

## From the US government:

In the [United States](#), the [Office of Management and Budget](#) (OMB) has produced a formal definition of [metropolitan areas](#), which are organized around [county](#) boundaries (except in [New England](#), where cities and towns are more significant than counties as geographical and political units.) These are referred to as "Metropolitan Statistical Areas" (MSAs). If an MSA is large enough and can be subdivided into meaningful sub-metropolitan areas, then the MSA is considered a "Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area" (CMSA), with each subdivision called a "Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area" (PMSA). The largest MSAs in the United States are all CMSAs.

This is from the [Washington Post](#).

### The Washington PMSA

The **PMSA** (Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area) is a term defined by the federal government. This geographic classification is based on population densities and commuting data from the Census. The Washington PMSA includes the District of Columbia, 18 counties and six independent cities in the surrounding states of Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia, with a total of 1,954,100 households.

