

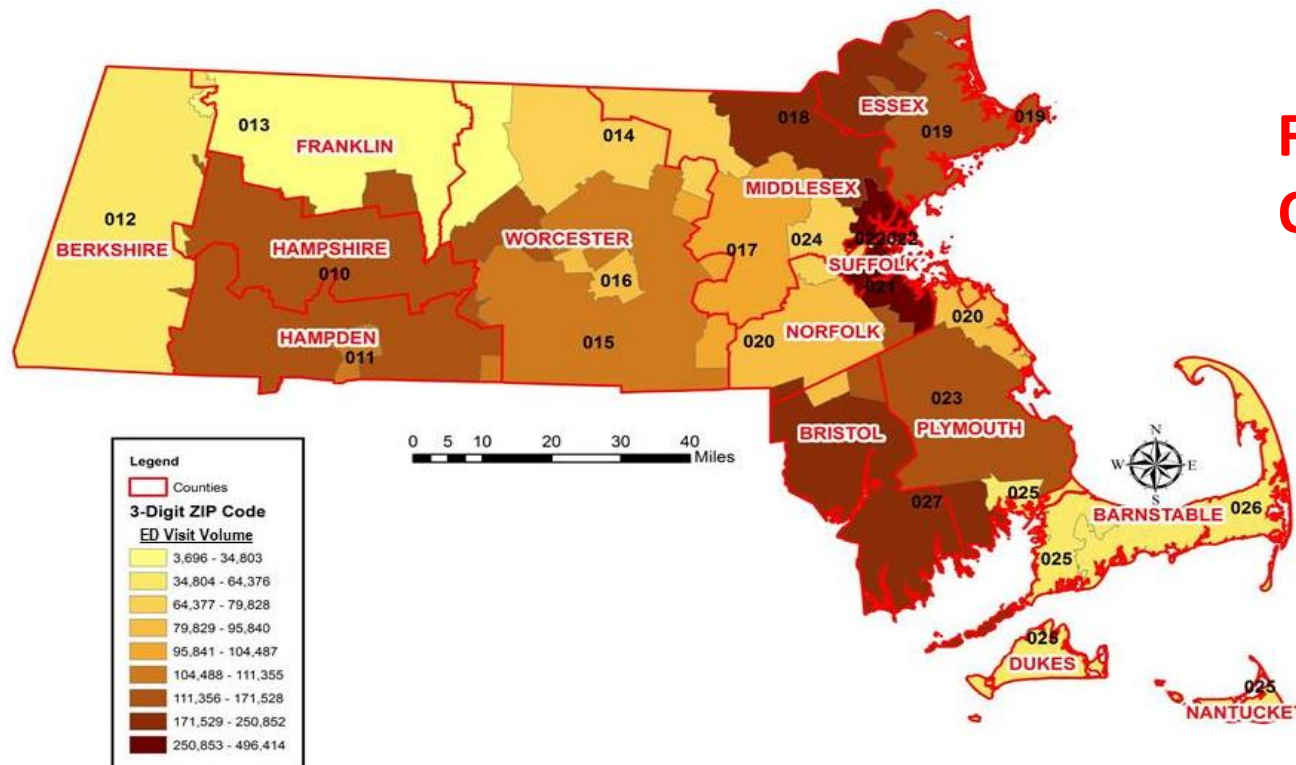
**Question:** Section VII of the CHIA application form has the option of requesting 3-digit ZIP Code, but what volume distribution and geographic distribution can we expect when using 3-digit ZIP Code boundaries?

**Answer:** Massachusetts has approximately six hundred and eighty-five 5-digit ZIP codes assigned by the United States Postal Service for mail delivery. These ZIP codes are subject to change and can overlap. The **first 3-digits** of the 5-digits are a larger grouping with **the first digit** representing a National Area ranging from zero (for states in far Northeast) to nine (for states in the far West), the **second and third digits** representing local central post office coverage area, and the remaining digits are for mail service delivery routes. When the data are aggregated at the 3-digit ZIP code level, approximately six hundred and eighty-five 5-digit Massachusetts ZIP codes are reduced **eighteen 3-digit ZIP codes**.



Question: Section VII of the CHIA application form has the option of requesting 3-digit ZIP Code, but what volume distribution and geographic distribution can we expect when using 3-digit ZIP Code boundaries? *(continued)*

Answer: The map below shows the FY2016 Massachusetts ED Visit volume by 3-digit ZIP Code and County. **The eighteen 3-digit ZIP Code boundaries represent a smaller aggregation than the 12 Massachusetts Counties.** Geographic coverage in larger less urban 3-digit ZIP Code areas of the Cape, Berkshire and part of Franklin County have lower ED Visit volume. Several small counties on the Cape share the same 3-digit ZIP Code. The Suffolk County 3-digit ZIP Code areas have the highest ED Visit volume.

