

County Classification of Urban and Rural Status

Two definitions for classifying counties were used in the State of Washington's Children 2003 report: (1) The Office of Budget and Financial Management (OMB) standard definition for metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas and (2) Rural Urban Commuting Area (RUCA) codes. Different data sets required different classifications, therefore preventing a uniform definition for each chapter. The OMB and RUCA methodologies are explained below, in addition to how counties were classified under each definition.

OMB Definition

The standard OMB classification system for Metropolitan/Non-Metropolitan areas (urban/rural in the State of Washington's Children report) is based on Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) generated by the Census Bureau. A county is designated an MSA if it has (a) one or more Urban Areas (a city and its surrounding densely settled territory with a combined population of 50,000 or more and a population density of 1,000 people or more per square mile) and a total population exceeding 100,000; *or* b) one city with at least 50,000 people. Counties not designated MSA are considered rural.

Urban

Benton
Clark
Franklin
Island
King
Kitsap
Pierce
Snohomish
Spokane
Thurston
Whatcom
Yakima

Rural

Adams
Asotin
Chelan
Clallam
Columbia
Cowlitz
Douglas
Ferry
Garfield
Grant
Grays Harbor
Jefferson
Kittitas
Klickitat
Lewis
Lincoln
Mason
Okanogan
Pacific
Pend Oreille
San Juan
Skagit
Skamania
Stevens
Wahkiakum
Walla Walla
Whitman

RUCA Definition

Urban, large town, and rural areas were delineated by zip code of residence, using zip code specific RUCA (Rural Urban Commuting Area) codes, which designate regions as urban, large town, or rural, based on measures of urbanization, population density, and daily commuting distances. Urban areas were defined as those zip codes with RUCA codes of 1-3, 4.1, 7.1, 8.1, or 10.1, large town areas as those with RUCA codes of 4, 5, 6, 7.2, 8.2, or 10.2, and rural areas as those with 7.0, 7.3, 7.4, 8, 8.3, 8.4, 9-9.2, 10, or 10.3-10.5. Patients with out-of-state or missing zip codes were excluded only from analyses that stratified by rural/large town/urban status.

Urban

Benton
Clark
Cowlitz
Franklin
King
Kitsap
Pierce
Snohomish
Spokane
Thurston
Whatcom
Yakima

Large Town

Asotin
Chelan
Douglas
Grant
Kittitas
Lewis
Walla Walla
Whitman

Rural

Adams
Clallam
Columbia
Ferry
Garfield
Grays Harbor
Island
Jefferson
Klickitat
Lincoln
Mason
Okanogan
Pacific
Pend Oreille
San Juan
Skagit
Skamania
Stevens
Wahkiakum