

# Summary: Local Government

## City Government

Most Floridians live in small cities. Some cities are called towns or villages. City governments are called municipal governments. They decide on local laws, taxes, and services. Municipal governments hire police, firefighters, and animal control officers to protect their citizens. They also repair streets, collect trash, and take care of public land.

Citizens play an important part in city governments. They vote for people to represent them. Citizens can also share their opinions and attend city council meetings.

City council members work with the mayor to manage the city and to pass local laws. The mayor leads city council meetings and represents the city at public events. In some cities, the city council chooses the mayor. In other cities, voters elect the mayor. Sometimes, the city council also hires a city manager to keep the city running smoothly.

## Counties and Districts

A county government is another kind of local government. Florida is divided into 67 counties. A county can include more than one city. County voters elect commissioners to run the county government. Commissioners make decisions about things like roads and land that may be part of many cities.

Each county has its own school district. Voters in each school district elect a school board. School board members make decisions about the public schools. School districts collect taxes from property owners that help pay for education. School districts also get money from the state.

Florida has many special districts. Like county governments, special districts are local governments. But they only work on one important issue, such as fire services or city improvements.

In 1972, five special districts were created to work on water management. These special districts make sure that Floridians have fresh water for drinking and recreation. They work to control floods and stop pollution.



### Before You Read

Find and underline each vocabulary word.

**municipal** *adjective*, local and self-governing

**city council** *noun*, a group of elected officials who decide how to run the city

**mayor** *noun*, a person who leads city council meetings and represents the city at public events

**city manager** *noun*, a person who keeps the city running smoothly

**special district** *noun*, local governments that work on one important issue



### After You Read

**REVIEW** In what way can citizens take part in their city governments? Highlight two sentences that tell the answer.

**REVIEW** In what ways are county governments and special districts alike? Circle the sentence that tells the answer.