



# A Guide to Lee County Government

**Lee County web site: [www.leeco.us](http://www.leeco.us)**

What is County Government? That's a very good, simple question. The answer, however, is not so simple and often leads to many more questions.

Understanding county governments can often be a difficult proposition because of their confusing composition.

We hope the following information will at least clear up some of the confusion surrounding county government in Lee County or at least get you pointed in the right direction.

## **Evolution of County Government**

When counties were first created they were intended to be the administrative arm of the state – a way for the state to conduct its business on the local level.

Counties, and by extension County Commissions, are an integral part of American government and have been since before our nation's founding. In fact, the first county was actually formed in Virginia in 1634 and featured many of the positions we still see today.

The earliest county governments in the nation were modeled after England's "shire" system where local representatives of the king included the justice of the peace, sheriff, coroner and constable.

That system remained in place for a number of years with only slight regional variations. As the country continued to grow, citizens wanted more of a voice so many states drafted constitutions requiring elections for several county officers including county commissioners, justices of the peace, sheriffs, clerks and coroners.

Unfortunately, a significant drawback to having numerous elected officials with varying authority and responsibilities is that it can make knowing who to talk to confusing.

## **Counties vs. Cities**

Since counties were created by and are considered agents of the state, the State Legislature put limits on what counties could actually do. Many of those limits are still in place today and counties have to petition the Legislature for additional powers and authority to conduct county business.

Unlike counties, cities are formed voluntarily by groups of citizens. Since they are formed voluntarily, they have more leeway than counties and are able to establish their own rules and regulations unless legislatively prohibited. This leeway underlines one of the main differences between the two entities – Home Rule.

Essentially, Home Rule is the broad authority granted to local government by their State Legislature in regard to regulating various services needed to operate independently and address local issues.

Many states across the country have recognized the need to grant counties wide discretionary authority to address local issues and needs. A few, like Alabama, have not followed this trend and refrain from granting much authority to counties.

In Alabama, cities have broad authority to address local issues unless prohibited by state law, unlike counties which can only perform those functions specifically authorized by state law.

Over the years, however, the Alabama Legislature has granted limited and specifically defined powers which can vary greatly from county to county through local laws and Constitutional Amendments. This county-by-county, case-by-case authorization adds to some of the confusion many citizens experience when dealing with different counties in Alabama.

## **County government structure**

In Alabama, the basic structure of county government is the county commission. That structure was established not long after Alabama became a state in 1819. Originally, each County Commission was elected county-wide and consisted of four part-time Commissioners and the Probate Judge, who served as Chairman of the County Commission.

Over time, that structure evolved with commissioners being elected by district as opposed to county-wide to better represent the citizens. In 1986, Lee County entered into a consent decree in a federal class-action discrimination lawsuit entitled Dillard v. Crenshaw County, agreeing to add a fifth Commissioner to represent a “majority-minority” district.

Today there are three different primary types of county commission leadership: Probate Judge as chairman, a separate county-wide elected chairman and a chairmanship rotated periodically among all commissioners. In Lee County the structure remains the Probate Judge elected county-wide who also serves as chairman of the Commission with five part-time Commissioners elected by district.

### **Who are our Commissioners?**

*Sometimes we get requests as to who various officials departments and/or officials report to, including County Commissioners. In each section we will identify to whom each department and/or official reports. For example: Each County Commissioner reports to the citizens of their respective district.*

The County is divided into 5 districts with a commissioner elected from within each district. The only county-wide elected position on the Commission remains the Probate Judge who serves as chair. Commissioners serve four-year terms and are elected on a staggered basis to allow for continuity; the only exception to this is the Probate Judge who serves a six-year term.

The current members of the County Commission and their term end dates are:

Chairman	Probate Judge Bill English	Jan. 2019
District 1	Sheila Eckman	Nov. 2020
District 2	Johnny Lawrence	Nov. 2018
District 3	Gary Long	Nov. 2020
District 4	Robert Ham	Nov. 2018
District 5	John Andrew Harris	Nov. 2018

## **County Responsibilities**

Counties are a political subdivision of the state and perform several governmental functions. They are considered quasi-public corporations and have a variety of responsibilities.

