

# **A DESCRIPTION OF LEON COUNTY GOVERNMENT**

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## **Leon County**

Leon County was originally part of Escambia County. It was created by the Territorial Legislature in 1824. Named for Ponce de Leon, Florida founder, Leon County was one of the most populous and prosperous counties in antebellum Florida. The City of Tallahassee, the county seat and the only incorporated city in Leon County, was established in 1825 following a decision by the legislature to locate the capital of ten new Florida territories midway between the population centers of St. Augustine and Pensacola.

Leon County is approximately 671 square miles. Its highest elevation is 288 feet, found in the northern part of the county, about 1/4 mile to the southwest of Lake McBride. Leon County has a population of approximately 248,039 people, with 91,774 living in the unincorporated area of the County and 156,265 within the city limits.

In November 2002, the citizens of Leon County approved making Leon County a charter county. As a charter county government, Leon County has home rule authority and can now more readily act towards the needs of its citizenry.

## **Seven-Member Commission Elected to Govern County**

Leon County, a political subdivision of the State of Florida, is guided by an elected seven-member Board of County Commissioners. Five members of the commission are elected to serve specific districts and two members are elected at-large. A chairperson is selected each year. Florida Statutes, Chapter 125 establishes the powers and duties of the County Commission and County Administrator.

## **Elected Officials**

Elected Officials include the Board of County Commissioners, the Judiciary, the State Attorney, Public Defender and five Constitutional Officers: the Clerk of the Court, the Property Appraiser, the Sheriff, the Supervisor of Elections and the Tax Collector.

Constitutional Officers are elected to administer a specific function of County government and are directly accountable to the public for its proper operation. The Board funds all or, in some cases, a portion of the operating budgets of the other elected officials. With the exception of the Supervisor of Elections, the Constitutional Officers maintain separate accounting systems.

## **Role of the County Administrator**

The County Administrator is appointed by the Board of County Commissioners and is responsible for carrying out the directives and policies of the Board. The County Administrator is also responsible for the management and supervision of all functions and personnel under the Board of County Commissioners.

## **Appointed Boards and Committees**

Leon County has a number of appointed Boards and Committees that serve in an advisory capacity to the Board of County Commissioners. In addition, the Board appoints a number of committees that serve as quasi-legal bodies. The following is a partial list of these committees: Architectural Review Board, Code Enforcement Board, Contractors Licensing and Examination Board, Educational Facilities Authority, Parks and Recreation Advisory Team, Neighborhood Recognition Committee, Planning Commission, and the Tourist Development Council.