

## Council Elections by Geographic Representation

Q.

I need information about cities that elect their city councilmembers (either some or all) by geographic representation. This would mean that the city is divided into wards or districts, and councilmembers must reside within a specific ward/district, but are elected by the voters of the entire city. I'd like to know which cities, how many are elected in this manner, and what the city population is.

A.

I know that the City of Bremerton, population around 39,000, has 7 council districts. I believe, however, that only the residents of THOSE districts elect their councilmember – not the entire City – I may be wrong about that. Here's a link that gets you to all the cities in Washington that elect by district – you'd need to go to those city sites to get the information on which cities elect within the parameters you're asking about. (I'm thinking all the ones I've heard about with districts are like Bremerton – but perhaps not.)

[https://www.google.com/search?ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&q=council+district%22&btnG=Search&domains=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.codepublishing.com%2Fwa%2F&sitesearch=www.codepublishing.com%2Fwa%2F&safe=active&gws\\_rd=ssl](https://www.google.com/search?ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&q=council+district%22&btnG=Search&domains=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.codepublishing.com%2Fwa%2F&sitesearch=www.codepublishing.com%2Fwa%2F&safe=active&gws_rd=ssl)

A.

Our city has elected City Council Members. There are 8 Aldermen elected. Each Alderman represents the Ward they live in. They are required to live in their Ward. Our population currently is 25,123.

A.

Our small town of 4,343 has five council members that are elected at-large – no districts or wards needed for our size.

A.

Virginia Beach has a population of 440,000. 11 total districts. 7 Specific Districts (all voters but elected official must live in the district) 4 At-Large (represents entire City and can live anywhere, including the Mayor).

Q.

We are a city of 19,000. We have 7 members of council: 5 ward councilors, 1 president, and 1 vice president. A citizen who desires to be president or vice president must run at-large. The candidate who receives the most at-large votes wins presidency; the candidate with the second highest votes for at-large wins vice presidency. Ward councilors receive only the votes of residents in their respective wards.

## SECTION 5 QUALIFICATIONS OF MEMBERS.

Each member of the Council immediately prior to his election or appointment shall have been, and during his term of office shall continue to be, a qualified elector of the City of Ashtabula, Ohio, and shall continue to have the qualifications of an elector therein. A member from a ward shall reside in his ward immediately prior to his election or appointment, and removal of a ward member from his ward during his term of office shall work as a forfeiture of his office. Each member of Ashtabula's City Council shall not hold any other public office, except that of a notary public or member of the State militia, and shall not be interested in any contract with the City of Ashtabula, and no such member may hold employment with the City of Ashtabula.

The City Council of Ashtabula shall be the judge of the election and qualifications of its members, reviewable by the courts. Council members may be removed from office in the manner and for the causes provided by

general law for the removal of public officers.

(Amended 5-2-95)

A.

Our town is small about 1,100 and we have voted in districts since 1988 due to a lawsuit to have minority representation in towns and cities with population of over 1,000. My town has always been majority white we have 34% black and other minority population. We have two majority black and other minority districts. The council members from the five districts are elected by their districts only. Only the Mayor is elected by the entire town. Hope this helps.

A.

We have 8 Aldermen and a Mayor. Four aldermen serve at-large and represent the entire city. Four aldermen serve individual wards that are broken down geographically into four “equally populated” areas. Elections are held every two years, staggered between the Mayor and at-large elections, and the ward elections. Our does not handle the elections – they are administered by the County.

Here is an excerpt from our Municipal Code.

#### Section 4. Wards.

The city shall be divided into four wards. Any existing ordinance dividing the city into four wards shall continue in full force and Aldermen may from time to time alter the boundaries of existing wards. The number of wards shall not be increased or decreased within forty-five days preceding an election.

*Cross reference—Municipal code reference, City divided into four wards: title 20, chapter 4.*

#### Section 5. Elective Offices.

Elective offices shall be that of a mayor and eight (8) aldermen, four (4) of whom shall be elected at-large in the year in which of whom shall be elected from the City's four (4) wards, one (1) from each ward, in the year when there is no mayoral election.

*(As replaced by Priv. Acts 1988, ch. 216, § 1, and Priv. Acts 1990, ch. 152, § 1)*

#### Section 6. Nominations.

Any eligible person shall have his name on the ballot as a candidate for the office he seeks upon filing with the Commission days before the election a written petition signed by at least twenty-five registered voters of the city.

#### Section 7. Voting and Certification of Results.

Every voter in the City shall be entitled, in years when there is a mayoral election, to vote for mayor and four (4) at-large candidates for office, regardless of the voter's ward residence of the candidate or voter. Every voter shall also be entitled, in years when there is no mayoral election, to vote for those candidates who reside in the same ward as the voter. The candidate for each position receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected. Whenever two (2) or more candidates for office shall receive an equal number of votes, the election shall be decided by either affirming the election of the candidate receiving the highest number of votes, or by a special election, or by any other means allowed by state law. The method of deciding the election shall be determined by the Board, by a majority vote of the remaining members of the Board, by special election, or by any other means allowed by state law. The method of deciding the election shall be determined by the Board, by a majority vote of the remaining members of the Board.

A.

The Town of Conception Bay South has a population of approx. 25,000. We have 4 wards and the Councilor does not have to live in the ward to run for election. Only those residents that live in the ward can vote for the ward Councilor though.

We also have 4 at large Councillors and a mayor which are voted by the entire population. So, a resident in Ward 1, for example would vote for the mayor, the 4 at large Councillors and 1 ward Councilor.