

2010 PUMA Name Guidelines for Participants

Descriptive names will be added to the Census Bureau's public products including demographic/housing products and geographic products (i.e., TIGER/Line Shapefiles and map products). PUMA names will be provided by SDCs during PUMA delineation. In all cases, the objective is to clearly identify the extent of the PUMA by identifying a concise area name that is also meaningful to data users. The Census Bureau will have final approval of all names for inclusion in its public products and will collaborate with SDCs to create meaningful PUMA names during the delineation process.

BASIC CONCEPTS AND NOMENCLATURE:

The goal in assigning names to PUMAs is to provide a means for easily understanding and identifying the geographic location of each PUMA. PUMA names should generally reference the geographic areas within a PUMA containing the most population, housing, and/or area, e.g., a county, place (incorporated place or census designated place (CDP)), county subdivision, American Indian reservation and/or off-reservation trust land, military installation, national park, and/or prominent physical feature; the PUMA's geographic relationship within or to another geographic area, e.g., "Northeast Utah", "West Loudoun" in Virginia, or "Northeast Minneapolis" in Minnesota; or a well-known region primarily within the PUMA, e.g., "Florida Panhandle."

The following guidelines refer to the toponymy of PUMA names and particular associations to the communities and features that the name represents:

- 1) PUMA names should be as short and concise as possible while still being descriptive, clear, and unique within a state.
- 2) PUMAs may be named after the largest population center, administrative division, or historically central place within it (e.g., "Burbank" in California, "Taos" in New Mexico). Names of incorporated places, CDPs, and county subdivisions may be used.
- 3) PUMAs may be named after a populous American Indian Reservation (AIR) within it, (e.g., "Navajo Nation Reservation - Hopi Reservation" in Arizona).
- 4) PUMAs may be named after a legal or statistical geography (e.g., county or CDP). The geographic type or area descriptor may be appended to the name to identify the particular geographic entity being described where there is a clear case that the name alone may cause confusion for data users (e.g., South San Bernardino County, San Bernardino City South).
- 5) Where a PUMA contains multiple centers or counties with relatively equal importance, a PUMA name may represent no more than three centers or counties (e.g., "Mount Pleasant - Moroni" in Utah). If it is not clear which centers or counties to include, the PUMA name should instead follow another of the name guidelines.
- 6) A PUMA may be named after a prominent physical feature (e.g., "Denali" or "Cook Inlet" in Alaska), a prominent land use area in which it is partially or wholly located (e.g., "Yellowstone National Park" in Wyoming), or a distinctive region within the county or state (e.g., "Everglades and Lower Keys" in Florida).

- 7) If there is no clear cultural focus or topographic name that can be applied, a PUMA name can consist of the state or county name, and a compass direction to indicate the portion of the state or county in the PUMA. The directional indicator should precede the state or county name (e.g., “Northeast Colorado”). Note: In all other cases, a state name or abbreviation should not be appended to a name.
- 8) A PUMA name may consist of a place name and compass direction to give the PUMA location relative to the place or within the place. If a place name is used, the directional indicator follows it (e.g., “Irvine South”).

RULES AND NAMING CONVENTIONS: The following detailed guidelines pertain to the structural components of the name apart from its origin or association to the communities or features it represents.

- 9) Character limit: All names shall not exceed 86 characters.
- 10) Unique names: A PUMA may not have the same name as another PUMA within the same state.
- 11) State name or abbreviation: A state name or abbreviation should be used only when the PUMA name consists of the state name and a compass direction to indicate the portion of the state in the PUMA (refer to #6, above). For clarity, state abbreviations will be appended to PUMA names in Census Bureau public products, as appropriate.
- 12) Hyphen usage for multiple geographic areas: Hyphens may be used to connect the names of multiple geographic areas used in the PUMA name. Up to three geographic area names may be included within a PUMA name.
- 13) Name hierarchy: Where a PUMA name represents two or more areas joined by hyphen(s), the names should be presented in order of population size or regional importance, listing the most populous/most important first.
- 14) Alphabet: All names must be in the Roman alphabet as normally used for writing the English language.
- 15) Diacritical marks and special characters: Diacritical marks (accents and tildes) may be added to names. For the 2010 Census, diacritical marks are allowed in all areas of the United States, not just in Puerto Rico and Guam. A list of valid characters for geographic area names will be added to PUMA delineation guidelines (see appendix A).
- 16) Abbreviations: The words Saint and Sainte (abbreviated as St. and Ste., respectively), Air Force Base (AFB), and Air Reserve Base (ARB) must be abbreviated. USPS two-letter state abbreviations may also be used, but are discouraged (refer to #11, above). Other abbreviations are discouraged, but may be accepted based on Census Bureau review and approval.