

**Postal Codes by Federal Ridings File  
(1996 Representation Order)  
User Guide**

**Updated File Including  
May, 1998 Postal Codes**

**Produced by the Geography Division  
Statistics Canada  
August 1998**

## ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide is intended for users of the Postal Code/Federal Riding file. It includes an overview of the file and its intended use, a description of the general methodology used to create the file and of the data quality and limitations of the file contents. A record layout of the fields in the file and a glossary of the terms used in this document are also included.

This guide is based on the best information available at the time of its release. It in no way constitutes a warranty in the event that users should observe characteristics that deviate from those stated in this document.

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## POSTAL CODE/1996 FEDERAL RIDING FILE

### 1 OVERVIEW

#### 1.1 Introduction

The postal code/1996 federal riding file is a digital file which provides a link between the six character postal code and Canada's federal ridings. The current version of the postal code/federal riding file links 701,002 postal code records, existing as of May 1998, to the 301 federal ridings.

The official term for a federal riding or constituency is federal electoral district (FED). Elections Canada defines a federal electoral district as any place or territorial area entitled to return a member of Parliament (MP) to serve in the House of Commons. FED legal limits and descriptions are the responsibility of the Chief Electoral Officer, and are usually revised every 10 years after the results of the decennial census. There are 301 FEDs based on the 1996 Representation Order, the most recent revision of the federal riding limits<sup>1</sup>.

#### 1.2 Purpose of the Postal Code /1996 Federal Riding File

The postal code/ 996 federal riding file was conceived as a tool for use with administrative files containing postal codes. By using the postal code as a link, data from administrative files may be organized and/or tabulated by federal riding. Using this tool, federal government departments will be able to respond more quickly and easily to MPs requests for information about their ridings. For example, the number and value of contracts awarded to a particular riding could be summarized. The ridings where petition signatories reside could also be identified in order to notify the appropriate Members of Parliament. Conversely, the postal codes for a given riding could be identified for general mailings to constituents; however, it should be noted that some postal codes do straddle one or more riding boundary. Before using this file, users should first familiarize themselves with the information provided in the following section on data quality.

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<sup>1</sup> Note that the terms "federal riding" and "federal electoral district" or "FED" are used interchangeably in this user guide.

## 2 DATA QUALITY STATEMENT

### 2.1 Introduction

The purpose of a data quality statement is to provide detailed information for users to evaluate the appropriateness of the data or product for a particular use.

Before using the postal code/1996 federal riding file with administrative files containing postal codes, users should be aware of some characteristics of postal codes that may affect their linkage to federal ridings on the postal code/federal riding file:

- 1) postal delivery areas do not always respect federal riding boundaries;
- 2) postal codes may be associated with post office boxes at a postal station that is not in the same riding as the client using the post office box;
- 3) Canada Post Corporation regularly retires postal codes and may also reactivate retired codes for use again.
- 4) Inclusion or exclusion of postal codes in a federal riding.

In the first case, a postal delivery area (as represented by the six-digit postal code) may straddle one or more federal riding boundaries, which means that, in the postal code/1996 federal riding file, the same postal code may be linked to two or more (adjacent) federal ridings. Most ridings are affected in this way in both urban and rural areas. Refer to section 2.3 *Logical Consistency* in this guide for further details.

In the second case, the postal code linkage to the federal riding is based on the mailing address information, and therefore it is the physical location of the post office that is linked to the riding rather than the ultimate destination of mail delivery - the residential, industrial or commercial location of the client renting a post office box - which could be located in another riding.

In the third case, users of the postal code/1996 federal riding file must keep in mind that the file contains only the postal codes from Canada Post that were active as of May 1998. If the addresses in a user's administrative file are not updated to May 1998, there may be non-matches with the postal code/federal riding file because some of the postal codes in the user's file may have been retired, or may even have been reactivated and re-assigned by Canada Post to another range of addresses outside the riding where they had previously been used. Statistics Canada maintains an audit trail of the "birth" dates and "retirement" dates of postal codes in the Postal Code Conversion File. Users may wish to contact their nearest Regional Reference Centre (addresses given at the end of this user guide) where detailed information about the Postal Code Conversion File is available in the *Postal Code Conversion File (PCCF) User Guide, Updated File including May 1998 Postal Codes*, produced by the Geography Division, Statistics Canada, August 1998.

