

FAC has the tools to help you be a more effective leader in your county.



An Education Program of the Florida Association of Counties



**FLORIDA
ASSOCIATION OF
COUNTIES**





County Commissioners Certification Program

Providing high quality and comprehensive educational opportunities for county commissioners and staff is a high priority for the Florida Association of Counties (FAC). To that end, in 1990, FAC created the Florida Counties Foundation (FCF), which is the training and technical assistance arm of the Association.

The mission of FCF is to enhance the leadership skills of county officials, to facilitate innovative thinking and action by those leaders, and, ultimately to enable counties to prosper as communities in the 21st century.

In 1996, the Foundation launched the Certified County Commissioner Program. A voluntary program of study designed for county commissioners to learn information and enhance skills relevant to their duties and responsibilities. Completion of the course requirements results in the designation of Certified County Commissioner. To date, over 280 commissioners have graduated from the CCC program.

Frequently asked Questions about the CCC Program

Who may participate in the program?

This program was designed for county commissioners. Only commissioners will receive the Certified County Commissioner designation. County Staff are welcome to attend and “audit” the courses.

How do you enroll in the program?

When you attend your first CCC course, you will automatically be enrolled in the program. Your course credits will continue to be tracked until you have completed the entire CCC program.

Who teaches the program?

A team of experts which includes university faculty, government officials, professional speakers, FAC members, and FAC staff.

How long does it take to receive the CCC designation?

CCC courses are offered year round at FAC conferences. The core courses, with exception of the New Commissioner Workshop, are offered once a year. This program can be completed with 12 to 18 months. To graduate, commissioners must take a total of 42 hours of courses. This includes 30 hours of core, 6 hours of elective and 6 hours of continuing education. The CCC graduation ceremony is held every year during FAC’s Annual Conference.

How much does the program cost?

Ten courses will be offered this calendar year. The registration fee for five of the courses will be \$125 a day, while the other five course registrations are built into the conference registration price. The FCF Board is offering registration scholarships. A scholarship of \$125 for the registration fee will be awarded to the first 10 small county commissioners (pop. of less than 75,000) who register for a course and request the scholarship.

How does FAC keep track of the courses that I have taken?

All core and elective courses will have sign-in sheets passed around the room throughout the session. In order to receive credit for a course, you must attend the entire program from start to finish. For continuing education credits, you need to register and attend the conference in order to receive credit.

How can I keep track of the CCC courses that I have taken?

All of your records are maintained at the FAC office. Transcripts will be emailed to you upon request. The FAC office will also notify you once you are getting close to graduation to ensure that you take the final courses needed to complete the program.

County Commissioners Certification Program

CORE CCC COURSES

The program content for each core course is designed to cover fundamental information necessary to effectively serve as a county commissioner. To be certified, commissioners must earn a minimum of 30 credit hours of core curriculum. Each core course is equivalent to 6 hours of credit. The majority of these programs are offered once a calendar year.

New Commissioner Workshop (Mandatory)

This in-depth course is designed to help officials transition into their new governing roles. Participants will gain an understanding of the wide range of topics that are important for their job including legal requirements, nature of county organization, finance and budget, and strategies for success in this role.

Ethics, Public Records & Sunshine Laws (Mandatory)

This course is designed to give commissioners an understanding of Florida's stringent laws. Participants will broaden their knowledge of ethics requirements for elected officials, understand the Sunshine Law and Public Records Law, learn about reporting requirements, and become familiar with the process of an ethics complaint.

Financial Management

This course provides guidance for commissioners to better manage their county's fiscal affairs. Participants will gain a basic understanding of the state's fiscal trends, budgeting process, revenue sources available to their counties and the what, when and how to issue debt.

County Government Structure & Authority

This course looks at the authority that has been granted to counties by all sources, including the citizens. Participants will broaden their knowledge of county government form and function, of state government and how it relates to federal government, and of mandates and the impact they have on counties.

Growth Management & Land Use Decisions

This course is designed to give commissioners an understanding of the history of land use planning in Florida and how we got where we are today. Participants will learn the realities of implementing comprehensive plans including how amendments, development approvals, and exceptions should be handled.

County Government Roles & Responsibilities

This course looks at the functions of county government. Participants will better understand state mandated county government services including public safety, transportation and health and human services.

