

Government Units by State: Census Years 1942 to 2012 - United States -- States
2012 Census of Governments

Geography: United States

Geographic area [2]	Federal, state, and local government units													
	2012	2007	2002	1997	1992	1987	1982	1977	1972	1967	1962	1957	1952	1942 [1]
United States	90,107	89,527	87,576	87,504	85,006	83,237	81,831	79,913	78,269	81,299	91,236	102,392	116,807	155,116
Alabama	1,209	1,186	1,172	1,132	1,122	1,054	1,019	950	876	797	733	617	548	511
Alaska	178	178	176	176	175	173	157	151	121	62	57	42	49	-
Arizona	675	646	639	638	591	577	453	421	407	395	379	367	367	499
Arkansas	1,557	1,549	1,589	1,517	1,447	1,397	1,425	1,347	1,284	1,253	1,209	1,127	1,089	3,705
California	4,426	4,345	4,410	4,608	4,393	4,332	4,103	3,807	3,820	3,865	4,023	3,879	3,764	4,149
Colorado	2,906	2,417	1,929	1,870	1,761	1,594	1,545	1,460	1,320	1,253	1,194	1,666	1,953	2,358
Connecticut	644	650	581	584	564	478	480	435	429	414	399	384	363	349
Delaware	340	339	340	337	276	282	218	211	159	171	208	132	108	70
District of Columbia	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2
Florida	1,651	1,624	1,192	1,082	1,014	966	970	912	866	828	765	672	617	503
Georgia	1,379	1,440	1,449	1,345	1,298	1,287	1,269	1,264	1,244	1,204	1,219	1,121	976	946
Hawaii	22	20	20	20	21	19	19	20	20	20	21	22	15	-
Idaho	1,169	1,241	1,159	1,148	1,087	1,066	1,019	973	902	872	835	843	938	1,666
Illinois	6,964	6,995	6,904	6,836	6,723	6,628	6,468	6,621	6,386	6,454	6,453	6,510	7,723	15,854
Indiana	2,710	3,232	3,086	3,199	2,899	2,807	2,866	2,855	2,793	2,670	3,092	2,989	3,050	3,043
Iowa	1,948	1,955	1,976	1,877	1,881	1,878	1,872	1,853	1,819	1,803	2,643	4,906	5,857	7,519
Kansas	3,827	3,932	3,888	3,951	3,892	3,804	3,796	3,726	3,716	3,669	5,411	6,214	6,933	11,115
Kentucky	1,339	1,347	1,440	1,367	1,321	1,304	1,242	1,184	1,136	953	873	822	796	771
Louisiana	530	527	474	468	459	453	469	459	835	734	629	584	489	523
Maine	841	851	827	833	797	801	807	780	715	699	659	645	664	584
Maryland	348	257	266	421	402	402	440	427	404	362	352	328	328	207
Massachusetts	858	862	842	862	844	837	799	767	683	655	587	573	584	409
Michigan	2,876	2,884	2,805	2,776	2,722	2,700	2,644	2,634	2,650	2,904	3,817	5,160	6,766	8,106
