How can I find the urban or rural status of my school or library?

Urban or Rural Status within E-Rate is based on the U.S. Census Bureau’s delineation. An individual school or library is designated as “urban” or “rural” based on the census block it is located in, the urban area it is located in, and the urban area population. If the urban area has a population of 25,000 or more, it is determined to be “urban” for the E-Rate program.

Any school or library not designated “urban” is designated as “rural.”

E-Rate Urban / Rural Status Manual Lookup

1. Navigate to the Census Bureau Find Address Geographies online tool.
2. Enter the school or library address including the street address, city, state, and zip code.
3. Set the Benchmark to Public_AR_Census2020 and the Vintage to Census2020_Census2020 using the dropdown menu.
4. Select Get Results.

Rural Example

5. Scroll down to the Census Blocks section at the bottom of the page and review the last field called UR.
   a. If the Census Block UR value is ‘R’ then the entity and address is rural.
6. Scroll down to the Census Blocks section at the bottom of the page and review the last field called UR.

   a. If the Census Blocks UR value is ‘U’ then scroll up to the ‘Urban Areas’ section to locate the Name of the urban area.

7. Open the 2020 Census Bureau list of urban areas Excel file located here.

8. Locate the urban area name and associated population.

9. If the urban area population is 25,000 or less, then the entity is designated as rural. If the population is more than 25,000, then the entity is designated as urban.