

LOCAL GOVERNMENT 101

Think global, act local

www.muni.org/assembly



WHAT IS GOVERNMENT?

GOVERNMENT:

“the governing body of a nation, state, or community”

LAW:

“the system of rules which a government or community uses to run itself and that the members agree to follow”

HOW DOES GOVERNMENT IMPACT US?

DISCUSSION

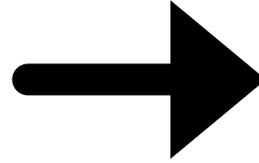
Discuss in a group or think
about on your own

- What are some forms of government?
- What government services have you used today?
- What are some of the laws we live by?

LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT AND FOUNDING DOCS



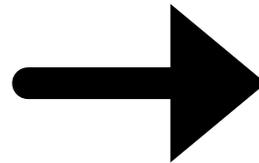
Federal



**US Constitution &
Federal Law/Statute**



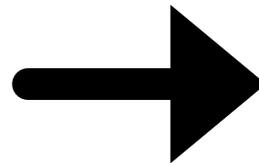
State



**AK Constitution &
State Statute**

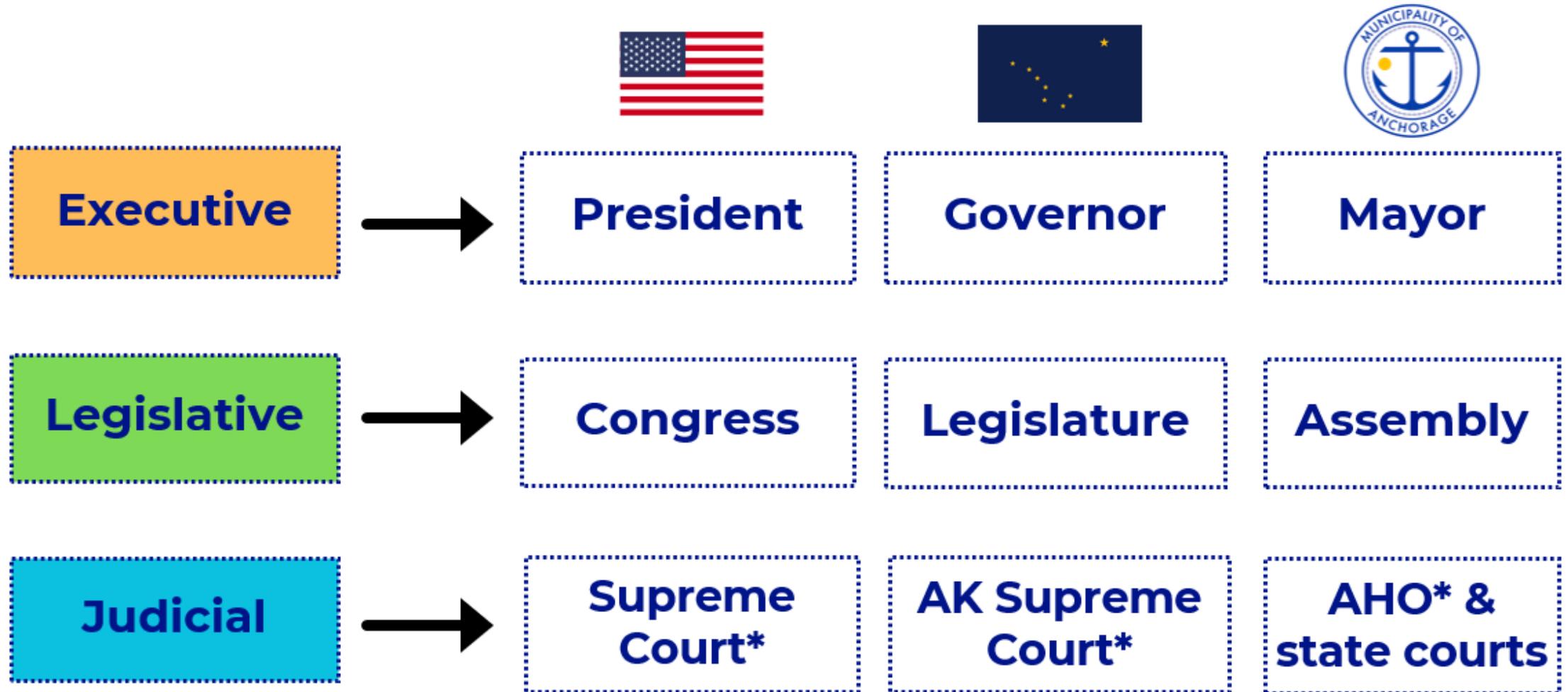


Local



**Anchorage Charter &
Municipal Code**

BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT



DISCUSSION

Discuss in a group or think about on your own

WHO REPRESENTS US?