While the maintenance and construction of roads and bridges in the unincorporated areas is considered one of the county's primary responsibilities, it is by far not the only one.

The county's other basic responsibilities are:

- Adopting a budget for County Commission operations as well as budgets for other county elected officials
- Preparation of county assessments and plats
- Facilities management and construction
- Administrative support for the County Commission and other local county elected officials' offices

Over the years, however, the role of the county has evolved and counties and County Commissions have taken on new responsibilities. Some of which include:

- Solid Waste and Animal Control
- Emergency Management
- Emergency Medical Transportation
- Regulating Junkyards and other public nuisances
- Building Inspection
- Recreation
- Assist with airport improvement

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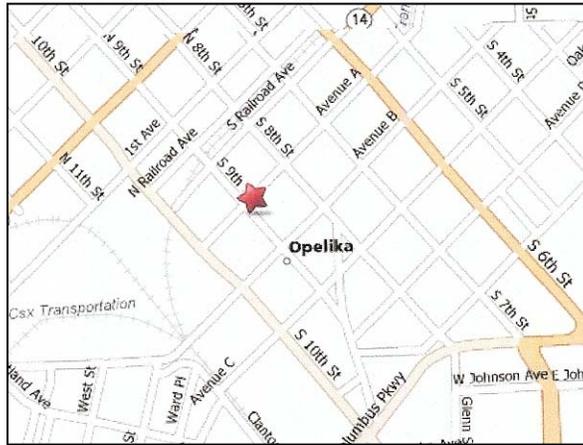
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**COUNTY  
OFFICES  
LOCATED IN  
THE  
HISTORIC LEE  
COUNTY  
COURTHOUSE**

*215 S. 9<sup>th</sup> Street,  
Opelika AL 36801*



Built in 1896 and placed on the National Registry of Historic Places in 1973, the historic Lee County Courthouse is a working courthouse. The Neoclassical revival structure was built for \$24,000 and replaced the first Lee County Courthouse - a two-story Greek revival built in 1867 by Horace King, a former slave and renowned covered bridge builder. The current Courthouse has been added onto twice since it was built and underwent a major, two-year, multi-million renovation in 1986-87.

The main offices located in the County Courthouse are:

- Revenue Commissioner's Office
- Probate Office
- County Commission Office
- Appraisal Department
- Coroner's Office

Other non-county offices include:

- Voter Registration
- Veteran's Affairs

Probate Court proceedings take place in the courthouse; other court proceedings (Circuit, District, Family, Juvenile) take place at the T.K. Davis Justice Center Complex.

*Courthouse Main Number: 334-737-3660 or 1-800-239-4469*

## **What does the Revenue Commissioner's Office do?**

*Elected official – Revenue Commissioner Oline Price  
Serves six-year term, ending September 2021  
Reports to the citizens of Lee County*

The Revenue Commissioner's Office is primarily responsible for the assessment, collection and distribution of property taxes also known as Ad Valorem taxes. In addition, the Revenue Commissioner's Office is also responsible for:

- Purchase and annual renewal of motor vehicle registration
- Purchase and annual renewal of manufactured home registration
- Collection of motor vehicle and manufactured home sales tax
- Titling of motor vehicles and manufactured homes

*Revenue Commissioner's Office: 334-737-3655  
[www.leecountyrevenuecommissioner.com](http://www.leecountyrevenuecommissioner.com)*

## **What does the Probate Office do?**

*Elected official – Probate Judge Bill English  
Serves six-year term, ending January 2019  
Reports to the citizens of Lee County*

The Probate Judge presides over Probate Court and hears cases involving:

- Wills and Estate
- Adoptions
- Guardianships and Conservatorships
- Mental Health involuntary commitments
- Name changes
- Legitimation of children
- Eminent Domain/Land Condemnation
- Redemption of property sold for delinquent taxes

The Probate Office also provides many varied services including:

- Recording of deeds, mortgages and other instruments
- Driver's licenses
- Maintain the public records room
- Marriage licenses and weddings
- Business licenses

Hunting and fishing licenses  
Boat sales taxes and registration

*Probate Office: 334-737-3670*

## **What does the County Commission Office do?**

*Reports to the County Commission*

The Commission Office is responsible for the administrative and financial duties associated with and conducted by the county commission.

