**1990 - 2000 Tract-to-Tract Comparability File: General Guidelines**

The 1990-2000 tract-to-tract comparability file was created to simplify tract-level comparisons of California census data over time. Though census tract boundaries are delineated with the intention of being maintained over many years, physical changes in street patterns caused by highway construction, new developments, or an increase/decrease in population may require occasional boundary changes or even tract splits. This makes the process of relating census tracts more difficult. To make comparison of tract data from different census years easier, standard tracts were established. In this case, 2000 census tracts were used as the standard and the data from 1990 were converted to their 2000 census tract equivalents.

In 2000 there were 7,049 census tracts covering the entire area of the state while in 1990 there were only 5,858 census tracts. Thus, census data from each of the 1990 census tracts had to be converted to their 2000 census tract equivalents so the equivalency file has 7,049 tract records. The conversion was done in a number of different ways depending upon the relationships of the 1990 and 2000 census tracts as reported in the Census Bureau tract-to-tract relationship file. The result of the conversion process allows the user to easily compare census tract data between 1990 and 2000. The data, as assigned to 2000 census tracts, should accurately depict the demographic and economic changes for this period.

To help the user of this file better understand the relationship of 1990 and 2000 census tracts, practical examples that describe the actual spatial relationships between census geographies are presented. Users should be aware that the converted 1990 tract data could not be considered OFFICIAL U.S. Census Bureau data or California Department of Finance data.

There are four possible types of geographical changes between 1990 and 2000 and an illustration of each follows:

1. **No Change**. A census tract that did not change between 1990 and 2000:

 1990 2000

 4002 4002

* Estimates of the 1990 data for 2000 tract are the same as the actual 1990 data for the 1990 tract. In this situation, all derived measures (median age, median household income, median housing unit value and median housing rent) remain unaltered. A typical example is Alameda County tract 4002 that remained unchanged between 1990 and 2000.

2. **Split**. A census tract that existed in 1990 was subdivided in 2000:

 1990 2000

 4240 4240.01

 4240 4240.02

* The 1990 data were assigned to the two 2000 tracts based upon the proportionate share of the population of the two tracts. That is, suppose 66 percent of the population from the 1990 tract 4240 was allocated to the 2000 tract 4240.01 and 34 percent to tract 4240.02. The 1990 medians remained unchanged. A typical example is Alameda County tract 4240 in 1990 that was split into 4240.01 and 4240.02 in 2000.

 3. **Merge**. A census tract that existed in 1990 was merged with another tract in 2000:

 1990 2000

 4019 4019

 4019.99 4019

* In this situation, the 1990 data were aggregated and assigned according to the 2000 tract boundaries. The 1990 medians were recalculated because merging the data created a new distribution upon which the medians should be based. An example is Alameda County tract 4019 in 2000 that was formed from the merger of tract 4019 and 4019.99 in 1990.

4. **Revision**. A census tract in 2000 includes a portion from tracts in 1990:

 1990 2000

 4018 4018

 4019.01 4018

 4019.01 4019.01

* The 1990 data were converted to a 2000 tract using the population split/merge of the tracts in 2000. That is 100 percent of the 1990 tract 4018 and 2.4 percent of the 1990 tract 4019.01 population were assigned to the 2000 tract 4018 while 97.6 percent of the 1990 tract 4019.01 population were assigned to the 2000 tract 4019.01. The 1990 derived measures were recomputed. An example is Los Angeles County census tract 4018 and 4019.01 in 1990 that made up entirely different tracts 4018 and 4019.01 in 2000.

The entire process of conversion was done using a simple allocation of the percentage of the 1990 census tract population that ended up in each 2000 census tract. That is, of the 5,858 1990 tracts, 2,559 had exactly the same boundaries in 2000 and the balance needed conversion.

