



UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

CENTER FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS RESEARCH

## NEWS RELEASE

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### NEW CENSUS DATA SHOW UNICAMERAL DISTRICTS LIKELY TO NEED ADJUSTMENT DURING 2021 REDISTRICTING

**Omaha, Nebraska** – Figures released this week by the U.S. Census Bureau provide the last look at estimated populations of Nebraska Unicameral districts prior to official 2020 Census results to be released next spring. New data from the American Community Survey, the Census Bureau’s main product for providing socio-economic information, show district populations as of July 1, 2017.

The figures indicate Nebraska will have about 1.948 million people in 2020, or an average of 39,756 across its 49 Unicameral districts. The analysis shows that 13 districts with high rates of population growth will be more than 5% above the average district size.

Most growing districts are in the state’s most populated counties of Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy, led by District 39, Elkhorn. District 39 will likely have a 2020 Census count near 58,000 or 46% above the average district size in Nebraska. Districts 49, Gretna, and 10, Bennington, are each expected to have more than 50,000 residents or about 26% above the average district population. According to David Drozd, a census data expert at the Center for Public Affairs Research at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, “The only district estimated to be 5% above the average size that is not in a Big Three county is District 37, in Buffalo County, the state’s fourth-fastest growing county.”

Conversely, the analysis shows 20 districts that are expected to be 5% below the average district size. Many of these primarily rural districts have been losing population for many years and some may be as much as 5,000 persons, or 13%, below the average district size.

While most districts 5% below the average size are in rural locations, a few are located within Douglas County, including Districts 6, 9, 11, 20, and 31. “These are more fully developed areas, closer to the center of Omaha, that do not have as much land to develop as compared to the growth in housing construction that is currently occurring along the urban fringe,” Drozd said.

Population shifts across the state will impact redistricting and the size and boundaries of districts. The redistricting process attempts to equalize legislative district populations so that the most and least populated districts do not differ by more than 10%, 5% above or below, the

average-size district population. The release date for 2020 Census counts used in redistricting has not been set and will likely be delayed as a result of the impact of the coronavirus and some severe weather events, nationally, that have impacted Census Bureau operations and processing.

This analysis was conducted utilizing 2010 Census counts and the population growth rate between 2010 and 2017 to estimate population levels in 2020. These data are a guide for redistricting but the analysis is not officially part of that process.

The Center for Public Affairs Research collaboratively produces and disseminates high-quality public scholarship about topics that impact the lives of Nebraskans. Ongoing projects from CPAR include policy analyses for the Planning Committee of the Nebraska State Legislature, the Nebraska Statewide Transit Initiative, governing.unomaha.edu, and designation by the U.S. Census Bureau as a statewide liaison for disseminating a range of data products. To learn more about CPAR and access many of its data resources go to [cpar.unomaha.edu](http://cpar.unomaha.edu).

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**2010 to 2017 Population Change with Extrapolation to 2020 for Current Unicameral Districts (boundaries effective May 2011)**

Sources: Legislature Maps - [http://nebraskalegislature.gov/about/leg\\_map.php](http://nebraskalegislature.gov/about/leg_map.php); U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2015-2019, Table B03002

Prepared by: David Drozd, UNO Center for Public Affairs Research on December 9, 2020

Note: green shading denotes being 5% or more above the average district size while gray shading is 5% or more below that average

