

# STATE OF INDIANA

DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE



INDIANA GOVERNMENT CENTER NORTH  
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INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46204  
PHONE (317) 232-3777

**TO: All Township Officials**

**FROM: Jason Cockerill, Commissioner**

**DATE: May 22, 2026**

**SUBJECT: Legislation Affecting Township Fire Funding Matters**

The Department of Local Government Finance (“Department”) issues this memorandum to provide guidance to townships that anticipate making a request to increase their property tax rates under Ind. Code § 6-1.1-18-28, enacted by House Enrolled Act 1065-2020 (“HEA 1065”). **This memorandum supersedes all previous memoranda released by the Department on the same subject matter.**

Indiana Code § 6-1.1-18-28, as most recently amended by House Enrolled Act 1210-2026 (“HEA 1210”), states that a qualifying township may petition the Department to increase the maximum property tax levy for the township firefighting fund under Ind. Code § 36-8-13-4 based on a corresponding property tax rate increase. HEA 1210 provides a township may now only qualify for a levy adjustment if the township:

- (1) previously submitted a petition or petitions under this statute after 2016;
- (2) received levy adjustments attributable to a combination of one (1) or more rate increases adding up to 0.15; and
- (3) had a percentage increase to its CNAV over the last two (2) years (2024 Pay 2025 and 2025 Pay 2026) between two (2) times and four (4) times the maximum levy growth quotient for the preceding calendar year. For calendar year 2025, the maximum levy growth quotient was 1.04 (4%).

## **June 1 Deadline**

A township for which the above applies may submit a petition to the Department before **June 1**. Note the change in deadline, which was previously April 1. Note also that a qualifying township would have had to have an eligible rate of 0.15, the maximum allowed by statute. The amendments to Ind. Code § 6-1.1-18-28 by HEA 1210 permit an additional rate increase over this amount, subject to limitations as explained below.

The determination of eligibility for the levy adjustment based on population does not change. However, for qualifying townships, additional conditions apply:

(1) The rate determined under Step Three of the statutory formula may not exceed 80% of the amount determined in Step Two.

(2) The rate determined under Step Three of the statutory formula, when added to the current year's certified tax rate for the township's fire fund or fire and EMS fund (as applicable), may not exceed \$0.20.

(3) If a township subsequently submits a petition under Ind. Code § 6-1.1-18-28 after receiving an adjustment based on the amended version of this statute, Step Four of the statutory formula will apply.

In order to perform the necessary calculations to find the rate increase, the Department provides the attached worksheet which will function also as a request form. The pages that follow contain detailed instructions for completing the worksheet.

A township must include with the request form a written statement or resolution from the township board authorizing permission to submit this request.

Please send the request form to the [Budget Division Field Representative](#) for the county in which the township resides. Again, please note that the due date for submissions has changed. HEA 1210 requires submission of the request no later than **June 1, 2026**.

**Instructions for Completing Township Firefighting Levy Increase Request**  
**(Ind Code § 6-1.1-18-28)**

**Section I. – Description of Service Area**

This section will outline the parameters used to identify the service area for purposes of determining the population of the township’s fire protection and emergency service area.

- A. Are there municipalities wholly contained within the boundaries of the service area? If the answer to this question is ‘Yes,’ please list the municipalities.
  
- B. Are there municipalities only partially contained within the boundaries of the service area? If the answer to this question is ‘Yes,’ please list the municipalities.

**Section II. – Determining Rate Increase**

Proceed with each STEP as follows:

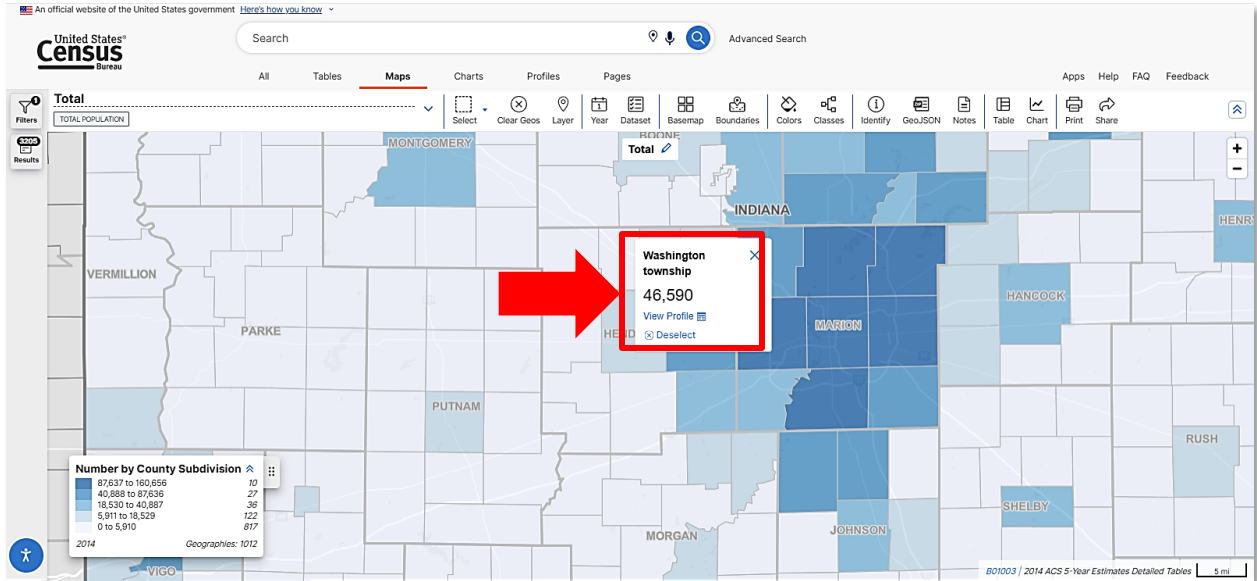
**STEP ONE:** Determine the percentage increase in population within the fire protection and emergency services area during the ten (10) year period immediately preceding the year in which the petition is submitted. Per Ind. Code § 6-1.1-18-28(b), the most recently available population data issued by the Census Bureau during the ten (10) year period may be used.

