

CHC Organizational Structure

This webpage will provide an overview of a County Historical Commission's (CHC) organizational structure. More topics associated with a CHC's organizational structure are located [here](#).

THC and CHCs are Partners--a CHC is not a part of the THC

The Texas Historical Commission (THC) is the state agency for historic preservation. Its mission is to protect and preserve the state's historic and prehistoric resources for the use, education, enjoyment and economic benefit of present and future generations. County Historical Commissions (CHC) are part of county government and, as such, a partner to the THC. It is important for a CHC to understand the general organization of the THC in order to relate its goals and activities to services provided by the agency.

More about the **THC and its commissioners** is provided [here](#) and [here](#).

THC staff is headquartered in Austin, with field offices at THC-managed historic sites across the state. THC staff, comprised of archeologists, architectural historians, historians, architects, planners, preservation specialists, administrative staff and other disciplines, carries out the day-to-day activities of the THC.

More about **THC staff divisions** is provided [here](#).

The Texas Legislature set up the system of county historical commissions (CHC) to assist local commissioners courts and the Texas Historical Commission (THC) in the preservation of each county's historic and cultural resources. The duties and responsibilities of a CHC are set forth in detail in Texas' Local Government Code, Chapter 318 (see Appendix II). The statute is fairly broad, leaving latitude for CHCs to organize and undertake activities appropriate to their county's size and resources. The statute does have some specific requirements that apply to all CHCs.

CHC Size and Structure

The CHC must have enough members to accomplish its goals and each appointee must participate. State statutes do not limit the size of a commission but do set a minimum appointment of seven county residents. Regardless of number, appointees must be willing and able to fulfill CHC responsibilities; this appointment should not be viewed as perfunctory. Some CHCs allow for non-

county residents on the commission, which may or may not work depending on the level of commitment demonstrated by these individuals to attend meetings and participate in CHC events.

Although the statute provides for commission appointments during January of odd numbered years, and we recommend that appointments be made with the intent that appointees serve a full, two-year term. Statutes do note that the commissioners court may fill a vacancy on the commission for the remainder of the unexpired term, in case an individual is unable to fulfill the two-year appointment term. More information on providing appointee updates to the THC located [here](#).

Statutes direct county commissioners courts to appoint individuals who broadly reflect the age, ethnic, and geographic diversity of the county. Consider appointments of at least one member from each community in the county and/or each precinct. Appointees should have an interest in historic preservation and an understanding of local history and resources. Appointees must be willing AND ABLE to serve. CHCs were created to manage and initiate programs--this directive requires appointees who actively participate.

Note that state statutes do not address the issue of CHC bylaws and officers. Bylaws and officers is a matter left to each county. Recommendations for bylaws provided [here](#). General officer descriptions are provided [here](#).