## Data Support Document
## Urban / Rural Classification

### 1. Purpose and Scope

Users of CLSA data may request variables that pertain to the geographic location of participants, including the Urban/Rural Classification variable.

Urban/Rural Classification is a variable that has been created based on Statistics Canada's Postal Code Conversion File (PCCF)[1] to indicate if a person lives in an urban population centre or a rural area. Together urban population centres and rural areas cover all of Canada.

### 2. Implementation

In order to represent information about these variables accurately, we have reproduced some information directly from Statistics Canada documentation, as cited. These passages are indicated using *italics*. Please visit the links provided in the References for additional information.

*Postal codes are managed by Canada Post Corporation (CPC) for the efficient sorting and delivery of mail. They are not created as units for the analysis or mapping of population, business or dwelling characteristics. The postal code products created by Statistics Canada provide the link between postal codes and Statistics Canada's standard geographic areas to allow for these various uses of the data.*[2]

*The PCCF is a digital file which provides a correspondence between the CPC six-character postal code and Statistics Canada's standard geographic areas for which census data and other statistics are produced. Through the link between postal codes and standard geographic areas, the PCCF permits the integration of data from various sources. In April 1983, the Geography Division of Statistics Canada released the first version of the PCCF, which linked postal codes to 1981 Census geographic areas and included geographic coordinates. Since then, the file has been updated on a regular basis to reflect changes. For the current release of the PCCF (August 2015), the vast majority of the postal codes are directly geocoded to 2011 Census geography.*[3]

### 3. Available Data Overview

Variables for Urban/Rural Classification available in the CLSA are:

SDC_URBAN_RURAL_TRM                SDC_URBAN_RURAL_COM

### 4. Data Preparation

Data were extracted from the PCCF.

Possible values for the Urban/Rural Classification variable in the CLSA dataset are outlined below. These are known as "type" codes and are labelled 'POP_CNTR_RA_type' in the PCCF[1].

0 Rural
1 Urban Core

2 Urban Fringe
4 Urban population centre outside census metropolitan areas (CMA) and census agglomerations (CA)
6 Secondary core
9 Postal code link to dissemination area
-8 Missing

*Taken together, population centres (POPCTRs) and rural areas cover all of Canada. Rural areas (RAs) include all territory lying outside population centres.* **Rural** *population includes all population living in rural areas of census metropolitan areas (CMAs) and census agglomerations (CAs), as well as population living in rural areas outside CMAs and CAs.*[4]

*A CMA or a CA is formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the* **urban core**). *A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000 of which 50,000 or more must live in the core. A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000. A CMA or CA can have two types of cores: the core and the* **secondary core**. *The core is the population centre with the highest population, around which a CMA or a CA is delineated. The secondary core is a population centre within a CMA that has at least 10,000 persons and was the core of a CA that has been merged with an adjacent CMA.*[5]

**Urban fringe** *includes all population centres within a CMA or CA that have fewer than 10,000 persons and are not contiguous with the core or secondary core. The terms 'core' and 'fringe' replace the terms 'urban core' and 'urban fringe' for the 2011 Census. All territory within a CMA or CA that is not classified as a core or fringe is classified as rural area.*[4]

*Population centre population includes all population living in the cores, secondary cores and fringes of CMAs and CAs, as well as the population living in* **population centres outside CMAs and CAs**.[5]

**Postal code link to dissemination area**–For cases where postal codes are linked at the dissemination area or census subdivision level, no urban/rural information is available, and linked data are assigned a value of '9'. Urban/rural information is only available for postal codes linked at the more detailed dissemination block or block-face level. '9' is an urban/rural mix, and for the purposes of the CLSA dataset considered as urban.

Missing data are assigned a value of '-8'.

## 5.   Additional Information Available

For information related to the geographic location of CLSA participants, please also see the Data Support Document on Forward Sortation Areas (FSA) and Census Subdivisions (CSD), available on our website at www.clsa-elcv.ca.

## 6.   References

1. Statistics Canada (2016) Postal Code[OM] Conversion File (PCCF), 2016. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 92-154-X.

2. Statistics Canada (2007) Geography Working Paper Series: How Postal Codes Map to Geographic Areas, no. 1 Retrieved from: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/92f0138m/92f0138m2007001-eng.htm (Accessed on 01 Dec, 2017)

3. Statistics Canada (2016) Postal Code[OM] Conversion File (PCCF), Reference Guide, 2016. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 92-154-G. Retrieved from: http://www5.statcan.gc.ca/olc-cel/olc.action?objId=92-154-G&objType=2&lang=en&limit=0 (Accessed on 28 Nov, 2017).

4. Statistics Canada (2016) Population Centre and Rural Area Classification, 2016. Retrieved from: http://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p3VD.pl?Function=getCET_Page&VD=339235&Item=342170 (Accessed on 01 Dec, 2017)

5. Statistics Canada (2016) Dictionary, Census of Population, 2016. Retrieved from: http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/dict/index-eng.cfm (Accessed on 01 Dec, 2017)