In the fourth case, postal codes are given the representative point coordinates of a block-face or of an enumeration area. Where a 1996 Federal Electoral District boundary splits a 1996 EA or block-face, the postal codes linked to that EA or block-face are included in the federal riding in which their coordinates fall.

A description of how the postal code/federal riding file was produced and statements about its data quality (under the headings: lineage, logical consistency, attribute accuracy and completeness) follow.

## 2.2 Lineage

*Lineage includes descriptions of the source material from which the data were derived and the methods of derivation, including the dates of the source material and all transformations involved in producing the final digital product.*

### 2.2.1 Source Files

Two existing products of the Geography Division at Statistics Canada have been used to derive the postal code/1996 federal riding file:

- 1) May 1998 Postal Code Conversion File, which links postal codes (provided by Canada Post Corporation on the Postal Code Address Master File, updated to May 1998) to codes for all 1996 Census geographic areas, including province (PR) codes and federal electoral district (FED) codes and to geographic point coordinates representing the postal codes. The May 1998 postal code conversion file contains over 893,000 postal code records linked to the geographical areas used in the 1996 Census. These geographical areas have a reference date of January 1, 1996.
- 2) The **Federal Electoral District (FED) Names File** which contains the official name of each federal riding (based on the 1996 Representation Order) and its associated identification code as it existed on January 9, 1997.

### 2.2.2 Method of Derivation

The postal code/1996 federal riding file was created by merging a subset of the May 1998 postal code conversion file with the federal electoral district names file using the federal electoral district code as the common field which exists on both of the source files.

The subset of the postal code conversion file was created by extracting unique occurrences of postal codes linked to a federal electoral district. Then all records representing retired postal codes within each federal electoral district were identified and deleted. The resulting postal code/1996 federal riding file contains 703,702 postal code records of which 698,378 are unique links to one federal electoral district. In total, 2,624 postal codes (5,324 records) are linked to from 2 to 4 federal electoral districts (further details are provided in section 2.3 below). The number of postal code records by federal electoral district is provided in Appendix "A".

## 2.3 Logical Consistency

*Logical consistency describes the fidelity of relationships encoded in the data structure of the digital spatial data (i.e., how well elements of the data structure follow the rules imposed on them).*

Of the 701,002 postal codes found on this file, there are 698,378 postal codes uniquely linked to one federal riding and 2,624 postal codes that are linked to two or more federal ridings. The following table summarizes them.

**Postal codes linked to 2 or more Federal Ridings**

<b>Number of Federal Ridings</b>	<b>Number of postal codes</b>	<b>Number of records on postal code/federal riding file</b>
2	2,551	5,102
3	70	210
4	3	12
<b>Total</b>	2,624	5,324

## 2.4 Attribute Accuracy

*Attribute accuracy refers to the quality of the non-positional information attached to each postal code.*

The attribute accuracy of the postal code/1996 federal riding file is dependent on the accuracy of the postal code conversion file used as a data source. Please refer to the Postal Code Conversion File User Guide for further details.

## 2.5 Completeness

*Completeness expresses the degree to which the geographic entities (features) are captured according to the data capture specifications.*

Completeness in the context of the PCFR is the degree to which all valid postal codes are accounted for. There are 472 postal codes, valid as of May 1998 according to Canada Post Corporation, for which it was not possible to determine a link to census geography.

The Federal Electoral District Names file contains 301 records, one for each federal electoral district (1996 Representation Order).

