

OMB Bulletin No. 99-04



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
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OMB BULLETIN NO. 99-04

TO THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND ESTABLISHMENTS

SUBJECT: Revised Statistical Definitions of Metropolitan Areas (MAs) and Guidance on Uses of MA Definitions

Purpose: This Bulletin establishes two new Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs). It also provides guidance on the use of the statistical definitions of MAs.

Background: Pursuant to 44 U.S.C. 3504(e)(3) and 31 U.S.C. 1104(d) and Executive Order No. 10253 (June 11, 1951), the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) defines MAs for use in Federal statistical activities. OMB updates these definitions each June, adding new areas that qualify as MAs and cities that qualify as central cities for MAs.

New MSAs: Auburn-Opelika, Alabama is defined as a Level D MSA (FIPS Code 0580) effective June 30, 1999. The Auburn-Opelika, Alabama MSA comprises Lee County, Alabama. The MSA's central cities are Auburn, Alabama and Opelika, Alabama. Corvallis, Oregon, is defined as a Level D MSA (FIPS Code 1890) effective June 30, 1999. The Corvallis, Oregon, MSA comprises Benton County, Oregon. The MSA's central city is Corvallis, Oregon.

MAs: This Bulletin gives the definitions of all MAs in the United States and Puerto Rico based on the standards published on March 30, 1990, in the *Federal Register* (55 FR 12154-12160), the 1990 Decennial Census data, and 1998 Census Bureau population estimates. A total of 261 MSAs are recognized. There are 19 Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Areas (CMSAs), consisting of 76 Primary Metropolitan Statistical Areas (PMSAs). List I provides titles and definitions of all MSAs; List II presents similar information for CMSAs and PMSAs. List III identifies the MSAs, CMSAs, and PMSAs in each State. List IV provides titles and definitions for the New England County Metropolitan Areas (NECMAs). MSAs, PMSAs, and NECMAs are categorized by their 1990 population size, as follows:

Level A -- Areas of 1 million or more

Level B -- Areas of 250,000 to 999,999

Level C -- Areas of 100,000 to 249,999

Level D -- Areas of less than 100,000

Uses of MA Definitions: All agencies that conduct statistical activities to collect and publish data for MAs should use the most recent definitions of MAs established by OMB.

OMB establishes and maintains the definitions of MAs solely for statistical purposes. In periodically reviewing and revising the MA definitions, OMB does not take into account or attempt to anticipate any nonstatistical uses that may be made of the definitions, nor will OMB modify the definitions to meet the requirements of any nonstatistical program.

We recognize that some legislation specifies the use of MAs for programmatic purposes, including allocating Federal funds. For example, as called for by the Social Security Act, the Health Care Financing Administration uses MAs to define labor market areas and gather hospital wage data that are used in developing a hospital wage index for the labor-related portion of a hospital's standardized Medicare payment. We will continue to work with the Congress to clarify the foundations of the MA definitions and the resultant, often unintended consequences of their use for nonstatistical purposes.

In a case where there is no statutory requirement and an agency elects to use the MA definitions in a **nonstatistical** program, it is the sponsoring agency's responsibility to ensure that the definitions are appropriate for such use. When an agency is publishing for comment a proposed regulation that would use the MA definitions for a nonstatistical purpose, the agency should seek public comment on the proposed use of the MA definitions. Please refer to M-94-22 on Use of Metropolitan Area Definitions, issued by OMB on May 5, 1994, for further information.

List of MA Definitions: This bulletin is available electronically from the OMB home page at <http://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/OMB>; go to Bulletins. Copies of the list of MAs as of June 30, 1999, are available from the National Technical Information Service (NTIS), Document Sales, 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, VA 22161 (703-605-6000 or 1-800-553-6847) (Accession Number PB99-132698). This list is also available through NTIS in electronic form (Wordperfect) (Accession Number PB99-501538).

Inquiries: Inquiries concerning MA standards and the statistical uses of MA definitions should be directed to Suzann Evinger (202-395-3093).

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Director

[Attachment](#) (92 pages, 146 kb) 