*How to Determine Adjusted 2015 ACS Estimate*

- Determine the 2015 American Community Survey (“ACS”) Population estimate, adjusted to exclude political subdivisions in the unit and that are not in the unit’s service area.

**PART A:** The Census Bureau provides population estimates for 2015 on its website based on the ACS 5-Year Estimates (“ACS 2015 Population Estimate”). The best method the Department can identify to find population estimates broken down by township is as follows:

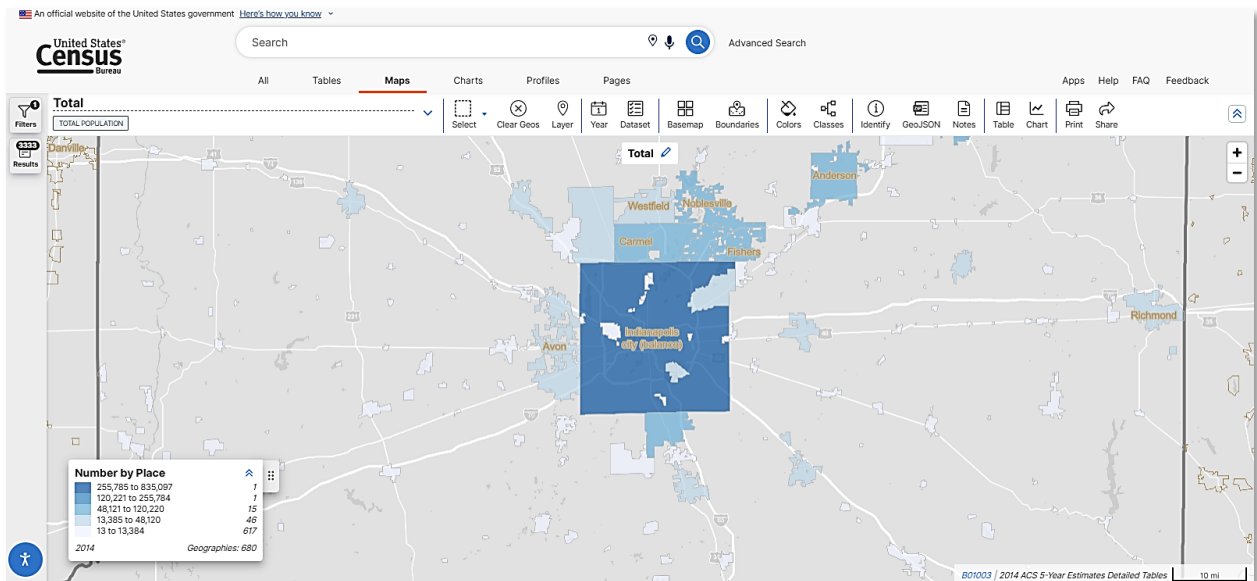
- Click on this link: [County Subdivision Selection Map](#) [This will open a searchable map of the United States broken down by county subdivision (i.e., townships) for each state.]
  
- Click on the appropriate township in Indiana. After clicking on the township, a pop-up window will appear. The population estimate for 2015 will appear in the pop-up window.



