

For: State and County Offices

**COC Review of Local Administrative Area (LAA) Boundaries**

Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Field Operations



**1 Overview**

**A Background**

To comply with final uniform guidelines issued on January 18, 2005, in FR:

- COC's **must** complete their annual review of LAA boundaries within each FSA County Office jurisdiction no later than April 1 of each year
- County Offices **must** determine whether drawing LAA boundaries or increasing the number of LAA's in a given area will assist in ensuring fair representation of SDA's and other producers in the area over which COC has jurisdiction.

Any proposed change in LAA's must be opened to public comment before any change is approved by STC.

**B Purpose**

This notice provides State and County Offices and COC's with:

- guidance to establish LAA's
- dates to complete reviewing LAA boundaries
- timeframes for public notice and comment period when LAA boundaries are changed
- guidance for offices recently involved, or soon to be involved, in office consolidations.

**C Contact**

For questions about this notice, State Offices shall contact either of the following:

- Ken Nagel, DAFO, at 202-720-7890
- Deborah Johnson, DAFO, at 202-720-0067.

<b>Disposal Date</b>	<b>Distribution</b>
September 1, 2007 2-28-07	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

## Notice AO-1378

### 2 Action

#### A COC Action

COC's shall:

- follow instructions in 15-AO, Part 3, Section 3 for reviewing LAA boundaries
- determine whether redrawing LAA boundaries or increasing the number of LAA's in a given area will assist in ensuring the fair representation of SDA's
- provide notice to the public and allow 15 calendar days for public comment before submitting to STC if LAA boundaries are redrawn
- complete the COC review of LAA boundaries and request STC's approval of LAA boundaries by submitting the following to STC no later than April 1, 2007:
  - boundary changes on completed FSA-582
  - county map showing the proposed boundary changes
  - justification for the proposed boundary changes with COC's recommendations and DD's concurrence
  - comments received from the public about the proposed changes
  - a request for STC's approval of the existing LAA boundaries by submitting a completed FSA-582, if no changes are made
- ensure that LAA voter lists are prepared for the correct LAA for the 2007 election by reviewing the Current COC Organization Structure screen print available on the COC Election web site at <http://intranet.fsa.usda.gov/fsa>.

**Note:** COC shall document the review and determination concerning LAA boundaries and LAA's up for election in the COC minutes.

#### B COC Action When Combining Offices

COC's shall ensure that no more than five LAA's exist after any office combination, and do the following:

- **before** March 1, 2007, shall have one COC representing the total area of the combined counties for the December 2007 election, with no more than five LAA's

## Notice AO-1378

### 2 Action (Continued)

#### B COC Action When Combining Offices (Continued)

- **between** March 1, 2007, and September 1, 2007, shall follow the current year COC makeup election calendar (to be provided at a later date) to establish one COC representing the jurisdiction of the combined counties, with no more than five LAA's
- **after** September 1, 2007, shall contact DAFO for guidance.

**Note:** Shared management is not an office combination. An office combination is the result of closing 1 or more offices.

#### C STC Action

STC's shall:

- submit STC determination to COC in sufficient time for COC corrective action or implementation
- document all decisions in the minutes
- conduct reviews of selected COC's to determine whether redrawing LAA's will assist in ensuring the fair representation of SDA's in the county or multi-county jurisdiction
- select COC's for additional review when STC finds evidence of under representation of SDA's on COC and inform DAFO of the finding
- complete the STC review of COC/LAA boundary changes and approve no later than May 31, 2007.

### 3 Publicizing Proposed LAA Changes

#### A Proposed LAA Changes

County Offices shall:

- publicize proposed LAA changes by:
  - posting proposed changes in LAA boundaries in County Offices
  - locally publicizing proposed LAA boundaries in a County Office publication and local media, providing the County Office address, telephone number, and FAX number
- ensure that 15 calendar days notice is provided for comments to be received from eligible voters before the proposed LAA boundaries are submitted for approval to STC.

## Notice AO-1378

### 4 Computer Operations

#### A LAA Updates

County Offices shall ensure that:

- COC and LAA data is updated using the Producer Election Data File and Control Table located in the COC Election web site at <http://intranet.fsa.usda.gov/fsa>
- LAA changes are in effect no later than June 15, 2007.

#### B Setting Up COC/LAA Configuration When Combining Offices

Contact DAFO for assistance with establishing new COC/LAA's when combining offices, or when office consolidation occurs while preparing for an election.

#### C Voter Data Verification

County Offices shall ensure that:

- voters are listed in the correct LAA in all cases, especially if LAA boundaries have changed
- all voter names and addresses are correct for each LAA
- all voter flags are correct.

#### D Eligible Voter Lists

County Offices shall:

- ensure that eligible voter lists without addresses for the LAA or LAA's conducting an election in 2007 are available for public view no later than June 15, 2007
- continually update eligible voter lists throughout the year as changes are known.