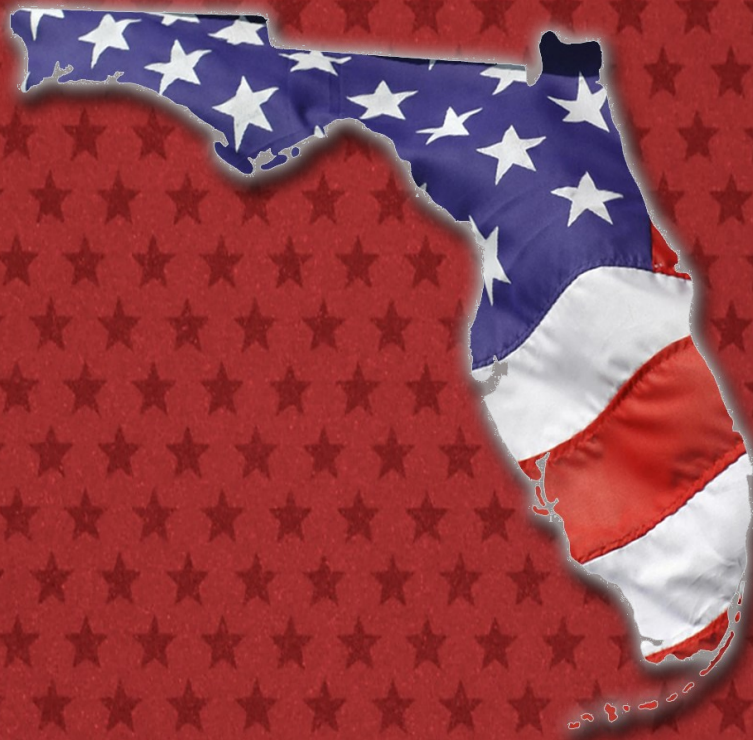


FLORIDA CIVICS 101



HOW GOVERNMENT WORKS IN YOUR STATE

Published By:

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ELECTING A PRESIDENT

According to the Constitution, the **President of the United States** must be at least 35 years old, a citizen of the United States from birth and a U.S. resident for 14 years. The term of office is **four years**.

The President of the United States is elected by the **electoral college** system of voting. Each state is allocated a number of electors equal to the number of its U.S. Senators, which is always 2 for each state, plus the number of its U.S. Representatives (Florida has 30 since the 2020 census). Therefore, **Florida now has 30 electoral votes**.

After their caucuses and primaries, the major parties nominate their candidates for President and Vice President at their national conventions – (traditionally held in the summer preceding the November election). Then on the Tuesday following the first Monday in November (in years divisible by 4), the people in each state cast their ballots. Whichever party slate wins the most popular vote in the states wins all of the electors of that state. The candidate for President with the most electoral votes, (provided that it is an absolute majority) is declared President. In the event no one obtains an absolute majority of electoral votes, the U.S. House of Representatives (as the chamber closest to the people) selects the President from among the top three contenders with each state casting only one vote and an absolute majority of the states being required to elect. If no one obtains a majority, the U.S. Senate then elects the President among the two top contenders.

Question:

How many years can a person serve as President of the U.S.?

Answer:

A president is limited to serving for 10 years in office. He or she can only be elected to two full terms according to the 22nd amendment to the U.S.

Constitution. However, if an individual becomes president through the order of succession, then they are allowed to serve an additional two years.



LIST OF U.S. PRESIDENTS FROM 1789 UNTIL TODAY:

01. George Washington
02. John Adams
03. Thomas Jefferson
04. James Madison
05. James Monroe
06. John Quincy Adams
07. Andrew Jackson
08. Martin Van Buren
09. William Henry Harrison
10. John Tyler
11. James K. Polk
12. Zachary Taylor
13. Millard Fillmore
14. Franklin Pierce
15. James Buchanan
16. Abraham Lincoln
17. Andrew Johnson
18. Ulysses S. Grant
19. Rutherford B. Hayes
20. James Garfield
21. Chester A. Arthur
22. Grover Cleveland
23. Benjamin Harrison
24. Grover Cleveland
25. William McKinley
26. Theodore Roosevelt
27. William Howard Taft
28. Woodrow Wilson
29. Warren G. Harding
30. Calvin Coolidge
31. Herbert Hoover
32. Franklin D. Roosevelt
33. Harry S. Truman
34. Dwight D. Eisenhower
35. John F. Kennedy
36. Lyndon B. Johnson
37. Richard M. Nixon
38. Gerald R. Ford
39. James Carter
40. Ronald Reagan
41. George H. W. Bush
42. William J. Clinton
43. George W. Bush
44. Barack H. Obama
45. Donald J. Trump
46. Joseph R. Biden, Jr.



FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVES

The national legislative body of the United States is called the **Congress** and consists of the **Senate** and the **House of Representatives**.

U.S. SENATORS

Each of the fifty states have two **United States Senators**. The U.S. Senate position is elected “at large” from the entire state. To be a U.S. Senator candidate, you must be a U.S. citizen for at least 9 years, be 30 years of age, be a registered elector, and a resident of the state from which you are elected. The terms of office are **six years**. Candidates must file qualifying papers with the State Division of Elections. They are subject to campaign finance laws administered by the federal government. The federal campaign finance laws differ from the Florida campaign finance laws. These candidates are required to file statements of their net worth.

U.S. REPRESENTATIVES

Candidates for the **United States House of Representatives** (Congressional office) are elected from “single-member” districts in accordance with federal requirements. The number of congressional districts allocated to a state is predicated upon the state’s decennial census taken April 1st of each year ending in “0” or every 10 years. According to the results from the 2020 census, Florida now has **30 congressional seats**. To become a candidate for congressional office, you must be a U.S. Citizen for at least 7 years, be 25 years of age, a registered elector, and a resident of the state when elected. Congressional terms are **two years**. Candidates for these offices file qualifying papers with the State Division of Elections and must also file net worth statements. These candidates are subject to federal campaign finance laws which differ from Florida campaign laws.

FLAGLER COUNTY DISTRICTS:

- ★ U.S. CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 7
- ★ STATE SENATE DISTRICT 7
- ★ STATE HOUSE DISTRICT 19



STATE REPRESENTATIVES

EXECUTIVE

Florida’s Constitution provides the same governmental organization found on the federal level: executive, legislative and judicial – in order to provide checks and balances. The executive branch of state government is also known as the “cabinet”. The **Governor and Lieutenant Governor** share power with the **Attorney General, Chief Financial Officer** and the **Commissioner of Agriculture**. These offices compose the “cabinet” and are elected “at large” statewide. Effective January 7, 2003, the Comptroller and the State Treasurer/Insurance Commissioner have been combined into one Chief Financial Officer’s position. The Secretary of State and the Commissioner of Education are no longer elected positions, but appointed positions. To become a candidate for Governor, Lt. Governor, Chief Financial Officer and Commissioner of Agriculture, you must be a U.S. Citizen, be at least 30 years of age, a registered elector and a resident of the state for at least the preceding 7 years. To become a candidate for Attorney General, you must meet all of these requirements, plus be a member of the Florida Bar for the preceding 5 years. The term of office is **four years**. Candidates for these offices file qualifying papers with the State Division of Elections. Candidates must file statements of their net worth. State executive offices have term limits of eight years.

LEGISLATIVE

Election to both the **Florida Senate** and the **Florida House of Representatives** is from “single-member” districts. Florida Senators are elected to **four year terms**. Florida Representatives are elected to **two year terms**. Both positions are subject to the party nomination process. Candidates for these offices file with the Florida Division of Elections and must also file statements of net worth. To become a candidate for the Florida Senate or the Florida House of Representatives you must be a U.S. Citizen, at least 21 years of age, a registered elector and a resident of the district you are seeking to represent upon taking office and a resident of the state for at least two years prior to the election. State legislative offices have term limits of eight years.



COUNTY GOVERNMENT

The Florida Constitution provides for “**counties**” and that each county is a school district, and that the voters within the county shall elect its officers. The county government is also organized like the federal and state government with executive, legislative and judicial branches. The county officers for Flagler County are:

- **County Judge**
- **Property Appraiser**
- **Tax Collector**
- **County Commission, Five Members**
- **Sheriff**
- **Clerk of Courts**
- **Supervisor of Elections**
- **School Board, Five Members**



COUNTY JUDGE

County Judges are elected for **six year terms**. They are elected “at large” within the boundaries of the county. To be a candidate, you must be a U.S. citizen, a resident within the jurisdiction of the court, a registered voter, and have been a member of the Florida Bar for the preceding five years. County Judges with opposition appear on the Primary election ballot. To win this office, the candidate must receive 50% plus 1 vote of the votes cast. All registered voters may vote for this office – without regard to political party affiliation. If no candidate received a majority of the vote in the Primary, a runoff election appears on the General election ballot. County judges file qualifying papers with the county Supervisor of Elections.

COUNTY OFFICES

The term for all of the other county offices is **four years**. All county officers file as candidates with the Supervisor of Elections. To be a candidate, you must be a U.S. Citizen, reside within the county, be a registered voter, and in the case of county commission and school board, you must reside within the jurisdiction of the district you seek to represent. The salary of county offices is set by a formula based upon the county’s population. With the exception of County Judge and School Board members, these offices are subject to the party nomination process.