Minnesota	3,673	3,527	3,483	3,502	3,580	3,556	3,530	3,438	3,396	4,185	5,213	6,298	9,026	10,398
Mississippi	984	1,001	1,001	937	870	854	859	836	797	784	773	672	693	1,792
Missouri	3,769	3,724	3,423	3,417	3,310	3,148	3,118	2,938	2,808	2,918	3,727	5,307	7,002	10,740
Montana	1,266	1,274	1,128	1,145	1,276	1,244	1,030	959	993	1,104	1,388	1,503	1,598	2,175
Nebraska	2,582	2,660	2,792	2,895	2,924	3,153	3,325	3,486	3,562	4,392	5,125	6,658	7,981	8,307
Nevada	192	199	211	206	208	198	185	183	185	147	137	110	243	163
New Hampshire	542	546	560	576	528	525	518	507	500	516	551	545	551	546
New Jersey	1,345	1,384	1,413	1,422	1,513	1,626	1,592	1,518	1,457	1,422	1,396	1,217	1,151	1,143
New Mexico	864	864	859	862	342	332	320	314	310	308	306	317	289	225
New York	3,454	3,404	3,421	3,414	3,299	3,303	3,250	3,310	3,307	3,486	3,803	4,189	5,483	8,339
North Carolina	974	964	961	953	938	917	906	875	803	753	676	624	608	603
North Dakota	2,686	2,700	2,736	2,759	2,765	2,788	2,796	2,708	2,727	2,758	3,029	3,968	3,968	4,066
Ohio	3,843	3,703	3,637	3,598	3,524	3,378	3,394	3,286	3,260	3,284	3,359	3,667	3,936	4,021
Oklahoma	1,853	1,881	1,799	1,800	1,795	1,803	1,703	1,676	1,684	1,774	1,960	2,332	2,771	5,100
Oregon	1,543	1,547	1,440	1,494	1,451	1,503	1,455	1,448	1,447	1,457	1,470	1,526	1,723	2,332
Pennsylvania	4,898	4,872	5,032	5,071	5,159	4,957	5,199	5,247	4,936	4,999	6,202	5,073	5,156	5,263
Rhode Island	134	135	119	120	126	126	123	121	116	110	98	91	89	54
South Carolina	679	699	702	717	698	708	646	586	584	562	553	503	413	2,057
South Dakota	1,984	1,984	1,867	1,811	1,786	1,763	1,768	1,728	1,771	3,511	4,464	4,808	4,917	4,919
Tennessee	917	929	931	941	924	905	914	906	882	792	658	560	435	328
Texas	5,148	4,836	4,785	4,701	4,792	4,416	4,181	3,884	3,625	3,447	3,328	3,485	3,963	7,360
Utah	623	600	606	684	627	531	505	493	460	446	424	398	385	303
Vermont	739	734	734	692	682	674	665	648	659	657	425	409	414	398
Virginia	519	512	522	484	455	431	408	390	386	374	381	367	386	323
Washington	1,901	1,846	1,788	1,813	1,761	1,780	1,735	1,667	1,683	1,653	1,647	1,577	1,539	1,906
West Virginia	660	664	687	705	692	631	634	596	509	456	390	362	350	326
Wisconsin	3,129	3,121	3,049	3,060	2,739	2,720	2,593	2,519	2,449	2,491	3,727	5,731	7,258	8,508
Wyoming	806	727	723	655	550	425	396	386	384	473	465	489	519	531