(Image Only for Illustration Purposes)

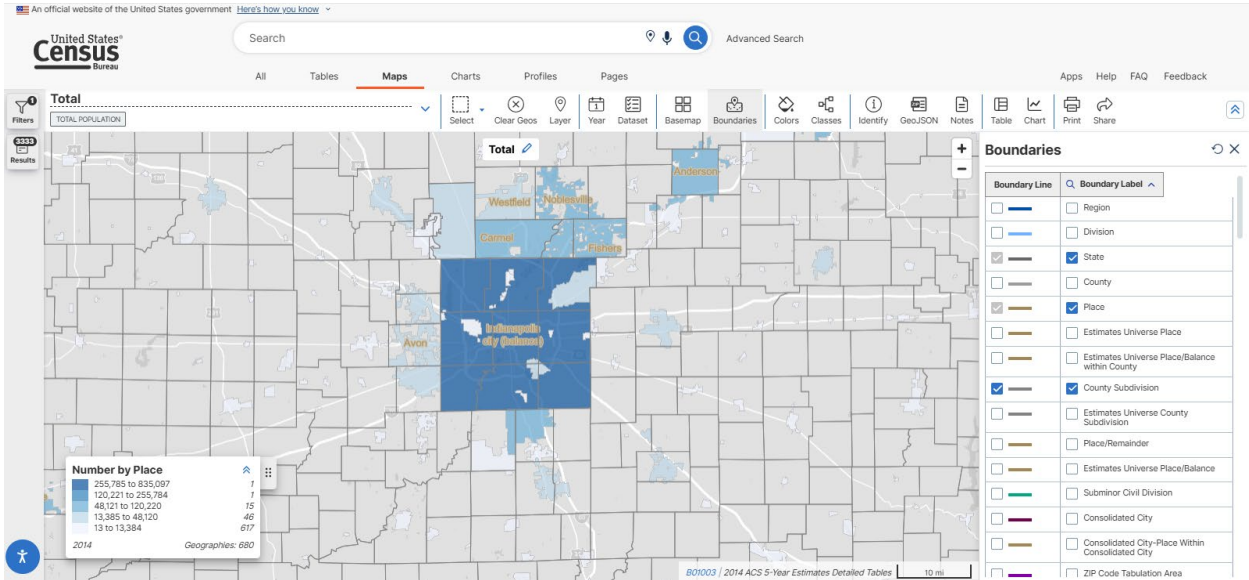
**PART B:** Provide population counts for all political subdivisions NOT in the service area. The population count should not include the population numbers for any municipality listed under the applicable township if the township does not provide fire and emergency services in that municipality.

- When the entirety of a municipality is located in a township, use the “Place” geography filter.
- To find the municipal population counts, click on this link: [Place Map](#). [This will open a searchable map of the United States broken down by place (i.e., municipalities) for each state.]



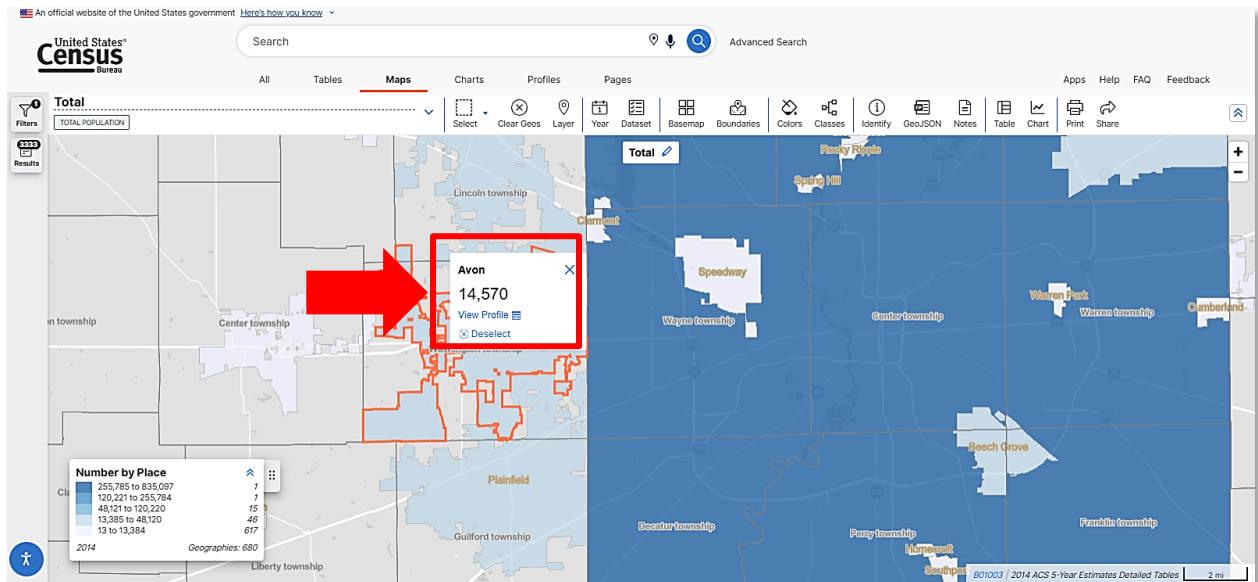
(Image Only for Illustration Purposes)

- It is helpful to open the “Boundaries” submenu and click “County Subdivision” (enabling both the “Boundary Line” and “Boundary Label” check boxes). This will show the township boundaries to better discern whether a municipality resides entirely within the township or not.



