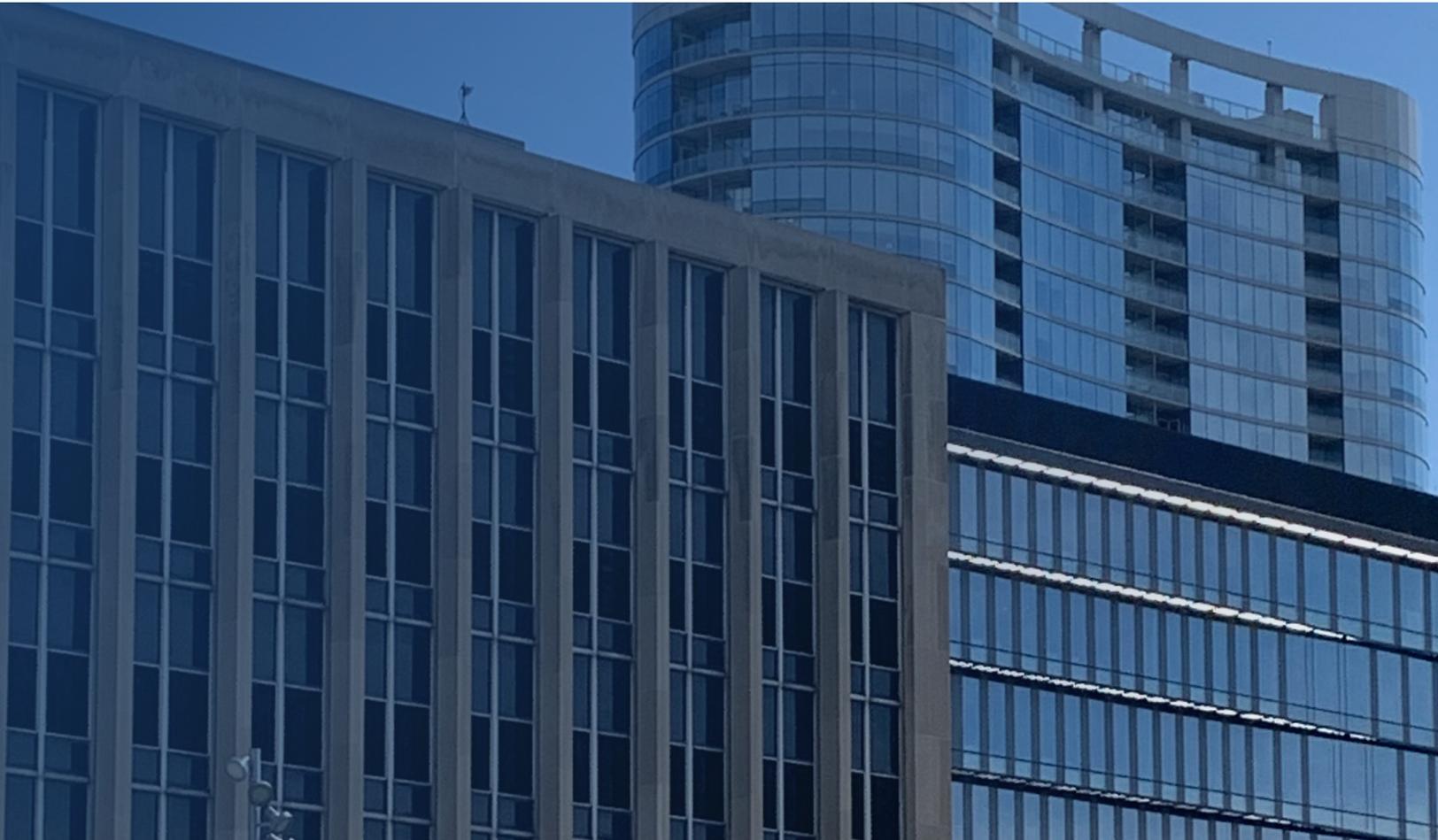


Unigov Handbook

A Guide to Indianapolis Government



AN ENCYCLOPEDIA OF INDIANAPOLIS GUIDE



Encyclopedia of Indianapolis Guides provide information to help users understand and appreciate important institutions, services, and developments that affect the life, culture, and governance of Indianapolis and Central Indiana.

The League of Women Voters (LWV) is a nonpartisan organization dedicated to the promotion of informed and active participation of citizens in government. It influences public policy through education and advocacy with membership open to men and women 16 and older.

The LWV directs its attention solely to matters of government and the individual's responsibility in that government. The LWV is active in voter education and provides impartial voting information.

Alongside the national organization, the LWV of Indianapolis chapter was founded in 1920 and has been active ever since. It began publishing the *Unigov Handbook* in 1980 with additional printings and editions in 1982, 1985, 1994, 2001, 2011, and 2016. In 2021, the *Handbook* moved to a digital format as part of the digital *Encyclopedia of Indianapolis*.

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Introduction

A Brief History of Unigov

Unigov is the name given to the consolidated city-county government of Indianapolis. In the late 1960s, Mayor [Richard Lugar](#) proposed a series of changes to state law that restructured Indianapolis' city government. Lugar and others argued that such changes would prevent an erosion of the city's tax base that was being threatened by growth beyond the city limits. Under Unigov, as these changes were called, the city limits were expanded to the county limits and many functions of city and county government were consolidated. Although Indianapolis is currently the only city in the state with the Unigov framework, Unigov is itself a set of state laws that automatically applies to any city that reaches the total population of 600,000. (The original population threshold was 250,000, but the General Assembly increased the number to prevent other cities from converting to the Unigov structure.) For more information see [Creation of Unigov](#).

On January 1, 1970, Unigov went into effect and transformed city and county government in Marion County in two fundamental ways. First, the City of Indianapolis' city limits were expanded to include all of Marion County, with the only exceptions being the excluded cities and towns of Beech Grove,

Introduction

Lawrence, Southport, and Town of Speedway. Second, many functions of city and county government were consolidated into a new municipal entity called the Consolidated City of Indianapolis. This consolidation was called unified government, hence the name “Unigov.”

Unlike the other 91 counties in Indiana, where city mayors and city councils, county boards of commissioners, and county councils all have differing executive, legislative, and fiscal powers, Unigov established a single executive, who is both mayor of the city and county executive, and a City-County Council, which is the legislative body of the city and county. As a result, the structure of Unigov appears like the structure of our state and federal government, with a separation of powers among three equal branches of government: executive, legislative, and judicial. The executive branch consists of the Mayor’s office, city departments, and county agencies. The City-County Council makes up the legislative branch, while the judicial branch consists of the court system.

At its inception, Unigov was a radical departure from the typical structure of local government in Indiana. Although much was consolidated, some entities within Marion County retained their autonomy. Therefore, despite the name “Unigov,” not all functions of local government in Marion County were absorbed by Unigov. For example:

- The county-elected offices of Assessor, Auditor, Clerk of the Circuit Court (also called County Clerk), Coroner, Prosecutor, Sheriff, Surveyor, Recorder, and Treasurer remained separate elected offices and part of Marion County government.
- Fire service and school districts were maintained at their pre-Unigov borders, with the Indianapolis Fire Department providing service within the old city limits, the excluded cities and towns (except for Southport) providing their own fire service, and the townships providing fire service.
- City and county law enforcement, provided by the Indianapolis Police Department (IPD) and the Sheriff’s Department respectively, remained separate, with IPD providing service within the old city limits and the Sheriff providing service outside of the old city limits and Excluded Cities.

- Each Excluded City and town, Beech Grove, Lawrence, Southport, and Speedway, maintained autonomy, and its own police force, school system, and mayor (except Speedway, where there is a town manager employed by the town council). Nevertheless, citizens of these Excluded Cities still vote for the Indy Mayor and Council.
- Township government remained wholly separate.

Since the creation of Unigov more than 40 years ago, efforts to streamline have continued.

- City and county information technology services have been consolidated into a county agency known as the Information Services Agency (ISA).
- In 2001, the Department of Capital Asset Management was merged into the Department of Public Works.
- In 2008, the Marion County Justice Agency was consolidated into the Department of Public Safety—which the City-County Council voted to eliminate in 2016 and reorganized into the Office of Public Health and Safety in 2017.
- In 2009, the Department of Administration was eliminated, with human resources transferring to the Office of Finance and Management.

The financial operations of the city and county have also been reformed.

- In 2005, the Auditor's duties relating to the county budget were transferred to the Controller and the Controller's duties relating to city payroll and accounts payable were transferred to the Auditor.
- In 2008, state law provided for a referendum for voters to decide whether to consolidate the duties of the Township Assessors into the County Assessor. The referendum was held in all townships except Decatur, where the township assessor position had already been eliminated because the township had fewer than 15,000 parcels. Nearly two-thirds of voters in the other townships voted for consolidation, thereby eliminating the positions of Township Assessor in Marion County.

Introduction

City and county public safety functions have undergone significant changes in recent years.

- In 2007, Indianapolis Police Department (IPD) law enforcement officers and the Sheriff 's law enforcement deputies were consolidated into a new Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department (IMPD) under the control of the Sheriff. In 2008, control went to the Mayor.
- Also, in 2007, state law changed to allow for the voluntary consolidation of township fire departments into the Indianapolis Fire Department (IFD). All but three townships—Decatur, Pike, and Wayne—have since consolidated into IFD.
- In 2009, park rangers and, in 2011, the Metropolitan Emergency Communications Agency (MECA), transferred to the then Department of Public Safety.
- In 2016, a proposal was passed to eliminate the Department of Public Safety and to create an Office of Public Health and Safety by 2017. Mayor Hogsett signed an executive order in 2016 immediately delegating more responsibility to the police and fire chiefs, making them the heads of their respective city departments, and specifying that they report directly to the Mayor.

Expansions and contractions in executive and legislative power have also changed since 1970.

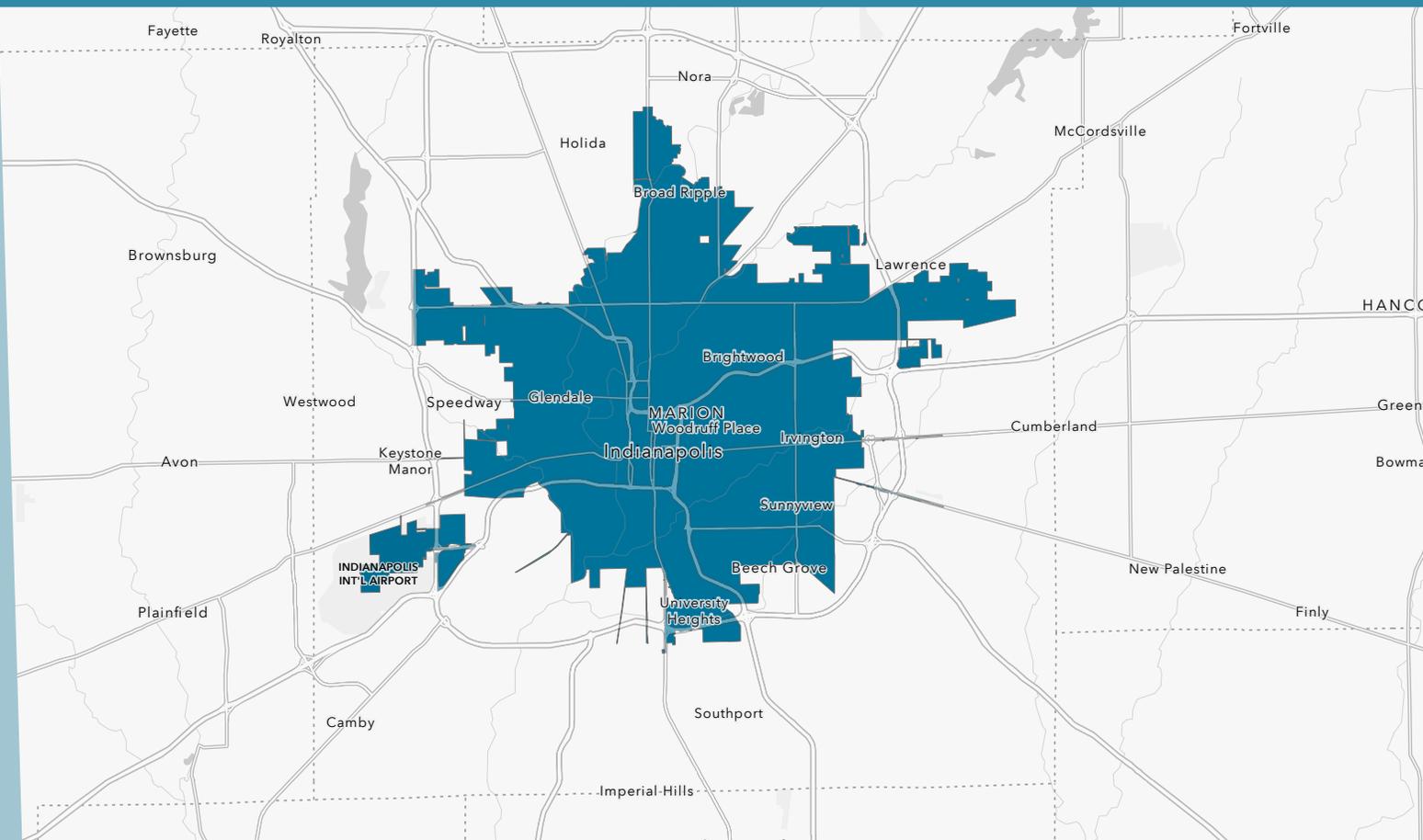
- In 2001, charter school legislation was enacted giving the Mayor authority to charter a school anywhere within the consolidated city. A board appointed by the Mayor oversees charters. Charter schools are secular, tuition-free public schools that are not subject to many of the regulations for traditional public schools. They control their own curriculum, staffing, organization, and budget.
- In 2013, state law eliminated the four at-large councillor positions on the City-County Council. These seats, which were elected by all voters in the County, had been a part of Unigov since its creation. Those positions were eliminated effective January 1, 2016.

Unigov at a Glance

These maps and diagrams answer a few basic questions about how Unigov works. They illustrate how our city limits expanded with implementation of Unigov, how government is organized, and how responsibilities for services are distributed within city boundaries.

How did Unigov change the boundaries of cities and towns?

