

CODE SHEET

All yes/no questions are Yes (1) and No (2). "Check all applicable" or "check all that apply" questions are listed in numeric order (i.e. 1, 2, 3, etc.) All "check only one" or "select one" questions are in numeric order (i.e. 1, 2, 3, etc.)

**Municipal Form of Government, 2011
Trends in Structure, Responsibility, and Composition**

August 2011

Dear Municipal Clerk:

ICMA, the International City/County Management Association, has conducted a Form of Government Survey for more than thirty years. This survey gathers the most comprehensive information available on form of government, election systems, provisions for referendum/recall, and term limits. In addition, information on characteristics of the local governing body is collected in this survey. A summary of the results will be available on ICMA's web site (<http://icma.org>) after the data have been tabulated.

Please contribute to this significant body of knowledge by completing the survey and returning it in the enclosed postage-paid envelope by **Friday September 16th 2011**. You can also complete the survey online at <http://icma.org/FormofGovernmentSurvey> or you may complete your survey in hard copy, scan it as a PDF, and email it to surveyresearch@icma.org

Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Robert J. O'Neill, Jr.
Executive Director, ICMA

Definitions for the survey that follows:

The term *municipality* refers to cities, towns, townships, villages, and boroughs.

The term *council* refers to an elected body whose members may be called council members, aldermen, selectmen, freeholders, trustees, commissioners, or a similar title.

The *chief appointed official* of the local government is often referred to as city manager, chief executive officer, city administrator, chief administrative officer, town administrator, village manager, or a similar title.

The *chief elected official* of the local government may have the title of mayor, president, board chair, etc.

8. Does your municipality have a provision for **Initiative**? 1. Yes 2. No

Initiative allows citizens to place charter, ordinance, or home rule changes on the ballot by collecting a required number of signatures on a petition.

If yes, which of the following initiative processes does your municipality provide? (Check all applicable.)

- 1 a. **Indirect:** Requires that *before* any charter, ordinance, or home rule change proposed by citizens through a petition process is placed on the ballot for vote, the council must consider it. Vote results are binding on the local government.
- 2 b. **Direct:** Requires that any charter, ordinance, or home rule change proposed by the citizens through a petition process must be placed directly on the ballot for a vote. Vote results are binding on the local government.
- 3 c. **Non-binding initiative:** Allows citizens to place on the ballot a question for voter approval or rejection. The voter response is non-binding on the local government.

9. Does your municipality have a provision for **Legislative referendum**? 1. Yes 2. No

Legislative referendum allows the council to place any question on the ballot for voter approval or rejection. The results may be binding or non-binding.

If yes, which of the following items must be placed on the ballot for voter approval (Check all applicable.)

- 1 a. Local bond measures
- 2 b. Proposed charter amendments
- 3 c. Proposed ordinances
- 4 d. Proposed home rule changes
- 5 e. Other _____

10. Does your municipality have a provision for **Popular referendum**? 1. Yes 2. No

Allows citizens to collect signatures on a petition to place on the ballot any charter, ordinance, or home rule change that has been adopted by the local government before the change can take effect.

11. Does your municipality have a provision for **Recall**? 1. Yes 2. No

Allows citizens to collect signatures on a petition to place on the ballot a question of whether an elected official should be removed from office before the expiration of his/her term.

12. **Since January 1, 2006**, have there been any attempts to change your municipality's *structure or form of government* (e.g., change from at-large to ward or district elections or add or eliminate the position of chief appointed official, etc.)? a. Yes b. No

A. If yes, approximately how many attempts have been made to change your municipality's *structure or form of government* since January 1, 2006? _____

B. Check each item that describes the proposed change(s) and indicate whether the change(s) was approved.

Attempted change	Change was proposed	Not approved	Approved	Year approved
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
1. Change from at-large to ward or district elections	Q12b_1a <input type="checkbox"/>	Q12b_1b <input type="checkbox"/>	Q12b_1c <input type="checkbox"/>	Q12b_1d _____
2. Change from ward or district to at-large elections	Q12b_2a <input type="checkbox"/>	Q12b_2b <input type="checkbox"/>	Q12b_2c <input type="checkbox"/>	Q12b_2d _____
3. Change to a mixed system with some at-large and some ward or district elections	Q12b_3a <input type="checkbox"/>	Q12b_3b <input type="checkbox"/>	Q12b_2c <input type="checkbox"/>	Q12b_2d _____
4. Change the mix between the number of council members elected at large and the number elected by ward or district	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
5. Increase the number of council or board members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
6. Decrease the number of council or board members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
7. Change the method of election of the chief elected official	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
8. Increase in powers/authorities of the chief elected official	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
9. Decrease in powers/authorities of the chief elected official	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
10. Add the position of chief appointed official (the appointed professional administrator)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
11. Eliminate the position of chief appointed official (the appointed professional administrator)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
12. Change who appoints the chief appointed official from (enter the previous appointment authority) q12b 12 previous to q12b 12 proposed (enter proposed)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

C. If a change in form of government was proposed, what was the proposed change? (*Place a check in the box in the "From" column that indicates the original form and a check in the box in the "To" column that indicates the proposed form.*)

- | From (q12c_from) | To (q12c_to) |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Mayor-council | <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Mayor-council |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Council-manager | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Council-manager |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Commission | <input type="checkbox"/> 8. Commission |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Town meeting | <input type="checkbox"/> 9. Town meeting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Representative town meeting | <input type="checkbox"/> 10. Representative town meeting |

CHIEF ELECTED LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL/MAYOR/BOARD CHAIR

The chief elected official of the local government may have the title of mayor, president, board chair, etc.