(Image Only for Illustration Purposes)

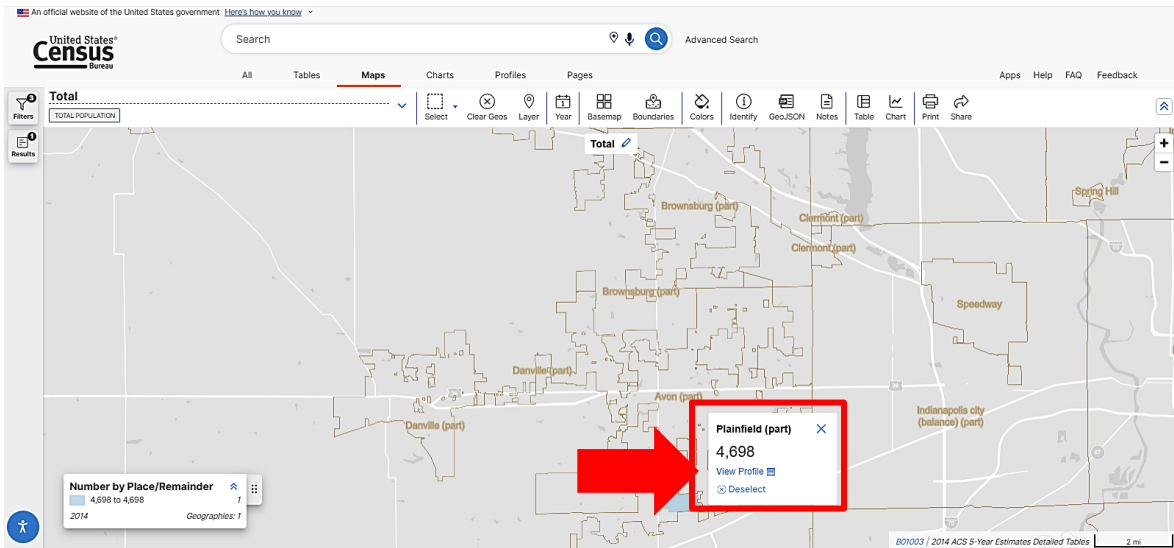
- Click on the appropriate municipality in Indiana. After clicking on the township, a pop-up window will appear. The population estimate for 2015 will appear in the pop-up window.

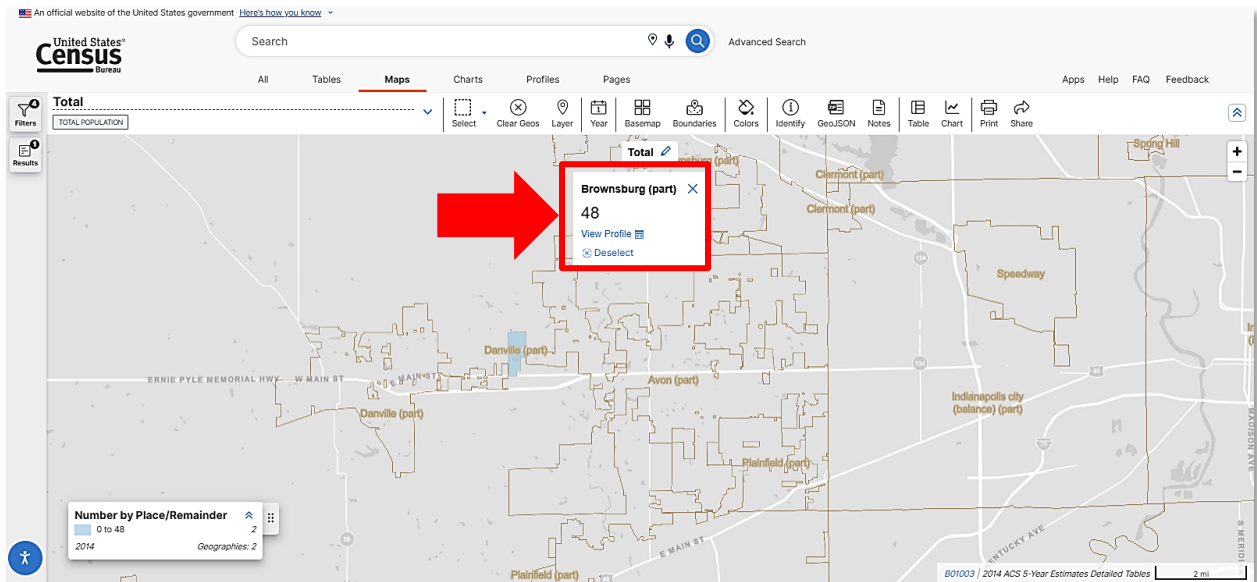
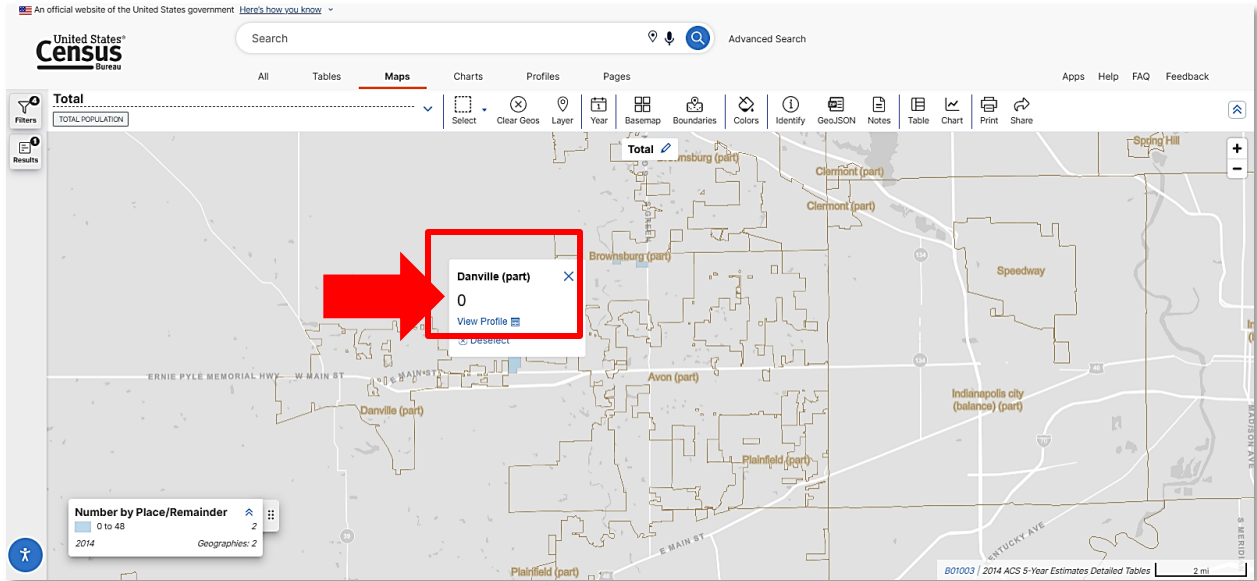