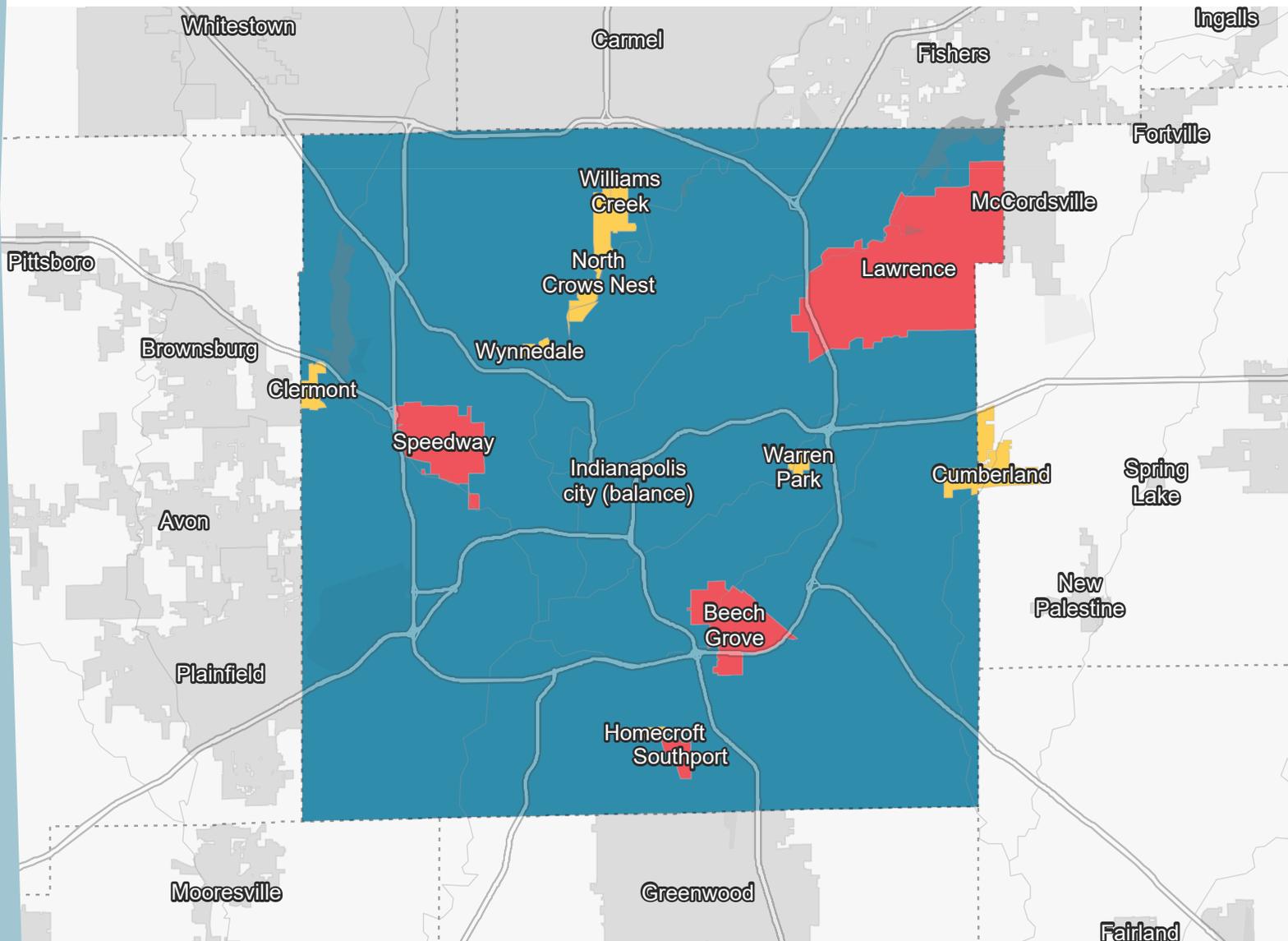
This map shows **Indianapolis' city limits** before Unigov was enacted. Most of Marion County falls outside the city limits.



Unigov at a Glance

This map shows the city limits after Unigov was enacted. They are still the same today. The consolidated city-county government includes all of Marion County. **Excluded cities** elect their own local government and have many of their own services but are still represented by City-County Council and receive some services from Indianapolis. **Included towns** are within the Indianapolis city limits and cannot enact their own laws but retain town status.

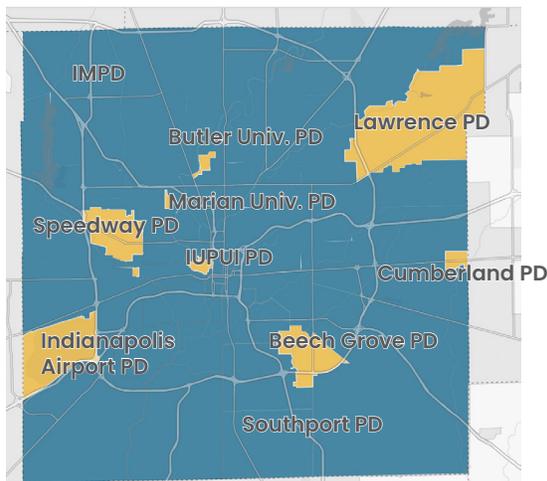
● Indianapolis ● Excluded cities ● Included towns



How are city services organized throughout the county?

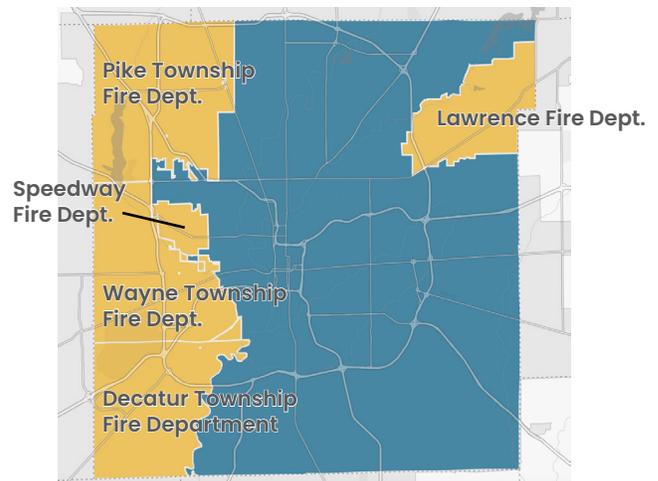
The geographic extent of services ranges widely under Unigov. Marion County is covered by 10 police departments, 6 municipal and township fire departments, but only two library systems. These maps show the extent of many services.

Police Departments



- Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department (IMPD)
- Other jurisdictions

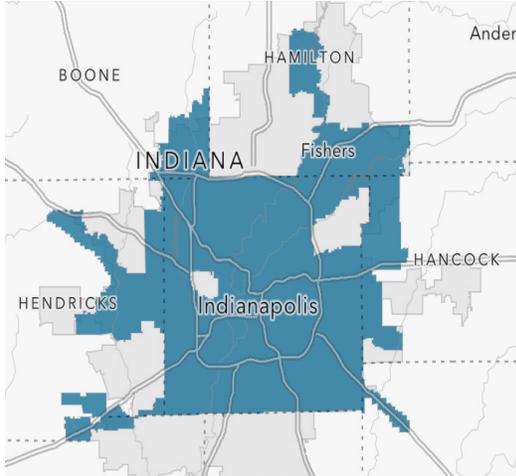
Fire Departments



- Indianapolis Fire Department
- Other service areas

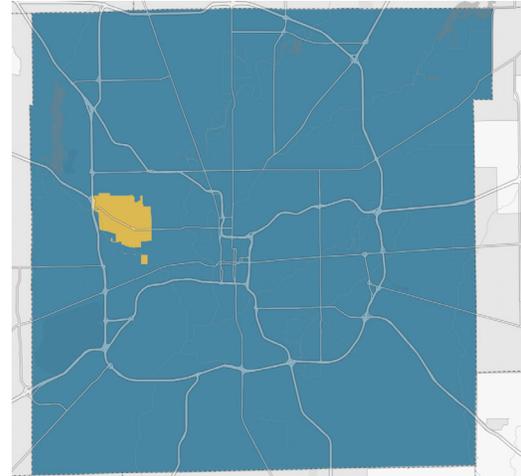
Unigov at a Glance

Water Utilities



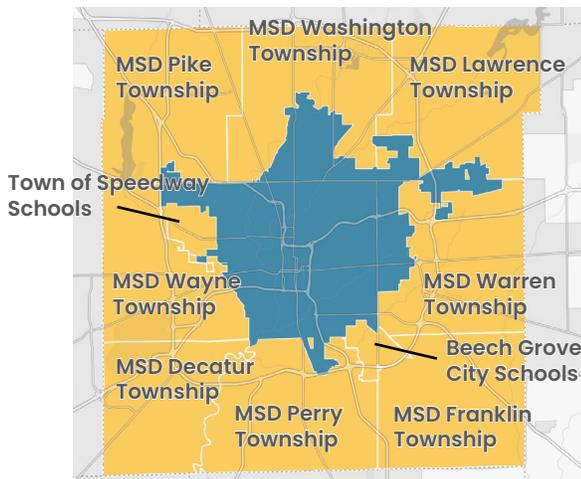
- Citizens Energy Group water service
- Other water utilities

Libraries



- Indianapolis Public Library
- Speedway Public Library

School Districts



- Indianapolis Public Schools
- Other school districts

How is our local government organized?

This is a high-level organizational chart of the various branches of local government.



Executive Branch

The Mayor

Executive Staff

Chief of staff

Deputy mayors (can change with each administration)

City Offices

Office of Audit and Performance

Office of Corporation Counsel

Office of Education Innovation

Office of Finance and Management

Office of Minority and Women-Owned Business Development

Office of Public Health and Safety

City Departments

Department of Business and Neighborhood Services

Department of Metropolitan Development

Department of Parks and Recreation

Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department

Indianapolis Fire Department

Department of Public Works



County Government

County Elected Positions

Assessor

Clerk of the Circuit Court

Coroner

Recorder

Treasurer

Sherrif

Auditor

Prosecutor

Surveyor

County Boards, Offices, and Agencies

Board of County Commissioners

Board of Voter Registration

County Election Board

State of Indiana Division of Family Resources

Indianapolis-Marion County Forensic Services Agency

Information Services Agency

Community Corrections

Public Defender Agency



Legislative Branch

City-County Council

Permanent Committees

- Committee on Committees
- Committee on Rules and Public Policy
- Committee of the Whole Council

Standing Committees

- Community Affairs
- Education
- Ethics
- Metropolitan and Economic Development
- Municipal Corporations
- Parks and Recreation
- Public Works
- Administration and Finance
- Public Safety and Criminal Justice

Special Service District Councils

- Fire Special Service District Council
- Police Special Service District Council
- Solid Waste Special Service District Council



Judicial Branch

Courts

Circuit Court

Superior Court

- Civil Division
- Criminal Division
- Probate Division
- Juvenile Division

Small Claims Court



Municipal Corporations

- Capital Improvement Board
- Health and Hospital Corporation
- Indianapolis Airport Authority
- Indianapolis-Marion County Building Authority
- Indianapolis Public Library
- Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation (IndyGo)

How is a budget created and passed?

The budget is passed by City-County Council in October, but the process is ongoing. This diagram outlines each step.

January to June



Prepare Budgets



Prior to July 1



Consult with Controller

Legislative Branch
City-County Council



Has the exclusive power to adopt budgets, levy taxes, + make appropriations but not in isolation.



Executive Branch
Mayor



City departments, county offices + agencies, + the courts prepare their individual budgets.



All departments + agencies consult with the Office of Finance and Management (ie., Controller).

Citizens



The best time to recommend changes or new services in the budget is early in the year.



Continue working with Mayor's Office + others on budget proposals.

July



Finalize Budgets



August + September



Public Hearings

Legislative Branch
City-County Council



Holds public hearings.

Executive Branch
Mayor



Budgets enter final preparation phase.



Mayor introduces the budget to the City-County Council in August.

Citizens



Last opportunity to work on the proposed budget.



This is the time for public review + comments.

October



Final Approvals



October to January



Review

Legislative Branch
City-County Council



Votes on combined city-county budget, special service districts, + most municipal budgets.



Budgets, levies + rates certified by January 15.

Executive Branch
Mayor



Mayor approves or vetoes the budget.



Reviewed and certified by the (State of Indiana) Department of Local Government Finance by Dec. 31.

Citizens



Process begins again.



Be an Informed Citizen

State Control and Local Government Overview

State Control

Throughout the United States, state control over local government is the norm rather than the exception. Local governments in Indiana are creatures of the state; their powers are granted through laws enacted by the General Assembly.

State law in Indiana gives cities, towns, and counties the power to perform certain services and to impose regulations on their citizens. Indiana cities are incorporated into three classes according to size. "First class" cities have a population more than 600,000. Indianapolis is the only such city in the state.

State law establishes one form of government for all classes of Indiana cities, the Mayor-Council form, except that third-class cities may employ a nonpartisan city manager. The administrative organization of cities, the manner of appointment, the term of office, and the powers and duties of various boards and agencies are all established by state law. Cities have the power to levy taxes only when authorized to do so by state legislation.

Until 1971, it was assumed that cities, counties, and towns could not exercise a specific power unless that power was granted by the state. In 1971, a "home rule" bill was enacted allowing cities to exercise any power necessary for the public good unless specifically prohibited by the state or federal law. Similar legislation was enacted for counties in 1975 and for towns in 1977. These changes to state law also denied certain powers to the

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local governments. Interpretation of “home rule” by the courts and State Attorney General had been mixed. As a result, cities and towns often found it more prudent to seek changes to state law and work through the Legislature to make local changes.

In 1980 the General Assembly passed a new “home rule” law that consolidated previously separate provisions and was made uniformly applicable to counties and municipalities. It was intended to give a more liberal scope to the home rule concept in Indiana and specifically declares the policy of the state is to grant units all the powers they need for the effective operation of government as to local affairs. Any doubt about the existence of a power is to be resolved in favor of its existence.

While the 1980 policy is certainly still subject to interpretation in particular instances, this statute does provide better guidelines in the event of judicial review. As with the previous home rule laws, there are still general and specific limits placed on the scope of home rule authority. Also, the “new home rule,” like the old, being statutory rather than constitutional, does not allow the “sovereign” operation of local governments without the consent of the Legislature, but is rather a grant of authority to them by the Legislature through implied consent.

In practical terms, the lack of a clear and robust home rule law in Indiana has meant that Indianapolis has found it necessary to seek approval from the Indiana General Assembly to hold a local referendum over whether to raise taxes to support public mass transit (2016). The state has denied cities, including Indianapolis, the authority to outlaw or tax the use of plastic bags (2016). The legislature overturned a City-County ordinance containing protections of tenants from unscrupulous landlords (2021). There are numerous other examples.

Local Government Overview

The Executive Branch

The executive branch carries out the day-to-day operations of the city. City government is managed by the Mayor's Office. There are six departments under the executive branch: Department of Business and Neighborhood Services (formerly Code Enforcement), Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD), Parks and Recreation, Indianapolis Marion County Police Department (IMPD), Indianapolis Fire Department (IFD), and the Department of Public Works (DPW). (As previously noted, the Department of Public Safety was eliminated in 2016, resulting in the police and fire chiefs each reporting directly to the Mayor.)

Each of the six departments has a director or chief appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City-County Council, and each department has an appointed board to oversee the operations of the department. These appointed board members are not paid, and the board meetings are open to the public.

In addition to the six departments, several offices oversee the functions within their purview: Audit and Performance, Corporation Counsel, Education Innovation, Finance and Management (overseen by the Controller), Minority and Women Business Development, and the Office of Public Health and Safety oversee the functions within their purview. Directors of each office are appointed by the Mayor and some are approved by the Council.