— Represents zero

[1] Counts for Alaska and Hawaii territories are not available for 1942.

[2] United States total includes the federal government and the 50 state governments.

Initial data release: 9/26/2013

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 Census of Governments: Organization Component Estimates. Data are not subject to sampling error, but for information on nonsampling error and definitions, see <http://www.census.gov/govs/cog2012>. Data users who create their own estimates from these tables should cite the U.S. Census Bureau as the source of the original data only.

Local Governments by Type and State: 2012 - United States -- States

2012 Census of Governments

Geography: United States

Geographic area	Total	General purpose governments			
		Total	County [1]	Subcounty governments	
				Total	Municipal
United States	90,056	38,910	3,031	35,879	19,519
Alabama	1,208	528	67	461	461
Alaska	177	162	14	148	148
Arizona	674	106	15	91	91
Arkansas	1,556	577	75	502	502
California	4,425	539	57	482	482
Colorado	2,905	333	62	271	271
Connecticut	643	179	-	179	30
Delaware	339	60	3	57	57
District of Columbia	2	1	-	1	1
Florida	1,650	476	66	410	410
Georgia	1,378	688	153	535	535
Hawaii	21	4	3	1	1
Idaho	1,168	244	44	200	200
Illinois	6,963	2,831	102	2,729	1,298
Indiana	2,709	1,666	91	1,575	569
Iowa	1,947	1,046	99	947	947
Kansas	3,826	1,997	103	1,894	626
Kentucky	1,338	536	118	418	418
Louisiana	529	364	60	304	304
Maine	840	504	16	488	22
Maryland	347	180	23	157	157
Massachusetts	857	356	5	351	53
Michigan	2,875	1,856	83	1,773	533
Minnesota	3,672	2,724	87	2,637	853
Mississippi	983	380	82	298	298
Missouri	3,768	1,380	114	1,266	954
Montana	1,265	183	54	129	129
Nebraska	2,581	1,040	93	947	530
Nevada	191	35	16	19	19
New Hampshire	541	244	10	234	13
New Jersey	1,344	587	21	566	324
New Mexico	863	136	33	103	103
New York	3,453	1,600	57	1,543	614
North Carolina	973	653	100	553	553
North Dakota	2,685	1,723	53	1,670	357
Ohio	3,842	2,333	88	2,245	937
Oklahoma	1,852	667	77	590	590
Oregon	1,542	277	36	241	241
Pennsylvania	4,897	2,627	66	2,561	1,015
Rhode Island	133	39	-	39	8
South Carolina	678	316	46	270	270
South Dakota	1,983	1,284	66	1,218	311
Tennessee	916	437	92	345	345
Texas	5,147	1,468	254	1,214	1,214

Geographic area	Total	General purpose governments			
		Total	County [1]	Subcounty governments	
			Total	Municipal	
Utah	622	274	29	245	245
Vermont	738	294	14	280	43
Virginia	518	324	95	229	229
Washington	1,900	320	39	281	281
West Virginia	659	287	55	232	232
Wisconsin	3,128	1,923	72	1,851	596
Wyoming	805	122	23	99	99

Government Organization Summary Report: 2012

Governments Division Briefs

by Carma Hogue
Released September 26, 2013
G12-CG-ORG

INTRODUCTION

This report is part of a series designed to provide information on the structure, function, employment, and finances of the United States' 90,106 state and local governments. The U.S. Census Bureau produces data every 5 years as a part of the Census of Governments in years ending in "2" and "7." Between censuses, comparable employment and financial activity data are produced from intercensal quarterly and annual sample surveys.

The estimates in this report present the data collected as part of the 2012 Census of Governments summarizing the structure and organization of state and local governments. The Employment and Finance components of the Census of Governments are released as separate products. Specifically, the data in this report are a complete enumeration of all state and local governments that were in existence on June 30, 2012. For Census Bureau purposes, a government is defined as an organized entity, which in addition to having governmental character, has sufficient discretion in the management of its own affairs to distinguish it as separate from the administrative structure of any other governmental unit.

DID YOU KNOW?

The official count of independent school districts in the United States is 12,880.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 Census of Governments: Organization Component.

DID YOU KNOW?

Illinois has 6,963 local governments, the highest number of governmental units in the nation, followed by Texas with 5,147 governmental units.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 Census of Governments: Organization Component.

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

The official count of local governments in the United States for 2012 was 90,056, comprising 38,910 general-purpose governments and 51,146 special-purpose governments. General purpose governments include those classified as counties, municipalities, and townships. These governments perform a number of functions, which include financial administration, police protection, highway administration, hospitals, utilities, etc. In 2012, general-purpose governments included 3,031 counties, 19,519 municipalities, and 16,360 townships.

Special-purpose governments perform only one function or a very limited number of functions. For example, independent school districts perform education-related functions. All other single- or limited-purpose governments are called special districts. Examples of special districts include mosquito abatement districts, utility districts, water and sewer districts, transit authorities, etc. Special districts may serve a single function in a large municipality or may serve as a regional entity in more rural settings. In 2012, special-purpose governments included 12,880 independent school districts and 38,266 special districts.



REGIONAL AND STATE-AREA CHARACTERISTICS OF GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

In examining the details of local governments, one finds that the region with the highest average number of local governments per state is the Midwest with an average of 3,332 local governments per state area. This is followed by the Northeast with 1,494; the West with 1,274; and the South with 1,181. As shown in Figure 1, the Midwest with 39,979 local governments services a 2010 Census population of about 66.9 million residents. The South with the lowest average number of local governments per state area has 20,073 local governments.