Geography	County or County Type	Total Population			2010 to 2017 Changes			2020 if same rate of change	Avg seat size and deviation	District deviation vs. average	Rank of Percent
		2010 Census	Avg seat size and deviation	2017 via ACS	Number	Percent	Rank of Percent				
<b>Nebraska</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>1,826,341</b>	<b>37,272</b>	<b>1,914,571</b>	<b>88,230</b>	<b>4.8%</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>1,948,038</b>	<b>39,756</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>n/a</b>
District 39	Douglas	36,499	-773	52,041	15,542	42.6%	1	57,936	18,180	45.7%	1
District 49	Sarpy	37,250	-22	46,725	9,475	25.4%	3	50,319	10,563	26.6%	2
District 10	Douglas	36,804	-468	46,463	9,659	26.2%	2	50,127	10,371	26.1%	3
District 21	Lancaster	37,976	704	43,456	5,480	14.4%	5	45,535	5,779	14.5%	4
District 25	Lancaster	37,487	215	43,110	5,623	15.0%	4	45,243	5,487	13.8%	5
District 3	Sarpy	36,801	-471	41,797	4,996	13.6%	6	43,692	3,936	9.9%	6
District 18	Douglas	37,488	216	41,892	4,404	11.7%	7	43,562	3,807	9.6%	7
District 14	Sarpy	37,737	465	41,865	4,128	10.9%	8	43,431	3,675	9.2%	8
District 26	Lancaster	37,783	511	41,860	4,077	10.8%	9	43,406	3,651	9.2%	9
District 27	Lancaster	38,075	803	41,440	3,365	8.8%	11	42,716	2,961	7.4%	10
District 29	Lancaster	38,002	730	41,220	3,218	8.5%	13	42,441	2,685	6.8%	11
District 37	Buffalo	38,550	1,278	41,148	2,598	6.7%	17	42,133	2,378	6.0%	12
District 30	Gage	36,467	-805	40,372	3,905	10.7%	10	41,853	2,097	5.3%	13
District 45	Sarpy	36,862	-410	40,098	3,236	8.8%	12	41,325	1,570	3.9%	14
District 7	Douglas	37,529	257	40,133	2,604	6.9%	16	41,121	1,365	3.4%	15
District 4	Douglas	37,056	-216	39,804	2,748	7.4%	15	40,846	1,090	2.7%	16
District 46	Lancaster	38,288	1,016	39,874	1,586	4.1%	20	40,476	720	1.8%	17
District 13	Douglas	36,227	-1,045	39,166	2,939	8.1%	14	40,281	525	1.3%	18
District 2	Cass	38,130	858	39,117	987	2.6%	24	39,491	-264	-0.7%	19
District 22	Platte	37,500	228	38,527	1,027	2.7%	23	38,917	-839	-2.1%	20
District 12	Douglas	37,055	-217	38,337	1,282	3.5%	21	38,823	-933	-2.3%	21
District 5	Douglas	37,119	-153	38,350	1,231	3.3%	22	38,817	-939	-2.4%	22
District 8	Douglas	36,550	-722	38,090	1,540	4.2%	19	38,674	-1,082	-2.7%	23
District 23	Rural	38,099	827	38,308	209	0.5%	32	38,387	-1,369	-3.4%	24
District 34	Rural	35,967	-1,305	37,687	1,720	4.8%	18	38,339	-1,416	-3.6%	25
District 35	Hall	37,640	368	38,089	449	1.2%	28	38,259	-1,497	-3.8%	26
District 28	Lancaster	38,303	1,031	37,994	-309	-0.8%	36	37,877	-1,879	-4.7%	27

Geography	County or County Type	Total Population			2010 to 2017 Changes			2020 if same rate of change	Avg seat size and deviation	District deviation vs. average	Rank of Percent
		2010 Census	Avg seat size and deviation	2017 via ACS	Number	Percent	Rank of Percent				
District 33	Hall/Adams	37,068	-204	37,633	565	1.5%	26	37,847	-1,909	-4.8%	28
District 36	Rural	38,550	1,278	38,025	-525	-1.4%	39	37,826	-1,930	-4.9%	29
District 31	Douglas	36,914	-358	37,437	523	1.4%	27	37,635	-2,120	-5.3%	30
District 6	Douglas	36,564	-708	37,336	772	2.1%	25	37,629	-2,127	-5.4%	31
District 20	Douglas	37,867	595	37,619	-248	-0.7%	35	37,525	-2,231	-5.6%	32
District 19	Madison	37,333	61	37,284	-49	-0.1%	34	37,265	-2,490	-6.3%	33
District 41	Rural	38,547	1,275	37,586	-961	-2.5%	44	37,221	-2,534	-6.4%	34
District 32	Rural	38,202	930	37,444	-758	-2.0%	40	37,156	-2,599	-6.5%	35
District 11	Douglas	36,814	-458	37,048	234	0.6%	31	37,137	-2,619	-6.6%	36
District 9	Douglas	36,624	-648	36,901	277	0.8%	30	37,006	-2,750	-6.9%	37
District 38	Rural	38,023	751	37,195	-828	-2.2%	41	36,881	-2,875	-7.2%	38
District 15	Dodge	36,691	-581	36,665	-26	-0.1%	33	36,655	-3,101	-7.8%	39
District 17	Mixed	37,541	269	36,686	-855	-2.3%	42	36,362	-3,394	-8.5%	40
District 24	Rural	35,821	-1,451	36,141	320	0.9%	29	36,262	-3,493	-8.8%	41
District 43	Rural	37,945	673	36,715	-1,230	-3.2%	47	36,248	-3,507	-8.8%	42
District 1	Rural	36,642	-630	36,211	-431	-1.2%	38	36,048	-3,708	-9.3%	43
District 48	Scotts Bluff	36,970	-302	36,074	-896	-2.4%	43	35,734	-4,022	-10.1%	44
District 16	Mixed	36,231	-1,041	35,823	-408	-1.1%	37	35,668	-4,088	-10.3%	45
District 40	Rural	37,613	341	36,171	-1,442	-3.8%	49	35,624	-4,132	-10.4%	46
District 44	Rural	37,056	-216	35,888	-1,168	-3.2%	46	35,445	-4,311	-10.8%	47
District 42	Lincoln	36,288	-984	35,263	-1,025	-2.8%	45	34,874	-4,882	-12.3%	48
District 47	Rural	35,793	-1,479	34,463	-1,330	-3.7%	48	33,959	-5,797	-14.6%	49

Note: to view the boundaries of particular legislative districts, visit [https://nebraskalegislature.gov/about/leg\\_map.php](https://nebraskalegislature.gov/about/leg_map.php)