The Legislative Branch

The legislative branch is the City-County Council, which is made up of 25 members who represent specific districts in the county. Until January 1, 2016, there were also 4 "at-large" members who represented the entire county. (At-large seats in Marion County were eliminated by the Indiana General Assembly during its 2013 legislative session.) The Council has exclusive power to adopt budgets, levy taxes, and make appropriations. The Council

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can enact, repeal, or amend local laws called “ordinances,” which in most cases are subject to the approval of the Mayor. The Council also has the power to appoint people to boards and commissions and to confirm some of the Mayor’s appointments of department and office directors and some of the appointments to boards and commissions.

The Judicial Branch

The judicial branch consists of a Circuit Court, a Superior Court with four divisions and 32 judges, and a Small Claims Court with nine courtrooms.

Excluded Cities

The cities of Beech Grove, Lawrence, and Southport and the town of Speedway were not annexed into the Consolidated City of Indianapolis and are called “Excluded Cities.” In addition to voting for the mayors and councils of their own respective cities and towns, residents of Excluded Cities are also able to vote for the Mayor of Indianapolis and for a council member representing their district. This arrangement was passed because residents are obligated to pay many county-wide taxes and because a variety of the powers of the Mayor of Indianapolis and the city departments extend to the entire county.

Included Towns

There are 10 “Included Towns” in Marion County, characterized by a population of fewer than 5,000 residents who elected to retain town status. Those are: Clermont, Crows Nest, Homecroft, Meridian Hills, North Crows Nest, Rocky Ripple, Spring Hill, Warren Park, Williams Creek, and Wynnedale. Unlike Excluded Cities, Included Towns are within the city limits of the Consolidated City of Indianapolis and are not able to establish laws that conflict with those established by the City-County Council.

Townships

Marion County has nine [townships](#): [Center](#), [Decatur](#), [Franklin](#), [Lawrence](#), [Perry](#), [Pike](#), [Warren](#), [Washington](#), and [Wayne](#). In each of the townships, there is an elected Township Trustee, Township Constable, and a seven-member board that oversees the township budget.

Schools

Marion County has 11 school districts, which are separate from the “civil city” (i.e., the consolidated city of Unigov). Each is a separate municipality with its own elected board. The school boards determine school budgets and policies within state law. Except for charter schools, neither the Mayor nor the City-County Council has any authority over a school corporation. (In 2001 the state granted the mayor’s office the authority to authorize charter schools.) The Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) is the second largest school district in the state.

Municipal Corporations

There are seven independent Municipal Corporations: Capital Improvement Board (CIB), Health and Hospital Corporation (HHC), Indianapolis Airport Authority, Indianapolis Public Library (IndyPL), Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation (IndyGo), Indianapolis-Marion County Building Authority, and the Local Improvement Bond Bank (Bond Bank).

County Offices of Assessor, Auditor, Coroner, Prosecutor, Sheriff, Surveyor, Recorder, Treasurer, and Clerk of the Circuit Court (also called County Clerk).

Except the Assessor, all these offices are established by the state constitution and cannot be eliminated unless the constitution is amended—a difficult and time-consuming process. (Although the offices cannot be eliminated, the powers and duties of the county officials are set by state law, which is why the county auditor and sheriff have more limited powers in Marion County than in other counties.) Thus, though the Mayor is the coun-

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ty executive, Marion County government continues to exist as a separate entity. The Council is the legislative body, and other common functions between city and county government, such as information technology and human resources, are shared to reduce costs.



Executive Branch

The City: Office of the Mayor

The Mayor's Office consists of the Mayor and the Mayor's executive staff which includes a Chief of Staff and one or more Deputy Mayors. The Mayor appoints Deputy Mayors, and, under state law, the City-County Council may create additional Deputy Mayors and specify their authority. Therefore, Deputy Mayor numbers, titles, and functions change with each administration. In recent years, Deputy Mayor positions have related to neighborhoods, economic development, education, and international and cultural affairs, among others.

The Mayor's cabinet, made up of the Deputy Mayors, Mayor's Office directors, and city department directors, meets regularly to discuss policy-making activity.

Mayor's Action Center

The Mayor's Action Center provides the public with a central agency to contact for service requests, information, or complaints. Some of the reasons to call include weeds, potholes, trash, abandoned vehicles, malfunctioning traffic signals, and street maintenance.

Mayor's Neighborhood Advocates

Neighborhood Advocates connect residents and business owners to city government and provide a communications link to the Mayor's Office.

City Departments

*Citizen-led oversight boards, commissions, and committees are in italics.



DBNS

Department of Business and Neighborhood Services (DBNS)

Formerly known as the Department of Code Enforcement (the name changed in 2016), the mission of the Department of Business and Neighborhood Services (DBNS) is to protect and improve the quality of life of persons and animals in the City of Indianapolis. DBNS is the City of Indianapolis and Marion County's principal department responsible for business licenses, residential and commercial permits, and the enforcement of the Revised Code of Ordinances of the Consolidated City and County.

Administrative and Financial Operations

The purpose of this section is to manage the department's financial and administrative matters, always promoting transparency and the overall financial health of the department; and to provide the citizens of Indianapolis, DBNS, and other city departments and agencies with the address, fleet, technology, document, office, and facility management required for safe, efficient, and effective operations related to the department's core function and mission.

Board of Business and Neighborhood Services

The Director of the Department of Business and Neighborhood Services chairs this five-member board. Two members are appointed by the Mayor and two by the City-County Council for one-year terms. The board is the governing body of the department. It reviews the department budget and approves all contracts. Public meetings are held monthly.

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DBNS

Bureau of Construction Services

The Bureau of Construction Services (BCS) provides oversight and regulation of the building construction industry by inspecting both residential and commercial construction projects to ensure safe and quality construction is taking place in the City of Indianapolis.

Bureau of Environmental Services

The mission of the Bureau of Environmental Services is to assure environmental protection for Indianapolis residents and to provide government oversight and regulation of air quality, soil control, and forestry in the public rights-of-way.

Bureau of License and Permit Services

The Bureau of License and Permit Services issues compliance certification, licenses, permits, and registrations to property owners, construction contractors, and regulated businesses within the City of Indianapolis – Marion County.

Bureau of Nuisance Abatement

The Bureau of Nuisance Abatement assists with the preparation and review of legal cases, coordination of multi-agency sweeps, city advocacy and preparation of Administration Law Hearings, and support for the enforcement of the Indiana Unsafe Building Law.

Bureau of Property Safety and Maintenance Services

The Bureau of Property Safety and Maintenance Services provides responsible government oversight and regulation of property maintenance, zoning, land use and development standards, as well as regulated business licensed entities.



DBNS

Contractor and Skilled Trade Boards

These Boards are the General Contractors Board, Board of Electrical Examiners, Board of Heating and Cooling Examiners, and the Board of Wrecking Examiners. They write policies and regulations concerning contractor conduct and requirements for securing building permits. If there is some official business to come before a board, that board holds regular monthly meetings in city offices. Special meetings may be called by the chair or any three members of a board.

Division of Construction and Business Services

The Division of Construction and Business Services (CBS) is responsible for business and contractor licensing, plan review and permitting, as well as conducting building inspections during and after the completion of a construction project. The division is made up of the Bureau of License and Permit Services and the Bureau of Construction Services.

Division of Property and Land Use Services (PLUS)

The Division of Property and Land Use Services provides strategic application of civil code regulation through inspection, enforcement, and abatement services related to property use/safety and maintenance, and environmental concerns. This division is made up of the Bureau of Environmental Services, Bureau of Nuisance Abatement, and Bureau of Property Safety and Maintenance Services.

Indianapolis Animal Care Services

The Indianapolis Animal Care Services (IACS), formerly known as Indianapolis Animal Care and Control, works in partnership with the community to promote and protect the health, safety, and welfare of the people, pets, and livestock in Marion County. IACS also manages the state's largest animal shelter, caring for more than 14,000 animals each year.

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DMD

Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD)

From planning for the City of Indianapolis' future to creating affordable homeownership opportunities to supporting the growth of jobs and investment in communities throughout the city—the Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD) works in partnership with other city departments to improve the city, neighborhood by neighborhood.

Metropolitan Development Commission

The Metropolitan Development Commission is the policy-making body of the DMD that adopts the Comprehensive Plan of Marion County. This plan is used by the commission and other units of government as a guide for orderly growth. The commission controls the establishment of redevelopment areas, manages tax increment finance (TIF) districts, and acquires and sells property in such areas to carry out a redevelopment plan. The commission has nine appointed members who serve one-year terms. Five are appointed by the Mayor and four by the City-County Council.

Division of Community and Economic Development

The Department of Metropolitan Development takes a multi-dimensional approach to enhancing Indianapolis' Community Economic Development by empowering each key component as its own division, resulting in three focus teams: Community Development, Economic Incentives, and Redevelopment. With guidance and oversight from the department's Administrative staff, each section works to promote economic development in Indianapolis by leveraging public and private resources to aid in the increase of affordable housing, job creation and retention, and the implementation of commercial, industrial, and retail developments.



DMD

Community Development Section

Community Development administers community development grant programs awarded each year by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The section works to create community partnerships and provides funding to support initiatives focused on affordable housing, neighborhood revitalization, homeless assistance, youth activities and supportive services while helping project sponsors remain in compliance with HUD regulations.

Economic Incentives Section

Economic Incentives assists with the implementation of commercial, industrial and retail development projects that create a variety of job opportunities, increase the tax base, and aid neighborhood projects that revitalize communities.

Redevelopment Section

Redevelopment leverages staff expertise, funding, and other resources to transform unused and under-used properties in Indianapolis into assets for the economy and the community. The section targets brownfields, vacant and abandoned housing, and urban blight.

Division of Planning

The Department of Metropolitan Development approaches city planning with two lenses; one lens is focused on where Indianapolis currently is, in cooperation with the Current Planning Section, and the other is focused on where Indianapolis will be in the future, with the Long-Range Planning Section. With guidance and oversight from the department's Administrative staff, each division works to strengthen the people and places of Indianapolis-Marion County by serving as strategic planning resources for city government and neighborhoods.

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DMD

Current Planning Section

Current Planning supports the Metropolitan Development Commission (MDC), and the Metropolitan Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) by evaluating, administering and providing professional planning recommendations for all land development petitions filed. This section also updates and maintains all zoning ordinances.

Long-Range Planning Section

The Long-Range Planning Section is responsible for Marion County's Comprehensive Plan, which is used by the Metropolitan Development Commission and other units of government as a guide for development and serves as the basis for zoning decisions within the county. This section coordinates partners and stakeholders while serving as the catalyst in planning activities related to land use, transportation, parks, resiliency, and neighborhood housing.

Metropolitan Planning Organization

The Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is a regional body housed within the City of Indianapolis. The MPO is responsible for regional long-range transportation planning according to federal regulations. The transportation planning function is governed by the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council (IRTC) Policy Committee, which is comprised of the elected and appointed officials in central Indiana. Key functions of the MPO include the development of their eight-county (including Marion County) planning area's Long-Range Transportation Plan and the development and maintenance of the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Improvement Program, which documents how all federal transportation planning funds will be expended in central Indiana over a four-year period.



DMD

Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission

In 1967, the Indiana State Legislature established and empowered the [Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission](#) (IHPC) to preserve the character and fabric of historically significant areas and structures for all present and future citizens of Marion County. The IHPC accomplishes this task by protecting areas through local designation and through providing technical assistance on the restoration and rehabilitation of historic structures or areas.

The Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission (IHPC) is a nine-member board appointed by the executive and legislative body of the consolidated city, with design and zoning review jurisdiction in the locally designated historic districts and conservation districts. Since 1976, the IHPC has had a professional staff that functions as a division of the Department of Metropolitan Development of the City of Indianapolis. The IHPC provides design and zoning review and approval for locally designated historic districts, conservation areas, and individually designated properties.

Metropolitan Board of Zoning Appeals

The Board of [Zoning](#) Appeals hears requests for variances in the zoning laws. It is made up of three divisions with five members each, who are appointed for a one-year term. Two are appointed by the Mayor, two by the City-County Council, and one by the Department of Metropolitan Development. All three boards have county-wide jurisdiction, not including the excluded municipalities of Beech Grove, Lawrence and Speedway, which have their own zoning appeals boards of five members each. The Board is authorized to allow or deny a variance pertaining to development standards and use restrictions under various specific conditions. It also hears and decides on special exceptions to a zoning ordinance; these are administrative decisions and do not involve a change in the zoning law.

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DMD

Metropolitan Plat Committee

The Metropolitan Plat Committee has five members appointed by the Metropolitan Development Commission for one-year terms. An individual must be a member of the Metropolitan Development Commission to be appointed to this committee. The Plat Committee approves all subdivision plats in Marion County and controls all vacations of streets, alleys, easements, and plats.

PARKS

Department of Parks and Recreation

The [Department of Parks and Recreation](#) provides recreational programming and facilities throughout Marion County and enforces all provisions of city ordinances and state statutes regarding public park lands and facilities use.

Administration Division

The division provides management and support to the department, including human resources, staff development, grant coordination, information systems, marketing and communications, community relations, finance, partnership development, and volunteer services.

Board of Parks and Recreation

The Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation chairs this five-member board. Two members are appointed by the Mayor and two by the City-County Council for one-year terms. The board is the governing body of the department. It reviews the department budget and approves all contracts. Public meetings are held monthly at the City-County Building. (On occasion, by the decision of the director, these meetings are held at one of the Indy Parks facilities.)



PARKS

Community Recreation

The division manages and operates programs and services at city parks and recreation facilities. Division staff organize a wide range of offerings in sports, arts, play, social, environmental, and self-improvement activities.

Resource Development Division

The Resource Development Division guides the direction of the department through strategic planning of parks, greenways, and golf development. The division also administers the Capital Improvement Program and assesses park assets, infrastructure needs, and project development while overseeing construction activities. This Division, along with Park Maintenance, is now incorporated within the Department of Public Works.

IMPD

Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department

Until 2016, the [Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department](#) (IMPD) was a division of the Department of Public Safety (DPS). At that time, The City-County Council voted to eliminate the Department of Public Safety and to reorganize it by 2017 into the Office of Public Safety and Health. IMPD was elevated to its own independent city department with the police chief reporting directly to the mayor.

Comprised of approximately 1,700+ sworn officers and 200 civilian employees, the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department provides police services to Marion County and is primarily responsible for maintaining order and protecting individuals' lives and property. It is charged with crime prevention and detection and the capture of offenders.

The department includes the Office of the Chief and the Divisions of Administration, Investigations, and Patrol. The IMPD's merit system and appointments are supervised by the Police Merit Board.

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IMPD

Office of the Chief

The Office of the Chief includes executive leadership and their staff to guide the affairs of the IMPD.

Administration Division

This is a support division responsible for human resources, training, finance, procurement, and policy.

Investigations Division.

This is a support division for crimes against persons (murder, rape, and assault) investigations.

Patrol Division

This division coordinates the patrol units within the six geographic districts as well as the activities of community engagement officers and property crime investigators. This division also guides the Bureau of Homeland Security.

Bureau of Homeland Security

This bureau is responsible for the response to and mitigation of critical incidents occurring in the city. It maintains a mobile command center and coordinates staffing for major emergencies and events. The Bureau of Homeland Security operates in consultation with the Office of Public Health and Safety and contains three branches: Tactical, Traffic Enforcement, and Traffic Investigations. The Tactical branch manages and deploys many of the IMPD's specialty units such as the SWAT and bomb squads. The Traffic Enforcement and Traffic Investigations branches encompass traffic safety grant management, the reserve unit, and crash investigations among other responsibilities. Emergency Management—which is respon-



IMPD

sible for implementing the city emergency management and hazard mitigation plans as well as maintaining the county warning siren system— is also managed by Homeland Security.