The final digital files contain the following number of records:

Filename	Number of records
PCFREAST.EXE (Atlantic provinces)	54,827
PCFRQUE.EXE (Quebec)	179,293
PCFRONT.EXE (Ontario)	248,611
PCFRWEST.EXE (Prairie provinces & N.W.T.)	112,133
PCFRBC.EXE (B.C. & Yukon)	108,838
PCFRNAT.DAT (Canada)	703,702



### 3 TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

#### 3.1 Physical Medium Description

The PCFR is a flat ASCII file and does not include any software

#### 3.2 Record Layout

The record layout for the postal code/1996 federal riding file follows:

Field	Size	Position	Type	Title
1	6	1-6	AN	Postal Code
2	2	7-8	AN	Province/Territory Code
3	3	9-11	AN	Federal riding (FED) code
4	50	12-61	AN	Federal riding (FED) name

## 4 POSTAL CODE/FEDERAL RIDING FILE GLOSSARY OF TERMS

### **Federal Riding or Federal Electoral District (FED)**

A federal electoral district is any place or territorial area entitled to return a member to serve in the House of Commons. FED legal limits and descriptions are the responsibility of the Chief Electoral Officer, and are usually revised every 10 years after the results of the decennial census. The 1996 Representation Order is the most current revision, and is based on 1991 Census population data.

### **Postal Code**

The postal code is a six-character alpha-numeric code defined and maintained by Canada Post Corporation for the processing (sortation and delivery) of mail.

The alpha-numeric characters are arranged in the form ANA NAN, where "A" represents a letter of the alphabet and "N" a numeric digit. The first character of a postal code (allocated in alphabetic sequence from east to west across Canada) represents a province or territory or a major sector entirely within a province.

The first three characters represent a set of well defined and stable areas known as the Forward Sortation Area (FSA). Rural FSAs are identifiable by the presence of a "0" in the second position of the FSA code.

The last three characters identify the Local Delivery Unit (LDU). In established urban areas, the LDU can specify a small and easily defined area within an FSA such as block-face (one side of a city street between consecutive intersections with streets or similar physical features), an apartment building, an office building, or a large firm or organization which does large volume business with the post office. In rural areas, the LDU denotes a service area - the area serviced by rural route delivery from a post office or station, e.g., a rural route, general delivery or post office box.

### **Province (PROV)**

The major political division of Canada. From a statistical point of view, it is a basic unit for which data are tabulated and cross-classified. The province codes are: **10** - Newfoundland and Labrador, **11** - Prince Edward Island, **12** - Nova Scotia, **13** - New Brunswick, **24** - Quebec, **35** - Ontario, **46** - Manitoba, **47** - Saskatchewan, **48** - Alberta, **59** - British Columbia.

### **Territory (TERR)**

Two major political divisions of Canada, namely the Yukon Territory and Northwest Territories. From a statistical point of view, these territories are equivalent to a province, i.e., a basic unit for which data are tabulated and cross-classified. The territory codes are: **60** - Yukon, **61** - Northwest Territories.

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APPENDIX A:

POSTAL CODE / 1996 FEDERAL RIDING FILE  
NUMBER OF POSTAL CODES (or Pcs) PER FEDERAL RIDING (or FED)

PR/FED	FEDERAL RIDING NAMES	# OF PCs
10001	Bonavista--Trinity--Conception	152
10002	Burin--St. George's	535
10003	Gander--Grand Falls	738
10004	Humber--St. Barbe--Baie Verte	1128
10005	Labrador	363
10006	St. John's East/St. John's-Est	2090
10007	St. John's West/St. John's-Ouest	2063
11001	Cardigan	71
11002	Egmont	905
11003	Hillsborough	1767
11004	Malpeque	43
12001	Bras d'Or	1323
12002	Cumberland-Colchester	1661
12003	Dartmouth	2860
12004	Halifax	3097
12005	Halifax West/Halifax-Ouest	2340
12006	Kings--Hants	793
12007	Pictou--Antigonish--Guysborough	1199
12008	Sackville--Eastern Shore	1296
12009	South Shore	547
12010	Sydney--Victoria	3476
12011	West Nova	667
13001	Acadie--Bathurst	1285
13002	Beauséjour--Petticodiac	1617
13003	Charlotte	1534
13004	Fredericton	3243
13005	Fundy--Royal	2981
13006	Madawaska--Restigouche	3109
13007	Miramichi	2518
13008	Moncton	4449
13009	Saint John	3542
13010	Tobique--Mactaquac	1435
24001	Abitibi	1709
24002	Ahuntsic	2472
24003	Anjou--Rivière-des-Prairies	2339
24004	Argenteuil--Papineau	1234
24005	Beauce	1805
24006	Beauharnois--Salaberry	2195
24007	Beauport--Montmorency--Orléans	2748
24008	Bellechasse--Etchemins--Montmagny--L'Islet	685
24009	Berthier--Montcalm	47
24010	Bourassa	1998
24011	Brome--Missisquoi	2409
24012	Brossard--La Prairie	2462
24013	Chambly	3077

