to receive public input before the Commission draws any maps and hearings following the drawing and display of any commission maps. The commission shall display the proposed maps for public comment in a manner designed to achieve the widest public access reasonably possible, and for a reasonable time before approval by the commission. In addition, the commission shall make available a report that identifies for each district: boundaries, population, racial and ethnic composition, and compactness measures.

11. Process for final approval of the plan?

Current language: “Upon completion of its work, the redistricting commission shall file its recommended districting plan with the mayor. The mayor shall present the recommended plan to the city council at its next meeting. The city council shall adopt the plan as submitted or shall modify and adopt the plan, in either case within 45 days of receipt by the mayor. If neither of such actions is taken within 45 days, then the recommended plan of the redistricting commission will become the final districting plan for the city.”

Suggestion:

Any modification that changes the population within a district by less than 2 percent, must be made in open session at a city council meeting with a written explanation of the need for the modification, and must be approved by a vote of two-thirds of the city council.

Any modification that changes the population within a district by 2 percent or more, must be made in open session at a city council meeting with a written explanation of the need for the modification, and must be approved by a vote of three-fourths of the city council.