



FAC Public Policy Development Process

As of September 23, 2021

The Florida Association of Counties has a deliberative, consensus-built policy development process. The goal is to solicit and develop policy statements on legislative issues affecting county government. Through participation in legislative policy committees and caucuses, county officials identify, discuss, and ultimately vote on issues to be in FAC's Legislative Program. Each policy committee and caucus has one presidentially-appointed Chair and Vice Chair as well as a number of volunteer Policy Leaders. The FAC annual Legislative Program is comprised of two parts: Guiding Principles (which are effective from year to year, unless modified at the Closing Session of the Legislative Conference) and Policy Positions (which are effective for one year, from Closing Session the Legislative Conference to the next).

FAC Legislative Policy Committees:

- Finance, Tax, & Administration (FTA)
- Health, Safety, & Justice (HSJ)
- Water & Environmental Sustainability (WES)
- Agriculture & Rural Affairs (ARA)
- Community & Urban Affairs (CUA)
- Federal (Fed)
- Presidential Select Committee on Broadband*
- Presidential Select Committee on Preemption*

FAC Legislative Caucuses:

- Urban
- Rural

Policy Committee Roles and Responsibilities

- FAC policy committees are referred to as "committees of the whole," meaning that any FAC member county commissioner can volunteer (no later than May 15 of any year) to serve on any and all policy committees and that committee participation is open to any interested county commissioner who is in attendance at the policy committee meetings that take place during conferences.
- Any volunteers seeking to serve as a Policy Leader after August 1 of any given year, must notify the Chair and Vice Chair of the desired appointment. The Chair and Vice Chair of that committee will then petition the President for acceptance or denial of that request. Only Policy Leaders, the Chair, and Vice Chair have voting privileges in their respective committees. Newly elected commissioners may volunteer by December 31 of the year in which they are elected. The President will appoint these persons to their committees of choice. County staff persons and

non-committee members are strongly encouraged to participate in the discussion and provide input but are not permitted to vote.

- Each policy committee includes one presidentially appointed Chair and Vice Chair, and several presidentially appointed Policy Leaders. These roles collectively serve as the Committee Leadership for the respective policy committees.
- Each policy committee has one FAC staff point person, who coordinates Committee Leadership calls, policy committee meetings, and provides education on issues within the committee's purview.
- The Committee Leadership of each committee will have at least one meeting via conference call prior to the Innovation & Policy Conference to discuss the policy development process and Committee Leadership expectations during that conference.
- During the Innovation & Policy Conference, the Committee Leadership, led by the committee Chair and/or Vice Chair and with support from FAC staff, will consider and make recommendations on each policy proposal submitted for consideration. The county submitting the proposal will be responsible for presenting the issue to the committee. Each county submitted proposal must indicate whether the submitting county's BoCC supports the proposal or that that proposal has regional authority support. FAC staff will present FAC-submitted proposals.

Procedures for Legislative Policy Development

- Policies: Single-purpose statements addressing a specific issue or piece of legislation. Policies must address an issue of statewide, regional, or significant and widespread impact and cannot promote individual county or project appropriations. Individual counties or commissioners, or FAC staff may submit Policy Proposals.
- Guiding Principles: General policy principles of statewide importance that are relevant over several years at a time and over several individual policy issues. These statements exist automatically from year to year unless they are modified at the Legislative Conference's Closing Session by the membership.
- Policy Proposals: Proposed policies can be submitted by completing the Policy Proposal Submission Form, which is due 30 days prior to the first Legislative Executive Committee meeting of either the Innovation & Policy Conference or the Legislative Conference, whichever is sooner. Emergency submissions will be considered only upon action by the majority of the Legislative Executive Committee. Emergency submissions are those submitted after the 30 day deadline that address regulatory or legislative matters that could not have been foreseen 30 days before the conference, and are issues of a such timely nature that FAC should consider them immediately. Inaction by the submitter is not such an emergency. FAC will not accept or present for discussion and debate any policy proposals that are not sponsored by a county.

- Vetting of Policy Proposals: Upon submission, FAC staff will vet proposed policies to determine whether they fall within the Policy definition criteria. Proposals that meet the definition criteria will be assigned to a policy committee. During the Innovation & Policy Conference, Committee Leadership of each respective committee will meet to discuss the assigned proposals. At the Innovation & Policy Conference and the Legislative Conference, committees may act on policy proposals in the following ways: accept, defer, or reject. Any proposal may be modified by a committee before final action is taken.
- Voting Procedures: Each policy committee will call the meeting to order and carry out the meeting agenda. In the event that the chair is unavailable, the vice chair will preside over the meeting. Only Policy Leaders, the Chair, and Vice Chair have voting privileges. County staff persons and non-committee members are strongly encouraged to participate in the discussion and provide input but are not permitted to vote.
- Procedural Rules – The latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order as presented to the chair by FAC staff will be used to govern the conduct of committees and caucuses. The Chair of each committee will take each vote to a roll call vote unless the vote is unanimous.

Legislative Executive Committee (LEC)

- The role of Legislative Executive Committee (LEC) is to provide statewide leadership during the policy development process and to approve the policy statements recommended by the respective policy committees at the end of the Legislative Conference.
- The LEC is comprised of the following members: the FAC Executive Committee; the Chairs and Vice Chairs of each policy committee; and the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Rural and Urban Caucuses and all past presidents of the Association who are still hold office as a county commissioner.
- Policy Leaders are permitted to attend LEC meetings, but they are not permitted to vote.
- The LEC meets twice during both the Innovation & Policy Conference and the Legislative Conference, once prior to committee meetings beginning and once at the conclusion of committee work.
- At least one Chair or Vice Chair of each policy committee and caucus must attend the LEC meeting and provide a brief description of the policy proposals to be discussed at its committee meeting and the outcome of those discussions. During the first LEC meeting of each policy development conference, any policy committee chair (or vice chair if chair is absent) may claim cross jurisdiction of a policy proposal and have it heard in an additional committee. Such a claim will be effective unless the LEC votes, upon proper motion and by a major of those present, to prohibit such cross jurisdiction.

- Upon completion of the Legislative Conference policy committee work, the LEC will meet, hear reports from each policy committee chair, and act on them, in whole or in part. The LEC must vote to recommend FAC's complete legislative policy statements and top priorities for the next legislative session. That recommendation moves to action by the full membership at the Closing Session of the Legislative Conference.
- During the course of the legislative session, the LEC meets weekly via conference call (usually on Friday mornings) and is responsible for any revision, modification, deletion or addition to the policy statements adopted by the membership and may make interim policy decisions as needed.