24014	Champlain	2711
24015	Charlesbourg	3394
24016	Charlevoix	1086
24017	Châteauguay	2231
24018	Chicoutimi	3329
24019	Compton--Stanstead	1094
24020	Drummond	3098
24021	Frontenac--Mégantic	1943
24022	Bonaventure--Gaspé--Îles-de-la-Madeleine--Pabok	54
24023	Gatineau	3894
24024	Hochelaga--Maisonnette	1926
24025	Hull--Aylmer	3538
24026	Joliette	3141
24027	JonquiÈre	2669
24028	Kamouraska--RiviÈre-du-Loup--Témiscouata--Les Basques	1071
24029	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce--Lachine	2340
24030	Lac-Saint-Jean	1603
24031	Lac-Saint-Louis	4296
24032	LaSalle--Imard	1740
24033	Laurentides	2218
24034	Laurier--Sainte-Marie	2311
24035	Laval-Centre/Laval Centre	3218
24036	Laval-Est/Laval East	3474
24037	Laval-Ouest/Laval West	3385
24038	Lévis	4185
24039	Longueuil	2205
24040	LotbiniÈre	849
24041	Louis-Hébert	3527
24042	Manicouagan	1317
24043	Matapédia--Matane	689
24044	Mercier	2751
24045	Mont-Royal/Mount Royal	2374
24046	Outremont	1615
24047	Papineau--Saint-Denis	1797
24048	Pierrefonds--Dollard	3026
24049	Pontiac--Gatineau--Labelle	1868
24050	Portneuf	769
24051	Québec	4153
24052	Québec-Est/Québec East	3944
24053	Repentigny	3527
24054	Richelieu	2200
24055	Richmond--Arthabaska	2673
24056	Rimouski--Mitis	2182
24057	Roberval	2579
24058	Rosemont	1760
24059	Témiscamingue	1623
24060	Saint-Eustache--Sainte-Thérèse	3211
24061	Saint-Bruno--Saint-Hubert	2879
24062	Saint-Hyacinthe--Bagot	2062
24063	Saint-Jean	2642
24064	Saint-Lambert	2629
24065	Saint-Laurent--Cartierville	2501
24066	Saint-Léonard--Saint-Michel	1829
24067	Saint-Maurice	3273