(Image Only for Illustration Purposes)

- When a municipality is located in multiple townships, use the “Place/Remainder” geography filter.

- To find the partial population counts for municipalities, follow this process:
  - Open this link: [2015 ACS Map](#).
  - Click “Filters” on the left-hand side.
  - Click “All geographies”.
  - Scroll down and click “Place/Remainder”.
  - Click “Indiana”.
  - Click on the appropriate county.
  - Click on the appropriate township.
  - Click on each municipality (part) that should be excluded. If necessary, select multiple municipalities.
- Return to the searchable map. Municipal boundaries will be outlined. The parts of municipalities selected above will appear shaded. Click on the appropriate municipal part to find the 2015 ACS estimate count for that part.





*(Image Only for Illustration Purposes)*

- Subtract PART A by PART B This will yield an **Adjusted 2015 ACS Estimate**.

#### *How to Determine Adjusted 2024 Population Count*

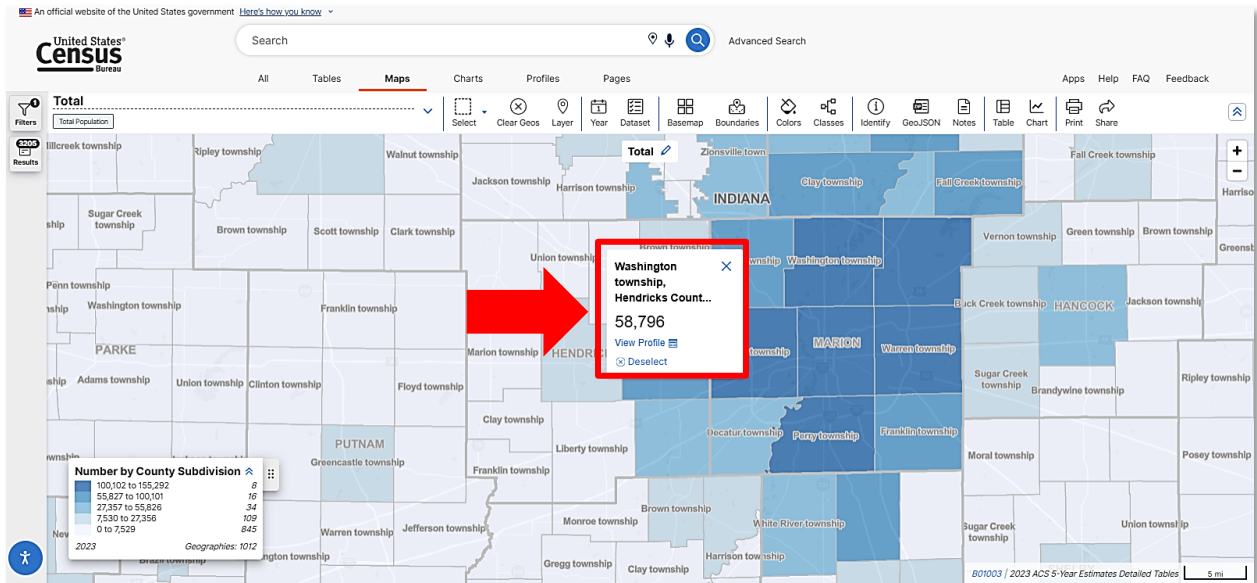
- Determine the 2024 ACS Estimate, adjusted to exclude political subdivisions in the unit, not in the unit's service area.

