

2025



Municipal Association
of South Carolina™

MEO

Municipal Elected Officials
Institute of Government

*The South Carolina Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government,
Advanced Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government and
Advanced Continuing Education are presented by the
Municipal Association of South Carolina.*



MEO Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government

Commitment

As a local elected official, you have a responsibility to make sure your municipality operates responsively, efficiently and effectively. By participating in municipal government training, you are gaining the basic knowledge to help fulfill this responsibility.

More than 90 years ago, the Municipal Association of SC made a commitment to offer services that give municipal officials the knowledge, experience and tools for making the best public decisions for their cities and towns. Since 1986, the Association has offered the South Carolina Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government. The first class graduated in 1988. In 2014, the Association launched the Advanced Municipal Elected Officials Institute to provide continuing training to MEO Institute graduates.

In 2019, the Association launched the Advanced Continuing Education classes for Advanced Institute graduates to continue their learning in a noncredited self-directed track.

Contact information

Urica Floyd
Staff Associate for Training and
Learning Solutions
Municipal Association of SC
803.354.4754
ufloyd@masc.sc

Christine Sumter
Administrative Assistant
Municipal Association of SC
803.933.1208
csumter@masc.sc

Basic Institute Requirements

The Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government provides 20 hours of instruction available through a combination of in-person and online courses. To graduate from the Institute, elected officials must complete the following seven courses:

- Session A
- Session B
- Basic Budgeting and Municipal Finance
- Forms of Municipal Government
- Freedom of Information Act in South Carolina
- Municipal Economic Development
- Municipal Governance and Policy

Officials must take Session A before Session B. The classes for Sessions A and B are held in Columbia each winter the day after the Association's Hometown Legislative Action Day. The other required courses may be taken in any order.

The Association offers the other required courses in two formats: once a year at the regional councils of governments' locations and on-demand 24/7. To access the courses, visit www.masc.sc (keyword: MEO). Officials must graduate from the MEO Institute before taking Advanced MEO Institute courses. Respectively, officials must also graduate from the Advanced MEO Institute before enrolling in the Advanced Continuing Education classes.

Transcript

Refer to your MEO Institute transcript to determine which courses you have completed and which you need for graduation. Access your transcript by logging on to www.masc.sc with your user identification number and password, and then navigating to the MEO Institute page.

Session A and Session B

Sessions A and B are held in Columbia each winter the day after the Association's Hometown Legislative Action Day. Officials must take Session A before enrolling in Session B (eight hours each). These sessions are only available to elected officials and are required to graduate from the MEO Institute.

2025 Schedule

Hometown Legislative Action Day - January 21, 2025

MEO Institute Sessions A or B
January 22, 2025
Columbia Metro Convention Center
Columbia, SC

2026 Schedule

Hometown Legislative Action Day - January 20, 2026

MEO Institute Sessions A or B
January 21, 2026
Columbia Metro Convention Center
Columbia, SC

Session A

The City as an Employer

Your most important resource as an employer should be your employees. Learn the basics of effective human resource management and the elected officials' roles and responsibilities as a public sector employer.

Conducting Public Meetings

State law requires all municipalities to adopt and follow rules of procedure. Learn how to hold effective meetings by adopting, applying and enforcing rules of procedure and how they relate to issues such as noticing public meetings, holding executive sessions, establishing a quorum and taking minutes.

Ethics and Public Accountability

Public accountability is key to a local leaders' credibility. Learn about the state Ethics Act that dictates proper campaign procedures, rules of conduct and financial disclosure.

Visioning, Strategic Planning and Goal Setting

The ability of the mayor, councilmembers and staff to work together as a team for the common good of the community is a strong asset. Get tips for establishing a vision for your municipality, thinking strategically, translating ideas into strategies and working with others to put those strategies into action to reach defined goals.

Session A and Session B

Session B

Business License Tax Administration

Business licensing is an important source of municipal revenue, and state law is very specific about how to administer the tax properly. Is it legal to exempt individual businesses from paying the tax? Does state law require using gross receipts to calculate the tax? Find out the answers to these questions and more.

Intergovernmental Relations

Collaboration and sharing resources across all levels of government are critical to a municipality's success. Learn about the roles and responsibilities of federal, state and local governments in South Carolina; how to develop effective working relationships with officials on each level; and how advocacy is a way to ensure councils have the tools they need to lead their hometowns.

Liability of Municipalities and Their Elected Officials

Claims and litigation are unavoidable costs of providing municipal services. Explore how to avoid and reduce the number and costs of such claims and understand how public officials can be held individually liable for their actions while carrying out their duties.

Municipal Court as a Business

The municipal court is a complex entity within municipal government. Get a better understanding of the inner workings of a municipal court from a business model approach as all functions of court are explored.

Other Required Courses

Courses

The MEO Institute includes five other required courses. Courses are offered once a year at select regional councils of governments locations and on-demand 24/7. Participants may choose the format that works best for them.

Basic Budgeting and Municipal Finance

Participating in the municipal budget process is one of the most fundamental responsibilities of a local official. Learn the most important steps in the budget process, from preparation to implementation, and understand council's responsibility for monitoring budget compliance.

Forms of Municipal Government

A council operates under one of three forms of municipal government in South Carolina. Learn about the roles and responsibilities of councilmembers, the mayor and manager/administrator in each of the forms.