24068	Shefford	2066
24069	Sherbrooke	3655
24070	Terrebonne--Blainville	3499
24071	Trois-Rivières	3216
24072	Vaudreuil--Soulanges	1921
24073	Verchères	1734
24074	Verdun--Saint-Henri	1774
24075	Westmount--Ville-Marie	3845
35001	Algoma--Manitoulin	630
35002	Barrie--Simcoe--Bradford	2759
35003	Beaches--East York	2342
35004	Bramalea--Gore--Malton	2629
35005	Brampton Centre/Brampton-Centre	2081
35006	Brampton West--Mississauga/Brampton-Ouest--Mississauga	2537
35007	Brant	4100
35008	Broadview--Greenwood	1818
35009	Bruce--Grey	1671
35010	Burlington	3151
35011	Cambridge	3608
35012	Davenport	1562
35013	Don Valley East/Don Valley-Est	1640
35014	Don Valley West/Don Valley-Ouest	2328
35015	Dufferin--Peel--Wellington--Grey	1226
35016	Durham	1863
35017	Eglinton--Lawrence	2424
35018	Elgin--Middlesex--London	2526
35019	Erie--Lincoln	2254
35020	Essex	2354
35021	Etobicoke Centre/Etobicoke-Centre	2633
35022	Etobicoke--Lakeshore	3402
35023	Etobicoke North/Etobicoke-Nord	2135
35024	Glengarry--Prescott--Russell	889
35025	Carleton--Goucester	2384
35026	Guelph--Wellington	3293
35027	Haldimand--Norfolk--Brant	1474
35028	Halton	2947
35029	Hamilton East/Hamilton-Est	3445
35030	Hamilton Mountain	3221
35031	Hamilton West/Hamilton-Ouest	3293
35032	Hastings--Frontenac--Lennox and Addington	777
35033	Huron--Bruce	985
35034	Kenora--Rainy River	1605
35035	Kent--Essex	2446
35036	Kingston and the Islands/Kingston et les Îles	3590
35037	Kitchener Centre/Kitchener-Centre	3184
35038	Kitchener--Waterloo	3557
35039	Lambton--Kent--Middlesex	1374
35040	Lanark--Carleton	3084
35041	Leeds--Grenville	1513
35042	London North Centre/London-Centre-Nord	3646
35043	London--Fanshawe	2420
35044	London West/London-Ouest	2853
35045	Markham	3103
35046	Mississauga Centre/Mississauga-Centre	1909
35047	Mississauga East/Mississauga-Est	1917

35048	Mississauga South/Mississauga-Sud	2778
35049	Mississauga West/Mississauga-Ouest	2371
35050	Nepean--Carleton	2131
35051	Niagara Centre/Niagara-Centre	3675
35052	Niagara Falls	3361
35053	Nickel Belt	747
35054	Nipissing	2182
35055	Northumberland	2332
35056	Oak Ridges	3133
35057	Oakville	3509
35058	Oshawa	3585
35059	Ottawa Centre/Ottawa-Centre	4107
35060	Ottawa South/Ottawa-Sud	3102
35061	Ottawa--Vanier	3193
35062	Ottawa West--Nepean/Ottawa-Ouest--Nepean	2955
35063	Oxford	2871
35064	Parkdale--High Park	1775
35065	Parry Sound--Muskoka	1033
35066	Perth--Middlesex	1803
35067	Peterborough	2928
35068	Pickering--Ajax--Uxbridge	2333
35069	Prince Edward--Hastings	1704
35070	Renfrew--Nipissing--Pembroke	2881
35071	Sarnia--Lambton	2802
35072	Sault Ste. Marie	2890
35073	Scarborough--Agincourt	1510
35074	Scarborough Centre/Scarborough-Centre	2484
35075	Scarborough East/Scarborough-Est	1978
35076	Scarborough--Rouge River	2027
35077	Scarborough Southwest/Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	2168
35078	Simcoe--Grey	915
35079	Simcoe North/Simcoe-Nord	2200
35080	St. Catharines	4021
35081	St. Paul's	2167
35082	Stoney Creek	2893
35083	Stormont--Dundas	2141
35084	Sudbury	3051
35085	Thornhill	2715
35086	Thunder Bay--Atikokan	2045
35087	Thunder Bay--Nipigon	2213
35088	Timiskaming--Cochrane	514
35089	Timmins--James Bay/Timmins--Baie James	1840
35090	Toronto Centre--Rosedale /Toronto-Centre--Rosedale	2915
35091	Trinity--Spadina	2040
35092	Vaughan--King--Aurora	2757
35093	Victoria--Haliburton	949
35094	Waterloo--Wellington	1558
35095	Wentworth--Burlington	2553
35096	Whitby--Ajax	2880
35097	Willowdale	2558
35098	Windsor--St. Clair	3006
35099	Windsor West/Windsor-Ouest	4121
35100	York Centre/York-Centre	1921
35101	York North/York-Nord	2158

