

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

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

**Produced by the Geography Division  
Statistics Canada  
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## 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 710,957 postal code records, existing as of September 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/1996 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 September 1998. If the addresses in a user's administrative file are not updated to September 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 September 1999 Postal Codes* produced by the Geography Division, Statistics Canada, January 1999.

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) January 1999 Postal Code Conversion File, which links postal codes (provided by Canada Post Corporation on the Postal Code Address Master File, updated to September 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 January 1999 postal code conversion file contains over 900,000 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 January 1999 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 713,646 postal code records of which 708,344 are unique links to one federal electoral district. In total, 2,613 postal codes (5,302 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 710,957 postal codes found on this file, there are 708,344 postal codes uniquely linked to one federal riding and 2,613 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	2,540	5,080
3	70	210
4	3	12
<b>Total</b>	2,613	5,302

## 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 476 postal codes, valid as of September 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)	61,883
PCFRQUE.EXE (Quebec)	180,858
PCFRONT.EXE (Ontario)	249,159
PCFRWEST.EXE (Prairie provinces & N.W.T.)	112,580
PCFRBC.EXE (B.C. & Yukon)	109,166
PCFRNAT.DAT (Canada)	713,646



### 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	5	7-11	AN	Federal riding (FED) code
3	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	534
10003	Gander--Grand Falls	738
10004	Humber--St. Barbe--Baie Verte	1128
10005	Labrador	363
10006	St. John's East/St. John's-Est	2096
10007	St. John's West/St. John's-Ouest	2067
11001	Cardigan	71
11002	Egmont	904
11003	Hillsborough	1762
11004	Malpeque	43
12001	Bras d'Or	1332
12002	Cumberland-Colchester	1657
12003	Dartmouth	2863
12004	Halifax	3100
12005	Halifax West/Halifax-Ouest	2359
12006	Kings--Hants	795
12007	Pictou--Antigonish--Guysborough	1201
12008	Sackville--Eastern Shore	1299
12009	South Shore	547
12010	Sydney--Victoria	3481
12011	West Nova	667
13001	Acadie--Bathurst	1287
13002	Beauséjour--Petticodiac	1615
13003	Charlotte	2574
13004	Fredericton	3263
13005	Fundy--Royal	3006
13006	Madawaska--Restigouche	3109
13007	Miramichi	3702
13008	Moncton	4441
13009	Saint John	3551
13010	Tobique--Mactaquac	6176
24001	Abitibi	1709
24002	Ahuntsic	2472
24003	Anjou--Rivière-des-Prairies	2344
24004	Argenteuil--Papineau	1240
24005	Beauce	1823
24006	Beauharnois--Salaberry	2201
24007	Beauport--Montmorency--Orléans	2755
24008	Bellechasse--Etchemins--Montmagny--L'Islet	684
24009	Berthier--Montcalm	47
24010	Bourassa	1998
24011	Brome--Missisquoi	2435
24012	Brossard--La Prairie	2465
24013	Chambly	3080
24014	Champlain	2718
24015	Charlesbourg	3398

24016	Charlevoix	1459
24017	Châteauguay	2234
24018	Chicoutimi	3326
24019	Compton--Stanstead	1093
24020	Drummond	3105
24021	Frontenac--Mégantic	1944
24022	Bonaventure--Gaspé--Iles-de-la-Madeleine--Pabok	54
24023	Gatineau	3905
24024	Hochelaga--Maisonneuve	1923
24025	Hull--Aylmer	3544
24026	Joliette	3139
24027	Jonquière	2673
24028	Kamouraska--Rivière-du-Loup--Témiscouata--Les Basques	1071
24029	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce--Lachine	2342
24030	Lac-Saint-Jean	1621
24031	Lac-Saint-Louis	4302
24032	LaSalle--Émard	1746
24033	Laurentides	3117
24034	Laurier--Sainte-Marie	2300
24035	Laval-Centre/Laval Centre	3226
24036	Laval-Est/Laval East	3481
24037	Laval-Ouest/Laval West	3396
24038	Lévis	4192
24039	Longueuil	2210
24040	Lotbinière	850
24041	Louis-Hébert	3531
24042	Manicouagan	1335
24043	Matapédia--Matane	689
24044	Mercier	2751
24045	Mont-Royal/Mount Royal	2390
24046	Outremont	1614
24047	Papineau--Saint-Denis	1795
24048	Pierrefonds--Dollard	3027
24049	Pontiac--Gatineau--Labelle	1871
24050	Portneuf	776
24051	Québec	4159
24052	Québec-Est/Québec East	3951
24053	Repentigny	3529
24054	Richelieu	2199
24055	Richmond--Arthabaska	2678
24056	Rimouski--Mitis	2184
24057	Roberval	2595
24058	Rosemont	1765
24059	Témiscamingue	1628
24060	Saint-Eustache--Sainte-Thérèse	3217
24061	Saint-Bruno--Saint-Hubert	2883
24062	Saint-Hyacinthe--Bagot	2061
24063	Saint-Jean	2646
24064	Saint-Lambert	2627
24065	Saint-Laurent--Cartierville	2498
24066	Saint-Léonard--Saint-Michel	1829
24067	Saint-Maurice	3280
24068	Shefford	2070
24069	Sherbrooke	3657
24070	Terrebonne--Blainville	3509
24071	Trois-Rivières	3220