Community Engagement Unit (CEU)

CEU is responsible for establishing and maintaining community partnerships to address crime and quality of life issues in Indianapolis's neighborhoods. The CEU focuses on youth and community issues not fully addressed through routine police patrol and criminal investigations.

The Neighborhood Office Outreach (NOO)

This office is responsible for proactively establishing and maintaining community partnerships to address neighborhood quality of life issues. NOO is made up of Youth Services Unit, Community Outreach Unit, Behavioral Health Unit, and Reentry Management Unit (inPACT). NOO's community work also addresses immigrant outreach and language services.

Police Merit Board

The Merit Board for the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department was established in 2007. The Merit Board is made up of seven members including four appointments from the Mayor, one member from the City-County Council, and two members elected by a majority vote of the active members of the department. The Merit board oversees the classification of ranks, grades, and positions for IMPD, in addition to overseeing preferences for employment, promotions, and appointments within the department. Perhaps the most prominent role the board plays is that of discipline.

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IMPD

General Orders Board

Established in September of 2020 and going into effect in January of 2021, the General Orders Board (GOB) is the policy-making body for the General Orders of IMPD. Specific General Orders, such as those related to HR policy, sensitive intelligence gathering, or other protected orders are not considered within the jurisdiction of the board. The GOB is made up of two appointments from the Mayor, the Council President, the Chief of Police, and one from the rank and file of the IMPD for a total of seven members. The membership provides civilian oversight but maintains a voice for the Chief and Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) in the policy-making process. Appointees serve two-year terms or until a replacement is named and serve at the pleasure of the appointing authority.

Use of Force Review Board

Established in 2020, the Use of Force Review Board was established by the General Orders Committee of IMPD. The board is constituted of nine members, four ranked officers and five civilians. These members include: the captain of the IMPD Training Academy; one lieutenant appointed by the deputy chief of Oversight, Audit and Performance; one peer officer, appointed by the assistant chief who is assigned to the same division as the officers involved in the event but in a different branch and district; one officer nominated by majority vote of sworn members of the department; two civilian members nominated by the Mayor; and three civilian members nominated by the president of the City-County Council. The board replaced the existing Firearms Review Board. Much like the previous board, the new board will not have the authority to recommend discipline for an officer but rather it will make an advisory finding to determine whether an officer's actions complied with department policy. This advisory finding will be provided to the Chief of Police.



IFD

Indianapolis Fire Department

The [Indianapolis Fire Department](#) (IFD) was established as a paid fire force in 1859. More recently, the IFD had been a division of the Department of Public Safety (DPS) until 2016. Like IMPD, IFD was elevated to its own independent city department with the fire chief reporting directly to the mayor in 2016.

The Indianapolis Fire Department serves the entire city, either as the primary emergency response agency, or by providing automatic and mutual aid to the excluded cities of Beech Grove, Lawrence, and Speedway and also to Decatur, Pike, and Wayne townships. The IFD primary fire district encompasses approximately 278 square miles and, as of 2021, is divided into seven geographic battalions (districts) with 42 fire stations. (IFD co-staffs a 43rd worksite with the City of Lawrence Fire Department.)

The IFD is divided among the Office of the Chief and four Bureaus which oversee 21 Divisions. The Office of the Chief includes Media Relations, Chief Financial Officer, Indiana Task Force One, Health and Safety, Peer Support, Project Management and Chaplain Services.

The four functional bureaus are Operations, Administration, Logistics, and Community Risk Reduction.

The Operations Bureau is responsible for EMS and Special Ops. This encompasses all emergency apparatus responses on incidents such as Fire, EMS, vehicle extrication, rope and water rescue, confined space, hazardous materials, and urban search. The Administration Bureau is responsible for Personnel, Scheduling, Training, Pension, Recruitment, Arsenal Tech Fire Rescue Program, Explorer Program and Information Technology. The Logistics Bureau has responsibility for Support and Fleet Services, Air Program Management, Facilities Management, and Quartermaster. The Community Risk Reduction Bureau is responsible for Fire Investigations, 911 Communications, Fire and Life Safety, Inspections, Planning, Performance and Compliance, the Emergency Management Liaison, and Public Education.

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IFD

Fire prevention programs and education programs, such as the Survive Alive program, in partnership with Professional Firefighters Local 416, and “in home” inspection/smoke alarm initiative, are integral to IFD’s role in the community. The Survive Alive program was established in 1995 and has educated thousands of area school children in K-4th grades.

On request, firefighters will inspect homes in their service district; install 10-year smoke alarms, if needed; and advise occupants of hazards found. Quarterly open houses at neighborhood fire stations, Safe Place/Safe House programs, inspection/self-Inspection for business owners, IFD Firefighter for a Day Camp, IFD Fire Safe Olympics, arson outreach programs, juvenile fire setter education, home fire escape plans, prescription drug take back locations, mobile food pantries, and other community-based projects are additional ways IFD serves the community.

Fire Merit Board

The Fire Merit Board is composed of six members: four appointed by the director and two by active members of the IFD, for two-year terms. Members are residents of the Fire Special Service District and cannot be members of the Indianapolis Fire Department or hold another elective or appointive government office. The Fire Merit Board administers the merit system and supervises appointments to the Fire Department.

Department of Public Works (DPW)

DPW

Division of Policy and Planning

The Division of Policy and Planning provides all the administrative functions of the Department of Public Works. These include Strategic Planning, Budgeting and Accounting, Legislative Liaison, Americans with Disabilities Act compliance, Public Information, and Administration. As an outgrowth of the Strategic Planning Section, the Office of Sustainability was established in 2008.



DPW

Office of Sustainability

The Office of Sustainability (also known as SustainIndy) has strong ties to the City's environmental agenda. The charge of SustainIndy includes public-private coordination of environmentally responsible actions that influence community awareness, economic development, and quality of life in Indianapolis for today and in the future. The mission of the City of Indianapolis Office of Sustainability is to use best practices to create lasting environmental, economic, and community vitality—enhancing our quality of life in the present and protecting the quality of life for future Indianapolis residents. To achieve this, the Office of Sustainability coordinates and collaborates on neighborhood goals and establishes public-private partnership opportunities to build the vision of a more sustainable city.

Fleet Services Division

The Fleet Services Division is responsible for procuring, managing, maintaining, fueling, administering, and selling vehicles owned, leased, and operated by various departments and agencies of the city.

Division of Engineering

The Division of Engineering includes the office of Systems Planning, Project Development, and Construction Services. This division assesses infrastructure needs within the city, develops projects, and carries out the construction.

Division of Operations

The Division of Operations, and its various sections, maintains the infrastructure, including solid waste collection, snow removal, pothole patching, operation and maintenance of traffic signals, and other services.

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DPW

Street Operations Section

Street Operations Section provides crews responsible for day-to-day maintenance, snow removal, pothole patching, operation and maintenance of traffic signals, and maintenance of levees, alleys, and bridges. Other services include graffiti removal, planning for special events, demolition, and grass and weed control within the right-of-way. A “rapid response” team deals with problems on streets, with traffic, or in other areas.

Special Events Operations Section

Special Events Operations Section provides barricades, cones, and supports street closing activities in special weather circumstances and during major events such as the Indy 500.

Traffic Operations Section

Traffic operations Section includes teams for street sweeping along major thoroughfares, the maintenance of traffic signals, and the fabrication and installation of Signs and Markings.

Environmental Services Section

Environmental Services Section responds to toxic and environmental threats that may arise, and contracts with vendors for correct disposal of hazardous substances. It also manages the Tox Drop program, providing locations for residents to discard materials not accepted as solid waste, such as paint thinners, fertilizer, and aerosol cans.

Safety and Training Section

Safety and Training Section advocates for safe practices in the dynamic Indy DPW workplace and provides workers with training on forthcoming techniques, technologies and operations.



DPW

Stormwater Operations Section

Stormwater Operations Section, made up of the Channel Maintenance team, Rapid Response team, Forestry, and a small team of Field Investigators to assess stormwater-related service requests, responds to and maintains the city's stormwater system and related vegetation management needs. This includes work along natural waterways, neighborhood drainage systems, levees, and dams.

Park Maintenance Section

Park Maintenance Section, while also a part of the Indy Parks and Recreation agency, is responsible for providing stewardship of natural resources areas, managing and executing maintenance plans for parks assets, coordinating park beautification and land improvement services, and installing and maintaining athletic fields.

The Division of Solid Waste

The Division of Solid Waste collects and disposes of trash in five solid waste districts and outsources two additional contracts to companies—Waste Management (1 district) and Republic (6 districts). The waste is taken to the mass burn facility for incineration and generation of steam. The steam is sold to customers who need to heat and cool buildings downtown. This section also collects heavy trash, retrieve dead animals from streets, and provides fall leaf collection services.

Board of Public Works

The Board of Public Works consists of seven members, three appointed by the Mayor, three by the City-County Council, and the Director of the Department of Public Works serves as the board chairperson. The board meets twice monthly and reviews the department budget, approves contracts and bids, and holds any hearings required by law.

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City Offices (Mayor's Office)

Citizen-led oversight boards, commissions, and committees are in italics.

OAP

Office of Audit and Performance

The Office of Audit and Performance (OAP) is a successor to the City-County Internal Audit Agency. OAP was established to audit and enhance the performance of City-County operations. The office oversees the external audit contract for the City-County, performs internal audits, and conducts evaluations to make recommendations for increased efficiencies, operational improvements, and increased transparency in City-County government. In addition, OAP may establish performance metrics for all City-County departments, offices, and agencies, plus the seven municipal corporations under the purview of the Office.

OCC

Office of Corporation Counsel (OCC)

The Office of Corporation Counsel (OCC or “city legal”) provides attorneys and support staff for legal services to the Mayor, the city departments, the county agencies, the city and county boards and commissions, and on occasion, the City-County Council, and the courts.

The OCC also has training responsibilities under the ethics provisions of the Revised Code (Section 293) (the “Ethics Code”) to ensure that appointees to boards and commissions, as well as employees, are trained on the requirements of not only the Ethics Code, but also the Indiana Access to Public Records Act and the Indiana Open Door Law (public meetings). Under the Ethics Code, the OCC also collects and maintains annual statements of economic interest that are filed by elected officials, agency directors and their direct reports, appointees to boards and commissions, employees whose employment is subject to approval of the City-County Council, employees designated by the OCC as having final purchasing authority, and all employees of the Purchasing Division of the Office of Finance and Management.



OCC

The OCC is comprised of four sections: City Prosecutor, Counseling, Litigation, and the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO).

City Prosecutor

The City Prosecutor section prosecutes violations of the Revised Code of Indianapolis, including those concerning animal care, licensing, building code, zoning and a variety of other ordinance-enforcement cases.

Counseling

The Counseling section supports City and County officials, agencies, appointees, and employees when acting in their official capacities. The Counseling section's responsibilities include serving as counsel at public meetings, providing legal advice on a wide variety of legal issues, preparing and negotiating contracts, and preparing proposed ordinances. In addition, the counseling team represents the City and County regarding unemployment-insurance claims, assists the Auditor and Treasurer with the tax sale, and employs a compliance officer to investigate contract and wage compliance.

Public Access Counselor (PAC)

Within the Counseling section, the PAC is responsible for ensuring that the public access laws of Indiana—the Access to Public Records Act and the Open Door Law—are followed by city-county government. The PAC can provide guidance on the public access statutes as well as assist citizens who have concerns about accessing public records or public meetings of city or county government.

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Litigation

OCC

The Litigation section represents the City and County and their agencies, departments, officials, appointees, and employees in state and federal courts at both the trial and appellate levels. It also represents City and County interests before administrative agencies.

Office of Equal Opportunity

The OEO receives and investigates complaints of discrimination under state statutes (civil rights and housing) and the local Human Relations Ordinance (Revised Code Chapter 581). If appropriate, those complaints are also adjudicated before the Equal Opportunity Advisory Board. The OEO moved to the OCC in 2016.

OEI

Office of Education Innovation

The Indianapolis Mayor's Office of Education Innovation (OEI) works to hold mayor-sponsored charter schools accountable. As of 2021, there are 45 public charter schools serving 18,000 students. Not only does OEI monitor public charter schools, but it collaborates with the private, public and philanthropic sectors to lead multiple education initiatives seeking to ensure that every child in Indianapolis has access to a high-quality education.

Indianapolis Charter School Board

This board has the authority to grant or reject charter applications submitted to the Mayor of Indianapolis. The board consists of nine members, six of whom are appointed by the Mayor and three by the President of the City-County Council. Board members serve four-year renewable terms.



OFM

Office of Finance and Management – Controller’s Office

The Office of Finance and Management (OFM) provides internal services to the operating agencies of city and county government and carries out the general administrative functions of the city.

Human Resources

The Human Resource Division is responsible for employee recruiting, training and development, benefits, and workers compensation for the city and county. It also develops safety policies and procedures, conducts Occupational Safety and Health compliance inspections, monitors tort claims, and investigates claims of discrimination and harassment.

Purchasing Division

The Purchasing Division is a separate division of the Office of Finance and Management. It is responsible for procurement of goods, services, public works construction, and the disposal of fixed assets.

Budget Division

The Budget Division prepares, manages, and monitors the city and county’s annual operating and capital budget. In addition, it prepares monthly budget reports, works with agency and department CFOs on budget issues and reviews and prepares fiscal ordinances for the annual budget.

Accounting Division

The Accounting Division is responsible for compiling and issuing the city and county annual comprehensive annual financial report (CAFR), along with management of accounting policies and practices throughout city and county government.

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OFM

Collections Division

The Collections Division is responsible for managing the city and county's outstanding accounts receivable program. The Division works with third party entities to engage those individuals who owe money to the city or county to make payments and reduce the outstanding number of accounts receivable.

OMWBD

Office of Minority and Women Business Development

This office strives to enhance the City's growth and economic stability through the promotion of contracting and procurement opportunities for the minority-, women-, veteran-, and disability-owned business enterprises it has certified. This office's primary goals are to promote meaningful business opportunities, build productive partnerships, and create successful integration of certified minority-, women-, veteran-, and disability-owned business enterprises within the business infrastructure of the City of Indianapolis. This office also monitors contract compliance and bid evaluations to ensure good faith efforts are made to meet the utilization goals in place for all city, county, and municipal agencies.

The Office of Equal Opportunity is also housed in this office.

Office of Equal Opportunity

This office and its board are empowered to carry out the public policy of the State, as stated in the Indiana Civil Rights Law and the Indiana Fair Housing Law, within the territorial boundaries of Marion County, and the public policy of the City of Indianapolis as stated in the Human Rights Ordinance. It receives, investigates, and adjudicates community complaints with respect to any discriminatory practice occurring within the territorial boundaries of Marion County and which relates to (1) acquisition of real estate; (2) employment; (3) education; or (4) public accommodations.



