

Precincts ^[1]

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Precincts

by Lindley S. Butler, 2006

Precincts exist in North Carolina as voting district subdivisions of both [cities](#) ^[2] and [counties](#) ^[3]. In the Proprietary province of Carolina, however, precincts were administrative and judicial districts of the counties or [colonies](#) ^[4]. Corresponding to the modern county, each Proprietary precinct-governed by a court of justices chaired by a steward-had a [sheriff](#) ^[5] as its chief law officer. The precincts also were used in determining representation in the [Assembly](#) ^[6] and organizing the [militia](#) ^[7]. Since the colonial Assembly first met in 1665, precincts may have been established at that time, but the earliest documentation is a 1668 commission that confirms that [Pasquotank](#) ^[8] Precinct was in existence. It is likely that [Chowan](#) ^[9], [Currituck](#) ^[10], and [Perquimans](#) ^[11] Precincts were created at the same time. These four governmental units are North Carolina's oldest extant counties.

Subjects:

[Colonial period \(1600-1763\)](#) ^[12]

[Geography](#) ^[13]

[Politics and government](#) ^[14]

[UNC Press](#) ^[15]

[Voting](#) ^[16]

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Links

[1] <https://ncpedia.org/precincts>

[2] <https://ncpedia.org/geography/cities>

[3] <https://ncpedia.org/geography/counties>

[4] <https://ncpedia.org/colonial-period-overview>

[5] <https://ncpedia.org/sheriff>

[6] <https://ncpedia.org/general-assembly>

[7] <https://ncpedia.org/militias-colonial>

[8] <https://ncpedia.org/geography/pasquotank>

[9] <https://ncpedia.org/geography/chowan>

[10] <https://ncpedia.org/geography/currituck>

[11] <https://ncpedia.org/geography/perquimans>

[12] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/colonial-period>

[13] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/geography>

[14] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/politics-and-gove>

[15] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/unc-press>

[16] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/voting>

[17] <https://ncpedia.org/category/authors/butler-lindley-s>

[18] <https://ncpedia.org/category/entry-source/encyclopedia->