13. Does your municipality have a: 1 a. mayor 2 b. council president/board chair 3 c. both

*If you have both a mayor and a council/board president, answer the questions below for the position of **mayor**. If you do not have a mayor, but have a council president/board chair; answer the questions for the position of **council president/board chair**.*

14. Is the position of chief elected official in your local government *officially* full-time or part-time?
 1 a. Full-time 2 b. Part-time

15. How is your chief elected official selected? (*Check only one.*)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 <input type="checkbox"/> a. Voters elect directly | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> d. Council members rotate into the position of chief elected official |
| 2 <input type="checkbox"/> b. Council selects from among its members | |
| 3 <input type="checkbox"/> c. The council member receiving the most votes in the general election becomes the chief elected official | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> e. Other (<i>Please specify.</i>) _____ |

16. How long is the chief elected official's term of office? (*Important: If the chief elected official is a member of the council, specify the term for the position of chief elected official, not of council member.*) (*Check only one.*)

- 1 a. 1 year 2 b. 2 years 3 c. 3 years 4 d. 4 years 5 e. Other (*Please specify.*) _____

17. Is there a legal limit on the number of terms allowed for the position of chief elected official? 1. Yes 2. No

A. If yes, what is the maximum number of terms allowed by law?

- 1 a. 1 term 2 b. 2 terms 3 c. 3 terms 4 d. 4 terms 5 e. Other (*Please specify.*) _____

B. If yes, when was the term limitation for the position of chief elected official enacted? _____ (year)

C. If yes, what authority limits the number of terms for the position of chief elected official? (*Check only one.*)

- 1 a. Ordinance 2 b. Charter 3 c. State law 4 d. Other (*Please specify.*) _____

18. Is the chief elected official a member of council, that is, does the chief elected official serve on the council? 1. Yes 2. No

A. If yes, does the chief elected official receive supplemental compensation for these additional duties? 1. Yes 2. No

19. Under what circumstances does the chief elected official have the authority to vote in council meetings? (*Check only one.*)

- 1 a. On all issues 2 b. Only to break a tie 3 c. Never 4 d. Other (*Please specify.*) _____

20. Does the chief elected official have the authority to veto council-passed measures? 1. Yes 2. No

A. If yes, is a "super majority" vote of the council required to overturn the mayoral veto? 1. Yes 2. No

21. Does the chief elected official have the authority to (*Check all applicable.*)

- 1 a. Nominate the chief appointed official without council review or approval
- 2 b. Appoint the chief appointed official without council review or approval
- 3 c. Assign council members to chair or serve on committees and make assignments to those committees
- 4 d. Appoint citizens to serve on advisory or quasi-judicial authorities, boards, or commissions
- 5 e. Receive the annual budget developed by the chief appointed official and present the budget with comments and suggestions to the council for consideration
- 6 f. Prepare the annual budget
- 7 g. Make an annual report to the council and citizens on the state of the community
- 8 h. Remove the chief appointed official without council review or approval

22. Since 2006 have any recall initiatives been filed against the chief elected official? 1. Yes 2. No
If yes, were any successful? 1. Yes 2. No

23. How many staff work directly for the chief elected official? a. Full-time staff _____ b. Part-time staff _____

COUNCIL/BOARD OF SELECTMEN/TRUSTEES

*The term **council** refers to the elected governing body of the local government. The elected body may be called the board of selectmen, trustees, aldermen, etc.*

24. Does the political party affiliation of council candidates appear on the ballot in a local general election? 1. Yes 2. No

25. What is the current filing fee for running for a seat on the council? (If there is no fee, enter zero.) \$ _____

26. How many council positions are there on your council? _____ (Include the chief elected official if that position serves on the council. If the chief elected official is a member of the council, your answer to question 18 should be "yes.")

27. How are your council members selected? (Check only one.)

- 1 a. All at large 2 b. All by ward/district 3 c. Combination of at large and ward/district.

A. If you selected **c**, indicate the number of council members elected by each of the following methods:

- a. At large _____ b. By ward/district _____

28. How many current council members are a. Male _____ b. Female _____

29. How many current council members fall into the following age groups?

- a. Under 22 _____ c. 30-39 _____ e. 50-59 _____
b. 22-29 _____ d. 40-49 _____ f. 60 and over _____

30. How many current council members are:

- a. Native American _____ d. White, not of Hispanic origin _____
b. Hispanic _____ e. Black, not of Hispanic origin _____
c. Asian or Pacific Islander _____

31. How many current council members are in each of these occupational categories? (**Count members only once.** If any member has more than one occupation, include that person in the category where he or she spends the greatest amount of time.