Among the things the Commission handles are:

- County Commission meeting requests and minutes
- Creation and implementation of County Budget
- Purchasing and Accounts Payable
- Accounting and Finance
- Bid documents and contracts
- Payroll and Employee Benefits
- Human Resources and Safety Management
- Communications and Technology Support
- Facilities Management

The chief administrative official of the county is the County Administrator who works closely with the County Commission on policy-making and the legislative agenda. He/she serves as the day-to-day manager of the functions listed above.

*Commission Office: 334-737-3660*

## **What does the Appraisal Department do?**

*Reports to the County Administrator*

The Appraisal Department is responsible for appraising all parcels of land and business personal property located in the county and determining its Fair Market Value.

Appraisers conduct field reviews of 25 percent of the parcels of land in the county each year ensuring that every parcel is

physically reviewed every four years at a minimum. Since 2004, property reappraisals have been conducted on a yearly basis.

*Appraisal Office: 334-737-3640*

### **What does the Coroner do?**

*Elected Official – Coroner Bill Harris*

*Serves a four-year term, ending January 2019*

*Reports to the citizens of Lee County*

The coroner is responsible for investigating and determining the cause of death of anyone in the county who dies without being attended by or examined by a legally qualified physician.

If necessary, the coroner can also request an autopsy if he/she thinks a death was caused by unlawful means.

Coroners do not have to have a medical license, but must attend yearly training sessions if they have less than 2 years experience in the position.

## **NON-COUNTY OFFICES LOCATED IN THE HISTORIC LEE COUNTY COURTHOUSE**

### **What does the Voter Registration office do?**

*State Office*

The Voter Registration office houses the three-member Board of Registrars. The Board of Registrars is responsible for registering new voters, updating existing voter information and compiling the official county voters list each election.

Board members serve four-year terms with one member each appointed by the Governor, State Auditor and the Commissioner of Agriculture and Industries.

Office hours for the Voter Registration office are 8:30 a.m. -4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

*Voter Registration Office: 334-737-3635*

## **What does the Veteran's Affairs office do?**

*State Office*

The Veteran's Affairs office is actually a state agency that is provided office space in the courthouse by the Lee County Commission.

As part of its responsibilities, the office promotes awareness and assists eligible veterans, their families and survivors in receiving any entitled benefits from the Federal and state governments.

*Veteran's Affairs: 334-737-3633*

## **OTHER COUNTY OFFICES NOT LOCATED IN THE HISTORIC LEE COUNTY COURTHOUSE**

### **What does the Highway Department do?**

*100 Orr Avenue,  
Opelika AL 36801  
Reports to the  
County Commission*



Under the supervision of the County Engineer, the Highway Department is responsible for the maintenance of more than 845 miles of roads (both dirt and paved) and 115 bridges.

The Highway Department is also responsible for:

- Ditch cleaning
- Weed control

Culvert repair and replacement  
Planning, engineering and construction on county roads  
Federal and State funding for roads and bridges  
Development and enforcement of Subdivision regulations

Lee County has legislation creating a unit system in regard to county roads where maintenance, planning, purchasing and construction are at the discretion of the County Engineer under policies and priorities established by the County Commission.

*Highway Department: 334-737-7011 or 1-800-239-7073*

### **What does Building Inspection do?**

*100 Orr Avenue, Opelika AL 36801  
Reports to the County Engineer*

The Building Inspection Department is responsible for the enforcement of county and state Building Codes and regulations. As such, the department issues permits for renovation, remodeling, new construction, electrical or plumbing improvement and heating and air conditioning improvements and inspects such work in progress for compliance.



Costs of the permits vary depending on the value of the work being done. Contact the Building Inspection office for more information and to request guidelines.

*Building Inspection: 334-737-7014 or 1-800-745-9811*

## What does Environmental Services do?

100 Orr Avenue, Opelika AL 36801  
Reports to the County  
Engineer

Environmental Services  
is comprised of four  
different departments:

- Solid Waste
- Disposal
- Solid Waste
- Enforcement
- Recycling
- Animal Control



The solid waste department is responsible for the disposal of solid waste, the enforcement of solid waste regulations and the supervision and licensing of junkyards.

