

Government Organization Summary Report: 2022 and 2025

By Mercera Silva and Chris Wintemute

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E22-COG



INTRODUCTION

Have you ever wondered about governments in your community? The U.S. Census Bureau has the answers to your questions!

The [Census of Governments \(CoG\)](#) is conducted every 5 years (years ending in “2” and “7”) to collect information about state and local governments. It has three phases. The first phase, called the [Organization](#) component, counts all active governments in the United States and organizes them by state, type, population size, and function. Beginning in September 2025, the Census Bureau began publishing an annual Government Organization series of data tables in addition to the 11 tables published after every CoG. Another important publication is the annual Public Use File, which is a listing of all active independent government units, dependent school districts, and public pension systems.

The second and third CoG phases gather and publish data on government employment, payroll, and finance. CoG publications also provide statistics on school systems, taxes, and pension systems.

WHAT IS A GOVERNMENT?

An entity must satisfy the following three characteristics to be considered a government according to [Census Bureau definitions](#) as described in the Individual State Descriptions report.

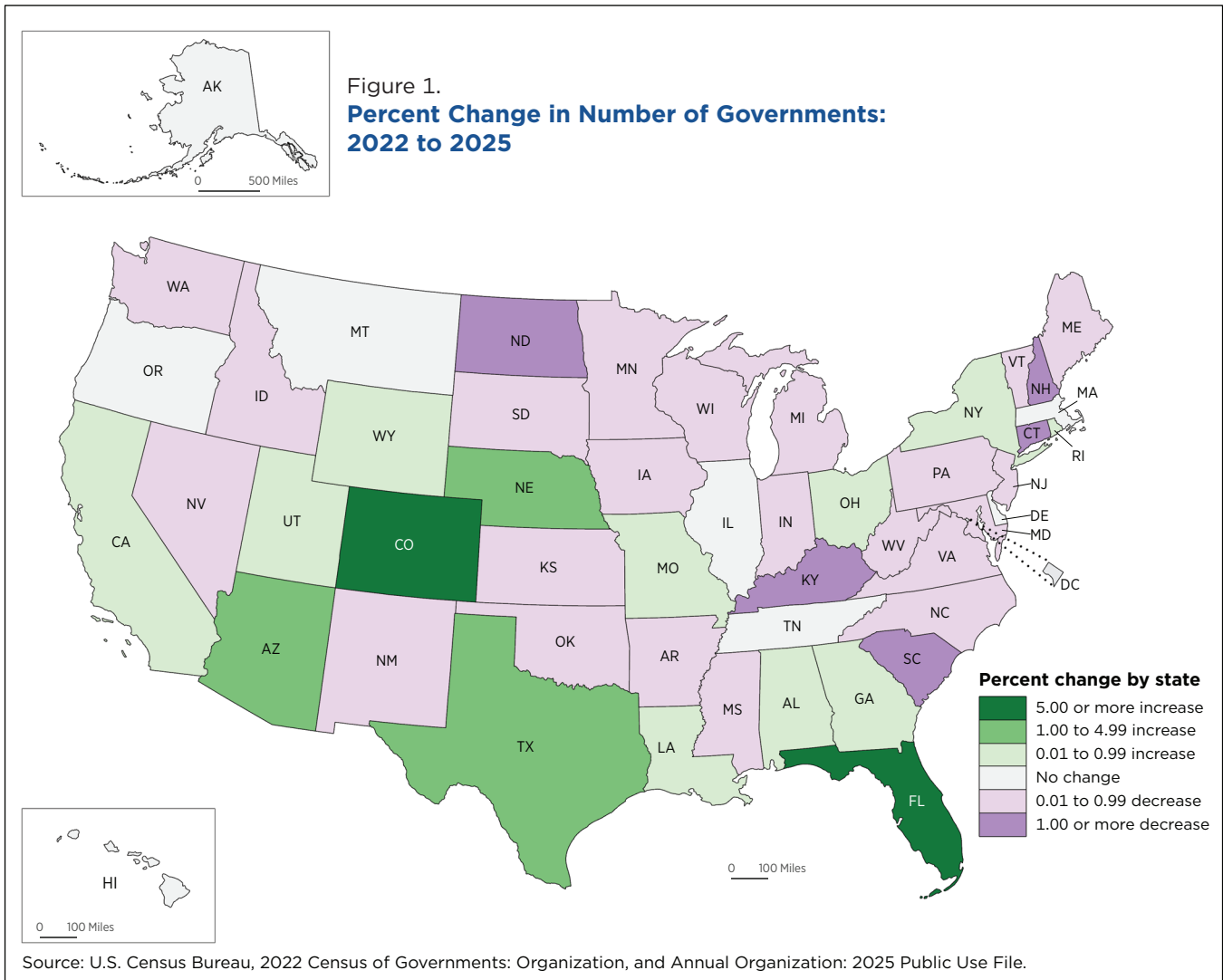
1. Existence as an organized entity.
2. Governmental character.
3. Substantial autonomy.

Governments typically have a popularly-elected governing board, levy taxes, and provide a service to the public within a specific geographic area.

The Census Bureau recognizes five types of local governments.

1. County.
2. Municipal.
3. Township.
4. Special districts.
5. School districts.

Government types 1 to 3 are considered general-purpose governments while the remaining two are special-purpose governments. County, municipal, and township governments provide essential daily services including public safety (fire/police), road maintenance, water/sewer utilities, sanitation, and parks. General-purpose governments can also provide kindergarten through 12th grade education in the form of dependent school systems, which are common in states like Massachusetts and Connecticut.



Special-purpose governments provide public services (i.e., utilities, libraries, fire protection) to the community but are not operated by another government. Additionally, they can provide education in the form of independent school districts.

CHANGES IN NUMBER OF GOVERNMENTS: 2022 TO 2025

The counts of governments have remained consistent at approximately 90,000 since 2007. Between 2022 and 2025, the overall change in general-purpose governments was 601 (0.65 percent) (Figure 1).

According to the 2022 CoG, there were 90,837 total local governments in the United States (Table 1). Of that total, 38,736 were general-purpose governments (42.6 percent) while 52,101 were special-purpose governments (57.4 percent). Special district governments (39,555) made up close to 75.9 percent of the total number of special-purpose governments.

In 2025, the total number of local governments increased to 91,438. The change was due to an increase in special-purpose governments, whose total grew to 52,734 (57.7 percent). Of that, 40,199 were special district governments (76.2 percent). It is interesting to observe that counts of governments have remained relatively consistent since 2007.

INCREASE IN SPECIAL DISTRICT GOVERNMENT COUNTS

The change was attributed to an increase in the number of special district governments in four states: Colorado, Florida, Nebraska, and Texas. Generally, these new governments provided two or more public services to their communities, such as community development, water conservation, and fire and emergency medical services.

Table 1.

Comparison of Total Local Government Units Operating in the United States

Total local government unit counts	2025	2022
Total local government units	91,438	90,837
General-purpose governments	38,704	38,736
County governments	3,031	3,031
Subcounty governments	35,673	35,705
Municipal governments	19,489	19,491
Township governments	16,184	16,214
Special-purpose governments	52,734	52,101
Independent school district governments	12,535	12,546
Special district governments	40,199	39,555

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Annual Organization: 2025.