OPHS

Office of Public Health and Safety (OPHS)

Created in 2016, the Office of Public Health and Safety (OPHS) is meant to provide a “holistic approach” to crime prevention and mental health while also streamlining the bureaucracy in these areas. (Creation of this office followed the elimination of the Department of Public Safety and the elevation of Police and Fire to separate city departments reporting directly to the mayor.) The Office of Public Health and Safety oversees Public Safety Communications, Re-Entry services, and the Assessment and Intervention Center.

Division of Public Safety Communications

This division is responsible for operating the emergency communication systems and computer facilities for all participating public safety agencies in Marion County. This division receives and reviews with comment and recommendation all reports, requests, and documents on public safety communications operations in Marion County and coordinates with participating governments and agencies all activities necessary to ensure compatibility of the public safety communications systems and computer facilities.

Re-Entry Services

The mission of Re-Entry Services is to develop collaborative partnerships among government, businesses, faith-based organizations, and community members to leverage resources to decrease recidivism among ex-offenders. The Mayor’s Re-entry Program does not conduct direct services; however, it utilizes all resources available to assist in the process and shape policy.

Assessment and Intervention Center

The Albert G. and Sara I. Reuben Engagement Center for the city’s homeless opened in 2017 in the former Arrestee Processing Center. In 2021, the Assessment and Intervention Center, located on the Community Justice Campus, took over the Engagement Center’s

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OPHS

services. Services include shelter, medical detox, case management, mental health evaluations and housing referrals to chronically homeless, substance-addicted, mentally ill individuals. The center provides a safe place for homeless individuals who are experiencing drug or alcohol intoxication to be diverted from jail, or an emergency room, and who are unable to gain access to emergency shelter options due to active substance abuse. The center provides a safe place for medical detoxification to occur and an opportunity to engage in community resources and services aimed at recovery and permanent housing. The center also works to enhance successful transition to permanent supportive housing and placement into treatment and long-term rehabilitation when individuals are ready for this step.

Food programs

Lack of adequate nutrition can lead to poor performance at work, make it harder to learn in school, and lead to crime and violence in our community. OPHS works with residents, community groups, and businesses to promote food security, food access, and a vibrant food economy. This program also studies food systems and economies to collect data that can inform future policies and programs for Indianapolis.

Community Violence Reduction

In 2016, the Office of Public Health and Safety was tasked with providing direct violence intervention in Indianapolis's neighborhoods, building the capacity of grassroots organizations engaged in violence prevention, and ensuring resources reach residents who need them most. Subsequently, the city created the role of Director of Community Violence Reduction who reports to the Director of OPHS and is supported by Indy Peacemakers—independent, nongovernmental affiliated activists from local neighborhoods who act as violence interrupters and provide operational assistance to grassroots neighborhood groups engaged in violence prevention.



Health

OPHS

OPHS works with the Marion County Health Department to promote the health and well-being of Indianapolis residents. OPHS supports the health department's programs, partners with community organizations, and leads health-focused initiatives for the City of Indianapolis. To learn more about the health department's programs and resources, visit MarionHealth.org.



The County

**Citizen-led oversight boards, commissions, and committees are in italics.*

The state constitution establishes eight elected county officers: Auditor, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Coroner, Prosecutor, Sheriff, Surveyor, Recorder, and Treasurer. In addition to these, state law provides for an elected County Assessor. Each county official is elected to a four-year term. There are no term limits for the Prosecutor, Assessor, or Surveyor.

ASSESSOR

Assessor

Under the jurisdiction of the Department of Local Government Finance, the County Assessor's duties include the assessment of real and personal property for taxation. Assessments fall under three categories: real estate, business personal property, and mobile homes as personal property. The Assessor certifies the various assessed property values for the preparation of tax bills. The Assessor answers questions regarding ownership, description and value of property, deeds, and transfer of ownership. The Assessor also serves as Secretary to the Property Tax Assessment Board of Appeals (PTABOA). The PTABOA decides real estate and personal property tax appeals. The Assessor processes applications for nonprofit property tax exemptions. Along with the Auditor and Treasurer, the Assessor is one of three County Commissioners.

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AUDITOR

Auditor

In Marion County, the Auditor is responsible for (i) accounting; (ii) payroll, accounts payable, and accounts receivable; (iii) revenue and tax distributions; and (iv) maintenance of property records for both the city and county. The powers and duties related to the fixing and reviewing of budgets, tax rates, and tax levies for the county are performed by the City Controller, who is the chief financial officer of both the city and county.

The Auditor is responsible for keeping all ledgers and records affecting city and county funds, as well as for ensuring that such funds are received and disbursed according to the law. Upon receipt of taxes collected by the Treasurer, the Auditor distributes funds to the local units of government for which the funds were collected. By August first of each year, the Auditor provides estimates of the assessed valuation of each unit of government to prepare the taxing budget for the new year, as well as the county operating budget.

The Auditor serves as a County Commissioner and as ex-officio secretary of several county boards as well as approving and issuing warrants for monies expended by all city and county entities. Before they are recorded, all property transfers are entered for taxation in the Auditor's office. The Auditor coordinates with the Treasurer in conducting the annual tax sale of real estate disposed for delinquent taxes. The Auditor also handles homestead, mortgage, disability, and veteran exemptions, exemptions for property owners over 65 years of age, and sales disclosure forms, as well as the real estate property tax abatement program.

CLERK

Clerk of the Circuit Court (County Clerk)

This is a constitutional office that serves a dual role as state election law administrator and administrator to the judiciary. By statute, the General Assembly has assigned responsibility for many of the administrative functions of the County Clerk. The following is a brief description of the functions of the County Clerk.



CLERK

Election Related Functions

Elections are fundamental to our democracy and the responsibility of making sure elections run smoothly is given to the County Clerks. County Clerks administer Indiana's election laws in a non-partisan manner by making sure all polling sites meet state and federal guidelines and that election workers are trained. The Clerk also receives candidacy filings from persons seeking certain elective public offices and issues certificates of election to successful local candidates (except in the cases of constitutional officers, who receive their commissions from the Governor). The Clerk serves as an ex-officio member and secretary of the County Election Board and as a member and clerk of the County Board of Canvassers.

Judicial Related Functions

Access to the courts often begins in the County Clerks' office. The Clerk maintains all records of pleadings, motions, papers, evidence, and court rulings of the court. The Clerk also issues summonses and subpoenas to witnesses ordering them to appear in court. The Clerk issues and records marriage licenses, maintains oaths of offices, assigns election duties, and keeps a record of all judgments, orders, and decrees of the court. The Clerk also must certify and attest to complete transcripts of court proceedings involving title to property, the imposition of prison sentences and in all court cases where a complete court record is required. The Clerk collects court costs, fines, and money judgments levied by the court. In the case of a money judgment, the Clerk pays the money to the person or entity entitled to the judgment. In recent years, the collection of child support has become a major responsibility of the Clerk's office.

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Coroner

CORONER

The Coroner investigates all suspicious deaths, including homicides, suicides, accidents, child and infant deaths. Assisted by the police and various laboratories, the Coroner attempts to determine the cause of death. After investigation, the Coroner completes a verdict and makes it available upon request. The Coroner deals directly with families, giving information and taking care of the personal effects of the deceased. If the Sheriff is absent or disqualified from serving, the Coroner performs the Sheriff's duties.

PROSECUTOR

Prosecutor

The Prosecutor is an office mandated by the Indiana Constitution with the prosecutor serving as the senior enforcement officer in the county. The prosecutor is elected for a four-year term. The Marion County Prosecutor's Office represents the State of Indiana in criminal matters before the Marion County Superior Courts. The office has jurisdiction of all areas within the borders of Marion County, including the cities of Lawrence, Beech Grove, Southport, Speedway, and the Indiana State Capital. The Prosecutor's Office has 13 divisions, units, and teams.

Child Support Division

The Child Support Division of the Marion County Prosecutor's Office provides a wide range of services to parents who need child support establishment, enforcement, or modification. Services are provided and authorized through the federal Title IV-D program and through a cooperative agreement with the Indiana Child Support Bureau. Services are provided at the downtown office, as well as branch offices located at Flanner House, Center Township Trustee's Office, Wayne Township Trustee's Office, and the Lawrence Township Trustee's Office.



PROSECUTOR

Criminal Charging Division

Law enforcement agencies present cases to this division for criminal charging determinations. Deputy prosecuting attorneys determine if criminal charges are appropriate to be filed in each case. Additionally, the Marion County Prosecutor's Office operates the Marion County Child Advocacy Center where specialized deputy prosecutors and professional staff coordinate with other agencies on investigations and make criminal charging determinations in accusations of child abuse and other Special Victim matters. Similarly, deputy prosecuting attorneys at the Family Justice Center are located on the property of the Julian Center, a domestic crisis center, to facilitate investigations with detectives and make criminal charging decisions on accusations of domestic violence.

Community Outreach Team

The Community Outreach team builds relationships with Marion County communities to reduce crime and avoid involvement in the criminal justice system. Community Outreach Coordinators maintain a presence in neighborhoods across the county, strengthening bonds with community members and organizations through education and engagement.

Conviction Integrity Unit

The Conviction Integrity Unit works to prevent, identify, and remedy wrongful convictions by conducting fact-based reviews of past convictions. In addition to reviewing cases, the unit trains prosecutors and investigators on ways the office can operate more efficiently, effectively, and adopt nationally recognized best practices to help safeguard against future wrongful convictions.

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PROSECUTOR

Grand Jury Division

Investigators assigned to the Marion County Prosecutor's Office conduct long-term investigations in cases involving white collar crime, public corruption, and tax evasion. In limited circumstances, evidence of suspected crimes is presented to a Grand Jury composed of six citizens of Marion County to determine if criminal charges are filed.

Juvenile Division

This division is responsible for filing and prosecuting acts of delinquency by children 17 years of age and younger. Through grant funding, a deputy prosecuting attorney within the division also provides awareness and preventative education on Teen Dating Violence.

Latino Services Division

The Latino Services Division is composed of Court Certified Interpreters who ensure that Spanish-speaking victims and witnesses in criminal cases have equitable access to justice. The Division also provides crime prevention and outreach to the Latino communities within Marion County. Interpretation and victim services are also provided in multiple other languages each year.

Post-Conviction Division

This division responds to all requests for post-conviction relief and for sentence modifications. This division also handles all requests for expungement of arrests and convictions and the sealing of criminal records.

Trial Division

In 2020, the Trial Division was restructured in response to changes in the Marion County Criminal Courts. The Marion County Prosecutor's Trial Division has been restructured into four Trial Division



PROSECUTOR

Teams. Each team staffs two Major Felony Courts and three Level 6 Felony/Misdemeanor Courts and includes Special Victims deputy prosecuting attorneys working with victims of domestic violence, sex crimes, and child abuse.

Special Prosecution Unit

The Special Prosecution Unit collects and analyzes data to assist in investigations and criminal cases. Members of the unit work closely with the Crime Gun Intelligence Center, a multi-agency effort to identify individuals and groups of persons who appear to present escalating violent behaviors through firearm forensics.

Strategic Initiatives Division

The Strategic Initiatives Division leads the office initiatives on alternatives to incarceration including cases in Marion County Problem Solving Courts as well as diversions. The Division also provides programming aimed at reducing recidivism and empowering those re-entering the community, including the Second Chance Workshops. Additionally, the Division leads work on youth-focused programs including the Prosecutor's Youth Violence Fellowship.

Traffic Court Unit

The most common interaction for members of the public with the criminal justice system is through matters handled by the Traffic Court, including common traffic infractions. The Marion County Prosecutor's Office offers deferral and diversion opportunities to reduce the collateral consequences of traffic violations.

Victim Advocates

Victim Advocates play an important role in helping victims of crime navigate the judicial process and provide referrals to needed resources, including trauma counseling and housing. Specialized

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PROSECUTOR

advocates assist survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse, as well as the families of homicide victims.

RECORDER

Recorder

The Marion County Recorder's Office maintains permanent public records of property transactions between owners and makes those documents available to the public. Records include deeds, liens, mortgages, releases, easements, and other records pertinent to real estate.

SHERIFF

Sheriff

In 2007, the Sheriff's Divisions on Road Patrol and Investigations were combined with the Indianapolis Police Department to create the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department. The Marion County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) is specifically responsible for criminal warrants; county jail operations and facilities; emergency communications (911 Center); security for city and county buildings and property; service of civil process and collection of taxes under tax warrants; and sex and violent offender registration.

The Sheriff's Office serves all orders as directed by the courts, serves all legal processes of the County Election Board, and collects delinquent taxes. An arrested person is taken to the Marion County Jail Intake Section for processing and identification. The family of an arrested person may obtain information about court appearances and bail from the Sheriff's Office.

SURVEYOR

Surveyor

The Surveyor has responsibility for perpetuating the locations of all section corners and verifies and maintains corner markers. These corners are the basis of all land descriptions and locations in the county. Also, the Surveyor maintains indexes of survey-related information in the county. Their corner locations are prima facie evidence of the locations of the US Public Land Survey System corners set as wooden stakes in 1819-1821, before the settlement of Marion County. The Surveyor's Office can supply plans, right-



SURVEYOR

of-way, and other technical information for the benefit of anyone who has need of it, including individuals, surveyors, engineers, and developers.

TREASURER

Treasurer

The Treasurer's duties are to bill, collect, account for, and distribute all collected property taxes, and to manage and invest the county's funds. The Treasurer also provides financial analysis related to these functions and is a member of the Board of County Commissioners. This official works to solve tax-bill problems brought forward by citizens, and collaborates as needed with other offices, such as the Auditor.

County Boards, Offices, and Agencies

BOARDS

Board of County Commissioners

The Board of County Commissioners is composed of the Assessor, Auditor, and Treasurer. It makes appointments to certain municipal corporation boards. The board meets once a month.

Board of Voter Registration

Consisting of two members, one from each major political party, this board supervises the registration of voters for all elections in Marion County. It keeps a permanent record of registered voters, which is public information. Voters may be registered at the Board of Voter Registration Office during open registration periods. Citizens may obtain paper (mail-in) voter registration forms at the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, public libraries, several county offices, and online at indianavoters.com.

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BOARDS

County Election Board

The Election Board has three members—the County Clerk and two members, one from each major political party, appointed by the chairs of their respective parties. Charged with the responsibility for conducting all elections and administering election laws in the county, the board takes care of the voting machines, prints and distributes the ballots, and appoints and trains the vote center election officials. The board receives and maintains files of candidates' campaign financial reports. It also interprets and clarifies election laws and handles any question of a candidate's legal qualifications for a local office. Voters wishing to learn about in-person early voting and/or absentee-by-mail voting options should contact the Marion County Election Board at (317) 327-5100 or visit the Election Board website at MCEB.indy.gov.

State of Indiana Division of Family Resources

Marion County once had a [Department of Public Welfare](#) which later changed to the County Office of Family and Children. The county now is served by a local office of the State of Indiana Division of Family Resources (DFR). The Division of Family Resources (DFR) is responsible for establishing eligibility for Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP—food assistance), and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF—cash assistance) benefits. It manages the timely and accurate delivery of SNAP and TANF benefits and provides employment and training services to some SNAP and TANF recipients.