It offers access to garbage disposal services seven days a week for rural Lee County residential and commercial property owners as well as providing a recycling program to interested residents.

Animal control works to:

- Enforce Confinement Law (owned animals running loose)
- Pick-up of stray animals
- Animal nuisance calls

Any animal picked up by Animal Control officers is taken to the Lee County Humane Society located in Auburn off Shug Jordan Parkway at Ware Drive.

*Environmental Services: 334-737-7013*

## What does the Building Maintenance Department do?

1214 Monroe Avenue,  
Opelika AL 36801  
Reports to the County  
Administrator

Building maintenance is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of all county facilities.

Those facilities include the County Courthouse, the T.K. Davis Justice Center Complex, the Highway Department, the Auburn Satellite Office and many others.



*Building Maintenance: 334-705-8671*



## What does the Emergency Management Agency do?

908 Avenue B,  
Opelika AL 36801  
Reports to the  
County Commission

The Emergency  
Management

Agency is responsible for storm and disaster preparedness and coordination of emergency response for both the county and municipalities.

It also provides:  
Early warning services

Emergency training  
Recovery  
Resource Coordination

EMA officials and first responders are trained for a variety of emergency events including:

Natural and technological disasters  
Terrorism and civil disorders  
Civil defense from an attack  
Any emergency threat to life or property

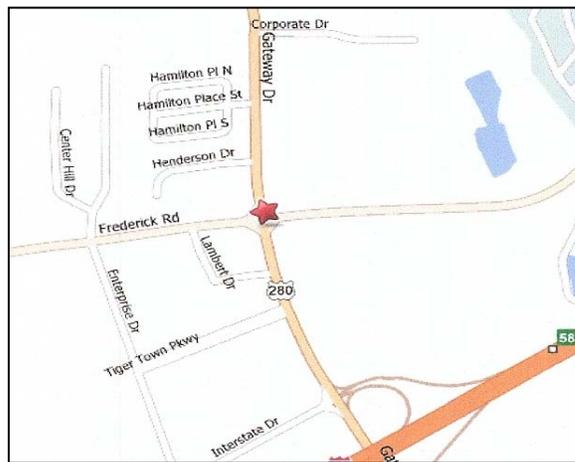
EMA Office: 334-749-8161

## **T.K. DAVIS JUSTICE CENTER COMPLEX**

*2311 Gateway Drive, Opelika AL 36801*

The T.K. Davis Justice Center Complex is a county-owned facility housing state and county offices and officials that was built in 1984.

The Justice Center houses all state judicial offices associated with the 37<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit (Lee County).



While located in Lee County, the County Commission's only responsibility is to provide office space for the judicial system and for the maintenance and upkeep of the building.

### **Judicial Offices**

Lee County is the 37<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit of Alabama and all judicial functions, excluding Probate Court, are held at the T.K. Davis

Justice Center. These court functions include:

District Attorney	District Court
Circuit Clerk	Adult probation and parole
Circuit Court, incl.	Juvenile probation
Family/Juvenile Court	Court Referral

### **What does the District Attorney do?**

*Elected official – Brandon Hughes*

*Serves six-year term, ending January 2023*

*Reports to the citizens of Lee County*

The District Attorney's Office is responsible for prosecuting all criminal cases in Lee County other than municipal cases. The office itself is comprised of the District Attorney, a Chief Assistant District Attorney and 5 part-time assistant district attorneys. In addition to prosecuting cases, the office also oversees:

- Worthless Check Unit
- Restitution Recovery division
- Victim/Witness Assistance

The Worthless Check Unit streamlines the process of collecting bad checks for merchants and other victims of worthless check crimes. Since 1988 it has collected over \$1 million in restitution.

Restitution Recovery Division collects unpaid court costs, fines, restitutions and fees not paid by convicted defendants. Since 1996 the division has collected over \$3.3 million for the courts and victims of Lee County.

The office also coordinates assistance for victims and witnesses of crimes. For more information please contact 334-737-3446.

