

NCHS Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties Data File Documentation

These data files contain the 2006 and 1990 census-based NCHS Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties codes for every county and county equivalent in the United States. The NCHS urban-rural classification scheme was developed for use in studying and monitoring health disparities across the urban-rural continuum. The 2006 NCHS scheme is based on the 2000 census and the 2000 OMB standards for defining metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas. The 1990 census-based NCHS scheme is based on the 1990 census and 1990 OMB standards for defining metropolitan statistical areas. A description of these schemes and their development can be found in the report (available on the NCHS Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for counties web page):

Ingram DD, Franco SF. NCHS Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties. National Center for Health Statistics. Vital Health Stat 2(154). 2012.

I. Control totals

The 2006 and 1990 census-based NCHS schemes have 6 levels, four for metropolitan counties and two for nonmetropolitan counties.

2006 NCHS Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties ¹			
Category code	Category name	Category description	Number of records
Metropolitan categories			
1	Large central metro	NCHS-defined "central" counties of MSAs of 1 million or more population	63
2	large fringe metro	NCHS-defined "fringe" counties of MSAs of 1 million or more population	354
3	Medium metro	Counties within MSAs of 250,000-999,999 population	332
4	Small metro	Counties within MSAs of 50,000 to 249,999 population	341
Nonmetropolitan categories			
5	Micropolitan	Counties in micropolitan statistical areas	694
6	Noncore	Counties not within micropolitan statistical areas	1,363
.	Missing	No code for Yellowstone Park, Montana. It no longer exists.	1
Total	All categories		3,148

¹The file has been updated to include records for five new Alaska areas: Hoonah-Angoon Census Area, Petersburg Census Area, Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area, Skagway Municipality, and Wrangell City and Borough.

Note: MSA is metropolitan statistical area.

1990 census-based NCHS Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties			
Category code	Category name	Category description	Number of records
Metropolitan categories			
1	Large central metro	NCHS-defined "central" counties of MSAs of 1 million or more population	63
2	large fringe metro	NCHS-defined "fringe" counties of MSAs of 1 million or more population	250
3	Medium metro	Counties within MSAs of 250,000-999,999 population	321
4	Small metro	Counties within MSAs of 50,000 to 249,999 population	204
Nonmetropolitan categories			
5	Counties with a city of 10,000 or more	Counties with a city of 10,000 or more population	483
6	Counties without a city of 10,000 or more population	Counties without a city of 10,000 or more population	1,821
.	Missing	No code for these entities as they did not exist until 2000 or later ¹	6
Total	All categories		3,143

¹Six counties/county equivalents do not have a 1990 census-based code: Hoonah-Angoon Census Area, AK, Petersburg Census Area, Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area, Skagway Municipality, Ak, Wrangell City and Borough, AK, and Broomfield, CO. Note: MSA is metropolitan statistical area.

II. TXT data file

File name: NCHSurbruralcodes.txt

Number of records: 3,148

Record length: 38

Release date: February 1, 2012

File Layout for NCHSurbruralcodes.txt:

Location	Field size	Item and Code Outline	Format
1-2	2	<u>State FIPS code</u>	Numeric
3-5	3	<u>County FIPS code</u>	Numeric
7-8	2	<u>State abbreviation</u>	Character
10-35	25	<u>County name</u>	Character
36	1	<u>2006 NCHS urban-rural scheme code</u> 1=Large central metro 2=Large fringe metro 3=Medium metro 4=Small metro 5=Micropolitan (nonmetropolitan) 6=Noncore (nonmetropolitan) .=Missing	Numeric
38	1	<u>1990 census-based NCHS urban-rural scheme code</u> 1=Large central metro 2=Large fringe metro 3=Medium metro 4=Small metro 5=With a city of 10,000 or more (nonmetropolitan) 6=Without a city of 10,00 or more (nonmetropolitan) .=Missing	Numeric

II. SAS data file

File name: NCHSurbruralcodes.sas7bdat

Number of records: 3,148

File type: SAS

Release date: February 1, 2012

File layout for NCHSurbruralcodes.sas7bdat.

Variable name	Description	Format
ST_CODE	<u>State FIPS code</u>	Character
CO_FIPS	<u>County FIPS code</u>	Numeric
ST_ABBREV	<u>State abbreviation</u>	Character
CO_NAME	<u>County name</u>	Character
CODE2006	<u>2006 NCHS urban-rural scheme code</u> 1=Large central metro 2=Large fringe metro 3=Medium metro 4=Small metro 5=Micropolitan (nonmetropolitan) 6=Noncore (nonmetropolitan) .=Missing	Numeric
CODE1990census	<u>1990 census-based NCHS scheme urban-rural code</u> 1=Large central metro 2=Large fringe metro 3=Medium metro 4=Small metro 5=With a city of 10,000 or ore (nonmetropolitan) 6=Without a city of 10,000 or more (nonmetropolitan) .=Missing	Numeric