24072	Vaudreuil--Soulanges	1924
24073	Verchères	1744
24074	Verdun--Saint-Henri	1776
24075	Westmount--Ville-Marie	3828
35001	Algoma--Manitoulin	630
35002	Barrie--Simcoe--Bradford	2783
35003	Beaches--East York	2342
35004	Bramalea--Gore--Malton	2636
35005	Brampton Centre/Brampton-Centre	2097
35006	Brampton West--Mississauga/Brampton-Ouest--Mississauga	2555
35007	Brant	4101
35008	Broadview--Greenwood	1825
35009	Bruce--Grey	1677
35010	Burlington	3158
35011	Cambridge	3617
35012	Davenport	1561
35013	Don Valley East/Don Valley-Est	1641
35014	Don Valley West/Don Valley-Ouest	2323
35015	Dufferin--Peel--Wellington--Grey	1232
35016	Durham	1875
35017	Eglinton--Lawrence	2425
35018	Elgin--Middlesex--London	2534
35019	Erie--Lincoln	2255
35020	Essex	2371
35021	Etobicoke Centre/Etobicoke-Centre	2632
35022	Etobicoke--Lakeshore	3392
35023	Etobicoke North/Etobicoke-Nord	2137
35024	Glengarry--Prescott--Russell	891
35025	Carleton--Goucester	2390
35026	Guelph--Wellington	3297
35027	Haldimand--Norfolk--Brant	1477
35028	Halton	2976
35029	Hamilton East/Hamilton-Est	3445
35030	Hamilton Mountain	3222
35031	Hamilton West/Hamilton-Ouest	3299
35032	Hastings--Frontenac--Lennox and Addington	779
35033	Huron--Bruce	985
35034	Kenora--Rainy River	1603
35035	Kent--Essex	2452
35036	Kingston and the Islands/Kingston et les Îles	3596
35037	Kitchener Centre/Kitchener-Centre	3184
35038	Kitchener--Waterloo	3570
35039	Lambton--Kent--Middlesex	1376
35040	Lanark--Carleton	3092
35041	Leeds--Grenville	1514
35042	London North Centre/London-Centre-Nord	3664
35043	London--Fanshawe	2432
35044	London West/London-Ouest	2861
35045	Markham	3126
35046	Mississauga Centre/Mississauga-Centre	1906
35047	Mississauga East/Mississauga-Est	1920
35048	Mississauga South/Mississauga-Sud	2780
35049	Mississauga West/Mississauga-Ouest	2374
35050	Nepean--Carleton	2142
35051	Niagara Centre/Niagara-Centre	3682
35052	Niagara Falls	3368
35053	Nickel Belt	747

35054	Nipissing	2183
35055	Northumberland	2332
35056	Oak Ridges	3162
35057	Oakville	3513
35058	Oshawa	3586
35059	Ottawa Centre/Ottawa-Centre	4121
35060	Ottawa South/Ottawa-Sud	3104
35061	Ottawa--Vanier	3200
35062	Ottawa West--Nepean/Ottawa-Ouest--Nepean	2958
35063	Oxford	2876
35064	Parkdale--High Park	1776
35065	Parry Sound--Muskoka	1034
35066	Perth--Middlesex	1805
35067	Peterborough	2931
35068	Pickering--Ajax--Uxbridge	2337
35069	Prince Edward--Hastings	1706
35070	Renfrew--Nipissing--Pembroke	2884
35071	Sarnia--Lambton	2801
35072	Sault Ste. Marie	2890
35073	Scarborough--Agincourt	1511
35074	Scarborough Centre/Scarborough-Centre	2485
35075	Scarborough East/Scarborough-Est	1979
35076	Scarborough--Rouge River	2027
35077	Scarborough Southwest/Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	2169
35078	Simcoe--Grey	919
35079	Simcoe North/Simcoe-Nord	2208
35080	St. Catharines	4027
35081	St. Paul's	2171
35082	Stoney Creek	2905
35083	Stormont--Dundas	2142
35084	Sudbury	3049
35085	Thornhill	2727
35086	Thunder Bay--Atikokan	2059
35087	Thunder Bay--Nipigon	2220
35088	Timiskaming--Cochrane	514
35089	Timmins--James Bay/Timmins--Baie James	1840
35090	Toronto Centre--Rosedale /Toronto-Centre--Rosedale	2917
35091	Trinity--Spadina	2040
35092	Vaughan--King--Aurora	2789
35093	Victoria--Haliburton	954
35094	Waterloo--Wellington	1563
35095	Wentworth--Burlington	2558
35096	Whitby--Ajax	2895
35097	Willowdale	2559
35098	Windsor--St. Clair	3016
35099	Windsor West/Windsor-Ouest	4137
35100	York Centre/York-Centre	1921
35101	York North/York-Nord	2162
35102	York South--Weston/York-Sud--Weston	2088
35103	York West/York-Ouest	1460
46001	Brandon--Souris	2031
46002	Charleswood--Assiniboine	1966
46003	Churchill	747
46004	Dauphin--Swan River	697
46005	Portage--Lisgar	1214
46006	Provencher	229

