

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT EDUCATION

2023 IMPACTS • UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON EXTENSION



# 1,773

LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS  
REACHED THROUGH  
WORKSHOPS

Local elected officials that are educated on how to perform their duties and responsibilities improve the overall operations of local governance and duty performance.

## More Effective, Efficient Government

Every other April, local elections are held for local government officials in every town, village, and city in Wisconsin. On average, over 20% of elected officials are new every election cycle. This creates a near continuous group of elected officials beginning their initial term as a local elected official. In this environment, elected officials need a trusted, unbiased source of information on local government topics that new and seasoned elected officials can use to improve their understanding and knowledge on local government topics to lead their respective communities. The Local Government Education Program partners with local government interest groups such as the Wisconsin Towns Association, and Wisconsin agencies like Wisconsin Department of Natural Resource, and the Wisconsin Transportation Information Center at UW-Madison, helping to provide town elected officials with current topical information impacting local towns duties and responsibilities. This education helps local units of government operate effectively and more efficiently, improving the overall operations and budgeting that towns oversee. During 2023, the Local Government Education program provided educational programming to over 1,770 individual town elected officials at the spring and fall Town Officials Workshop series.

In 2023, the Local Government Education Program provided 14 in-person trainings at the spring and fall Town Officials workshops to over 1,770 town elected officials. These seasonal in-person programs were located at seven various locations throughout the state as well as virtually for individuals unable to attend in-person trainings. Program topics were developed based on suggestions received during 2022 Town Official Workshop evaluations and discussions with Wisconsin Towns Association staff. The Local Government Education Program developed these evaluations, recorded and processed the evaluations, and helped plan the 2023 spring and fall workshop programs with the assistance of the Wisconsin Towns Association staff. Programing focused on a variety of topics such as review of recent Wisconsin law changes, ordinance development, emergency medical services requirements, bidding processes for contracts, road load limits and road studies, and various property tax collection and accounting duties required in



town government. Evaluations were handled by the Local Government Education program on behalf of all partners to assess and improve future educational offerings, as well as create a more robust understanding of the impact of these in-person trainings on attendees.

Through our partnerships with the Wisconsin Towns Association, the Wisconsin Department of Revenue, and the Wisconsin Transportation Information Center at UW–Madison, we continue to train and educate local elected officials throughout the state. Evaluations from the spring and fall Town Officials workshops asked respondents to rank their understanding/knowledge of each topic covered before and after the educational session to better understand knowledge gained through the Local Government Education Program’s outreach efforts. Course evaluations indicated, on average, a 20% increase in knowledge/understanding of each topic covered at the workshops. Evaluations also asked respondents to indicate the level of value they received at the workshop. Respondents indicated they valued the information presented on average as 4.45 out of 5 total points. These results indicate both self-improvement and a strong perception of value by the attending local elected officials. Workshops also help introduce the Local Government Education staff to local elected officials, helping to develop professional working relationships with elected officials throughout the state. Individual Local Government Education specialists see these relationships strengthen over the years and receive many inquiries from local elected officials well after the workshops are complete.



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