

Population Estimate System (PES) Frequently Asked Questions

General Information

What is the Population Estimate System or PES?

PES is OFM's new web-based application designed to collect the data OFM needs for its April 1 population estimates.

Why should I use PES to submit Form A data?

There are a number of advantages to using PES over the paper-based method of data collection:

- The system performs automatic calculations and displays running totals on many of the screens
- Built-in controls to prevent data entry errors
- Data submitted through PES will be available to cities in subsequent years
- Cities can access a variety of reports through PES (see the Reports section for more detail)

Can I provide feedback about PES?

Absolutely! We would love to hear feedback from you. Please send comments to your city analyst or use our general email box at pop.estimate@ofm.wa.gov. Please include your name, city and the version of the web browser you are using in your message.

Accessing and Using PES

How do I get access to PES?

The PES application can be accessed from <https://pop.ofm.wa.gov>.

Access to PES requires a SecureAccess Washington (SAW) account and a registration PIN from OFM. See the document [Setting up a SAW Account and Registering with PES](#) for more information.

How do I fill out Form A?

To learn how to use the PES application to enter Form A data, see the [PES User Guide](#).

For questions about Form A, see the [Form A Frequently Asked Questions](#) page.

How do I logout or quit PES?

PES does not have a logout button. Exit your browser or close the browser tab when you want to quit.

I already have a SAW account and I don't see "Population Estimate System" in the services list. What should I do?

The Population Estimate System is not on the list of services in SAW. You must access PES from <https://pop.ofm.wa.gov>. This URL will redirect you to the SAW login page where you must log in using your SAW credentials. You will then be taken to the PES application.

I already have a SAW account. How can I find out if my SAW user name matches the name OFM is using?

The name OFM has on file is in the body of the email you received from pop.estimate@ofm.wa.gov that contains your PES registration PIN.

You can find the name and email address associated with your SAW account by logging into SAW and going to the "Account Management" tab.

The name and email address must be the same. If they are not the same, you can update your information in SAW to match the OFM email or you can contact us at pop.estimate@ofm.wa.gov and we can make changes on our end to match your existing SAW credentials.

If the name and email addresses match, you must still activate your PES account. Go to Step 10 in [Setting up a SAW Account and Registering with PES](#) for instructions.

What do I do if I am unable to use (or don't want to use) the PES online system?

We encourage cities to make an effort to use the web application and will be happy to assist you if you run into difficulties. If needed, we can send you a PDF version of the form that can be filled out and mailed back to us.

What is the difference between an error message and a warning message?

Warning messages typically notify users that the data they have entered is not what is expected. City users can save and submit data with warnings. We recommend that users add a comment to explain why their data deviates from expectations.

Error messages typically alert users to missing or inaccurate information. Users cannot save data until the errors are resolved.

Why does PES time out after 60 minutes?

The 60 minute time limit is imposed by SecureAccess Washington for security purposes. OFM has no ability adjust this time limit.

Account Management

What do I need to know about PES account management?

PES allows cities to add multiple users to the system. Each user must have their own login credentials and SAW account. Users can be assigned one of three roles described below:

Population Contact:

- Certify and submit Form A
- Add or deactivate users
- Edit Form A data
- Run reports

Editor:

- Edit Form A data
- Run reports

Reviewer:

- Review Form A data
- Run reports

Only one person can be assigned the role of Population Contact. The Population Contact is responsible for submitting Form A and managing user accounts for your city.

One person is assigned the title of 'Highest Elected Official' or HEO. The HEO is assigned a 'Reviewer' role by default and are not sent a registration PIN. If the HEO needs to edit data in the system, simply request a registration PIN from OFM.

Certify and Submit

Why can't I see the 'Certify and Submit' page? It is grayed out.

The Certify and Submit page is only available to the designated Population Contact who submits data to OFM on behalf of the city.

Why do I have to 'Certify and Submit'?

State laws requires cities to provide OFM with the information requested on Form A. Having one responsible city official certify and submit through PES creates a digital record of the transaction that helps satisfy the reporting requirements. The 'Certify and Submit' process takes the place of a signature on the paper form.

How do I find out the name of my city's designated Population Contact?

Contact your city analyst directly or use our general mail box at pop.estimate@ofm.wa.gov. Please include your name, title, and the city you work for in your message.

Reports

What is the purpose of the PES Reports?

The PES reports are designed to help get you the information you need for the April 1 estimate process.

The following reports are available from the system:

- Form A – Unedited: Form A report without any markup
- Form A – City Edited: Form A with the data you have entered
- Form A – OFM Edited: Form A with your data and any OFM analyst edits and comments
- Census Summary: Information about the most recent city census
- Census PPH and Occupancy Rates: Historical data for any census from 1990 to present
- Annexation List: Annexations approved by OFM from 2010 to present
- Estimate Review Worksheet: OFM's preliminary population determination for city review
- Preliminary Population Determination: OFM's preliminary population determination for all counties and cities

Why are some reports grayed out?

There are a couple of reasons. Some of the reports are only available at specific times. For example the current year Estimate Review Worksheet and Preliminary Population Determination are only available during the estimate review period in early June. Some reports are only available when there is data to report. For example Form A – OFM Edited is not available until you have submitted your data and OFM analysts have had time to review it.