Mandatory Core Course Information

The New Commissioners Workshop is mandatory for commissioners elected after 1996. However, if the New Commissioners Workshop is not completed, participation in all five of the other core classes may be substituted.

The Sunshine, Public Records & Ethics Laws Course is mandatory. Commissioners may substitute the 12-hour on-line course, Florida Code of Ethics, Sunshine Law & Public Records Act, offered by the Florida Institute of Government. The on-line course will count as 6 hours of CCC credit. FAC staff can provide information on this program.



Participating in the CCC program was an invaluable experience. The information I received from the instructors and my peers in the program was like obtaining a college degree in county government.

**Commissioner Janet Taylor
Hendry County**

ELECTIVE CCC COURSES

The following courses develop skills that are important to county commissioners. A maximum of 6 credit hours from these or similar classes may be applied toward the 42 hours required for certification. Each elective course is equivalent to 3 hours of credit. Four elective courses are provided throughout the year. The program topics offered vary from year to year.

Diversity Training

This course will focus on strengthening county governance and leadership given the ever changing make-up of Florida's citizens. Participants will understand how their community is changing, how to resolve conflict in a diverse environment and how to lead through the change.

Economic Development

This course explains how counties can identify, implement and support successful economic development activities to increase well-paying employment opportunities and create a broader tax-base. Participants will understand the basics about their local economy how to cultivate new companies and retain existing ones.

Effective Communications

This course provides practical hands-on-training of proven communication strategies that will help commissioners better communicate with constituents. Participants will learn to communicate comfortably and effectively in any situation.

Emergency Management

This course will examine the role of the elected official during disasters and the requirements for an emergency management program in the county. Participants will discuss emergency management at the local, state and federal levels, including what happens in disasters from response to recovery.

Environmental Planning

This course looks at environmental planning issues affecting Florida's counties. Participants will be updated on current laws and legislation and the impacts on our state, including "hot environmental topics."

Florida's Legislative Process

This course provides guidance for commissioners on the legislative process and how to become an effective advocate for their county. Participants will gain an understanding of the inner workings of the legislature, the key players, and tips on effectively working with state leaders.

Health and Human Services

This course focuses on key health and human services that impact local government. Participants will learn their role in agency oversight, funding issues and the latest health and human services legislation that affects our state.

Human Resources/Labor Relations

This course discusses county human resource management issues and focuses on the importance of cultivating a healthy and productive workplace. Participants will learn about the complex legal aspects of human resources, the role of elected officials and key staff during labor relations and "hot topics" in each issue area.

Leadership and Strategic Thinking

County officials are uniquely positioned to achieve positive changes within their counties and in their relationships with local and state government partners. This course will provide the tools to become a high performance leader, one that leads team based strategic thinking, addresses difficult issues, and builds trust-filled relationships with their team and government counterparts.

Negotiation Skills

This course focuses on the rules and strategies needed for successful negotiations in the public sector. Participants will learn their negotiation style and the strategies needed to improve the negotiation process.

Public Safety

This course explores the vital role that local governments play in their communities to provide protection of human life and property. Participants will review the current public safety laws and legislation being discussed in Florida.

Understanding Charter Government

This course will explain the differences between charter and non-charter counties. Participants will better understand the elements of a charter, the charter process, and the challenges of implementing a charter.

CONTINUING EDUCATION CCC COURSES

Participation in statewide education and policymaking events is an important part of the curriculum. As such, the following events are CCC accredited. The credit hours for each of these programs vary due to program length. To become certified, commissioners must earn 6 hours of continuing education credits.

New Commissioner Orientation (1.5 CE)

This program is designed to provide an overview of the responsibilities a new commissioner will face on the first day of the job. Participants will be exposed to the powers and duties of a commissioner, ethics and Sunshine Laws and the valuable resources and services available through FAC.

Annual Conference (3 CE)

This conference gathers hundreds of county officials for a three day event to learn, network and share best practices to better serve Florida's counties. Participants can attend workshops with outstanding speakers and an exposition hall filled with knowledgeable service providers to gain new ideas and practices that they can apply on the job.

Legislative Day (1.5 CE)

This event is an organized day during the legislative session. Participants will receive a morning briefing on legislation important to counties, have meetings with their respective state lawmakers and attend a reception honoring the Florida Legislature.

