

Community of Interest Rules (Examples)

California Constitution

“(4) The geographic integrity of any city, county, city and county, local neighborhood, or local community of interest shall be respected in a manner that minimizes their division to the extent possible without violating the requirements of any of the preceding subdivisions. A community of interest is a contiguous population which shares common social and economic interests that should be included within a single district for purposes of its effective and fair representation. Examples of such shared interests are those common to an urban area, a rural area, an industrial area, or an agricultural area, and those common to areas in which the people share similar living standards, use the same transportation facilities, have similar work opportunities, or have access to the same media of communication relevant to the election process. Communities of interest shall not include relationships with political parties, incumbents, or political candidates.

(5) To the extent practicable, and where this does not conflict with the criteria above, districts shall be drawn to encourage geographical compactness such that nearby areas of population are not bypassed for more distant population.”

Fair Maps Act (California)

“(2) To the extent practicable, the geographic integrity of any local neighborhood or local community of interest shall be respected in a manner that minimizes its division. A “community of interest” is a population that shares common social or economic interests that should be included within a single supervisory district for purposes of its effective and fair representation. Communities of interest do not include relationships with political parties, incumbents, or political candidates.

(3) To the extent practicable, the geographic integrity of a city or census designated place shall be respected in a manner that minimizes its division.

(4) Supervisory district boundaries should be easily identifiable and understandable by residents. To the extent practicable, supervisory districts shall be bounded by natural and artificial barriers, by streets, or by the boundaries of the county.”

New York City Charter

“b. Such districting plan shall be established in a manner that ensures the fair and effective representation of the racial and language minority groups in New York city which are protected by the United States voting rights act of nineteen hundred sixty-five, as amended.

c. District lines shall keep intact neighborhoods and communities with established ties of common interest and association, whether historical, racial, economic, ethnic, religious or other.

d. Each district shall be compact and shall be no more than twice as long as it is wide.”

Ohio Constitutional Amendment (Proposed -2023)

“(1) Districts shall preserve communities of interest to the extent practicable.

- (a) A community of interest is an area where the record before the commission demonstrates the existence of communities of people with broadly shared interests and representational needs, including, without limitation, interests and representational needs that arise from common ethnic, racial, social, cultural, geographic, environmental, socioeconomic, or historic identities or concerns.
- (b) Counties, municipal corporations, townships, and school districts may constitute communities of interest provided the record before the commission clearly and convincingly demonstrates such subdivision is a community of people who have broadly shared interests and representational needs that are greater than those of other overlapping communities of interest.
- (c) Under no circumstance shall communities of interest include a community defined based on a shared political identity or common relationships with political parties or political candidates.
- (d) In considering which overlapping communities of interest to preserve, the commission shall give greater consideration to those communities of interest whose representational needs would be most benefited from the community’s inclusion in a single district.”