ELECTION SCHEDULES

The five constitutional officers (Sheriff, Property Appraiser, Clerk of Courts, Tax Collector and Supervisor of Elections) are elected in Presidential election years. The county commission and school board have staggered terms. Three county commission and two school board seats are up for election in Presidential election years; two county commission and three school board seats are up for election in Gubernatorial (Florida Governor & Cabinet) election years.





COUNTY GOVERNMENT, CONT'D

SHERIFF

The Sheriff is the chief law enforcement officer of the county, responsible for the operation of the jail and provides court-related functions – bailiff, warrants, civil process. The Sheriff's budget is funded through property taxes with some small portion coming from confiscated property fees.

PROPERTY APPRAISER

The Property Appraiser appraises “real property” at fair market value – (land and buildings); appraises tangible personal property in the county; prepares the assessment rolls; and administers exemptions. This office is funded by a “commission” on the appraised value by governmental unit. The Florida Department of Revenue approves this budget.

TAX COLLECTOR

The Tax Collector bills and collects property taxes, tangible personal property taxes and special assessment taxes; registers and titles motor vehicles and vessels; issues motor vehicle license plates; issues hunting, saltwater and freshwater fishing licenses; and disburses taxes collected to various governmental bodies. This is a “fee” office. The Florida Statutes sets a fee to be paid to the Tax Collector for each transaction. The Florida Department of Revenue approves this budget.

CLERK OF COURTS

The Clerk of Courts is the county auditor; the Clerk of the Board (maintains minutes and records of the County Commission); the Clerk of both County and Circuit Courts; the official recorder for all real estate sales within the county; collects and disburses child support payments for participants; and issues marriage licenses. This office is funded through a combination of property taxes levied and fees charged by state law.

SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS

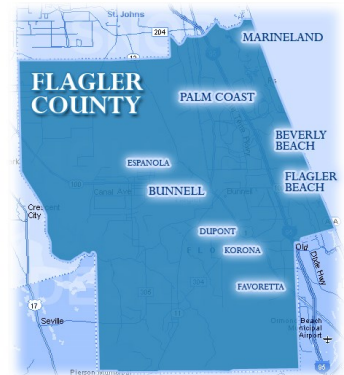
The Supervisor of Elections registers voters for federal, state, county, district and city elections; selects, trains and pays poll workers and poll deputies; qualifies candidates for county and independent district offices; monitors and receives campaign reports; supplies and collects financial disclosures forms required by law; and conducts federal, state, county and independent district elections. This office is funded through property taxes.

COUNTY COMMISSION

The County Commission enacts local ordinances; enacts and enforces zoning standards; adopts and enforces building construction standards; constructs and operates sewer plants; constructs and operates water treatment plants; constructs and operates landfills and trash disposal programs; constructs and maintains county roads; constructs and maintains county sidewalks; constructs and maintains public county parks; constructs and operates public libraries; provides for the health and general welfare of county citizens; and sets the ad valorem millage rate necessary to raise taxes required to fund approved programs and services. Commission budgets use a combination of funding sources – property taxes, occupational licenses, assessments, user fees, impact fees, bonds, tax anticipation certificates, grants, etc.

SCHOOL BOARD

The School Board operates, controls and supervises all free public schools within the school district; provides adequate educational facilities for all children; assigns students to schools; and determines the rate of school district taxes. School Board budgets use a combination of funding sources – property taxes, impact fees, bonds, grants, etc.





JUDICIAL OFFICES

Judicial elections are governed by Florida's Constitution and Florida Statutes Chapter 105. **Judicial candidates for the Florida Supreme Court and various District Courts of Appeal are selected as follows:**

- 1) Initial assumption of the justice position is through the appointment by the Governor after recommendation by the Judicial Nominating Commission.
- 2) The Justice serves a six-year term at which time he/she must qualify for "Retention" for that office. The retention question can only appear on the general election ballot.
- 3) Should the majority of votes cast on a particular justice's retention be "against" retention, the Justice would be removed at the end of the term and the Governor would again appoint another attorney to the position.

FLAGLER COUNTY JUDICIAL DISTRICTS:

★ 5TH DISTRICT COURT OF APPEALS

★ 7TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT



FLORIDA SUPREME COURT

The Florida Supreme Court is composed of seven justices. The Chief Justice is chosen by a majority of the members of the court. To be a candidate, you must be a resident of the state and reside in the territorial jurisdiction of the court. No justice may serve after reaching seventy years of age except upon temporary assignment or to complete a term – one-half of which he has already served. No one may be a candidate who has not been a member of the Florida Bar for the preceding ten years. Judicial retention appears only on the General election ballot. This election is non-partisan. Candidate paperwork is filed with the Florida Division of Elections as are statements of net worth. Terms of office are **six years**.