Indianapolis-Marion County Forensic Services Agency

The Forensic Services Agency provides criminal forensic services from its scientific laboratory for agencies, departments, and divisions of local government. The agency is governed by a five-member board, which includes the Coroner, the Sheriff, the Chief of the Indianapolis Police Department, one person (who must have professional experience in forensics or a related discipline) appointed by the Mayor, and one by the City-County Coun-



BOARDS

cil. The County Auditor serves as an ex-officio member of the board. The board sets policy, fixes rates, and recommends to the Mayor a director for the agency. The director oversees the daily operation of the agency and supervises personnel.

Information Services Agency

The Information Services Agency (ISA) provides information technology services to the city-county and is headed by the Chief Information Officer (CIO).

Marion County Information Technology Board

The Board hires the CIO, sets policies for the agency, and oversees technology expenditures. The Board is made up of the following: two technology professionals, one appointed by the Mayor and one appointed by the Council; the Assessor; three of the other four county constitutional officeholders; a representative for the Marion Superior Court appointed by the presiding judges; and two City employees appointed by the Mayor.

Marion County Community Corrections

Marion County Community Corrections (MCCC) is overseen by a Community Corrections Advisory Board as specified in the Indiana Code. The Advisory Board appoints the MCCC Director, subject to the approval of the City-County Council. MCCC provides electronic monitoring and work-release services. Clients on electronic monitoring (GPS ankle monitors) are serving sentences ordered by the Marion County Superior Courts. The MCCC also operates a work-release facility in Marion County. This facility houses residents who are serving sentences ordered by the Marion County Superior Courts or are finishing sentences with the Indiana Department of Corrections. Those under electronic monitoring and/or work release receive a full risk assessment, case planning, services around housing and employment, as well as substance abuse and mental health treatment.

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Marion County Public Defender Agency

BOARDS

The U.S. and Indiana Constitutions mandate that indigent persons charged with criminal offenses shall be provided effective representation of trial and appellate counsel at public expense. The agency staffs all felony courts, misdemeanor courts, Title IV D court, juvenile courts, termination of parental rights/children in need of services cases, and all criminal appeals.



Municipal Corporations

CIB

Capital Improvement Board (CIB)

The CIB's responsibility has been the operation of the Indiana Convention Center and Lucas Oil Stadium, as well as the ownership of Victory Field, Conseco Fieldhouse, and complimentary downtown properties. Funding comes from hotel/motel taxes collected by the state, state cigarette taxes allocated to the county, a 1 percent food and beverage tax, and rentals and other receipts paid for the use of the facilities. Until 2019, the CIB had 9 members. Legislation enacted by the Indiana General Assembly in 2019 expanded the CIB and gave the Governor the authority to appoint members for the first time. The CIB has 11 members who serve two-year terms. Nine members, selected by the Mayor (5), the Governor (2), the City-County Council (1), and the county commissioners from Boone, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, and Shelby counties (1), serve as voting members. The CIB also includes an ex-officio member and a member who serves as General Counsel. The board meets once a month. It's annual budget must be approved by the City-County Council.

HHC

Health and Hospital Corporation (HHC)

This municipal corporation operates the Marion County Public Health Department, Eskenazi Health (formerly Wishard Health Services), and Indianapolis Emergency Medical Services. Its executive division provides fiscal



HHC

and legal administration support for the corporation. [HHC](#)'s annual budget must be approved by the City-County Council.

A seven-member Board of Trustees, each appointed to a four-year term by the Mayor (3), City-County Council (2), and the County Commissioners (2) has the power to enact legislation and enforce the provisions of the legislation it enacts, in addition to its executive agency powers. HHC enacts legislation enacted is in the general areas of environmental regulation, communicable disease regulation, and corporate and administrative matters.

Marion County Public Health Department (MCPH)

MCPH deals with both traditional health problems (infectious diseases, reducing infant mortality, and improving immunizations) and environmental health regulations (illegal dumping, hazardous materials response and reporting, and rodent control). It issues birth certificates and death certificates, which may be obtained at 3838 N. Rural Street.

Eskenazi Health

Eskenazi Health provides the public hospital service for the county. Eskenazi Health's nationally recognized programs include a level I trauma center, regional burn center, comprehensive senior care program, women's and children's services, teen and adolescent care programs, Midtown Community Mental Health Center, and a network of primary care sites located throughout the neighborhoods of Indianapolis. Eskenazi Health partners with the Indiana University School of Medicine whose physicians provide a comprehensive range of primary and specialty care services. In 2009, Marion County voters approved (with 85 percent support) construction of a new hospital. The organization, then known as [Wishard](#), received a \$40 million gift from Indianapolis's Sidney and Lois Eskenazi, in honor of whom HHC named the new hospital and health system upon completion in December 2013. During that interven-

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HHC

ing time—2011—**Indianapolis Emergency Medical Services (EMS)** moved under Eskenazi Health.

IAA

Indianapolis Airport Authority

The [Indianapolis Airport Authority](#) (IAA) is a municipal corporation that was created to develop, administer and operate an air transportation system for Marion County and central Indiana. The Airport Authority Board, consisting of nine voting members, each appointed to a four-year term by the Mayor (5), the majority leader of the City-County Council (1), and the County Commissioners of Hancock (1), Hamilton (1), and Hendricks (1), and one non-voting advisory member from Morgan County, has executive and legislative powers to make policy and oversees the operations of not only the Indianapolis International Airport but also the Downtown Heliport and four smaller airports in Central Indiana. The IAA's annual budget must be approved by the City-County Council.

BUILDING

Indianapolis-Marion County Building Authority

This municipal corporation acts as a "landlord" for the City-County Building and 18 other city and county governmental properties, collecting rents and making necessary changes and improvements. Its budget is reviewed by the Administration Committee of the City-County Council. Its debt service is paid from rent collected from the City of Indianapolis and Marion County. The Building Authority has a five-member Board of Trustees appointed by the Mayor (3) and the City-County Council (2). The Trustees, in turn, appoint a five-member Board of Directors that is responsible for all Building Authority properties, including the City-County Building and grounds.

INDYPL

Indianapolis Public Library (IndyPL)

A large [Central Library](#) downtown and its 23 branches serve the entire County except the City of Speedway. In addition, Frog and Toad, two full-service mobile units provide a regular schedule of outreach. The libraries offer on-



INDYPL

line digital services through its website (indypl.org). The collections offer more than 1.7 million physical items as well as 200,000 eBooks, audiobooks, and online publications, an online digital repository known as DigitalIndy (digitalindy.org), and the digital *Encyclopedia of Indianapolis* (indyencyclopedia.org). Services include traditional reference as well as “Text a Librarian,” and high-speed internet access at all locations, including the mobile units. A library card is free to all residents and property owners of Marion County (except Speedway) as well as to students of Marion County schools.

The seven-member Library Board is the governing body of the agency. Members are appointed by the City-County Council (2), County Commissioners (3), and the Indianapolis Board of School Commissioners (2) to terms of four years each. This board may issue bonds and levy taxes with approval from the City-County Council and the Mayor. Its source of funds is primarily property tax, with some excise and financial institutions tax. Unlike most Indiana libraries, IndyPL does not have a statutory allocation of County Income tax. Its board meets monthly and annual budgets must be approved by the City-County Council.

BOND BANK

Indianapolis Public Improvement Bond Bank, known as the Indianapolis Bond Bank

In 1985, with the assistance of the Indiana General Assembly, the City of Indianapolis established the Indianapolis Local Public Improvement Bond Bank, the first municipal bond bank in the country. The Bond Bank is a municipal corporation that serves as the debt issuance and management arm of the City of Indianapolis and related “Qualified Entities.” These entities include [special taxing districts](#), political subdivisions, and building/leasing authorities. Since its inception, the Indianapolis Local Public Improvement Bond Bank has issued nearly \$13 billion in bonds and notes on behalf of various Qualified Entities of the City of Indianapolis and Marion County.

The Bond Bank is governed by a five-member Board of Directors appointed by the Mayor. Directors serve three (3) year terms and may be reappointed provided they continue to meet the statutory requirements. The Bond Bank is funded by fees it is paid for the services it performs on behalf of its

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BOND BANK

qualified entities. These services include advisory and management services in connection with the review and/or purchase and sale of securities. It has no taxing authority, and its annual budget is approved by the Board of Directors.

INDYGO

Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation ([IndyGo](#))

This municipal corporation is responsible for the public transportation system for the Indianapolis metropolitan area. Services include Fixed and Paratransit (“Open Door”— services for persons with disabilities). The corporation is governed by a seven-member board of directors, appointed by the Mayor (3) and City-County Council (4). Board members serve four-year terms. The board has the authority to issue bonds and levy taxes with city council approval. The corporation’s operating budget is funded from the fare box, federal, state, and local tax dollars, and advertising revenues. Annual budgets must be approved by the City-County Council. The IndyGo Customer Service Center, which provides schedule information, sells bus passes, issues half-fare ID cards, and provides information in several languages, is in the downtown Julia M. Carson Transit Center.

Legislative Branch



The Council

The City-County Council is the legislative body of the Consolidated City and County. It has the exclusive power to adopt budgets, levy taxes, and make appropriations to fund the operation of the city and county. It enacts, repeals, or amends local laws called ordinances. It appoints members to some boards and commissions and confirms the Mayor’s high-ranking appointments. The officers of the council are the President, Vice President, the Majority Leader, and the Minority Leader. Staff includes a Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Research Director, Chief Financial Officer, and General Counsel, in addition to an Assistant Attorney to advise the minority party members.



COUNCIL

All ordinances and resolutions must be introduced by Council members. Citizens may participate in this process by approaching a Council member with an idea or proposal for an ordinance or resolution. These proposals are introduced into the Council and are assigned to the appropriate committee for consideration. The committee holds a public hearing to receive citizen input, then decides to table the ordinance or bring it before the entire Council, or to a Special Service District Council, if appropriate, with a recommendation to pass or not to pass. When an ordinance is passed by the Council, it is then sent to the Mayor for signature or veto. A citizen may write or call to influence the Mayor's decision. The Council may override a veto with a two-thirds majority vote.

The City-County Council may also hear an appeal of a favorable zoning decision made by the Metropolitan Development Commission. The Councillor for the district in which the land in question is located must agree to request a hearing and the council must agree to hold a hearing. A vote of 18 members of the Council is required to change a decision of the Metropolitan Development Commission.

City-County Council

The City-County Council is the legislative branch of Unigov. The Council has 25 members who are elected by the voters of their districts to four-year terms. The county is divided into 25 council districts, which must be as equal as practicable in population, compact in size and shape, and follow natural boundary lines, such as roads or creeks.

Committees

The City-County Council is organized through a committee system of three permanent committees and nine standing committees. It also has three Special Service District Councils and may establish investigative committees.

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COUNCIL

Permanent Committees

The Committee on Committees includes the President of the Council, the Majority Leader, and the Minority Leader. Its function is to name the members of the Standing Committees. The Committee on Rules and Public Policy has eight members, including the President, the Majority Leader, and the Minority Leader, who consider and recommend proposed changes to the rules of the City-County Council and function as a Standing Committee on any matter referred to them by the President or the Council. The Committee of the Whole Council includes every member of the Council. By declaration of the President or by a motion, the Council may form itself as a Committee of the Whole Council. This is done whenever the public is entitled to a public hearing.

Standing Committees

The Council has Standing Committees for each of the City Departments. These committees have power to review and investigate policies and expenditures of those departments. Standing Committees include Community Affairs, Education, Ethics, Metropolitan and Economic Development, Municipal Corporations, Parks and Recreation, Public Works, Administration and Finance, Public Safety and Criminal Justice.

The number of members on the committees is determined by the Committee on Committees. Each committee has no fewer than three members and at least one minority member. The Standing Committees consider all proposals referred to them by the Council and must hear a proposal within 45 days. All committee meetings are open to the public, except for those meetings or part of meetings that are permitted by the Open-Door law to be closed. Each committee establishes at least one regular meeting per month.



COUNCIL

Special Service District Councils

The Fire [Special Service District](#) Council, Police Special Service District Council, and Solid Waste Special Service District Council act on matters pertaining to their districts. All Councillors serve on the three Special Service District Councils.

Budget ordinances pertaining to the Special Service Districts originate in these Special Service District Councils. Police and fire ordinances are considered by the Public Safety and Criminal Justice Committee of the City-County Council and solid waste ordinances by the Public Works Committee.

Special Committees

Special committees may be formed by the Council President or by a majority vote of Council members for any specific and proper purpose. They are to have an odd number of members with at least one from a minority party.

Investigative Committees

The City-County Council members may resolve to establish investigative committees for any lawful purpose. The resolution is to specify the membership of the committee, the nature of its investigation, and the power to subpoena witnesses, if that power is granted.

January to June



Prepare Budgets

Prior to July 1



Consult with Controller



Legislative Branch

City-County Council



Has the exclusive power to adopt budgets, levy taxes, + make appropriations but not in isolation.



Executive Branch

Mayor



City departments, county offices + agencies, + the courts prepare their individual budgets.



All departments + agencies consult with the Office of Finance and Management (ie., Controller).

Citizens



The best time to recommend changes or new services in the budget is early in the year.



Continue working with Mayor's Office + others on budget proposals.

July



Finalize Budgets

August + September



Public Hearings



Legislative Branch

City-County Council



Budgets enter final preparation phase.



Holds public hearings.

Executive Branch

Mayor



Budgets enter final preparation phase.



Mayor introduces the budget to the City-County Council in August.

Citizens



Last opportunity to work on the proposed budget.



This is the time for public review + comments.

October



Final Approvals

October to January



Review



Legislative Branch

City-County Council



Votes on combined city-county budget, special service districts, + most municipal budgets.



Budgets, levies + rates certified by January 15.

Executive Branch

Mayor



Mayor approves or vetoes the budget.



Reviewed and certified by the (State of Indiana) Department of Local Government Finance by Dec. 31.

Citizens



Process begins again.



Budget Process

In May, the various city and county departments and agencies begin their journey through the budget process (see diagram above that outlines the process). City departments, county offices and agencies, and the courts prepare an individual budget, which will emerge as a final legal document once adopted by the City-County Council and signed by the Mayor in late October. Prior to July 1, all city and county officials, departments, and agencies work with the Office of Finance and Management. Any citizen who wants to have a new service put into the budget should contact the Mayor's office early in the year.

At the first August Council meeting, the budget ordinances are introduced by the Mayor to the City-County Council. During August and September, each Council Committee holds public hearings on the budget of the department or agency for which it is responsible. This is another step in the process where citizens can be involved. A copy of the proposed budget, broken down into categories, can be seen at the City-County Council office or online at indy.gov.

The city and county budgets are combined into one ordinance which is approved by the Council at its last meeting in October. The budget is uploaded to the State's prescribed public notice website for view by all taxpayers. It is difficult to effect any change at this point, and the council may not pass a budget above the level legally posted. In addition, there are separate budget ordinances for the three Special Service Districts and five of the six independent municipal corporations (Health and Hospital, Airport Authority, Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation, Capital Improvement Board, and the Library Board). The revenue that supports the Building Authority is included in the City-County budget, although, the Building Authority's expense budget is not approved by the City-County Council. The city departments and the Council may reduce budgets and rates, but any reduction may be appealed to the Department of Local Government Finance.

