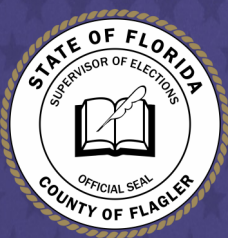


# FLORIDA CIVICS 101



## HOW GOVERNMENT WORKS IN YOUR STATE



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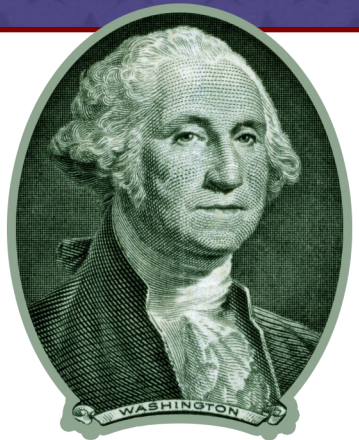
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## ELECTING A PRESIDENT

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 27 Representatives since the 2010 census. Therefore, Florida now has **29 electoral votes**.

After their caucuses and primaries, the major parties nominate their candidates for President and Vice President. On the Tuesday following the first Monday in November in years evenly 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.



### 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

# 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 1<sup>st</sup> of each year ending in “0”. According to the results from the 2010 census, Florida now has **27 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  
FEDERAL  
DISTRICT  
FOR  
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE:**  
★ **U.S.  
CONGRESSIONAL  
DISTRICT 6**



# 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:

Flagler County  
FLORIDA



- **County Judge**
- **Property Appraiser**
- **Tax Collector**
- **County Commission, Five Members**
- **Sheriff**
- **Clerk of Court & Comptroller**
- **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. Contested County Judges appear on the first primary 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 first primary, a runoff election appears on the general election ballot. County judges file qualifying papers as well as initial financial net worth statements with the county Supervisor of Elections. Once elected, financial net worth statements are filed with the Commission on Ethics in Tallahassee.

## 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. All county officers must file a statement of net worth in addition to other qualifying papers. 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, the 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 in Presidential election years; two county commission and three school board seats are up in Gubernatorial election years.



## **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 CIRCUIT COURT & COMPTROLLER**

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 105. **Judicial candidates for the Florida Supreme Court and various District Courts of Appeal are selected as follows:**

01. Initial assumption of the justice position is through the appointment by the Governor after recommendation by the Judicial Nominating Commission.
02. 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.
03. 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 5<sup>th</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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 first 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:

### BUNNELL

Supervisor of Elections Office  
In the Government Services Building  
1769 E. Moody Blvd., Bldg. 2, Ste. 101  
Bunnell, FL 32110

**Download an application online:**  
**[www.FlaglerElections.com](http://www.FlaglerElections.com)**

Bunnell Post Office  
704 E Moody Blvd.  
Bunnell, FL 32110

Health Department / WIC  
301 Dr Carter Blvd.  
Bunnell, FL 32110

### FLAGLER BEACH / BEVERLY BEACH

Flagler Beach City Hall  
105 S 2nd Street  
Flagler Beach, FL 32136

Beverly Beach Town Hall  
2735 N Ocean Shore Blvd  
Flagler Beach, FL 32136

Flagler Beach Post Office  
300 S. Daytona Ave.  
Flagler Beach, FL 32136

Flagler Beach Library  
315 7th Street S.  
Flagler Beach, FL 32136

### PALM COAST

Palm Coast Community Center  
305 Palm Coast Parkway NE  
Palm Coast, FL 32137

Tax Collector Branch Office  
7 Old Kings Road North, Suite 12  
Palm Coast, FL 32137

Palm Coast Post Office  
2 Pine Cone Drive  
Palm Coast, FL 32137

Flagler County Public Library  
2500 Palm Coast Pkwy NW  
Palm Coast, FL 32137

# 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.

**We the People** ... 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.

**We the People**... 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 and/or economic status or nationality.

**We the People**... 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.

**We the People**... say in a democracy decisions are made by a majority of the people. Unfortunately, this is not true. Decisions are made by a majority of the people who make their voices heard and who vote, a distinguishable difference.

**We the People**... know democracy and freedom are strengthened and protected when citizens become active in the electoral process.

**We the People**... 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 the Florida Civics 101 information packet which explains the government here in the State of Florida. I hope this will encourage your participation in the electoral process.

***Kaiti Lenhart***

Supervisor of Elections