DISTRICT COURTS OF APPEAL

The number of district courts of appeal are set by general law enacted by the Legislature. No District Court of Appeal shall have less than three justices. To be a candidate, you must be a resident of the state and the territorial jurisdiction of the court. No justice may serve after reaching seventy years of age except upon temporary assignment or to complete a term – one-half of which he has already served. No one may be a candidate for this position who has not been a member of the Florida Bar for the preceding ten years. Judicial retention for this office is non-partisan and appears only the General election ballot. Candidates for retention file qualifying papers with the Florida Division of Elections as well as net worth statements. Terms of office are **six years**. Initial appointment is by the Governor after recommendation by the Judicial Nominating Commission. Flagler is in the 5th District Court of Appeals.

JUDICIAL CIRCUITS

Florida is currently divided into 20 judicial circuits. Each judicial circuit is composed of several counties. Flagler County is in the 7th Judicial Circuit. Each judicial circuit elects a State Attorney, Public Defender, and Circuit Judges.

The **State Attorney** and **Public Defender** positions are subject to the general law regarding the partisan nomination process and subsequent General election. These positions are **four year terms**. Candidates for State Attorney and Public Defender file qualifying papers with the Florida Division of Elections. They must also file statements of their net worth. To become a candidate for State Attorney you must be a U.S. Citizen, a resident of the circuit upon taking office, a registered elector and be a member of the Florida Bar for the preceding 5 years. You must not engage in private practice but instead devote full time service to the duties of State Attorney. To become a candidate for Public Defender you must be a U.S. Citizen, a resident of the circuit upon taking office, a registered elector and a member of the Florida Bar for the preceding 5 years.

Circuit Judges are non-partisan positions and are elected for **six year terms**. They are elected "at large" from within the judicial circuit. Circuit Judges must also file for office by group number. If the judgeship is contested, the race appears on the Primary ballot. All registered voters may vote for the circuit judgeship – without regard to political party affiliation. If a candidate does not receive a majority of the vote (50% plus 1) in the Primary election, a runoff election is held at the General election. Circuit judges file qualifying papers with the Florida Division of Elections.



VOTING IN FLAGLER COUNTY

TO REGISTER TO VOTE IN FLAGLER COUNTY, YOU MUST:

- ✓ **Be a U.S. Citizen**
- ✓ **Be a legal resident in Flagler County**
- ✓ **Be at least 18 years old**
(you may pre-register if you are 16 or 17)



PICK UP A FLORIDA VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATION AT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

DRIVERS LICENSE OFFICES

Bunnell Location

1769 East Moody Blvd., Bldg. 2, Ste. 102
Bunnell, FL 32110
Phone: (386) 313-4160

Palm Coast Location

213 St. Joe Plaza Drive
Palm Coast, FL 32137

Flagler Beach Location

2525 Moody Boulevard
Flagler Beach, FL 32136

FLAGLER COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

2500 Palm Coast Pkwy. N.W.
Palm Coast, FL 32137
Phone: (386) 446-6763
www.FlaglerLibrary.org

FLAGLER BEACH PUBLIC LIBRARY

315 S. Seventh Street
Flagler Beach, FL 32136
Phone: (386) 517-2030
<https://www.cityofflaglerbeach.com/125/Library>

POSTOFFICES

Bunnell Post Office

704 East Moody Blvd.
Bunnell, FL 32110

Palm Coast Post Office

2 Pine Cone Drive
Palm Coast, FL 32137

Flagler Beach Post Office
300 S Daytona Avenue
Flagler Beach, FL 32136

SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS OFFICE

1769 East Moody Blvd, Bldg 2, Ste 101
Bunnell, FL 32110
Phone: (386) 313-4170
Hours of Operation
Monday - Friday: 8:30a.m. - 4:30p.m.
www.FlaglerElections.gov



WHY WE VOTE

We the People . . .

Defend a tradition of the citizens of the United States since our country's birth more than 200 years ago, the right to vote.

Exercise one of the most important rights and responsibilities U.S. citizens have: our opportunity to choose our leaders and express our opinions on issues.

Send a message to the world we are a country "of the people, by the people and for the people." We individually make our own choices by secret ballot, regardless of our gender, race, social or economic status, or nationality.

Honor the precious gift from previous generations of Americans, who worked, fought and died so we might obtain and keep our right to vote. We should never take this privilege for granted.

Say in a democracy decisions are made by a majority of the people. Decisions are made by a majority of the people who make their voices heard and who vote.

Know democracy and freedom are strengthened and protected when citizens become active in the electoral process.

Should remember to exercise our rights as citizens of this great country and vote in each election.

As your Supervisor of Elections, I am pleased to present this Florida Civics 101 booklet which explains the government here in the state of Florida.

I hope this will encourage your participation in the greatest gift our forefathers gave us.
REGISTER & VOTE!

Kaiti Lenhart

Flagler County Supervisor of Elections



Vote in Honor of a Veteran