The Mayor may veto single items in the City-County and Special Service District budgets except for funds for a judicial office or officers, a constitu-

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tional office, or the independent municipal corporations. The council may override a veto by a two-thirds vote. The council has no control over the budgets of the remaining units of government, which go directly to the Department of Local Government Finance.

The final step for the budget is review and approval by the Department of Local Government Finance. The DLGF is the entity of last resort to set budgets for the coming year and, based on its assessment of the budget, may amend a local unit's appropriation amount, tax rate, tax levy, or miscellaneous revenues. Except for debt service funds, it may not increase a budget or tax rate above the level originally presented by the local unit of government. The Department has various resources available by state law to address budget issues. The state DLGF is legally required to certify annual local units of government budgets by December 31 of each year.

Financing City-County Government

When the Indiana General Assembly created a unified system of government in 1970, geographic boundaries and many administrative functions and services were consolidated and expanded county-wide. The tax base for some services was also expanded county-wide. However, many taxing units with unique geographic boundaries existed and were retained and since then more have been created. This proliferation of taxing units contributes to a complicated tax structure.

There are 43 different governmental units in Marion County that provide services and impose taxes.

- Marion County
- nine townships
- eight Included Towns
- eleven school districts
- five independent municipal corporations
- Consolidated City
- four Excluded Cities
- one library board*
- two conservancy districts

*As of June 1, 2016, the Beech Grove Public Library merged with IndyPL. Tax revenues from

the Beech Grove Library District are now assumed by the Indianapolis Public Library District.

In addition, there are 17 more taxing units within the Consolidated City. All of these units levy taxes and provide services to one or more geographic areas. The location of an individual's property governs what set of governmental services it receives and what total tax rate it pays. There are 61 taxing districts in the county, each one receiving a unique combination of services and therefore, potentially paying a unique total tax rate.

In addition to property taxes paid by those who live and own property in Marion County, those individuals who live in Marion County and earn income are subject to the County Option Income Tax (COIT). As of this writing (2021), the income tax rate in Marion County is 2.02 percent of gross income and all who reside in Marion County pay that rate, regardless of where in the county they live. Of the 2.02 percent, 0.50 percent is dedicated to public safety (police, fire, sheriff, courts, etc.), 1.0003 percent is used to fund public safety primarily, along with city and county operations, redevelopment, etc. 0.2303 percent is used to support a property tax levy freeze, and finally, 0.25 percent was approved via voter referendum beginning in late 2017 for the dedicated purpose of mass transit expansion as part of IndyGo's budget. Those individuals who live outside of Marion County but work in Marion County, pay income taxes to the county they reside in. No income from those earnings comes to Marion County.

In 2007, the Indiana General Assembly enacted legislation to allow for a property tax cap referendum. In 2010, Indiana voters approved a referendum to insert property tax caps into the state Constitution. In 2012, those went into effect, basically reducing the income local units of government could get from property tax revenue by capping how much property owners would pay. The referendum capped property taxes at 1 percent, 2 percent or 3 percent based on the type of property owned by the individual or entity. In 2021, property tax caps have reduced the City of Indianapolis's and Marion County's annual property tax revenue by \$64 million, requiring a reduction in service provisions to maintain a balanced budget.

Other units have been created to solve a problem created by the state Constitution's a two-percent debt limit on local government. One source

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of funds for local government is the sale of bonds. Each individual unit of government may borrow (sell bonds) up to two percent of its assessed valuation. There are a few exceptions. For example, the Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation (IndyGo) has a debt limit of 1 percent and the Sanitary District has a twelve percent limit to allow for construction of large-scale facilities. Thus, by creating new units of government, more borrowing power through bonding is allowed. Bond financing is used for major capital projects that have a long, useful life. Other local sources of revenue for local government are the property tax, county option income tax, vehicle excise tax, county wheel tax and excise surtax, financial institutions tax, and fees and charges.

State tax revenues shared with local governments include riverboat wagering/gaming, gasoline, cigarettes, alcohol excise and gallonage taxes. State statute prescribes eligible uses of each revenue type. Aside from gasoline taxes, which must be spent on infrastructure/capital, the other state shared tax revenues can be used for most general governmental services.

Federal funds come to the local government through a variety of programs. Most federal funds are for specific purposes and their use must comply with stringent guidelines. (See also [Unigov and Public Finance](#)).



Judicial Branch

The Indiana Constitution provides for a Supreme Court, a Court of Appeals (both courts have statewide jurisdiction), Circuit Courts, and “such other courts” as the General Assembly may establish as they become necessary.

Marion County, the nineteenth judicial circuit for the state of Indiana, has a Circuit Court, a Superior Court, and a Small Claims Court. The judge of the Circuit Court is elected for six years. In addition to having judicial powers, the Circuit Court judge makes appointments to some Marion County boards. The Superior Court has four divisions (Civil, Criminal, Probate, and Juvenile) and 36 judges who are appointed to six-year terms. These judges elect a presiding judge and two associate presiding judges every two years and assign each judge to one of the courtrooms.

**Citizen-led oversight boards, commissions, and committees are in italics.*

Circuit and Superior Courts

The Circuit Court and Superior Court, Civil Division have the same jurisdiction in all civil actions and actions for dissolutions of marriage. The Superior Court, Probate Division, has jurisdiction in probating wills, appointing guardians and executors, administering estates, and other similar matters. The Superior Court, Juvenile Division, has original and exclusive jurisdiction in all cases of persons under 18 years of age. However, it may relinquish jurisdiction to the Criminal Division of Superior Court if deemed appropriate. The Juvenile Court judge has responsibility for the release and control of records and may destroy records, which is not ordinarily the case in other courts. The Superior Court, Criminal Division, has original jurisdiction in all misdemeanor and felony cases.

Vacancies in judgeships in the superior courts are filled through appointment by the Governor. Not only does a judge hear cases, he or she hires and supervises a staff of court reporters, bailiffs, clerks, and assistants. Judges also assist central administrative staff in compiling a single budget. The budget is sent to the Office of Finance and Management and becomes part of the budget process of the City-County Council.

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Other functions of the court include a jury pool, which summons the hundreds of jurors the courts need each week and a Domestic Relations Counseling Bureau, which meets with families going through divorce or separation and recommends to the court options that are in the best interests of the children involved.

Specialized dockets with the Superior Court include the following:

Environmental Court

This court hears cases ranging from poor property upkeep to large-scale contamination of public land, air, or water.

Traffic Court

Hears all traffic-related cases from speeding to driving while suspended. This court handles more than 100,000 tickets per year.

Domestic Violence

Three domestic violence courtrooms are dedicated to hearing cases involving violence among family members. The court also handles a huge number of protective orders.

Until 2017, the docket also included Community Court which brought residents and business owners in specific neighborhoods together to seek input on how law enforcement and the judicial system could make neighborhoods better. Those convicted of misdemeanors in this court were sentenced to community service in that neighborhood. This court was dissolved in 2017 and became another Level-6 Misdemeanor Court.

Small Claims Court

There are nine Small Claims courtrooms, one in each township. Judges are elected by the voters in each township. This is not a court of record and only corporations are required to be represented by an attorney. These courts have jurisdiction in all civil cases in which claims are no more than \$6,000. There are no jury trials in Small Claims courts. Appeals from these courts



are made to Superior Court, Civil Division. (See also [Courts in Marion County](#)).

Jury Commissioners

The judge of the Circuit Court appoints two citizen landowners, one from each major political party, as jury commissioners. Each week the commissioners select names for Petit Jury service. Grand jurors are similarly selected every three months. In the past, potential jurors were called using voter registration lists. These lists did not include all segments of potential jurors over 18 and, in some cases, caused a disincentive to vote. Since 2005, the Indiana Supreme Court and the Indiana Jury Committee annually compile a Statewide Jury Pool List based on data supplied by the Indiana Department of Revenue (DOR) and Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV).

Grand Jury

The Grand Jury inquires into all cases of persons imprisoned and not indicted, persons out on bail but not indicted, all cases of misconduct by public officials, cases concerning conditions and management of jails, and cases involving violation of state criminal laws.

Public Defender Board

This bipartisan board is responsible for policy decisions for the Public Defender Agency and for selecting the director of the agency. The Board was created by ordinance and includes nine members, four appointed by the City-County Council, four by the Marion Superior Court, and one by the Mayor. The agency provides public defenders for criminal, juvenile, probation violation, direct appeals, extradition, child support, civil commitment, termination of parental rights, children in need of services, and any other legal proceeding where the right to counsel has been established by law.

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Other Units of Government and Public-Private Partnerships

Boards and Commissions

*Citizen-led oversight boards, commissions, and committees are in italics.

Citizens' Police Complaint Board

In its current form, the Citizens' Police Complaint Office and Board was established in 1999. The Board is authorized to accept complaints from the public, review Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department (IMPD) internal investigations and adjudicate allegations of misconduct by IMPD officers. The board is composed of nine civilian members and two IMPD ex-officio members. The Mayor appoints four citizen members and one IMPD member and the Council appoints five citizen members and one IMPD member. The civilians serve three-year terms and the IMPD officers serve two-year terms. All are limited to two consecutive terms.

Ethics Commission

The Ethics Commission, consisting of five members appointed by the Mayor for three-year terms, administers a code of ethics which governs city and county officials, appointees, and employees. The Mayor and county officials, employees in specified positions, and members of boards and commissions of the city and county must file a statement of economic interest by May 1st of each year. The board meets when necessary, and the meetings, as well as statements of economic interest, are open to the public.

Indianapolis Housing Agency (IHA)

The Indianapolis Housing Agency is responsible for the design, construction, maintenance, and management of housing for low-income, elderly, and disabled persons. It is financed by revenues received from tenant

rents and an annual subsidy from the Housing Assistance Administration of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). A Board of Commissioners that assists in establishing public housing policy is made up of members appointed by the Mayor, City-County Council, and of members elected by the residents. IHA is online at indyhousing.org.

Marion County Alcoholic Beverage Board

The four members of the Marion County Alcoholic Beverage Board are appointed by the Mayor (1), the City-County Council (1), the County Commissioners (1), and the Indiana Alcoholic Beverage Commission (1). The Marion County Alcoholic Beverage Board holds hearings and makes recommendations to approve or deny applications for alcoholic beverage permits for all of Marion County except Lawrence, Beech Grove, and Speedway. The Mayor of each of those municipalities appoints one person who sits with the other three to make recommendations for those municipalities. Recommendations of a local board are subject to approval of the state Alcoholic Beverage Commission. Remonstrance may be sent to the board in care of the Marion County Clerk.

Marion County Cooperative Extension Service

The Extension Service provides information, programs, and activities for Marion County residents. It reaches the community through extension agents in the program areas of Youth, Home Economics, Agriculture, and Community Development. The Extension agents work with young people, 4-H, women's groups, and various clubs and organizations in the central city, as well as suburban areas of Marion County.

Public-Private Partnerships

Citizens Energy Group

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[Citizens Energy Group](#), a nonprofit charitable trust, manages the City's chilled water, gas, and steam. In 2011, the transfer of the City's water and wastewater systems to Citizens was approved by the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC). Citizens Energy Group's Board of Trustees appoints its own members and appoints a Board of Directors. Its Board of Trustees appoints its own members and appoints a Board of Directors, which oversees the operations of Citizens. By state law, Citizens operates as the city's Department of Public Utilities. The nonprofit charitable trust was established in the late 1800s to ensure that the city's gas system kept rates consistent and low. (Citizens operated a coke utility in the 1900s, which has since ceased operations.) In the 1900s, Citizens began operating the chilled water and steam systems. Learn more at citizensenergygroup.com.

Develop Indy

Develop Indy, a division of the Indy Chamber since 2012, serves as the economic development organization for Indianapolis/Marion County. It exists to help companies retain and create jobs. Whether a business is considering relocating to or expanding within the city, Develop Indy can provide site selection services, access to government incentive programs, market data and research, networking opportunities, and assistance with permitting, zoning and infrastructure issues. Learn more at developindy.com.

Downtown Indy, Inc. (DII)

Downtown Indy, Inc., known as Indianapolis Downtown, Inc., between 1993 and 2006, is a nonprofit organization formed to develop, manage and market downtown Indianapolis. The organization works to make the downtown clean, safe, and convenient. It takes on broader management and economic development responsibilities than its predecessor, the Commission for Downtown. A 27-member board and 63-member advisory board direct DII. The staff is led by a president. Learn more at indydt.com.

Indy Partnership

The [Indy Partnership](#), which is a division of the Indy Chamber, serves as the economic development agency for Central Indiana. Its mission is to attract new companies to the region for increased capital investment and job growth. Nine member counties form the Indy Partnership and collaborate on marketing opportunities (Boone, Marion, Johnson, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Madison, Morgan, and Shelby). Learn more at indypartnership.com.

Visit Indy

[Visit Indy](#), formerly known as the Indianapolis Convention and Visitors Association, markets the area as a destination for conventions, meetings, trade shows, special events, group tours, and pleasure travel. It is a private, nonprofit corporation funded by the Capital Improvement Board of Marion County and through membership of companies and firms. (Visit Indy receives no direct taxes, rather it receives its funding from the CIB and the CIB funds Visit Indy from a variety of sources.) Visit Indy is governed by a board of directors. Its employees work in convention sales, convention services, tourism, membership and development, publications, and finance and administration. It works with the Capital Improvement Board, member businesses, and other organizations to market and promote the city. Learn more at visitindy.com.

The Township

Marion County has nine [townships](#): [Center](#), [Decatur](#), [Franklin](#), [Lawrence](#), [Perry](#), [Pike](#), [Warren](#), [Washington](#), and [Wayne](#). Townships are an additional layer of government separate from city and county government.

Township Trustee

The Office of the Township Trustee provides direct general assistance to those in need. While the Division of Family Resources administers ongoing programs, the Township Trustee gives immediate, emergency aid. The

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Township Trustee is obligated to provide food, clothing, heating fuel, medical help, utilities, and transportation for employment to those who meet the township's standards for assistance. The Township Trustee's office must help families in need to acquire basic furniture and utensils and try to find employment. The Township Trustee and the Township Advisory Board, elected for four-year terms, hold four yearly meetings, two on budget and two on year-end reports, and may call special meetings for which public notice must be given. Each Township Trustee has an office in the township.

The trustees in Decatur, Pike, and Wayne townships also manage separate fire departments, as they have not elected to consolidate their fire departments into the Indianapolis Fire Department.

Township Constable

Elected for a four-year term, the Constable serves summonses, warrants, and subpoenas enforcing orders of the Small Claims Courts.

Township Advisory Board

This Board is elected by the township voters for a four-year term. Until January 1, 2017, township boards had seven members, but after that time state law provides that those boards have five members. It is required by law to meet on or before the third Tuesday after the first Monday in February. There is also an annual meeting for the adoption of the annual budget. Other meetings may be called, as necessary.