35102	York South--Weston/York-Sud--Weston	2083
35103	York West/York-Ouest	1467
46001	Brandon--Souris	2030
46002	Charleswood--Assiniboine	1966
46003	Churchill	746
46004	Dauphin--Swan River	697
46005	Portage--Lisgar	1207
46006	Provencher	227
46007	Saint Boniface/Saint-Boniface	2339
46008	Selkirk--Interlake	741
46009	Winnipeg North Centre/Winnipeg-Centre-Nord	2374
46010	Winnipeg Centre/Winnipeg-Centre	2684
46011	Winnipeg South/Winnipeg-Sud	2047
46012	Winnipeg South Centre/Winnipeg-Centre-Sud	1944
46013	Winnipeg North--St. Paul/Winnipeg-Nord-St. Paul	1789
46014	Winnipeg--Transcona	2238
47001	Battlefords--Lloydminster	1057
47002	Blackstrap	1670
47003	Churchill River/Rivière Churchill	263
47004	Cypress Hills--Grasslands	1019
47005	Palliser	2686
47006	Prince Albert	1464
47007	Qu'Appelle	1775
47008	Regina--Lumsden--Lake Centre	1721
47009	Saskatoon--Humboldt	1363
47010	Saskatoon--Rosetown--Biggar	1722
47011	Souris--Moose Mountain	1176
47012	Wanuskewin	1767
47013	Wascana	2582
47014	Yorkton--Melville	797
48001	Athabasca	1419
48002	Calgary Centre/Calgary-Centre	4944
48003	Calgary East/Calgary-Est	3271
48004	Calgary Northeast/Calgary-Nord-Est	2905
48005	Calgary--Nose Hill	2900
48006	Calgary Southeast/Calgary-Sud-Est	2610
48007	Calgary Southwest/Calgary-Sud-Ouest	2791
48008	Calgary West/Calgary-Ouest	3576
48009	Crowfoot	1057
48010	Edmonton East/Edmonton-Est	4453
48011	Edmonton North/Edmonton-Nord	3087
48012	Edmonton Southeast/Edmonton-Sud-Est	2811
48013	Edmonton Southwest/Edmonton-Sud-Ouest	3043
48014	Edmonton--Strathcona	4397
48015	Edmonton West/Edmonton-Ouest	4577
48016	Elk Island	2220
48017	Lakeland	1328
48018	Lethbridge	3278
48019	Macleod	231
48020	Medicine Hat	2664
48021	Peace River	1662
48022	Red Deer	2338
48023	St. Albert	2002
48024	Wetaskiwin	1988
48025	Wild Rose	1147

48026	Yellowhead	829
59001	Burnaby--Douglas	3376
59002	Cariboo--Chilcotin	1542
59003	Delta--South Richmond	4300
59004	Dewdney--Alouette	3303
59005	Esquimalt--Juan de Fuca	3286
59006	Fraser Valley	3396
59007	Kamloops	2802
59008	Kelowna	4261
59009	Kootenay--Columbia	1385
59010	Langley--Abbotsford	3134
59011	Nanaimo--Alberni	3339
59012	Nanaimo--Cowichan	2643
59013	New Westminster--Coquitlam--Burnaby	3886
59014	Okanagan--Shuswap	2526
59015	North Vancouver	4303
59016	Okanagan--Coquihalla	1712
59017	Port Moody--Coquitlam	3821
59018	Prince George--Bulkley Valley	2182
59019	Prince George--Peace River	2932
59020	Richmond	3202
59021	Saanich--Gulf Islands	3906
59022	Skeena	1733
59023	South Surrey--White Rock--Langley	3479
59024	Surrey Central/Surrey-Centre	3919
59025	Surrey North/Surrey-Nord	3372
59026	Vancouver Centre/Vancouver-Centre	3454
59027	Vancouver East/Vancouver-Est	3530
59028	Vancouver Island North/Ile de Vancouver-Nord	2897
59029	Vancouver Kingsway	3125
59030	Vancouver Quadra	4194
59031	Vancouver South--Burnaby/Vancouver-Sud--Burnaby	3574
59032	Victoria	4569
59033	West Kootenay--Okanagan	2176
59034	West Vancouver--Sunshine Coast	2704
60001	Yukon	875
61001	Nunavut	30
61002	Western Arctic	484