*District Attorney's Office: 334-737-3446*

### **What does the Circuit Clerk do?**

*Elected Official, Circuit Clerk – Mary Roberson*

*Serves six-year term, ending January 2019*

*2311 Gateway Drive, Opelika AL 36801*

*Reports to the citizens of the 37<sup>th</sup> Circuit (Lee County)*

The Circuit Clerk is the chief administrative and fiscal officer for the court system at both the Circuit and District Court level. The

Clerk's responsibilities include:

- Available to law enforcement for issuance of warrants and for filing of court documents
- Management of all court monies
- Serves as fiduciary manager for court ordered investment accounts
- Personnel management
- Court planning
- Purchasing and inventory control
- Issuance of all writs and summonses including jury summonses and witness subpoenas

The Circuit Clerk is also responsible for jury management, serves as the custodian for all court records and is responsible for providing access to records by court personnel, legal community and the public.

### **What is Circuit Court?**

Circuit Court has a general jurisdiction and is responsible for:

- Criminal prosecutions for felony offenses
- Exclusive jurisdiction in civil actions exceeding \$10,000
- Domestic Relations cases
- Concurrent jurisdiction with District Court juvenile cases
- Concurrent jurisdiction with District Court in civil matters between \$3,000 and \$10,000
- Appellate jurisdiction over all appealed cases from District Courts, Probate Court, Municipal Courts and certain administrative and municipal boards

The Circuit Judges for Lee County are:

- Judge Jacob Walker III  
*Serves six-year term ending January 2023*
- Judge Chris Hughes  
*Serves six-year term ending January 2023*
- Judge Mike Fellows – Family/Juvenile Court  
*Serves six-year term ending January 2023*

### **What is District Court?**

District Court has a limited jurisdiction and is responsible for:

- Criminal misdemeanors

Preliminary hearings in felony prosecutions  
Can receive guilty pleas in felony cases not punishable  
by death  
Small Claims  
Concurrent jurisdiction with the Circuit Court in  
juvenile and civil matters between \$3,000 and \$10,000  
Exclusive jurisdiction in civil matters not  
exceeding \$3,000

The District Judges for Lee County are:  
Judge Steve Speakman  
*Serves six-year term ending January 2023*  
Judge Russell K. Bush  
*Serves six-year term ending January 2019*

### **What do the Adult Probation and Parole and Juvenile Probation departments do?**

*State Employees*

The adult probation and parole handles all supervisory aspects of adults who have been placed on probation by the court system and supervision of those who have been granted parole by the state's Board of Pardons and Parole.

Juvenile probation officers work with youths who are alleged to be delinquent or in need of supervision.

### **What does Court Referral do?**

*County employees that report to District Judges*

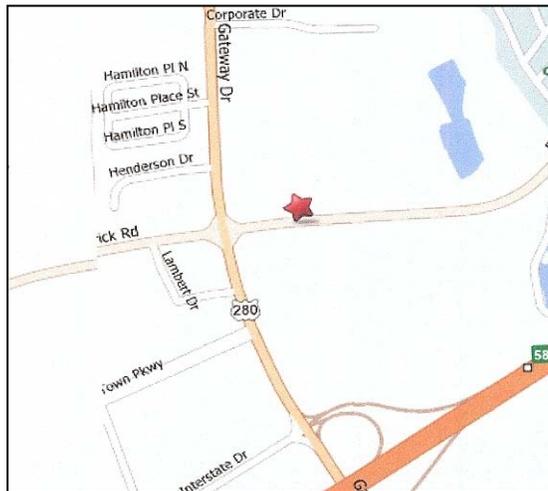
The Court Referral program provides eligible defendants convicted of certain alcohol and drug related offenses an alternative to serving time in jail. The program refers the defendants to alcohol and drug education and treatment programs.

### **W.S. "Buck" Jones Sheriff Administration Building**

The W.S. "Buck" Jones Sheriff Administration Building opened in 2007 and allowed the Sheriff's Department to move from the Justice Center into a larger facility.

## **What does the Lee County Sheriff's Office do?**

*Elected official – Sheriff  
Jay Jones  
Serves four-year term,  
ending January 2019  
1900 Frederick Road,  
Opelika AL 36801*



The county relies on the Sheriff's Department to provide law enforcement protection to the unincorporated portions of the county.