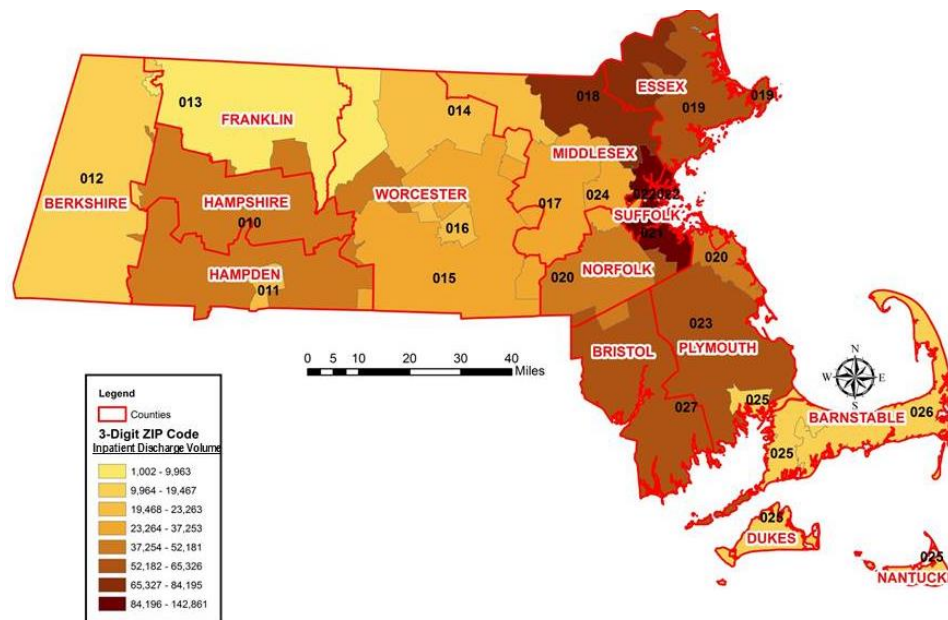


**FY2016 Massachusetts  
Outpatient Emergency  
Department  
Visit Volume by  
3-digit ZIP Code and  
County**

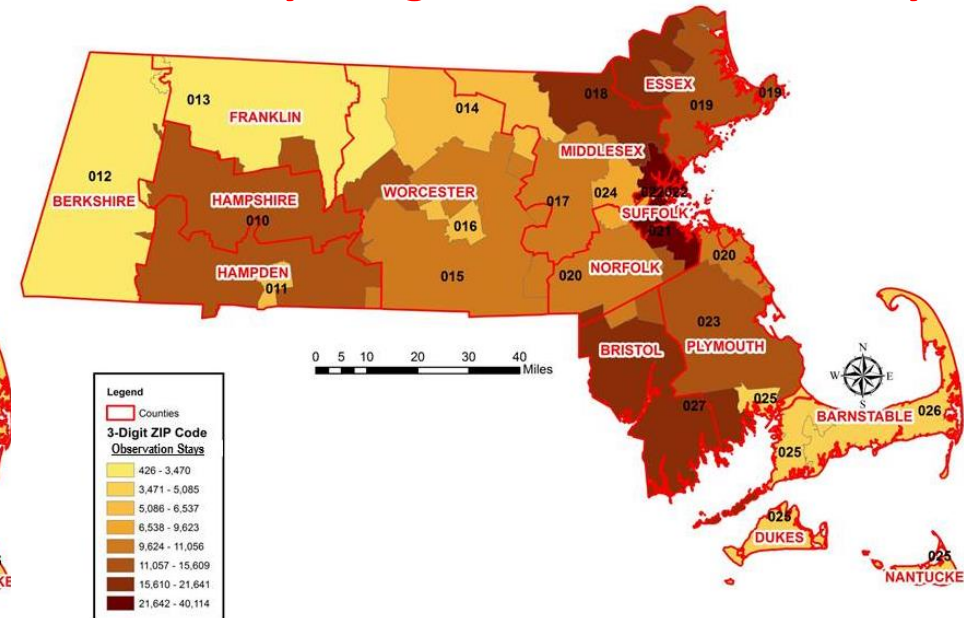
**Question:** Section VII of the CHIA application form has the option of requesting 3-digit ZIP Code, but what volume distribution and geographic distribution can we expect when using 3-digit ZIP Code boundaries? *(continued)*

**Answer:** Both FY2016 Hospital Inpatient Discharge Volume and FY2016 Observation Stay 3-digit ZIP volume mirror a geographic distribution of the FY2016 ED Visit data with less volume from the Cape, Berkshire and a part of Franklin County. When using 3-digit ZIP codes, it is important to keep in mind, while they roughly align some political boundaries, you will see more shared overlapping between ZIP code boundaries and political boundaries. Compare county and ZIP code boundaries in maps below.