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The Citizen

Voter Registration and Elections

A citizen must be registered to vote. You may register to vote if you are a citizen of the United States, 18 years of age by the November general or municipal election, a resident of your precinct for 30 days before the election, and not currently imprisoned after being convicted of a crime. (In Indiana, 17-year-olds may register to vote if they will be 18 by the November election.) a special election is held, you must be 18 years old on or before the day of the special election to vote, such as an election held for a public question conducted in an off-year.

You do not need to declare a party affiliation when you register. You only need to register to vote one time unless you move or change your name. It is important to be registered at the address you currently reside.

Voter registration forms are available at public libraries, license branches, and county clerks' offices, among other places. Paper voter registration forms must have an original signature; therefore, the paper form must be mailed or hand-delivered to the Marion County Board of Voters Regis-

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tration. First time voters in Indiana mailing in their paper registration form should provide proof of residency or this information will be requested when you go to vote.

Additionally, online voter registration took effect in Indiana on July 1, 2010. Online voter registration can be accomplished through the Indiana State-wide Voter Registration System at indianavoters.com. To register online, you must have an Indiana Driver's License or State ID number. If you do not have an Indiana Driver's License or State ID number, then you must register to vote using the paper form. You can provide the last four numbers of your Social Security Number on this form or, if you do not have a Social Security Number, mark "none" on the registration form and a number will be assigned to you.

Registration closes 29 days before Election Day. If you have moved too late to transfer to your new address, you may still vote under some circumstances; contact the Marion County Board of Voter Registration (317-327-5040) with your specific situation.

You vote at your precinct polling place, which is open from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Locations are published in the newspaper or you may call the Marion County Election Board at 317-327-5100 or the political party headquarters of your choice. Polling site information can also be obtained online at MCEB.indy.gov. In some circumstances, you may vote absentee by mail, traveling board, or in-person at the Clerk's Office or other location; contact the Marion County Election Board for information

Indiana requires a voter to provide a valid photo ID issued by the state of Indiana or federal government when voting on Election Day or during in-person absentee voting. Pursuant to state law, most IDs must include a photograph of the voter and have a name that conforms to the voter's registration record. The photo ID must also be current or expired since the last general election. There are exceptions to the photo ID law; contact the Marion County Election Board (317-327-5100) for information. Individuals who do not have a photo ID can vote by provisional ballot. For the provisional ballot to be counted, you must bring their photo ID to the Marion

County Election Board or sign an affidavit you have a religious exemption or are indigent not later than noon, 10 days after the election.

Indiana does not have initiative or recall but has passed state laws to permit referendums for specific types of public questions. For example, in 2008 the Indiana General Assembly changed the way capital projects funded by tax dollars are financed. Capital projects, such as school expansions, must be approved by the voters. In addition, restrictions apply on the ability of governmental entities to campaign on behalf of their referendum.

Ballots in the general election may include amendments to the state constitution. To be adopted, each amendment must pass in two consecutive sessions of the General Assembly. The same measure must receive a majority of the popular vote at the next election.

Be an Informed Voter

Study the candidates, the issues, and your own priorities. Obtain factual information on the candidates. Attend candidate meetings and watch televised forums and debates. Many organizations provide incumbents' voting records, at least on selected issues of interest.

Try to see beyond the emotional appeals and distortion tactics, such as guilt by association, twisted arguments, and labeling the opponent. Try to spot phony issues and evasion of the real issues. Pick candidates whose positions are most like yours on the issues you think are important. No candidate will agree with you on all issues.

Serve as a Poll Worker

County election boards rely on the two major political parties to nominate registered voters of the county to fill a variety of positions to support the voting process. These include poll workers who support absentee voting (e.g., in-person early voting, mail-in, and traveling board), Election Day polling locations, and post-election canvassing work.

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A 16- or 17-year-old can also work most election positions as long as certain requirements are met. There may be limitations on serving as an election worker if you are a candidate running for office.

If a political party does not nominate enough individuals to serve, then the county election board can fill the vacancies. Work hours and duties will vary depending on the position. Political parties can also appoint watchers, poll book holders, and challengers. Contact the Marion County Election Board (317-327-5100) or your preferred political party for more information.

Communicate Your Opinions

As a voter, your opinions help determine how your elected officials may vote on a given issue or what kind of policy decision may be made. Let your representative in government know your views by card, letter, telephone, fax, or e-mail. Be brief and discuss only one issue at a time. Use your own words and identify specific legislation, if possible. Sign your name and address legibly. Begin early, before a bill has been introduced, if you want to see your ideas incorporated into legislation.

The United States Senators and Representatives maintain local offices listed online and in the telephone book. Local and state names, phone numbers, and addresses are available from the City-County Building, the State Capitol, or on their websites.

Observe Meetings

Observing public meetings keeps you informed of the conduct of public business and the personalities of those involved. With some exceptions, the Indiana Open Door Law states that all meetings of the governing bodies of public agencies must be open at all times for the purpose of permitting members of the public to observe and record them. The law dictates that: a secret ballot may not be taken; the agenda is to be posted at the entrance; records must be kept and available later; public notice, in most cases, must be given. Executive sessions (closed to the public) may be held only for the purpose of discussion of collective bargaining, litigation, pur-

chase or lease of property, job performance of individuals, and interviews with prospective employees or with industrial or commercial prospects. All final actions and voting must be taken at an open meeting. Political party caucuses are not included in the Open Door Law and are not open to the public. For more information on Indiana's Open Door Laws, contact the State's Public Access Counselor at 1-800-228-6013 or visit their website at in.gov/pac.

When testifying at a public hearing, it is a good idea to write your statement out and to give a copy to each member of the body you are addressing. Keep your statement brief. Tell why you support or oppose the legislation or action and give facts to support your position. Your statement might tell how the measure affects the public interest, who will benefit, how similar laws in other communities have worked, what other groups favor your position, and how much it will cost.

Be prepared to answer questions regarding your position. If you can, have other supporters attend the hearing even though they will not testify. Listen carefully to the statements of your opposition. If facts are misstated and you are given an opportunity to reply, do so in a calm manner.

Other Skills of a Citizen

A Letter to the Editor can be an effective way to publicly discuss an issue and influence decisions of a legislative body. Your letter is more likely to be printed if you state your points directly and clearly. Many newspapers provide online submission forms you can complete on their websites. You must include your name and contact information, but you may request that those not be printed.

Become a member of a group or a coalition to increase your influence. Groups may form around single issues or may be broad-based coalitions. If you find a group that is consistent in its policies and practices with your beliefs, you often may be more successful working with it, rather than alone.

To lobby to pass an ordinance or law, get to know your councillor or legislator and party leaders in person. Attend their neighborhood appearances or

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other public sessions within the district. Go to them early; supply them with succinct, easy-to-read information and news clips; listen to their views.

One way to seek change is to work for administrative policy adjustment, rather than a change in law. Formal or informal complaints may call attention to a problem. If working through the administrative agency does not bring implementation of existing law and policies, it may be necessary to go to court in the public interest to get results. However, litigation is not necessarily a last resort. It may be the preferred technique from the beginning. It may be necessary to plan a campaign to build public opinion to improve the climate for supporting (or opposing) some action.

This might include developing a theme, distributing information, getting spokespersons on TV, radio, and in the press, operating a speaker's bureau, developing a website, staging demonstrations, developing a newsletter, and lining up endorsements.

Become a Candidate for Elective Office

**Verify all deadlines, forms, signature requirements, etc. with party officials and/or your County Election Board as these important details are subject to change.*

To run for local or party office is a simple process. For most offices, filing a declaration of candidacy and a statement of economic interest is the simple legal step that must be taken to run for office. There may be requirements to file periodic campaign finance reports. In addition, a candidate needs an organization, funding, advertising, and volunteers.

Candidate filing forms are available at your County Clerk, County Election Board Office, and Indiana Election Division. Forms used to run for elected office must be notarized and filed with the appropriate entity not later than the noon deadline set forth in state law. Candidate forms cannot be faxed or emailed. Forms can be mailed, though the County Election Board or Secretary of State must receive the document not later than the noon deadline. Please contact the County Election Board or Indiana Election Division to confirm office hours to hand-deliver candidate forms.

Except for federal offices, state law requires a candidate to be a registered voter of the election district. In addition, most offices have residency requirements to live in the election district for a specific period before the November election. Candidates for U.S. House and U.S. Senate simply need to be an inhabitant of the state by the November election.

Resources including candidate and campaign finance guides are published by the Indiana Election Division and available at www.in.gov/sos/elections.

Federal Office

The Federal Election Commission (www.fec.gov) is the agency that helps guide candidates for federal office, specifically for compliance with campaign finance. Candidates for federal office in Indiana file a declaration of candidacy with the Secretary of State's office.

In addition, Democratic and Republican candidates for U.S. Senate are required to file certified petition signatures of at least 500 registered voters in each of the state's nine Congressional districts for a minimum of 4,500 signatures. The petitions are first filed with the county voter registration official where the individuals are registered to be certified. Then the certified signatures are collected and filed with the Secretary of State by the deadline. The Clerk of the U.S. House or the Secretary of the U.S. Senate may have additional paperwork for candidates to complete.

Democratic and Republican candidates for U.S. President must also collect signatures of at least 500 registered voters in the nine Congressional districts and file a declaration of candidacy to run in the May primary in Indiana. The petition signatures must first be certified by county voter registration officials before the petition can be filed with the Secretary of State. However, the Democratic and Republican parties do not nominate their candidates for U.S. President in the primary election. The formal nomination occurs at their national conventions.

Be an Active Citizen

Libertarian Party candidates have different ballot access laws as do Independent and minor party candidates. Contact the Indiana Election Division (317-232-3939) for more information.

Statewide Office

To run for Governor, Democratic and Republican party candidates file a declaration of candidacy with the Secretary of State and a statement of economic interests with the Indiana Inspector General. The Inspector General has the statement of economic interests form available online at in.gov/IG.

In addition, Democratic and Republican candidates for governor are required to file certified petition signatures of at least 500 registered voters in each of the state's nine Congressional districts for a minimum of 4,500 signatures. The petitions are first filed with the county voter registration official where the individuals are registered to be certified. Then the certified signatures are collected and filed with the Secretary of State by the deadline.

Other statewide offices (Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State, Auditor, Treasurer) are nominated at the Democratic and Republican state party conventions. Candidates for statewide offices nominated at the party conventions must file a declaration of candidacy with the state political organization and may pay a fee set by the party. At the convention, a candidate must receive a majority vote to become the convention's nominee to appear on the November ballot.

Libertarian Party candidates have different ballot access laws as do Independent and minor party candidates. Contact the Indiana Election Division (317-232-3939) for more information.

Candidates for statewide office electronically file campaign finance reports with the Indiana Election Division at campaignfinance.in.gov.

State Legislative Office

Democratic and Republican candidates for state legislative office must file a statement of economic interest with the Clerk of the Indiana House or Secretary of the Indiana Senate and then file a declaration of candidacy with the Secretary of State to run in the May primary election. The statement of economic interest is available through the Indiana General Assembly's website (www.in.gov/IGA).

Libertarian Party candidates have different ballot access laws as do Independent and minor party candidates. Contact the Indiana Election Division (317-232-3939) for more information.

Candidates for state legislative office electronically file campaign finance reports with the Indiana Election Division at campaignfinance.in.gov.

Judicial Office or Prosecuting Attorney

Democratic and Republican candidates for judicial offices or prosecuting attorney must file a statement of economic interest with the Commission on Judicial Qualifications and then file a declaration of candidacy with the Secretary of State. The statement of economic interest is available through the Commission on Judicial Qualifications.

Some counties elect nonpartisan judges or use a retention method. Libertarian Party candidates have different ballot access laws as do Independent and minor party candidates. Contact the Indiana Election Division (317-232-3939) for more information.

Candidates for judicial office or prosecuting attorney file campaign finance reports with their County Election Board or County Clerk.

Local Office

Democratic and Republican candidates for local office must file a statement of economic interest (CAN-12) and a declaration of candidacy with their County Clerk or County Election Board. Libertarian Party candidates

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have different ballot access laws as do Independent and minor party candidates. Contact the Marion County Election Board (317-327-5100) for more information.

Candidates for local office file campaign finance reports with their County Election Board or County Clerk.

Party Office

The Democratic and Republican parties each have state convention delegates and precinct committeepersons. State Convention delegates are elected in the May primary in even-numbered years. Republican precinct committeepersons are elected in the May primary election held in the presidential election year (e.g., 2020), while Democratic precinct committeepersons are elected in the May primary election held in the non-presidential election year (e.g., 2022).

State party rules establish the qualifications to seek these positions. Candidates for these offices file a declaration of candidacy with the County Clerk or County Election Board during candidate filing. The state's Campaign Finance Act does not apply to party offices.

Ballot Vacancies

If no candidate files to run for an office in the Democratic or Republican party primary, state law allows the Democratic and Republican parties to fill those ballot vacancies. Party committees, chairpersons and, if applicable, precinct committeepersons work together to fill vacancies following procedures set forth in state law.

The Libertarian Party can also fill ballot vacancies following procedures set forth in state law if no person was nominated at their state or county convention.

Contact the Indiana Election Division (317-232-3939) or your preferred party organization for more information.

Opportunities for Work within the Political Parties

The League of Women Voters urges you to work actively in the political party of your choice. Indiana is considered a strong political party state, and informed citizens need to understand the political party structure to effectively use it.

Precinct

The Precinct is the basic political unit. Voters elect a precinct committeeperson (PC) every four years at primary elections. State law sets forth that the Republican Party elects their precinct committeepersons in presidential election years; the Democratic Party elects theirs in the non-presidential election year. However, candidate qualifications and responsibilities are established by the respective state party.

His or her first official duty is to appoint a vice committeeperson. If no PC is elected, the county party chairperson may appoint one. The position carries no salary yet contributes to the particularly important and powerful county committee of each party. Other ways for a voter to participate at the precinct level are working at the polls on Election Day, being a block captain, helping to poll the neighborhood, and distributing literature.

County Committee

The next level, the **County Committee**, is composed of all elected and appointed precinct committeepersons. This committee elects from its membership the county chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary, and treasurer for four-year terms. All the county chairpersons and vice chairpersons within a congressional district form the next level of political organization in the party, the District Committee.

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District Committees

Each of the congressional District Committees elects a chairperson and vice chairperson who form the State Central Committee.

State Central Committee

The State Central Committee is the party authority. The parties maintain permanent, year-round headquarters with full-time staff as well as other people hired during election periods. The State Committee is responsible for the state party conventions held in late spring or summer.

State Conventions

State Conventions provide the high point of a political party's activity in Indiana, as do the national party conventions for the nation. The conventions adopt platforms and nominate candidates for Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, State Auditor, State Treasurer, and Attorney General.

A vote for the presidential nominee in the presidential primary expresses a preference for the nominee, not a direct vote for him or her. Rather, the party nominee is chosen at the national party convention by delegates selected at the state party convention. In the May primary, the voters elect delegates to the state party convention who, in turn, elect the delegates to the national convention. Because of the lack of available information about them, it is difficult for the individual voter to make an informed choice of state convention delegates.

The State Central Committee of the party appoints national committee members, usually people who can pay their own way, since serving on a national committee is expensive. A national committee conducts the presidential and vice-presidential campaign and manages the party's affairs between national conventions.



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