- a. Lawyers _____ g. Homemakers _____
b. Other professionals (medicine, engineering, etc.) _____ h. Teachers and other educational personnel _____
c. Business executives/managers _____ i. Clergy _____
d. Business/industry employees _____ j. Retired persons _____
e. Service industry employees _____ k. Other (Please specify.) _____
f. Farmers or ranchers _____

32. How many council members are part time? _____ How many council members are full time? _____ (Excluding the chief elected official)

33. Indicate the length of term for council members. (Even if the chief elected official is a member of council, specify the length of term for other council members, not for the chief elected official.)

A. Council members elected *at large*

- 1 a. 2 years 2 b. 3 years 3 c. 4 years 4 d. 6 years 5 e. Other _____

B. Council members elected *by ward or district*

- 1 a. 2 years 2 b. 3 years 3 c. 4 years 4 d. 6 years 5 e. Other _____

C. Terms of office are (Check only one.) 1 a. Staggered 2 b. Concurrent

34. Is there a legal limit on the number of terms a council member may serve? 1. Yes 2. No

A. If yes, what is the maximum number of terms allowed by law? _____

B. If yes, when was the term limitation enacted? _____ (year)

C. If yes, by what authority is the number of terms limited? (Check only one.)

1. Ordinance 2. Charter 3. State law 4. Other (Please specify.) _____

35. How is a council member's seat filled if it is vacated before the term has expired? (Check only one.)
- 1 a. Method depends on length of term remaining 4 d. Appointed by chief elected official
 2 b. Special election 5 e. Position left vacant until next regular election
 3 c. Appointed by council 6 f. Other (Please specify.) _____

36. Since 2006, have any recall initiatives been filed against council members? 1. Yes 2. No
 A. If yes, were any successful? 1. Yes 2. No

37. Are any council members (excluding the chief elected official) paid an annual salary or stipend for any of their services?
 1. Yes 2. No

- A. If yes, please indicate the approximate annual dollar amount that your council members receive.
 1. Full-time council member \$ _____ 2. Part-time council member \$ _____

38. How often does the council meet in formal session excluding work sessions? (Check only one.)

- 1 a. Once a week 5 e. Three times a month
 2 b. More than once a week 6 f. Less than once a month
 3 c. Once a month 7 g. Other (Please specify.) _____
 4 d. Twice a month

39. Does your municipality have standing committees (permanent bodies with set memberships and regularly scheduled meeting times) that consider specific policy matters? 1. Yes 2. No

40. Does your municipality have citizen authorities, boards, or commissions? 1. Yes 2. No

- A. If yes, are members 1. Elected 2. Appointed (Check all applicable.)

- B. If yes, in what capacity do they serve? (Check all applicable.)

1. Advisory 2. Decision/policy making 3. Quasi-judicial

- C. If yes, in which areas are they used? (Check all applicable in the list below.)

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| 1 <input type="checkbox"/> a. Growth | 9 <input type="checkbox"/> i. Civil service | 17 <input type="checkbox"/> q. Architectural review |
| 2 <input type="checkbox"/> b. Transportation | 10 <input type="checkbox"/> j. Libraries | 18 <input type="checkbox"/> r. Code enforcement |
| 3 <input type="checkbox"/> c. Zoning | 11 <input type="checkbox"/> k. Housing | 19 <input type="checkbox"/> s. Parks and recreation |
| 4 <input type="checkbox"/> d. Finance | 12 <input type="checkbox"/> l. Community-police relations | 20 <input type="checkbox"/> t. Ethics |
| 5 <input type="checkbox"/> e. Airports | 13 <input type="checkbox"/> m. Economic development | 21 <input type="checkbox"/> u. Charter review commissions |
| 6 <input type="checkbox"/> f. Art | 14 <input type="checkbox"/> n. Planning | 22 <input type="checkbox"/> v. Other (Please specify.) _____ |
| 7 <input type="checkbox"/> g. Beautification | 15 <input type="checkbox"/> o. Environmental issues | |
| 8 <input type="checkbox"/> h. Cable TV | 16 <input type="checkbox"/> p. Historic preservation | |

41. Does the council employ staff to work exclusively on council business? 1. Yes 2. No

- A. If "yes," how many are a. Full-time staff _____ b. Part-time staff _____

42. Please provide your city's most recent bond ratings next to the name of the rating agency. If the agency listed did not rate your municipality, check "N/A."

- a. Bond rating by Moody's _____ N/A
 b. Bond rating by Standard & Poor's _____ N/A
 c. Bond rating by Fitch _____ N/A

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Title _____

Telephone number (____) _____ E-mail _____

Thank you for completing this important survey. Please return to:
Evelina Moulder, Director of Survey Research, ICMA
777 North Capitol Street, NE, Suite 500, Washington DC 20002-4201. You may scan and
email your survey to surveyresearch@icma.org