

# REDISTRICTING PRINCIPLES GILA COUNTY 2011

## The following two Redistricting Principles must be observed:

- Districts shall be substantially equal in population to ensure one person-one vote; ensure the total maximum population deviation between districts is less than 10%  
*The principle that all citizens, regardless of where they reside in a state, are entitled to equal legislative representation. This principle was enunciated by the Supreme Court in REYNOLDS V. SIMS, 377 U.S. 533, 84 S. Ct. 1362, 12 L. Ed. 2d 506 (1964). The Court ruled that a state's Apportionment plan for seats in both houses of a bicameral state legislature must allocate seats on a population basis so that the voting power of each voter be as equal as possible to that of any other voter. One person-one vote principle requires that districts be substantially equal in population. New court cases may require deviation of much less than 10%.*
- New Districts shall not harm minority voting rights  
*Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act forbids a voting standard, practice, or procedure from having the effect of reducing the opportunity of members of a covered minority to participate in the political process and to elect representatives of their choice. Basically, this non-discrimination provision prohibits districting practices that result in:*  
*“Cracking” - fragmenting concentrations of minority populations and dispersing them among other districts to dilute minority opportunities to elect candidates of their choice*  
*“Stacking” - combining concentrations of minority populations with greater concentrations of white population to prevent minority opportunities to elect candidates of their choice*  
*“Packing” - over-concentrating minorities in as few districts as possible to minimize the number of districts in which minorities constitute a numerical majority (referred to as “majority-minority districts”)*

## The following Redistricting Principles should be considered to the extent practicable:

- Be contiguous and compact  
*A district is contiguous if all parts the district can be visited without crossing a boundary line. Compactness is more complex as there are various methods for measuring it. Appearance and function analyses will look at the overall shape of the district to see how tightly drawn and or smooth the edges are. If too irregular, it may be a signal to the courts that the lines may have been motivated by a desire to create racial or political advantage*
- Preserve existing voting precincts and the cores of prior supervisory and community college districts  
*Recognition that major boundary changes can possibly be disruptive or confusing to voters.*
- Respect political subdivisions  
*When a proposed district or precinct boundary line is close to an existing municipality or another district line, an attempt should be made to use that same line.*
- Be drawn to protect incumbent elected officials  
*Recognition that incumbents may be affected by the lines that are drawn.*

**The following Redistricting Principles may be considered to the extent practicable:**

- **Preserve communities of interest**

*Populations or communities that have common needs and interests. Communities of interest can be identified by referring to the census, demographic studies, surveys, political information, or through public meetings to assess what socio-economic characteristics community members share. County residents can also suggest communities of interest that they feel should not be divided. The Redistricting Committee should not “discover”, or claim the existence of communities of interest late in the process so as to avoid the appearance of using a supposed community of interest to mask a partisan or racial gerrymander.*

- **Use visible, identifiable geographic features**

*While not a high priority, visible geographic features may be appropriate factors in certain situations.*