

Aldermanic-City Form

Under the aldermanic-city form, the legislative body ordinarily consists of two aldermen from each ward elected for a four-year term. Their terms are staggered so that half are elected every two years. The number of aldermen elected depends upon the population of the city. The mayor is the chief executive officer of the municipality. The mayor, city clerk, and city treasurer are elected at large (Village or citywide) to a four-year term. Other offices and vacancies are filled by appointment by the mayor with the advice and consent of the council, although it may be provided by ordinance that these offices be filled by election.

Commission Form

The commission form of government is limited to cities or villages under 200,000 population. Under this form, the voters elect at large a mayor and four commissioners who serve as the council. At the first regular meeting after an election, the council designates each member to be either the commissioner of accounts and finances, public health and safety, streets and public improvements, or public property. The mayor serves as commissioner of public affairs. The council may elect the clerk and treasurer, as well as all the other officers whose appointment is not delegated, as it may be, to one commissioner. Each commissioner is given executive control over such administrative departments as may be assigned to him. By referendum, the electors may provide for the election of commissioners to specific departments.

Managerial Form

The manager form of government is available to all municipalities under 500,000 in population. The municipality may retain its governmental structure as an aldermanic-city form, trustee-village form, or commission form while adopting the features of the manager form.

Under this form, the power of the council or board is purely legislative, except that it is empowered to approve all expenses and liabilities of the municipality. The manager is the administrative and executive head of the government for some purposes. The manager appoints and removes all officers not required to be elected. The appointment to most boards, commissions, and other municipal agencies resides in the mayor or president subject to council or board confirmation.

Strong Mayor Form

This form of government has an elected mayor, clerk, and treasurer and, depending upon the size of the community, from eight to twenty aldermen elected from wards. The terms of elected officials are four years. The functions of an ordinary mayor are generally merged with the powers accorded a municipal manager. The mayor is given the power, without council approval, to appoint and remove his administrative assistants, budget and finance director, heads of all departments, and all other officers of the municipality, and members of commissions, boards, and agencies, except those covered by civil service. The powers of the council are purely legislative.

Trustee-Village Form

Under the trustee-village form, the legislative body consists of six trustees, generally elected from the village at large. The number of trustees does not vary with the size of the municipality. Villages of over 25,000 population may have each of the six trustees elected by district instead of from the village.

The village president and clerk are elected at large, but the village treasurer is appointed. The term of the president, trustees, and clerk is four years, unless reduced to two years by referendum. As with the mayor in the aldermanic-city form, the appointments to all nonelective offices are made by the president with the advice and consent of the board of trustees. If the village collector is appointed, the village board may provide by ordinance that the elected village clerk also hold the office of village collector.