Policy Committee Conference (1.5 CE)

This conference brings together FAC's Legislative Policy Committees to examine the Association's agenda for the next legislative session. Participation on these committees is open to any FAC member wanting to participate in the policy development process. Members may serve on any of FAC's four standing committees and the urban and rural caucuses. Only county commissioners may vote, while staff serves in an advisory role.

Legislative Conference (2 CE)

This conference is a critical element of FAC's policy making process. This event is used to determine a consensus on legislative positions for Florida's counties in the next legislative session. Recommendations from the policy committees are forwarded to the full membership at this event for its consideration and vote. Participation on these committees is open to all FAC members who want to participate, however, only county commissioners may vote, while staff serves in an advisory role.

I was an experienced State Legislator prior to being a County Commissioner. I went through the FAC education programs and was surprised by how much more there was to learn! I highly recommend these programs.

**Commissioner Stacy Ritter
Broward County**



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WHAT IS THE ACC PROGRAM?

Advanced County Commissioner Program (ACC) Requirements for ACC Designation

The Advanced County Commissioner (ACC) education program, is an advanced leadership program designed for graduates of the Certified County Commissioners (CCC) program. This program was launched by the Florida Counties Foundation in 2006 and has continued to thrive thanks to a partnership with the University of Florida, IFAS Extension Program for the last five years.

The ACC program is organized as a series of three seminars, with 27 hours of course work. The course content focuses on leadership with an overarching theme of growth and development in Florida. Participating Commissioners must commit to fully participate in all three seminars in order to graduate.

County Commissioners Certification Program

2011 - 2012 Calendar of Events

2011

JANUARY

5-6 **New Commissioner Workshop (6 Core)**
Alachua County

MARCH

23 **FAC Legislative Day (1.5 CE)**
Leon County

24 **CCC Workshop - Ethics, Public Records
and the Sunshine Law (6 Core)**

Leon County

25 **CCC Workshop - Growth Management
(6 Core)** Leon County

MAY

5 **Regional Webinar - Human Resources
and Labor Relations (3 Elective)**
UF/IFAS Extension Offices

JUNE

21-24 **FAC Annual Conference (3 CE)**
Orange County

22 **CCC Workshop - Financial Management
(6 Core)**

23 **CCC Workshop - Leadership (3 Elective)**

24 **CCC Post Conference Workshop -
Legislative Process (3 Elective)**

AUGUST

11 **Regional Webinar - Emergency
Management (3 Elective)**
UF/IFAS Extension Offices

SEPTEMBER

21-23 **FAC Policy Conference (1.5 CE)**
Volusia County

22 **CCC Workshop - Economic
Development (3 Elective)**

NOVEMBER

16-18 **FAC Legislative Conference (2 CE)**
Walton County
**CCC Workshop - County Structure and
Authority (6 Core)**
**CCC Workshop - County Roles and
Responsibilities (6 Core)**
**CCC Workshop - Understanding Charter
Government (3 Elective)**

2012

FEBRUARY

1 **FAC Legislative Day (1.5 CE)**
Leon County

2 **CCC Workshop - Ethics (6 Core)**

3 **CCC Workshop - Growth (6 Core)**
Leon County

MARCH

8 **Regional Webinar - Emergency
Management/Wind Mitigation
(3 Elective)**
UF/IFAS Extension Offices

APRIL

TBD **Regional Workshops Emergency
Management/Wind Mitigation
(3 Elective)**
Locations TBD

JUNE

19-22 **FAC Annual Conference (3 CE)**
Orange County

20 **CCC Workshop - Financial Management
(6 Core)**

21 **CCC Workshop - Communications
(3 Elective)**

22 **CCC Post Conference Workshop -
TBD (3 Elective)**

AUGUST

16 **Regional Webinar (3 Elective)**
UF/IFAS Extension Offices

SEPTEMBER

19-21 **FAC Policy Conference (1.5 CE)**
Pinellas County

20 **CCC Workshop - County Structure and
Authority (6 Core)**

21 **CCC Workshop - County Roles and
Responsibilities (6 Core)**

NOVEMBER

28-30 **FAC Legislative Conference (2 CE)**
New Commissioner Orientation (1CE)
Sarasota County