**Appendix: The 1990-2000 Census Tract Equivalency Package**

The data file includes the following variables for the years 1990 and 2000:

**Geographic Codes**: Census 2000 County Codes and Tract Codes

**Area**: Land Area in Square Mile.

**Age Distribution**: Total Population, Ages 0-4, Ages 5-17, Ages 18-64, Ages 65 and Over, and Median Ages (Total, Male, Female)

**Race/Ethnicity**: White Alone non-Hispanic, Black Alone non-Hispanic, American Indian/Alaska Native Alone non-Hispanic, Asian/Other Pacific Islanders Alone non-Hispanic, Other non-Hispanic (including two or more races), and Hispanic/Latino population

**Relationship**: Population in Household, Own Child Under 18, and Population in Group Quarters

**Household Type**: Total Households, Family Households, Families with Related Children Under 18, Married Couple Families, Married Couple Families with Related Children Under 18, Female Householder, Female Householder with Related Children Under 18, Non-Family Household, Non-Family Household Living Alone, 65 Years and Over Non-Family Household Living Alone, Average Household Size, and Average Family Size

**Housing Tenure and Average Household Size**: Total Housing Units, Occupied Housing Units, Renter-Occupied Housing Units, Average Household Size of Owner-Occupied Housing Units, and Average Household Size Renter-Occupied Housing Units

**School Enrollment**: Population 3 Years and Over, Nursery/Pre-School and Kindergarten, Elementary and High School, and College or Graduate School

**Educational Attainment**: Population 25 Years and Over, Less than Grade 9 (including no schooling completed), Grades 9 to 12, High School Graduate, Some College (including Associate Degree), Bachelor’s Degree, and Graduate/Professional Degree

**Nativity or Place of Birth**: Total Population, Native, Born in US - in the State of Residence, Born in US - in other State, Born outside of US, and Foreign-Born

**Residence**: Population 5 Years and Over, Same House, Different House-Same County, Different House-Different County-Same State, Different House-Different County-Different State, and Different House-Elsewhere

**Language Spoken At Home**: Speak only English, Speak Spanish, Speak Spanish-Speak English Less than Very Well, Speak Asian/Other Pacific Islander Languages, Speak Asian/Other Pacific Islander Languages-Speak English Less than Very Well, Speak Other Languages (Including Indo-European), Speak Other Languages-Speak English Less than Very Well

**Marital Status**: Population 15 Years and Over, Never Married, Now Married, Separated, Widowed, and Divorced

**Labor Force**: Population 16 Years and Over, Population 16 Years and Over in Labor Force, Civilian 16 Years and Over in Labor Force, Civilian 16 Years and Over Unemployed, and Unemployed as percent of Civilian Labor Force

**Occupation**: Employed Civilian 16 Years and Over, White Collar Occupations, and Blue Collar Occupations

**Income**: Total Households, Total Families, Median Household Income, Median Family Income, and Per Capita Income

**Ratio of Income to Poverty Level**: Population for Whom Poverty Status is Determined, Ratio Under 1, Ratio Between 1.00 and 1.49, Ratio Between 1.50 and 1.99, and Ratio of 2 or more

**Persons Below Poverty**: Population 18 Years and Over for Whom Poverty Status is Determined, Population 18 Years and Over Below Poverty, Population 65 Years and Over for Whom Poverty Status is Determined, and Population 65 Years and Over Below Poverty

**Families Below Poverty**: Total Families, Families Below Poverty Level, Families Below Poverty with Related Children Under 18 Years, Female Householder Below Poverty, and Female Householder Below Poverty with Related Children Under 18 Years

**Occupants Per Room**: Occupied Housing Units, Less than or equal to one Person Per Room, 1.01 to 1.50 Persons Per Room, and More than 1.50 Persons Per Room

**Housing Units in Structure**: Total Housing Units, Single Family Housing Units, Two to Four Housing Units, Five or More Housing Units, Mobile Homes, and Other Housing Units (Boat, RV, Van, etc.)

**Housing Unit Rent**: Specified Renter-Occupied Housing Units, Median Contract Rent, and Median Gross Rent

**Gross Rent as Percent of Household Income**: Gross Rent Less than 20 Percent of Household Income (excluding the “not computed” category), Gross Rent 20 to 24.9 Percent of Household Income, Gross Rent 25 to 29.9 percent of Household Income, Gross Rent 30 to 34.9 percent of Household Income, and Gross Rent 35 or More percent of Household Income

**Housing Unit Value**: Specified Owner-Occupied Housing Units, and Specified Owner-Occupied Housing Units Median Value

**Mortgage Status by Selected Monthly Owner Costs as Percentage of Household Income**: Owner Cost Less than 20 Percent of Household Income (excluding the “not computed” category), Owner Cost 20 to 24.9 Percent of Household Income, Owner Cost 25 to 29.9 percent of Household Income, Owner Cost 30 to 34.9 percent of Household Income, and Owner Cost 35 or More percent of Household Income

**Internal Point**: Census 2000 Latitude and Longitude