- Can you name the elected officials that represent you in the different branches of government?

YOUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT: THE MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE

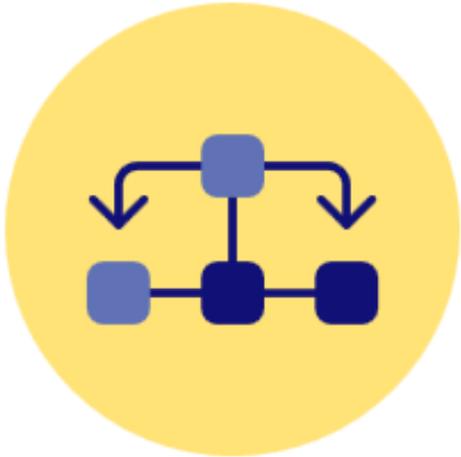


THINK GLOBALLY, ACT LOCALLY

WHY CARE ABOUT LOCAL GOVERNMENT?

- Affects our daily lives - road plowing, fire department response times, library hours, quality of parks
- Local leaders are approachable
- It's easier to make change on local level - and successes can spread to other cities and states

WHAT DOES THE MAYOR DO?



**MANAGES 27
DEPARTMENTS &
3300 EMPLOYEES**



**EMERGENCIES
& VETOES**



**SETS
MUNI
BUDGET**



**APPOINTS TO
BOARDS &
COMMISSIONS**

WHO IS YOUR MAYOR?



MAYOR SUZANNE LAFRANCE

- 3-year term began July 1, 2024
- Priority is: a “safe, secure, and affordable Anchorage”
- Former Assembly member for South Anchorage
- More at muni.org/mayor

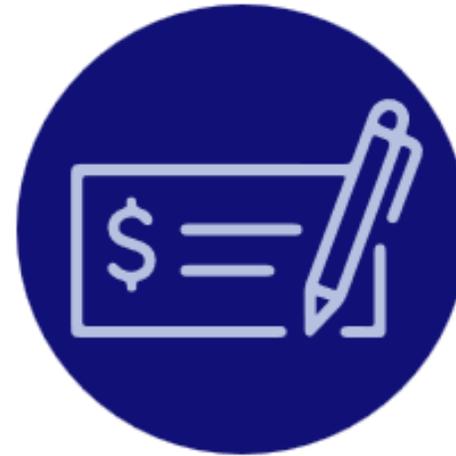
WHAT DOES THE ASSEMBLY DO?



**PASS
ORDINANCES
& RESOLUTIONS**



**APPROVE
THE
BUDGET**



**APPROPRIATE
FUNDS**



**CERTIFY
ELECTIONS**

WHO IS YOUR ASSEMBLY?



- [12 Members](#) - 2 from each district
- 3-year terms - half of body up for election each of the two years between mayoral elections

HOW ARE LAWS PASSED IN ANCHORAGE?