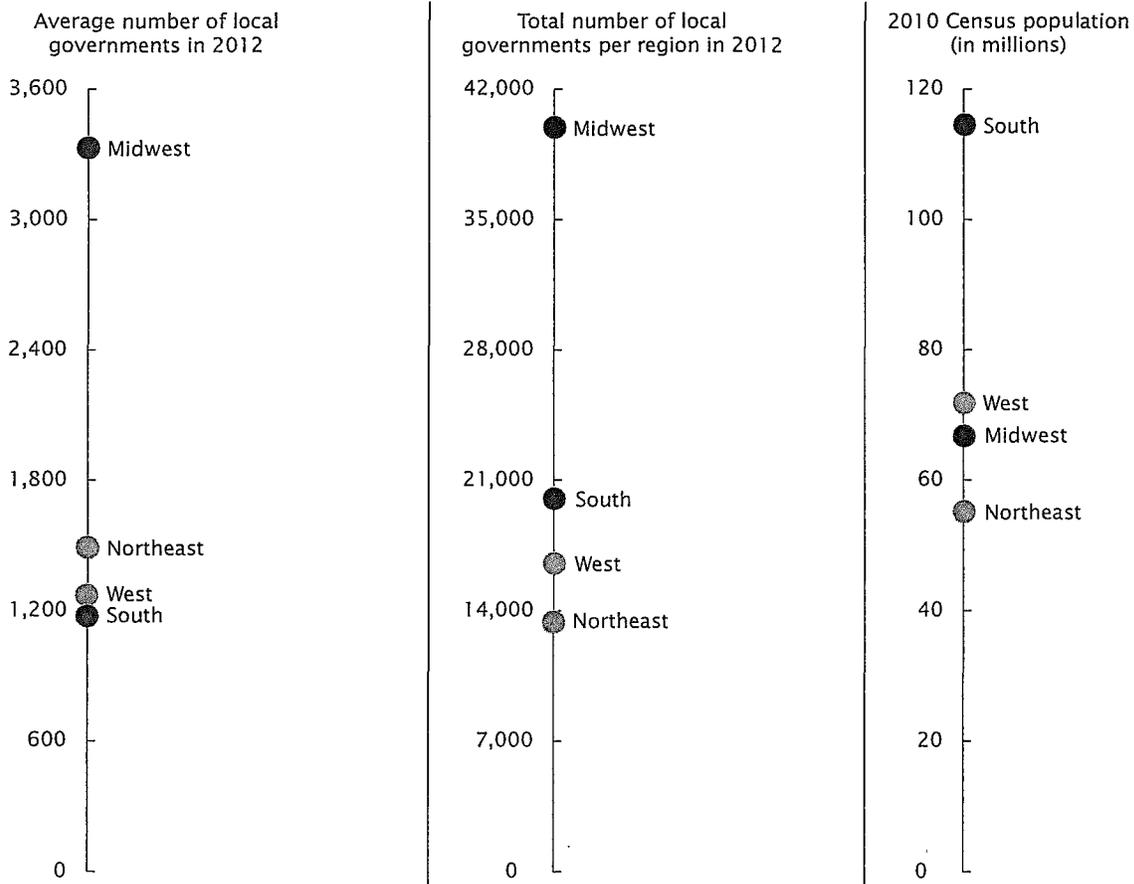
Some general points to understand when comparing state and regional numbers include:

- There are no township governments in the South and West.
- There are no county governments in Connecticut, Rhode Island, and the District of Columbia.

- A number of states have only public school systems that are dependent on the state government or on municipalities or county governments. The District of Columbia, Maryland, North Carolina, Alaska, and Hawaii have no independent school districts. Hawaii is unique as having only one public school system, a system that is dependent upon the state government.
- Sixteen states have a mix of dependent and independent school systems within their state areas. For example, Virginia has only 1 independent school district and 135 dependent school systems. Louisiana has 69 independent school districts and one dependent school system.

