



# EXTENSION IMPACT

## Building Capacity to Govern

**T**here are 1,923 Wisconsin local governments, and close to 10,000 elected governing body members in Wisconsin. To govern effectively, Wisconsin's local government elected officials and staff need to understand their roles and responsibilities to help their community thrive. Extension's Local Government Education Program provides educational programs to train, inform, and challenge Wisconsin's local government elected leaders and staff. Through this program, we educate Wisconsin local government leaders regarding the legal, operational, and personal knowledge requirements. In turn, this improves their local government operations to their community's overall benefit.

*Extension supports local government officials and staff in learning how to do their governing body duties effectively and efficiently while incorporating community feedback and input.*

In any given election year, local elected officials, including appointed clerks, turnover at a rate of twenty to twenty-five percent, representing over two thousand new local elected officials. This "churn rate" creates an ongoing need for regular training on local government governing, operations, and legal requirements.

In response to persistent training needs, Extension partners with the Wisconsin Towns Association, the League of Wisconsin Municipalities, the Wisconsin Counties Association and other organizations. Together, we create and provide training through in-person workshops, webinars, regional and annual conferences. Extension develops fact sheets, informational presentations, recorded video programs and award-winning website resources. In 2020, Extension's 62 Local Government Education programs reached 5,110 elected officials and staff. The goal was to assist them with learning how to do their governing body duties effectively, efficiently while incorporating community feedback and input.

For example, the Wisconsin Counties Association Spring Workshops, with an attendance of 789, offered presentations that were intentionally designed for new county board members and open to all county board members and staff. Because of COVID-19, these sessions were conducted virtually. Extension staff worked with the Wisconsin Counties Association to provide recorded sessions on a number of topics, including Roles and Responsibilities for County Officials; Running Effective Meetings; County Budgeting; Wisconsin's Open Meetings Law; Agendas and Minutes; Wisconsin's Public Records Law; and Ethics and Conflicts of Interest. Due to the recording of the presentations, the presentations are available to all county board members and staff. Follow-up evaluations indicated that participants felt their understanding of topics increased after watching the recordings and participating in the discussions.

in 2020



**5,100+**

**educational contacts  
with officials & staff**



**62**

**Local Government  
Education programs**



The Local Government Education program is part of Extension's Community Development Institute. Learn more by visiting [localgovernment.extension.wisc.edu](http://localgovernment.extension.wisc.edu).



**Extension**  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

An EEO/AA employer, University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title VI, Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act requirements.