Indiana Code § 1-1-3.5-3(d) states that the population for a political subdivision is determined by the most recent federal decennial census unless the statute specifically provides otherwise. For purposes of STEP ONE, the procedure should be followed for submissions that are due by June 1, 2026.

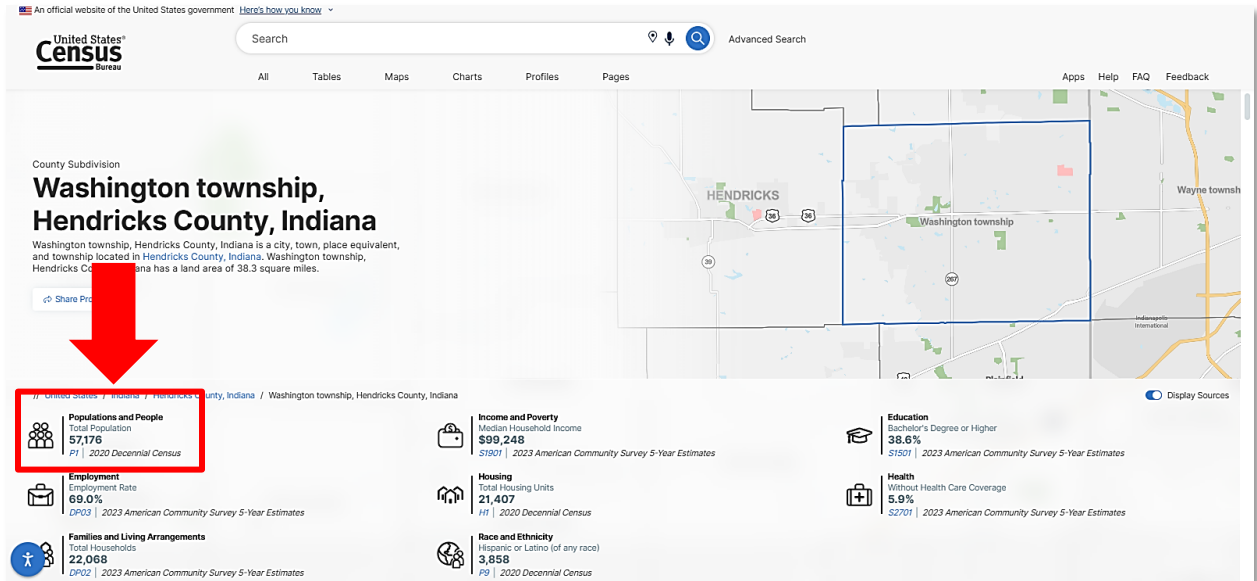
Determining this estimate will generally mirror the steps taken for the *Adjusted 2015 ACS Estimate*, except for the following:

**PART A:** The Census Bureau has released the 2024 American Community Survey population estimates for the State of Indiana. Therefore, the 2024 ACS population estimates can be found in the same way as finding the *Adjusted 2015 ACS Estimate*.

- Click on this link: [County Subdivision Selection Map](#) [This will open a searchable map of the United States broken down by county subdivision (i.e., townships) for each state.]
- Click on the appropriate township in Indiana. After clicking on the township, a pop-up window will appear. The 2024 ACS population estimate will appear in the pop-up window.