The Sheriff is a county-wide elected constitutional, state officer and serves a four-year term. Under the umbrella of the Sheriff's Office, the Sheriff oversees several divisions including:

- Uniform
- Investigations
- Administration
- Communications
- Civil
- Training

The Sheriff also oversees the county's consolidated jail, the Lee County Detention Facility. Both the Sheriff's Office and Consolidated Jail are located in the William "Buck" Jones Sheriff's Office Administration Building on Frederick Road, Opelika.

*Sheriff's Office: 334-749-5651 or 1-800-239-7072*

## **What is the Lee County Detention Center?**

*1900 Frederick Road, Opelika AL 36801*

The Lee County Detention Center is Lee County's only operating jail. The consolidated facility houses inmates not only from the

state and county but also the cities of Auburn and Opelika. Inmates detained at the facility include pre-trial felony defendants, those charged or convicted of misdemeanors in the county courts and those charged with violating municipal ordinances.

The facility is supervised by the Lee County Sheriff's Office and has a capacity of 420 inmates. The facility is attached to the W.S. "Buck" Jones Sheriff's Administration Building and the original jail located at the Justice Center.

### Satellite Offices

To aid the citizens of the county with their courthouse business, the Lee County Commission has authorized the establishment of satellite offices.

Through the convenience of satellite offices citizens can now take care of most business normally taken care of at the County Courthouse in an area of their choosing.

The county has satellite offices in Smiths Station and Auburn. Transactions available at the satellite office locations currently include Probate and Revenue functions.

**Smiths Station  
Satellite Office**  
2336 Lee Road 430  
Suite 120  
Smiths Station, AL  
36877  
334-291-1326

*Located in the City of  
Smiths Station  
municipal building*





**Auburn  
Satellite Office**  
1266 Mall  
Parkway  
Auburn, AL  
36830  
  
334-737-7297

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **What are the hours of the County Courthouse?**

The County Courthouse and Auburn Satellite Office are open Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. CST with the exception of Federal holidays. The Smiths Station Satellite Office is open Monday-Friday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 EST.

### **I would like to get a job with the county. Where do I need to go?**

The Personnel/Human Resources Department in the Lee County Commission Office assists with the hiring process for departments/offices funded by the Lee County Commission. Available positions are posted on the county's web site at [www.leeco.us](http://www.leeco.us), the Lee County Commission Office and with the Alabama State Employment Office.

The Personnel Office facilitates the hiring process for the following departments/offices:

County Commission Office	Highway Department
Probate Judge's Office	Appraisal Department
Revenue Commissioner's Office	Court Referral Office
Environmental Services	Building Inspection
Emergency Management Agency	Sheriff's Office/Jail
Building and Grounds Maintenance	

Applications are accepted via mail or in person. For more information contact the Personnel Office at 334-737-3639.

### **My road is terrible. Who do I talk to?**

If you are dissatisfied with the condition of your paved or dirt county road and would like it resurfaced or repaired, you should contact the Highway Department at 334-737-7011 to make them aware of the situation.

### **I want my dirt road paved. What do I need to do?**

Because of funding constraints, the Lee County Commission voted to abolish its dirt road paving program. Monies previously spend on dirt road paving are instead going to the maintenance of county and state-graded roadways.

### **Is my road maintained by the County?**

Some roads located in unincorporated Lee County are not maintained by the Lee County Highway Department. Roads designated by a blue road number sign are maintained by the County and those with a green road number sign are NOT maintained by the County. If you have any questions contact the Highway Department at 334-737-7011.

## **How can a citizen get involved in Lee County?**

The Lee County Commission encourages its citizens to participate in Lee County government by becoming involved in the various boards and organizations supported by the County.

Interested citizens should visit [www.leeco.us](http://www.leeco.us) and visit the County Commission tab link under the Government tab for a listing of board appointments made by the County Commission. For more information contact the Lee County Commission office at 334-745-9767.

## **I have to go to court. Where do I need to go?**

All Circuit, District, Family and Juvenile Court hearings are held at the T.K. Davis Justice Center located at 2311 Gateway Drive in Opelika. Probate Court hearings are held at the Lee County Courthouse located at 215 S 9th Street in Opelika. On occasion, Probate Court hearings are also held at the East Alabama Medical Center or at East Alabama Mental Health Brief Intensive Treatment Facility.