**FY2016 Inpatient Hospital Discharge Volume by 3-digit ZIP Code and County**

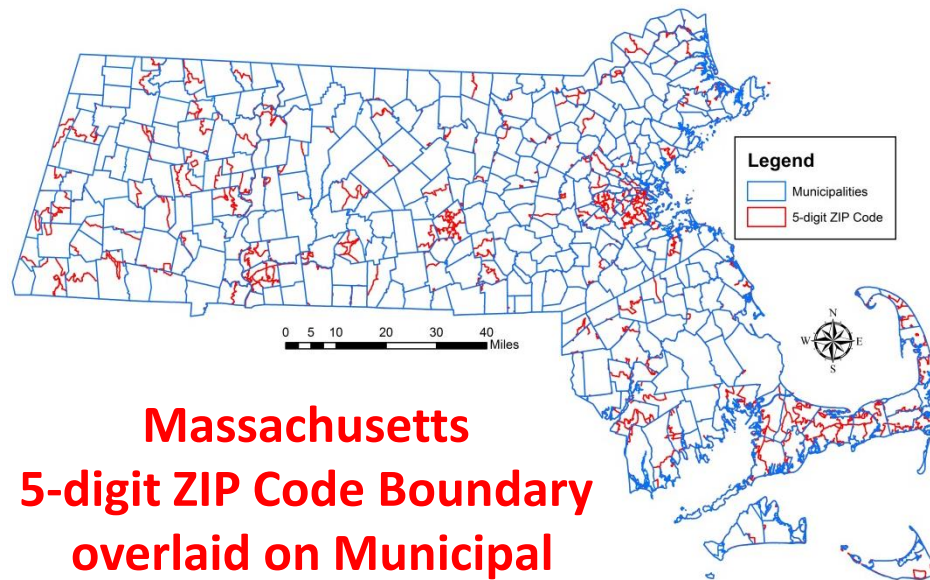


**FY2016 Outpatient Observation Stay Volume by 3-digit ZIP Code and County**

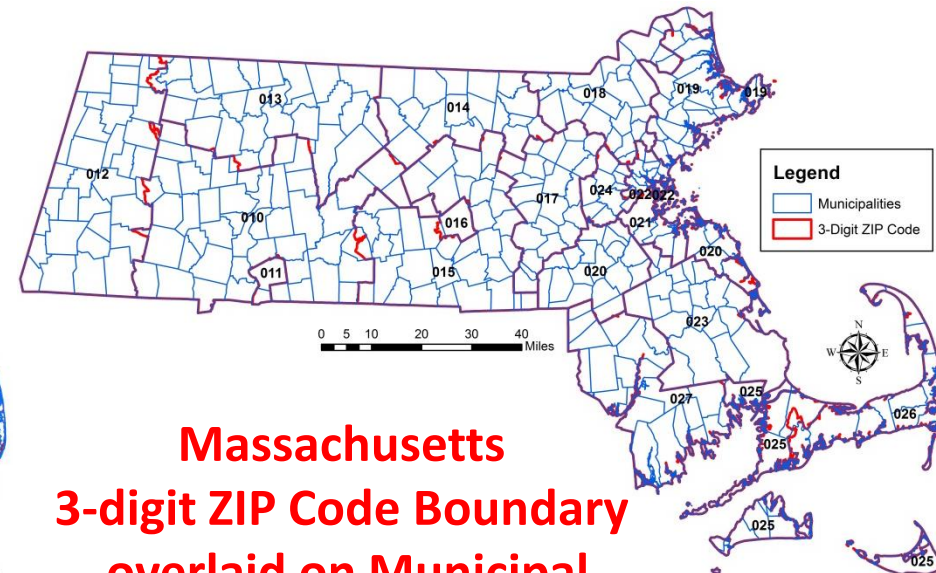


**Question:** Section VII of the CHIA application form has the option of requesting 3-digit ZIP Code, but what volume distribution and geographic distribution can we expect when using 3-digit ZIP Code boundaries? *(continued)*

**Answer:** As with 3-digit ZIP Codes, 5-digit ZIP Codes cut across multiple political boundaries. ZIP Codes generally do not show any respect for state, municipal, county, or census statistical area boundaries. They are administrative units for mail carrier routes that intertwine across political geographic boundaries like spaghetti, and are subject to continuous alteration or elimination based on mail volume. In the 5-digit ZIP code map below, the visible red lines indicate 5-digit ZIP code boundaries which cross Municipal and are shared. In the 3-digit ZIP Code map, there is a closer alignment with Municipal boundaries but sharing still visible in Western Massachusetts, Central Massachusetts and on the Cape.



**Massachusetts  
5-digit ZIP Code Boundary  
overlaid on Municipal  
Boundaries**



**Massachusetts  
3-digit ZIP Code Boundary  
overlaid on Municipal  
Boundaries**