

Implementation Guide

Purpose

City Government Month is a grassroots awareness campaign to educate the public about city government – the level of government closest to the people. An initiative of the Kentucky League of Cities (KLC), City Government Month is a month-long celebration of civics in the classroom and the community.

City Government Month has two primary goals:

1. To educate elementary school children about the services offered by their city; and
2. To increase public awareness of local government services.

City Government Month strives to connect both elected and appointed city officials with their local school principals, teachers and children, all while furthering social studies academic standards for the state.

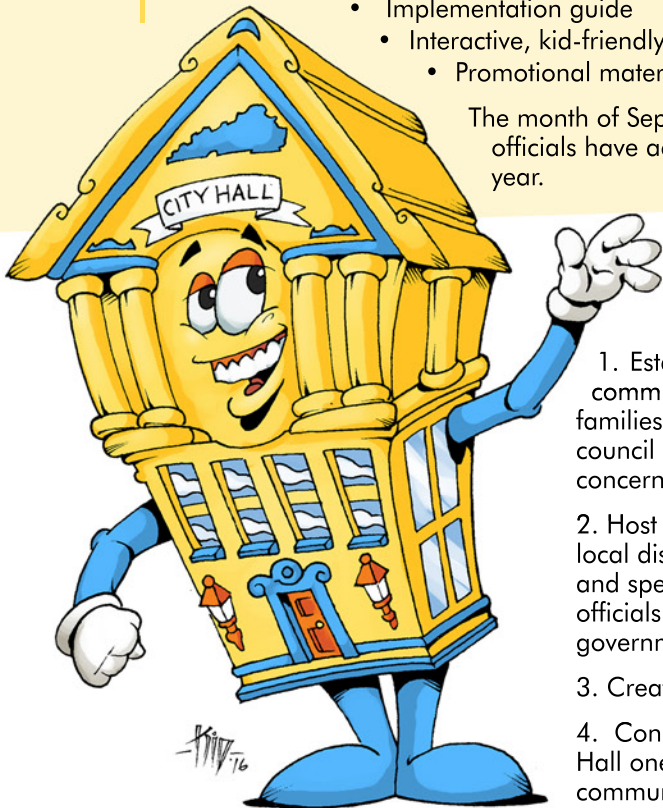
History

KLC first began to highlight the positive things that city governments and their officials do for citizens in 1995 with City Government Week. The week-long program returned almost every year until 2000, which was when KLC grew the program into the first City Government Month. The expansion of the program encouraged a wider audience across the commonwealth and provided more tools to teachers and city officials.

After 2006, KLC decided not to facilitate City Government Month again until 2016. The new City Government Month program includes many of the historically successful elements and new components, such as:

- Classroom lesson plans
- Coloring and activity book
- Implementation guide
- Interactive, kid-friendly website
- Promotional materials

The month of September is officially City Government Month, but teachers and city officials have access to the educational and promotional materials throughout the year.



"Tucky is our local government mascot!"

Ideas for Youth Involvement with Government

1. Establish a Youth Council in your city. They can plan community service projects, hold entertaining events for families and youths, and provide input to the mayor and city council or commission on issues regarding youth's needs and concerns.
2. Host a youth in government night. Invite city officials, your local district's legislators and local agency directors to meet and speak with your community's youth about what elected officials do, and how youths' lives are affected by city government.
3. Create a youth leader shadowing mentor program.
4. Conduct a Youth Forum. The group can convene at City Hall one or more times to consider real issues in the community. The agenda can be actual issues that your city council or commission members are currently considering.



Youth Involvement

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For Elected Officials

City Government Month is a great opportunity to highlight the many things you have to be proud of in your city. We encourage you to include as many different people in your community as possible, such as local business owners, state/federal legislators, the media, citizens, civic groups and students.

Open up city government to the public through any of the suggested ideas below:

1. Invite local civic groups, business leaders and community residents to City Hall for an Open House and an informal question and answer session with elected and appointed officials.
2. Pass a resolution or sign a proclamation declaring it City Government Month in your community in September. See www.citymonth.org for a sample resolution or proclamation that can be used.
3. Provide citizens with a history lesson about the founding of your city. One way to do this would be through an interactive scavenger hunt that would take participants to all of the historical sites within your community.
4. Display some city equipment and attach the purchase price to educate citizens on the cost of city services. This activity is also a great reminder of the importance of tax dollars and how those funds are put to use.
5. Highlight major city projects, new programs and any efforts by the city that enhance the quality of life within the community. Highlight projects and initiatives that have saved taxpayers money.
6. Have the city sponsor an essay or letter writing contest for local students with a theme that resonates within your community. You can have city staff or the city council/commission members select the winners and present awards to the winners at a city council or commission meeting or at a school assembly.

Involve local business in the celebration:

1. Host a breakfast with the mayor/council for all local business owners to kick off the month.
2. Insert information about City Government Month in utility/water/sewer bills to inform the public.
3. Give special recognition to business at council meetings. Support a job fair for business to recruit your citizens for jobs.



Kentucky's leaders of tomorrow need to learn about local governance today. Make sure to involve youth in your celebration of City Government Month.

1. Encourage city leaders to speak at your local schools.
2. Initiate a city-wide art contest that supports community involvement before City Government Month in September. Invite the Mayor to give awards and display the artwork in City Hall during September.
3. Encourage students to attend a city council meeting and arrange for a local official to address the class or school. Many cities record their council or commission meetings and make them available to the public online. Have you class watch a meeting and discuss what they learned.
4. Hold a mock council/commission meeting during a school assembly, showing an ordinance being debated and adopted or a budget being formulated. Use council/commission members or a mix of council/commission members and students.
5. Have students write letters to the editor of your local paper expressing their opinions and views on issues facing the community.
6. Get other great ideas at www.citymonth.org.



For Teachers/ Administrators

Contact Us!



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