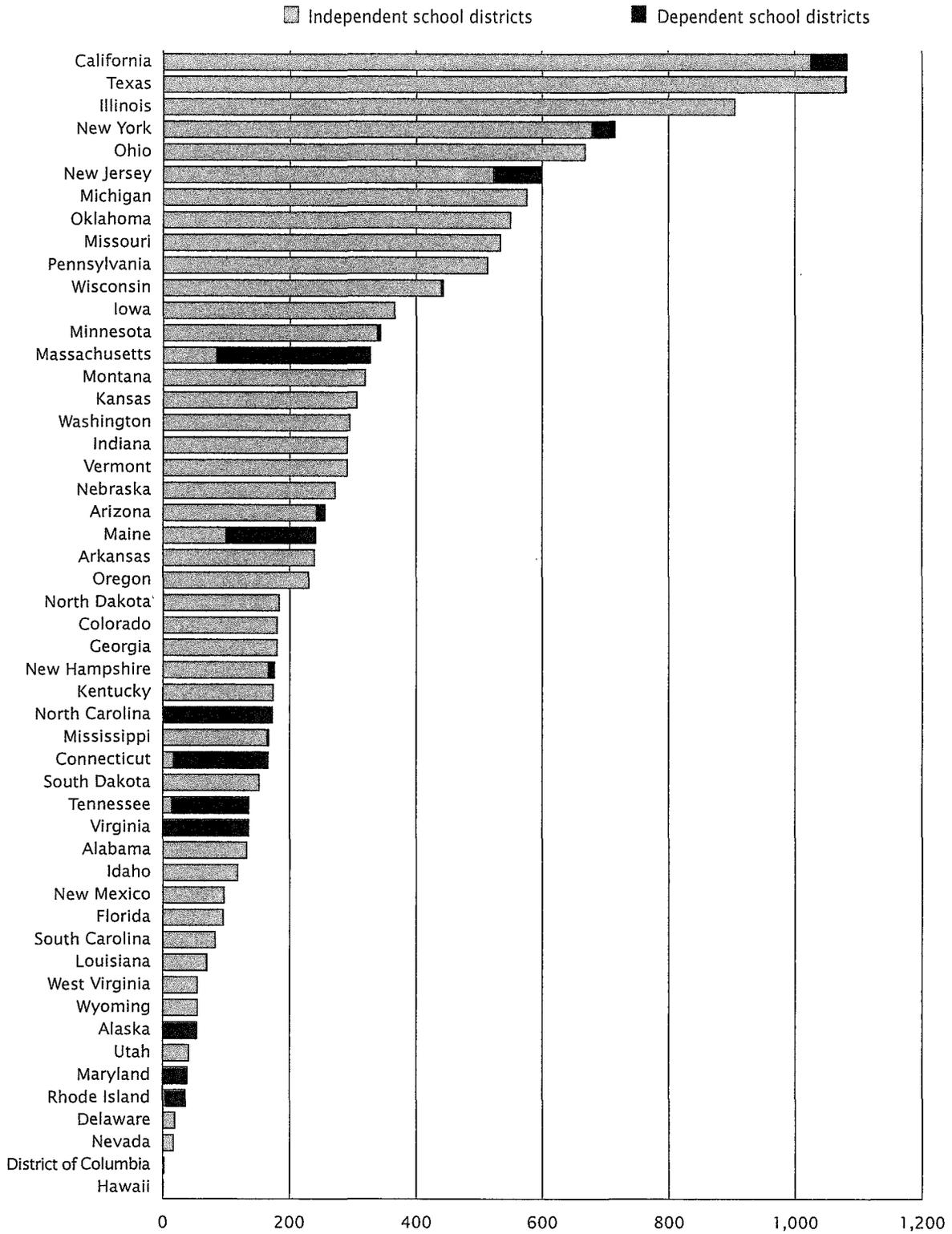
The largest number of dependent school systems is in the Northeast with 687 dependent systems. The South has the next largest number of dependent school systems with 477. As shown in Figure 2, the largest number of public school systems is in the Midwest with 5,039 school systems, only 8 of which are dependent school systems. The

Figure 1. Regional Characteristics of Local Governments



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 Census of Governments: Organization Component and 2010 Census.