46007	Saint Boniface/Saint-Boniface	2336
46008	Selkirk--Interlake	742
46009	Winnipeg North Centre/Winnipeg-Centre-Nord	2375
46010	Winnipeg Centre/Winnipeg-Centre	2686
46011	Winnipeg South/Winnipeg-Sud	2050
46012	Winnipeg South Centre/Winnipeg-Centre-Sud	1945
46013	Winnipeg North--St. Paul/Winnipeg-Nord-St. Paul	1797
46014	Winnipeg--Transcona	2237
47001	Battlefords--Lloydminster	1058
47002	Blackstrap	1671
47003	Churchill River/Rivière Churchill	263
47004	Cypress Hills--Grasslands	1020
47005	Palliser	2681
47006	Prince Albert	1467
47007	Qu'Appelle	1776
47008	Regina--Lumsden--Lake Centre	1723
47009	Saskatoon--Humboldt	1368
47010	Saskatoon--Rosetown--Biggar	1724
47011	Souris--Moose Mountain	1172
47012	Wanuskewin	1770
47013	Wascana	2580
47014	Yorkton--Melville	798
48001	Athabasca	1422
48002	Calgary Centre/Calgary-Centre	4940
48003	Calgary East/Calgary-Est	3275
48004	Calgary Northeast/Calgary-Nord-Est	2928
48005	Calgary--Nose Hill	2929
48006	Calgary Southeast/Calgary-Sud-Est	2620
48007	Calgary Southwest/Calgary-Sud-Ouest	2792
48008	Calgary West/Calgary-Ouest	3610
48009	Crowfoot	1057
48010	Edmonton East/Edmonton-Est	4443
48011	Edmonton North/Edmonton-Nord	3105
48012	Edmonton Southeast/Edmonton-Sud-Est	2817
48013	Edmonton Southwest/Edmonton-Sud-Ouest	3063
48014	Edmonton--Strathcona	4397
48015	Edmonton West/Edmonton-Ouest	4569
48016	Elk Island	2234
48017	Lakeland	1328
48018	Lethbridge	3288
48019	Macleod	395
48020	Medicine Hat	2672
48021	Peace River	1675
48022	Red Deer	2359
48023	St. Albert	2009
48024	Wetaskiwin	1998
48025	Wild Rose	1180
48026	Yellowhead	838
59001	Burnaby--Douglas	3378
59002	Cariboo--Chilcotin	1595
59003	Delta--South Richmond	4304
59004	Dewdney--Alouette	3311
59005	Esquimalt--Juan de Fuca	3288
59006	Fraser Valley	3403
59007	Kamloops	2804
59008	Kelowna	4259
59009	Kootenay--Columbia	1389

59010	Langley--Abbotsford	3142
59011	Nanaimo--Alberni	3344
59012	Nanaimo--Cowichan	2684
59013	New Westminster--Coquitlam--Burnaby	3885
59014	Okanagan--Shuswap	2543
59015	North Vancouver	4305
59016	Okanagan--Coquihalla	1713
59017	Port Moody--Coquitlam	3829
59018	Prince George--Bulkley Valley	2243
59019	Prince George--Peace River	2942
59020	Richmond	3204
59021	Saanich--Gulf Islands	3911
59022	Skeena	1733
59023	South Surrey--White Rock--Langley	3482
59024	Surrey Central/Surrey-Centre	3956
59025	Surrey North/Surrey-Nord	3377
59026	Vancouver Centre/Vancouver-Centre	3469
59027	Vancouver East/Vancouver-Est	3533
59028	Vancouver Island North/Île de Vancouver-Nord	2899
59029	Vancouver Kingsway	3128
59030	Vancouver Quadra	4190
59031	Vancouver South--Burnaby/Vancouver-Sud--Burnaby	3580
59032	Victoria	4553
59033	West Kootenay--Okanagan	2182
59034	West Vancouver--Sunshine Coast	2719
60001	Yukon	889
61001	Nunavut	30
61002	Western Arctic	484