

OUR THREE LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT: What are their roles

This list may not be comprehensive. It gives a general view of the responsibilities of the three levels.

FEDERAL Government:

Goal: 'Peace, order and good government'

- regulation of trade, commerce, copyrights
- infrastructure such as shipping, railways, telephones and pipelines
- communications and the post office
- finance including money and banking
- federal taxation and transfers to provinces and individuals
- employment insurance
- justice, especially the Criminal Code
- Immigration and citizenship
- foreign policy & international relations
- fisheries
- Indigenous lands and rights
- national parks
- defence and veterans affairs
- Indigenous affairs including education
- national police - the RCMP
- census and statistics

Sometimes the federal government wanders from its stated jurisdictional responsibilities to encroach on Provincial and territorial. According to the Constitution Act, 1867, everything not mentioned as belonging to the provincial governments does come under the power of the federal government.

PROVINCIAL, TERRITORIAL Governments:

Goal: 'Peace, order and good government' within their geographic boundaries

- administration of Justice
- policing (O.P.P.)
- education
- health care including hospitals, funding of home care
- social services, including Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program
- municipalities
- infrastructure and road regulations
- administration of justice
- labour standards
- births, deaths registrations
- natural resources and environment
- provincial parks
- property and civil rights in Ontario

LOCAL Governments:

These are the governments that affect us the most, but yet this is the government we ignore the most. They deal with our day-to-day life from emergency services to social services to determining what is being built next door.

Types of Local Governments

- **Towns, cities, villages and townships** – Mayor or Reeve, Councillors or Aldermen
- **Counties** – Warden
- **Regions** – Regional Chair
- **Band Councils** – similar responsibilities to municipalities but are connected to the federal government via the Indian Act, rather than to provincial governments.
- **School Boards** – in Ontario, there are 34 English public secular boards and 4 French boards (ACÉPO), 29 English Catholic boards, 8 French Catholic boards, 1 English Protestant board, and 7 public school authorities that operate in children's treatment centres. These are connected to the Ontario Ministry of Education, rather than the municipalities, but elected locally.

From the Association of Municipalities in Ontario <https://www.amo.on.ca/> :

The powers of municipal governments are determined by the provincial government. Many of these responsibilities are shared with the provinces and territories, but the local government is the front line. Municipal governments in Ontario are the ones responsible providing many of the services within their local boundaries that you rely on daily such as:

- Airports
- Ambulance and Paramedic services
- Animal Control and By-law enforcement
- Arts and Culture
- Building Permits
- Child Care service management
- Economic Development
- Emergency Management
- Fire Services
- Garbage Collection and Recycling
- Electric Utilities
- Library Services
- Licensing and control of pets
- Long Term Care and Senior Housing
- Maintenance of Local Road Network
- Museums and historical societies
- Parks and Recreation
- Public Transit
- Planning New Community Developments and Enhancing Existing Neighbourhoods
- Police Services
- Property Assessment
- Provincial Offences Administration
- Public Health
- Side Walks
- Snow Removal
- Social Services
- Social Housing
- Storm Sewers
- Tax Collection
- Water and Sewage
- Zoning