For speeding citations obtained in either Auburn or Opelika, please contact the respective municipality. For citations given by either a Lee County Sheriff's Deputy or an Alabama State Trooper contact the Circuit Clerk at the T. K. Davis Justice Center at 334-749-7141.

If you have received a notice to attend Federal Court, those cases are heard at the George W. Andrews Federal Building located at 701 Avenue A, Opelika, AL 36801.

## **Where do I register to vote?**

If you have not already registered, you can register to vote at the

Voter Registration Office located in the County Courthouse or by going to any of these agencies:

Department of Human Resources  
Driver's licensing office  
Select municipal public libraries

WIC program, Health Department  
Department of Rehabilitation Services  
Medicaid Agency

If you are a registered voter and would like to vote an absentee ballot, you need to contact the Absentee Voter office at 334-737-3621.

### **Is there planning and zoning in the county?**

Currently the County Commission exerts no planning and zoning authority in the county other than subdivision and road regulations. In 2007, the State Legislature approved Act 2007-477 regarding land-use and zoning for the unincorporated portions of the county.

That issue will be addressed on a beat-by-beat basis. Before any zoning can be implemented in a voting district or “beat”, a certain number of citizens/landowners must first submit a petition to the County Commission asking to hold a referendum. A referendum will then be held in that beat, and the Commission will only have that authority if a majority of those who vote support the idea.

### **What is the county doing about growth?**

Lee County is one of the fastest growing counties in the state and will only continue to grow. To address the issues faced by that growth, the Lee County Commission has developed the Lee County Comprehensive Master Plan.

The Master Plan will serve as a blueprint for the county’s future and will examine areas such as transportation, economic development, housing, infrastructure, open spaces and recreation and community facilities. To assist with the implementation of the Master Plan, the Commission has appointed a Planning Commission. The plan was approved by the Commission in March 2010 and is available at [www.leeco.us/masterplan](http://www.leeco.us/masterplan).

## **Where do I renew my car tags?**

The Revenue Commissioner's Office is responsible for the issuance and distribution of car tags. The county's main Revenue Office is located in the County Courthouse in Opelika however there are also satellite offices located in Smiths Station and Auburn.

If you would like to avoid the long lines at the courthouse, car tags can also be renewed online by visiting [www.leecountyrevenuecommissioner.com](http://www.leecountyrevenuecommissioner.com) and clicking on the Motor Vehicles link located at the top of the page.

## **I need a new Driver's License. Where do I go?**

To renew an existing or expired driver's license simply go to the Probate Office located at the County Courthouse in Opelika or the Auburn Satellite Office. If coming from another state, or if a driving or written test must be administered, you need to go to the Driver's License Examining Office located at the USA Factory Stores Outlet Mall, 1220 Fox Run Parkway, Suite A-4 in Opelika.

## **I need to get a boating license. Where do I go?**

To obtain a boating license in the state of Alabama you have to be 12 years of age or older and you must have successfully passed the state's written examination for boating regulations.

The application, fee and test can be completed at the Department of Public Safety's Driver's License Examining Office located in the USA Factory Store Outlet Mall at 1220 Fox Run Avenue, Suite A-4, in Opelika.

In lieu of a written test, applicants can also complete the state's Boater Certification Course available on-line. The course completion certificate must be presented along with the application and fee at the Driver's License Examining Office. For more information see the state's Department of Conservation and Wildlife web site at [www.outdooralabama.com](http://www.outdooralabama.com).

## **Where do I go to look for a deed?**

All property deeds are recorded through the Probate Office. Public access is available through public viewing stations located at the County Courthouse.

You may also order a copy of a recorded document through the mail or in person with a written request and appropriate fees paid. If the request is done via mail the recording information (book and page) as well as the recording date will need to be included to expedite the order. If requested in person, Probate staff can assist you in locating the documents by name.

## **Why are county roads numbered instead of named?**

County roads are numbered instead of being named to more accurately identify the location during an emergency. Road names can be similar so using numbers cuts down on confusion ensuring a quicker response time. The house numbers assigned to the county road addresses are actually distance indicators and are designed to assist police, fire and EMS units in arriving as promptly as possible.