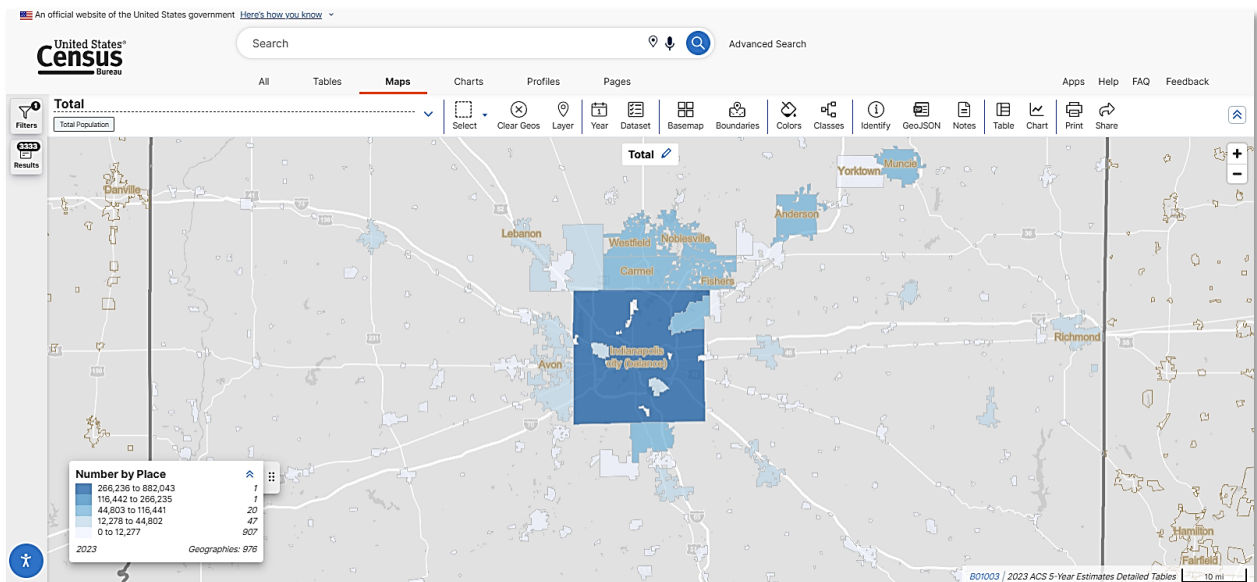
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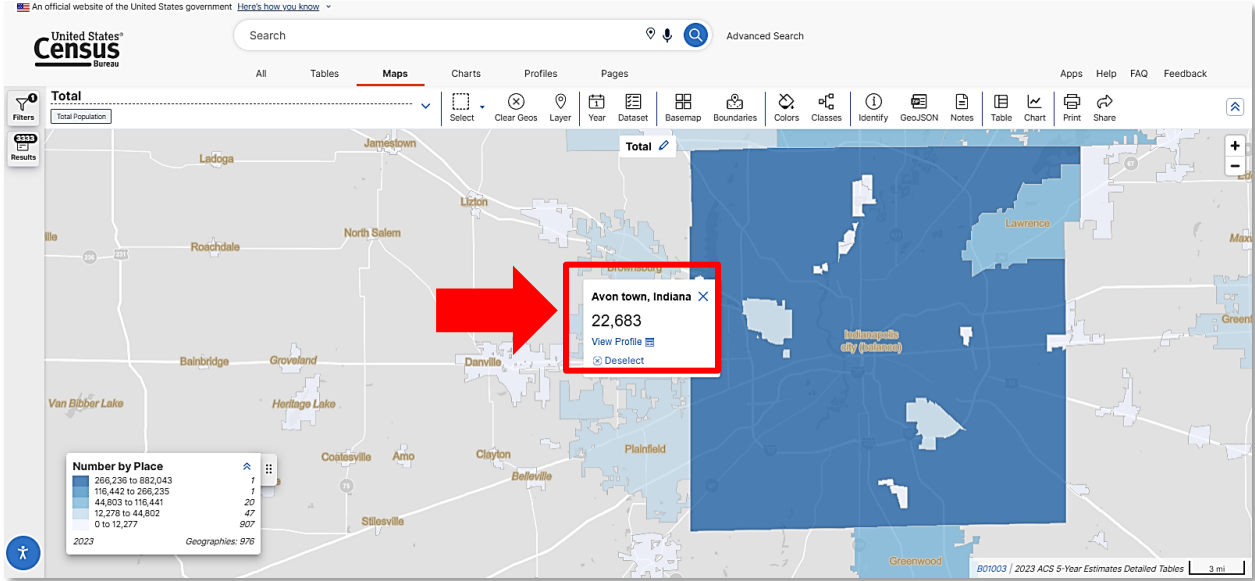
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**PART B:** Provide population counts for all political subdivisions NOT in the service area. As with the *Adjusted 2015 ACS Estimate*, the population count used for 2024 should not include the population numbers for any municipality listed under the applicable township, if the township does not provide fire and emergency services in that municipality.

