



## Background Reading for Local Government

Elections for national and state officials sometimes overshadow the importance of local elections — elections at the county or city level. But in many ways local elections have a more immediate on the daily lives of citizens than national and state elections. In Kentucky, these county officials are elected:

- county judge/executive
- justice of the peace (commonly called magistrate)
- county attorney
- county clerk
- property valuation administrator (Ky. Const., sec. 99)
- sheriff
- jailer
- coroner
- constable
- county surveyor

Kentucky's Legislative Research Commission (LRC) website has an informational bulletin, "[Duties of Elected County Officials](https://legislature.ky.gov/LRC/Publications/Informational%20Bulletins/ib114.pdf)," which summarizes the duties of each official in county governments in Kentucky. (<https://legislature.ky.gov/LRC/Publications/Informational%20Bulletins/ib114.pdf>) A chapter on each office sets out its most important duties, as well as its powers, qualifications, compensation, and historical background.

Cities also have elected officials such as mayors and city council members, and some cities and counties have merged governments. The LRC informational bulletin "[Kentucky Municipal Statutory Law](https://legislature.ky.gov/LRC/Publications/Informational%20Bulletins/ib145.pdf)" explains the Kentucky laws about municipal and urban-county governments and provides examples of organizational plans. (<https://legislature.ky.gov/LRC/Publications/Informational%20Bulletins/ib145.pdf>)

Another local election is that of school board members. Elections of school board members have a direct impact on the learning experience of students in the school district the board oversees. The [Kentucky School Boards Association website](https://www.ksba.org/BeingBoardMember.aspx) has information about the responsibilities of school board members. (<https://www.ksba.org/BeingBoardMember.aspx>)

By learning more about the elections and elected officials in your own county, school district, and community, you become an informed citizen who can discuss issues that impact you directly.