## **Where can I get a copy of the County Map?**

Maps of the county can be purchased for a small fee in the Lee County Commission Office. E-911 maps are also available for purchase in the Commission Office. For more information please call 334-737-3660.

## **I disagree with my property value. What do I need to do?**

If you are dissatisfied with the Fair Market Value assigned to your property, you can file a written protest with the Board of Equalization requesting an appointment with them.

The protest must be postmarked within 30 days of the Notice of Valuation or the protest will not be heard until the following year.

Written protests can be sent to:

Lee County Board of Equalization  
PO Box 3050  
Opelika, AL 36803-3050.

Following receipt of the protest, you will be contacted by a county appraiser. If you are still not satisfied, then you will be notified of an appointment with the Board of Equalization. The Board usually meets each year in the spring or early summer.

If following your appointment with the Board of Equalization you are still dissatisfied, you can appeal to the Circuit Court within 30 days after receiving final notification from the Board. Please note that in order to carry the appeal to the Circuit Court, taxes must be paid by the December 31 deadline or a bond will be filed in Circuit Court of double the amount or taxes due.

### **Does the County Commission run the County School system?**

No, the County Commission has no oversight of the Lee County School System. The seven members of the Lee County Board of Education are elected by district in the areas of Lee County outside Auburn and Opelika and they are responsible for operation of the county school system. The County Commission's only responsibility regarding the school system is to provide central office space as required by state law. For more information on the Lee County School System please visit [www.lee.k12.al.us](http://www.lee.k12.al.us).

### **Who is my County Commissioner?**

To find out who represents you on the County Commission, you can view the Commission District Map located on the county's web site at [www.leeco.us](http://www.leeco.us) under the County Commissioners link or you can contact the County Commission office at 334-745-9767.

## **How can I contact my County Commissioner?**

Commission Meetings are held on the second and last Monday of each month at 6 p.m. CST unless otherwise noted and are open to the public. Since commissioners serve a part-time position, the contact information for each County Commissioner is:

- District 1      Sheila Eckman  
1347 Shelton Mill Road  
Auburn, AL 36830  
Home/Office: 334-750-9666  
[www.yourleecounty.com](http://www.yourleecounty.com)  
[sheilaeckman@gmail.com](mailto:sheilaeckman@gmail.com)
- District 2      Johnny Lawrence  
3327 Moores Mill Road  
Auburn, AL 36830  
Home: 334-745-5091  
[jmlawrence@mindspring.com](mailto:jmlawrence@mindspring.com)
- District 3      Gary D. Long  
15665 US Highway 280E  
Smiths Station, AL 36877  
Cell: 706-681-1800  
[long.gary@aol.com](mailto:long.gary@aol.com)
- District 4      Robert Ham  
20 Lee Road 2120  
Opelika, AL 36804  
Home: 334-319-0691  
[roberthamcommissioner@yahoo.com](mailto:roberthamcommissioner@yahoo.com)
- District 5      John Andrew Harris  
311 East Avenue  
Opelika, AL 36801  
Home: 334-749-5100  
[Johnhr50@aol.com](mailto:Johnhr50@aol.com)

You can also contact your County Commissioner by contacting the Lee County Commission Office at 334-737-3660 or you may contact:

Chairman      Judge Bill English  
PO Box 811  
Opelika, AL 36803-0811  
Work: 334-737-3670  
Home: 334-749-2399  
[Probatejudge@mindspring.com](mailto:Probatejudge@mindspring.com)

**Is there a general number I can call for information?**

Yes, there is. The number is 334-737-3660 or 1-800-239-4469.

**COUNTY CONTACT  
INFORMATION**

Building Inspection	334-737-7014
Coroner	334-737-3620
County Commission Office	334-737-3660
Emergency Management	334-749-8161
Environmental Services	334-737-7013
Highway Department	334-737-7011
Probate Office	334-737-3670
Revenue Commissioner's Office	334-737-3655
Sheriff's Office	334-749-5651
Veteran's Affairs	334-737-3633
Voter Registration	334-737-3635

*This pamphlet is a product of the Lee County Commission  
215 S. 9<sup>th</sup> Street  
Opelika, AL 36801  
August 2017*