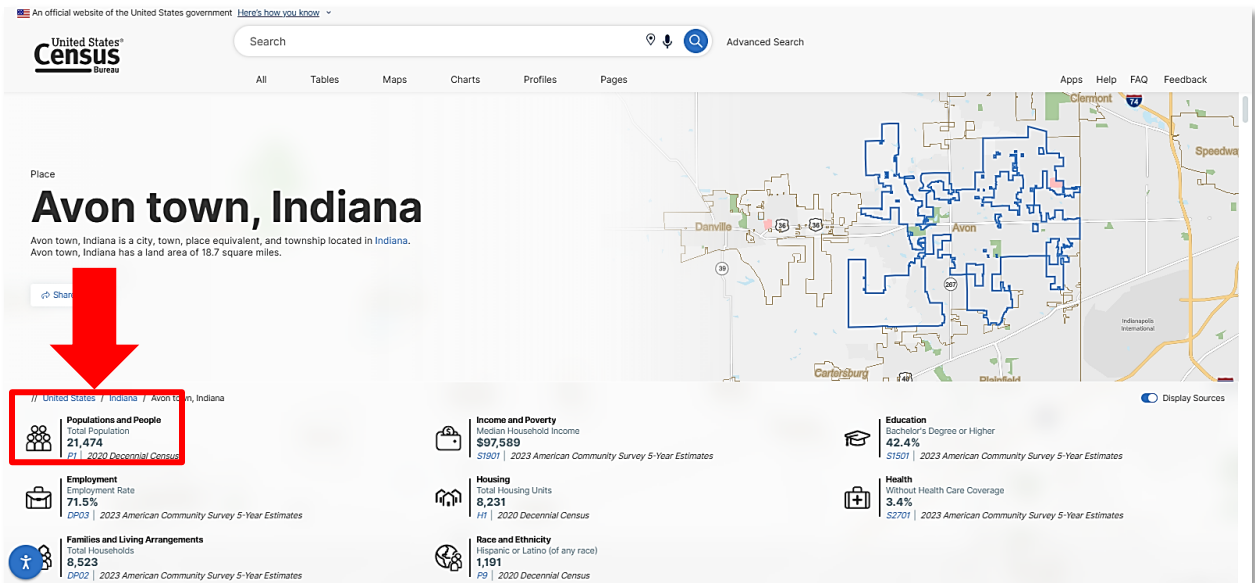
- To find the municipal population counts, click on this link: [Place Map](#). [This will open a searchable map of the United States broken down by place (i.e., municipalities) for each state.]



- For each municipality that resides in the township and is not in the township's fire service area, click on the space within the municipal boundaries. A pop-up window will appear. The 2024 ACS population estimate will appear in the pop-up window.



(Image Only for Illustration Purposes)



(Image Only for Illustration Purposes)

- To find the population counts for a municipality not wholly contained within the township, follow the same process as the *Adjusted 2015 ACS Estimate – Part B*, but use the estimates for 2024: [2024 ACS Map](#).
- Subtract PART A by PART B. This will yield an **Adjusted 2024 Population Count**.

*How to Determine the Average Increase*

- Subtract the result of the *Adjusted 2024 Population County* by the result of the *Adjusted 2015 ACS Estimate*. Divide this difference by the result of the *Adjusted 2015 ACS Estimate*. This will yield a percentage increase. This percentage may be rounded to the nearest percent (1% or 0.01).
  - Townships should use these resources to determine population estimates. Whether a township relies on the Census information, the Department will be using these resources to verify the submissions.

STEP TWO: Take the STEP ONE percentage and subtract six percent (6% or 0.06). If the result is greater than zero (0), use the result for STEP THREE. Otherwise, use zero (0).

STEP THREE: Take the lesser of the STEP TWO result or fifteen-hundredths (0.15).

ADDITIONAL RATE LIMITATIONS ADDED BY HEA 1210:

For petitions submitted by qualifying townships in 2026 for Pay 2027, the following conditions also apply:

- (1) The rate determined under Step Three of the statutory formula may not exceed 80% of the amount determined in Step Two.
- (2) The rate determined under Step Three of the statutory formula, when added to the current year's certified tax rate for the township's fire fund or fire and EMS fund (as applicable), may not exceed \$0.20.
- (3) If a township subsequently submits a petition under Ind. Code § 6-1.1-18-28 after receiving an adjustment based on the amended version of this statute, Step Four [described below] of the statutory formula will apply.

*[STEP FOUR only applies to any petition the executive of the township subsequently submits after submitting an initial petition after December 31, 2025, under Ind. Code § 6-1.1-18-28.]*

STEP FOUR: If the rate was increased under Ind. Code § 6-1.1-12-28 for the township within the immediately preceding ten (10) year period, the STEP THREE result is further reduced by the sum of the rate increases made in the immediately preceding ten (10) year period. The **Eligible Rate Increase** will be determined as follows:

- For townships that submitted a request under Ind. Code § 6-1.1-18-28 in 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, or 2024, 2025, apply the following equation:

$$\begin{array}{rcccl} \text{STEP THREE} & & \text{STEP FOUR} & & \text{STEP} \\ \text{Amount} & - & \text{Sum of amounts} & = & \text{FOUR} \\ & & \text{certified in 2020} & & \text{Amount} \\ & & \text{through 2025} & & \end{array}$$

Fill in the blank with the STEP FOUR amount. If the STEP FOUR amount is less than zero (0), fill in the blank with zero (0).

- For townships that did not submit a request under Ind. Code § 6-1.1-18-28 in 2020 through 2025, this STEP will equal the STEP THREE amount. Fill in the blank with the STEP THREE amount.

The Department will certify the eligible rate increase upon review of the township's petition. Per Ind. Code § 6-1.1-18-28(c), (d), and (e), the eligible rate increase shall be used to determine the increase to the township's firefighting fund maximum levy. The Department will not include the levy increase in its certification. The levy increase shall be calculated using the formula provided under Ind. Code § 6-1.1-18-28(d)(2).