Figure 2.
Total Number of Public School Systems by State



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 Census of Governments: Organization Component.

smallest number of public school systems is in the West with 2,744, of which 126 are dependent systems, found mostly in Alaska and California.

The largest component of government structure is the special district type of government with 38,266 units. The largest number of special districts is found in the Midwest with 13,145 special districts; followed by the West with 11,205; the South with 9,277; and the Northeast with 4,639 special districts. Both the Midwest and West have 4 states with over 1,000 special districts (Illinois, California, Colorado, Missouri, Kansas, Washington, Nebraska, and Oregon). Special districts vary greatly by state and are comprised largely of Fire Protection Districts (5,865 districts), Water Supply Districts (3,522 districts), Housing and Community Development Districts (3,438 districts), and Drainage and Flood Control Districts (3,248 districts).

TRENDS IN GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE

The 2012 Census of Governments: Organization Component found that state and local governments increased by 0.6 percent over the 2007 Census. From the 1952 Census of Governments to present, the number of governments has decreased 22.9 percent from 116,807 in 1952. From the previous census, governmental units in the Midwest region has decreased by 1.1 percent. The Northeast, West, and South have increased in the number of governments, increasing 0.1, 4.2, and 1.7 percent, respectively. The state showing the largest percentage increase in the number of governments over the last 5 years was Maryland, which added 91 governments, increasing 35.4 percent to 348 state and local governments. The next largest percentage increase was Colorado, which increased by 489 governments, an increase of 20.2 percent to 2,906 governments. The largest percentage decrease in number of governments was Indiana, which decreased by 16.2 percent to 2,710 state and local government units in 2012.

From 1952 to 2012, the percentage increase in the number of state and local governments was more than double in 6 states: Alaska (up 263.3 percent), Delaware (up 214.8 percent), New Mexico (up 199.0 percent), Florida (up 167.6 percent), Alabama (up 120.6 percent), and Tennessee (up 110.8 percent). Note that in 1952, Alaska was a territory and was officially proclaimed a state on January 3, 1959.

Particularly noteworthy, as depicted in the interactive visualizations on <www.census.gov/govs/cog2012>, special districts over the 60-year time period have increased from 12,340 districts in 1952 to 38,266 districts in 2012.

In that same time period, as the visualization shows, the number of independent school districts decreased from 67,355 to 12,880 units.

SOURCE AND ACCURACY OF THE DATA

The data in this report are not subject to sampling error or any sampling variability as the data resulted from a complete enumeration of all governmental units. Most of the data were gathered by a mail canvass (the 2011 Government Units Survey [GUS]) of appropriate government offices. GUS provided the preliminary estimates which were released in August 2012. Between August 2012 and April 15, 2013, state governments were canvassed for listings of local governments and the Governments Master Address File was augmented as appropriate. Legislation was researched to see if state legislation had approved the creation of additional governments. In the GUS, respondents were given an opportunity to respond either via mail or via a Web application. Of the respondents to the mailed survey, 38.0 percent completed their surveys via the Web collection instrument.

Data from school districts are collected in a joint Census Bureau and National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) effort through NCES State Data Coordinators.

The Census Bureau collects these data by law under Title 13, U.S. Code, Section 161. The survey is voluntary and as public record, the data are not confidential.

NONSAMPLING ERROR

Although every effort is made in all phases of collection, processing, and tabulation to minimize errors, the survey is subject to nonsampling error, such as inaccuracies in classification, keying, coding, and coverage errors.

While the data records are ultimately from state and local government sources, the classification of organizations is entirely the responsibility of the Census Bureau.

OVERALL UNIT RESPONSE RATE

The overall Unit Response Rate to the 2012 Government Units Survey was 75.0 percent.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For additional information on the Census of Governments, please visit our Web site at <www.census.gov/govs/cog2012>. Please contact the Outreach and Education Branch at 1-800-242-2184 (toll free) or e-mail <govs.cms.inquiry@census.gov>.