CHARTER & CODE

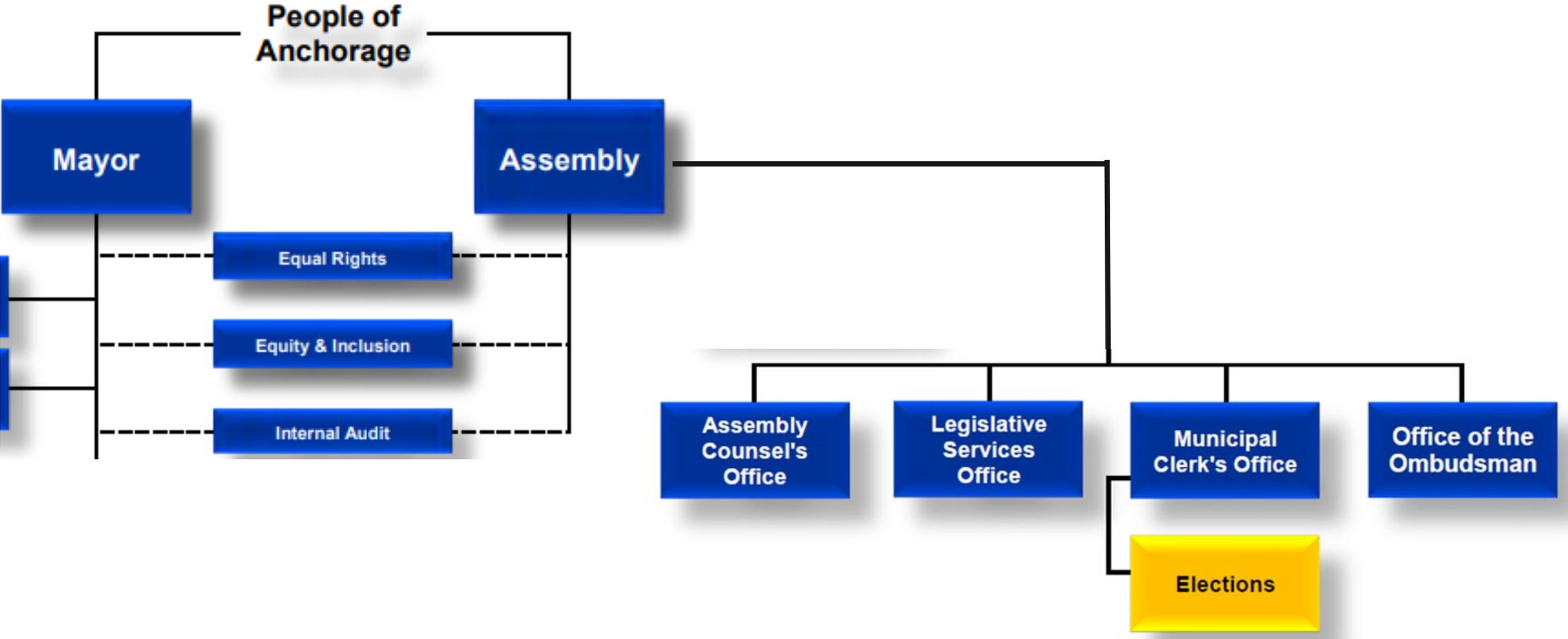
- Anchorage law = **Municipal Charter** (local Constitution) and **Municipal Code** (called “Code” or “AMC”)
- Changes to the **Charter** – must be approved by voters
- Changes to the **Code** – made through Assembly Ordinances (AOs) and approved by the Assembly

HOW ARE LAWS PASSED IN ANCHORAGE?

ASSEMBLY MEETINGS

- Twice a month on Tuesdays, 5-11pm
- Code changes (AOs) require a public hearing. When the item is called on the agenda, people have 3-minutes each to speak on the item
- After public hearing and debate, Assembly Members vote on the item

THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH



HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?



STAY INFORMED



Stay anchored. Sign up to receive email updates from the Anchorage Assembly. [SUBSCRIBE](#)

Get email updates

Watch meetings

Learn about the issues

TIPS FOR IMPACT

- Keep your testimony/email succinct so Members can quickly and easily understand your idea
- Tell how the issue will personally impact you
- It's okay if you don't know all the details, but just want to say "I support this" or "I don't support this"

Learn more at

www.muni.org/assembly



Participate



Meeting Agendas



Guide to Testimony



Committees



Worksessions

DISCUSSION

Discuss in a group or think about on your own

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE IN GOVERNMENT?

- Are you registered to vote?
- Have you ever emailed an Assembly Member?
- Have you volunteered for a department or served on a Municipal Board or Commission?

COMMUNITY COUNCILS



YOUR DIRECT LINE TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT

COMMUNITY COUNCILS

- Each neighborhood in the Municipality has a community council – anyone can attend!
- Where neighbors come together to chat, share ideas and provide input on issues
- Find your council: www.communitycouncils.org

FEDERATION OF COMMUNITY COUNCILS



FEDERATION OF
COMMUNITY COUNCILS
ANCHORAGE | EAGLE RIVER | GIRDWOOD

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Find Your Council

Explore the interactive map to easily identify which Council represents your area.



Attend a Meeting

See the Meeting Calendar to join your Council's next meeting and connect with your neighbors.



Stay Informed

Join your Council email list to stay up to date with community matters and all the important happenings.

DISCUSSION

Discuss in a group or think about on your own

TAKING ACTION

- Is there a local issue that is important to you?
- Who is the decision-maker on the issue?
- Where might you start if you wanted to work on this issue?
- What partners do you need to be successful?

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS



GET INVOLVED

Ways for youth to get involved with the leadership of our community:

- Anchorage School District - **Student Advisory Board**
- Municipality of Anchorage – **Youth Advisory Commission**
- Anchorage Assembly – **Youth Representative**
- **Join a nonprofit** that works on issues you care about



Anchorage Assembly
Legislative Services Office

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THANK YOU

www.muni.org/assembly