

What Counties Do

All Kentuckians live in a county. As an extension of state government, counties provide essential services to residents such as building and maintaining infrastructure, law enforcement, public safety, elections, judicial functions, recordkeeping and more.



To learn more about What Counties Do, visit kaco.org/county-information/what-counties-do

Judge/Executive



The county judge/executive leads the fiscal court and is the county's chief executive. This position develops the county budget, oversees the implementation of county policies and represents county interests at the state and federal levels.

County Clerk



County clerks are responsible for a variety of services and record-keeping duties related to elections, property records, vehicles and more. This office oversees elections for local, statewide and federal races, ensuring the process is fair and secure. The county clerk issues marriage licenses and is the official custodian of deeds, mortgages and land records.

Magistrates and Commissioners



Depending on the county, elected representatives serving on the county fiscal court are either magistrates (elected by a particular district) or commissioners (elected by the county at-large). They approve the county budget, pass ordinances, and adopt resolutions regarding county government operations.

Sheriff



Sheriffs and their deputies are trained law enforcement officers with several public safety and administrative responsibilities. This office responds to calls for service, investigates criminal activity, provides security at judicial centers, serves court summonses and other legal documents, and collects property taxes.

County Attorney



County attorneys represent the county in legal matters and provides legal guidance to the fiscal court. This office prosecutes misdemeanor offenses and traffic-related offenses, presents evidence in felony cases during the preliminary hearing and administers the child support enforcement program.

Jailer



Regardless of whether a county operates its own jail, the jailer is responsible for the custody, care and transportation of all individuals who are arrested in the county. A jailer ensures inmates are appropriately housed, supervised, have access to medical care, and are transported to and from court and other facilities.

Commonwealth's Attorney



Commonwealth's attorneys represent the Commonwealth of Kentucky in prosecuting felony cases for a judicial circuit, such as murder, assault, robbery and other serious offenses. This office works with law enforcement to gather evidence, consult witnesses and prepare cases for trial while seeking justice for crime victims.

Coroner



Coroners are responsible for investigating deaths that occur in their county. This office responds to the scene of fatal incidents such as accidents, vehicle crashes, homicides, suicides and natural disasters. The coroner determines the cause and manner of death, notifies the decedent's next of kin and issues death certificates.

Circuit Court Clerk



A circuit court clerk manages court records and provides administrative oversight of District Court, Circuit Court and Family Court in their county. These court records cover criminal and civil cases, traffic violations, divorce decrees and wills. This office oversees the selection and management of jury pools for trials.

Property Valuation Administrator



A property valuation administrator (PVA) assesses the fair market value of all real estate and tangible personal property in the county, including homes, businesses, land, equipment and vehicles. This office maintains property records and processes property tax exemptions such as the homestead exemption for seniors and people who are disabled.

