

State of South Carolina
Office of the Secretary of State
The Honorable Mark Hammond

1205 PENDLETON STREET, SUITE 525
COLUMBIA, SC 29201

803-734-2170
sos.sc.gov



October 4, 2023

The Honorable Janet S. Joye, Mayor
Town of Cope
Post Office Box 97
Cope, South Carolina 29038-0097

Dear Ms. Joye:

The Town of Cope was incorporated in 1894; however, since that time, its population appears to have declined below the level required by law to maintain its status as a municipality. S.C. Code of Laws § 5-1-100 states that “[w]hen following its incorporation a municipality’s population has decreased to less than fifty inhabitants, the certificate of the municipality must be automatically forfeited and void.” According to the 2020 United States Census, the population of the Town of Cope is now thirty-seven; please see the enclosed letter from the South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office. Without additional information to the contrary, the certificate of incorporation would be forfeited and void pursuant to S.C. Code of Laws § 5-1-100.

If you have additional documentation to provide, or would like to discuss this matter further, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Mark Hammond
Secretary of State

cc: The Honorable Jean Marie Jump, Councilmember, Town of Cope
The Honorable Darren E. Jump, Councilmember, Town of Cope
The Honorable William D. Workman IV, Councilmember, Town of Cope
The Honorable Marlene R. Workman, Councilmember, Town of Cope
The Honorable Vernon Stephens, State Senator
The Honorable Justin T. Bamberg, State Representative
The Honorable Johnnie Wright Sr., Chairman, Orangeburg County Council



EDWARD B. GRIMBALL, Chairman
C. CURTIS HUTTO
G. MICHAEL MIKOTA, Ph.D.

SOUTH CAROLINA REVENUE AND FISCAL AFFAIRS OFFICE

FRANK A. RAINWATER
Executive Director

October 3, 2023

Ms. Melissa W. Dunlap
Deputy Secretary of State and Chief Legal Counsel
Office of the Secretary of State
1205 Pendleton Street, Ste. 525
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Ms. Dunlap:

This letter is in response to a request for verification of municipalities within the state with a population of less than fifty for purposes of Section 5-1-100. This section relates to forfeiture of a municipality's certification of incorporation due to the decrease in a municipality's population below fifty. As of the 2020 Census, there are two municipalities within the state that have a population of less than fifty. The following table displays the 2020 decennial Census population for the municipalities within the state that have a population of less than fifty.

Population of less than 50 as of the 2020 Census

Municipality	2020 Population
Cope Town	37
Jenkinsville Town	40

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

If we may be of further assistance, please advise.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frank A. Rainwater".

Frank A. Rainwater
Executive Director

FAR/mkm

cc: Ms. Shannon Wiley, General Counsel and Public Information Director