

NCHS Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties Data File Documentation

These data files contain the 2013, 2006 and 1990 census-based NCHS Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties codes for every county and county equivalent entity 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. A distinguishing feature of the NCHS scheme is that it differentiates central and fringe (suburban) counties of metropolitan statistical areas (MSA) of 1 million or more population.

- The 2013 NCHS scheme is based on the 2010 census and the February 2013 office of Management and Budget (OMB) delineation of MSAs and micropolitan statistical areas (MISA) (derived using the 2010 OMB standards for defining MSAs and micropolitan statistical areas)..
- The 2006 NCHS scheme is based on the 2000 census and the December 2005 OMB delineation of MSAs and MISAs (derived according the 2000 OMB standards for defining MSAs and micropolitan statistical areas)..
- The 1990 census-based NCHS scheme is based on the 1990 census and the June 1993 OMB delineation of MSAs (derived according to the 1990 OMB standards for defining MSAs).

A description of the 2013 scheme and its development can be found in the report (available for download from the NCHS Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties web page at https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data_access/urban_rural.htm):

Ingram DD, Franco SF. 2013 NCHS Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties. National Center for Health Statistics. Vital Health Stat 2(166). 2014.

A description of the 2006 and 1990 census-based schemes and their development can be found in the report (available for download from the NCHS Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties web page at https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data_access/urban_rural.htm):

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

Categories of the NCHS Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties

The 2013, 2006, and 1990 census-based NCHS schemes have six levels, four for metropolitan counties and two for nonmetropolitan counties.

Table 1. Categories of the 2013 and 2006 NCHS Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties

Category code	Category name	Category description
Metropolitan		
1	Large central metro	NCHS-defined "central" counties of MSAs of 1 million or more population
2	large fringe metro	NCHS-defined "fringe" counties of MSAs of 1 million or more population
3	Medium metro	Counties within MSAs of 250,000-999,999 population
4	Small metro	Counties within MSAs of 50,000 to 249,999 population
Nonmetropolitan		
5	Micropolitan	Counties in micropolitan statistical areas
6	Noncore	Counties not within micropolitan statistical areas

Table 2. Categories of the 1990 census-based NCHS Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties

Category code	Category name	Category description
Metropolitan		
1	Large central metro	NCHS-defined "central" counties of MSAs of 1 million or more population
2	large fringe metro	NCHS-defined "fringe" counties of MSAs of 1 million or more population
3	Medium metro	Counties within MSAs of 250,000-999,999 population
4	Small metro	Counties within MSAs of 50,000 to 249,999 population
Nonmetropolitan		
5	Counties with a city of 10,000 or more	Counties with a city of 10,000 or more population
6	Counties without a city of 10,000 or more population	Counties without a city of 10,000 or more population

Control totals for data files

Table 3. Number of counties/county equivalent entities in each category of the 2013, 2006, and 1990 census-based NCHS Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties on the data file

Category code	Category name	Number of counties/county equivalent entities		
		2013 scheme ^{1,2,3}	2006 scheme ^{1,2}	1990 census-based scheme ^{1,4}
Metropolitan				
1	Large central metro	68	63	63
2	large fringe metro	368	354	250
3	Medium metro	373	332	321
4	Small metro	358	341	204
Nonmetropolitan				
5	Micropolitan	641	694	483
6	Noncore	1,341	1,365	1,822
.	Missing	0	0	6 ⁴
Total	All categories	3,149	3,149	3,149

¹Two counties have been renamed (Shannon County, ID became Oglala Lakota County, ID and Wade-Hampton Census Area, AK became Kusilvak Census Area, AK). There are two records on the file for each of these counties, one under the old name and one under the new name.

²The 5 newest Alaska areas (Hoonah-Angoon Census Area, Petersburg Census Area, Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area, Skagway Municipality, and Wrangell City and Borough) and the 3 areas they have replaced (Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan Census Area, Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon Census Area, and Wrangell-Petersburg Census Area) are all on this file. All of these areas have both a 2013 and 2006 NCHS scheme code of "6" (noncore). The counts shown for the noncore category reflect this duplication. The 5 newest Alaska areas do not have a 1990 census-based scheme code.

³Bedford city, VA and Clifton Forge city, VA no longer exist because they merged with the county in which they were located. Bedford city merged with Bedford County; Clifton Forge city merged with Alleghany County. Both Bedford city and Clifton Forge city still appear on some data files and have a category code for all of the NCHS schemes. The category codes for Bedford city and Clifton Forge city were and continue to be the same as those for their counties.

Clifton Forge, VA the 5 newest Alaska areas, Hoonah-Angoon Census Area, d

⁴ There is no 1990 census-based scheme code for the 5 newest Alaska areas (Hoonah-Angoon Census Area, Petersburg Census Area, Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area, Skagway Municipality, and Wrangell City and Borough) or for Broomfield County, CO. Note: See "County Geography" document for more detail about county geography on the file.

Layout for TXT data file

File name: NCHSurbruralcodes.txt

Number of records: 3,149

Record length: 120

Release date: 4/28/2014 (revised 4/4/2018)

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
10-45	35	<u>County name</u>	Character
47-96	50	<u>CBSA title</u> (February 2013 OMB delineation) Blank for noncore counties	Character
98-105	8	<u>CBSA July 1 resident population</u> (Vintage 2012 postcensal series) . = Missing for noncore counties	Numeric
107-114	8	<u>County July 1 resident population</u> (Vintage 2012 postcensal series)	Numeric
116	1	<u>2013 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)	Numeric
118	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

Location	Field size	Item and Code Outline	Format
120	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

Layout for SAS data file

File name: NCHSurbruralcodes.sas7bdat

Number of records: 3,149

File type: SAS

Release date: 4/28/2014(revised 4/4/2018)

File layout for NCHSurbruralcodes.sas7bdat.

Variable name	Description	Format
STFIPS	<u>State FIPS code</u>	Character
CTYFIPS	<u>County FIPS code</u>	Numeric
ST_ABBREV	<u>State abbreviation</u>	Character
CTYNAME	<u>County name</u>	Character
CBSATITLE	<u>CBSA title</u> (February 2013 OMB delineation) Blank for noncore counties	Character
CBSAPOP	<u>CBSA July 1, 2012 resident population</u> (Vintage 2012 postcensal series) . = Missing for noncore counties	Numeric
CTYPOP	<u>County July 1, 2012 resident population</u> (Vintage 2012 postcensal series)	Numeric
CODE2013	<u>2013 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
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

CODE1990 1990 census-based NCHS urban-rural scheme code Numeric
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