Freedom of Information Act in South Carolina

Open government is the cornerstone of accountable leadership. Learn about the state's FOIA requirements, including the release of public documents, proper notice of public meetings and appropriate use of executive sessions.

Municipal Governance and Policy

Laws governing municipal authority in South Carolina are complex. Explore the legislative source of municipal authority, the meaning of the term "Home Rule," and how to implement effective municipal policies.

Municipal Economic Development

For municipalities to attract new businesses and grow existing businesses, local officials must establish an organizational commitment to economic development. Find out how to identify a community's economic development assets, develop a plan to take advantage of these assets and use available tools to finance projects.

Optional on-demand course (not for credit – no charge)

The Five Basics of Effective Governing: The campaign is over — now the hard work begins. This noncredited course lays the groundwork for municipal elected officials as they begin their municipal service. To access the course, visit www.masc.sc (keyword: Five Basics).

MEO Institute 2025 Schedule

Check-in starts at 9 a.m. Each session begins promptly at 9:30 a.m. and ends no later than 12:30 p.m. Lunch is provided. Cancellations must be made by the date specified on each registration. For registration questions, contact Christine Sumter at 803.933.1208 or csumter@masc.sc, or Urica Floyd at 803.354.4754 or ufloyd@masc.sc.

Courses offered in person at the regional councils of governments locations. (Registration fee: \$35 each session)

March 18 *Registration deadline: March 10*
9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
• Basic Budgeting and Municipal Finance

May 20 *Registration deadline: May 12*
9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
• Municipal Governance and Policy
• Freedom of Information Act in South Carolina

September 16 *Registration deadline: September 8*
9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
• Municipal Economic Development
• Forms of Municipal Government

Regional COG Locations

Locations are subject to change. Check registration materials at www.masc.sc (Keyword: Events).

Appalachian Council of Governments
864.242.9733
30 Century Circle,
Greenville

Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments
843.529.0333
5790 Casper Padgett
Way, North Charleston

Central Midlands Council of Governments (Sept 2025)
803.376.5390
236 Stoneridge Dr.,
Columbia, SC 29210

Municipal Association of SC (Central Midlands location for March & May 2025)
803.799.9574
1411 Gervais St.,
Columbia

Pee Dee Regional Council of Governments
843.669.3138
2314 Pisgah Road,
Florence

Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments
843.546.8502
1230 Highmarket St.,
Georgetown

MEO Institute On-demand Course Registration Instructions

To register for the on-demand courses, go to www.masc.sc (keyword: MEO) and log in with your user identification number and password. All on-demand courses must be paid online with a credit card. Each course fee is \$35.

The on-demand courses can be accessed 24/7 from any computer, tablet or mobile device that has internet connection and may be taken in any order. Once registered, participants immediately receive an email with instructions on how to get started. Participants have 90 days to complete a course after registering online.

Available on-demand courses

- Basic Budgeting and Municipal Finance
- Forms of Municipal Government
- Freedom of Information Act in South Carolina
- Municipal Economic Development
- Municipal Governance and Policy

Courses offered on demand

(Registration fee: \$35 each course)

Elected officials may take courses according to their schedule and avoid delays associated with waiting for the once-a-year, in-person offerings. To access the courses, visit www.masc.sc (keyword: MEO).

Advanced Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government

The Advanced Institute provides elected officials who have graduated from the MEO Institute an option for continuing education. Participants can choose between two advanced courses offered each winter and fall. To complete the Advanced Institute, participants must complete four of the six courses offered.

- Advanced Advocacy and Intergovernmental Relations
- Advanced Budgeting and Finance
- Advanced Leadership and Governance
- Advanced Municipal Economic Development
- Municipal Utility Policy and Administration
- Public Safety Policy and Administration

January 22, 2025 Courses

Advanced Advocacy and Intergovernmental Relations

Municipal elected officials must educate members of the General Assembly on how bills impact their cities and towns. Learn successful strategies to navigate the legislative process on behalf of your hometown and take your advocacy skills to a new level.

Advanced Municipal Economic Development

Advanced Municipal Economic Development will concentrate on how to identify a municipality's unique assets, promote these assets, develop strategic partnerships, and use available tools and incentives to encourage private sector investment and job creation. Experienced municipal economic development professionals and consultants will present these topics and illustrate successful strategies and projects using case studies.

2025 Schedule

Advanced courses (Registration fee: \$125)

January 22 | 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center, Columbia, SC

- Advanced Advocacy and Intergovernmental Relations
- Advanced Municipal Economic Development

Registration deadline: January 10

October 2025 Advanced Institute Courses

Advanced Budgeting and Finance

Advanced Budgeting and Finance will pick up where the MEO Institute’s “Basic Budgeting and Municipal Finance” course left off. Presenters will focus on topics such as budget management, governmental accounting, annual audit, debt management and more.

Advanced Leadership and Governance

Advanced Leadership and Governance will take an in-depth look at the leadership role of municipal elected officials. Participants will learn about how to develop a bold vision for their hometowns and how to develop sound public policy to carry out that vision.

2025 Schedule

Advanced courses (Registration fee: \$125)

October 2025 | 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

- Advanced Budgeting and Finance
- Advanced Leadership and Governance

Information will be mailed in July 2025.

Transcript

Refer to your MEO Institute transcript to determine which courses you have completed and which you need for graduation. Access your transcript by logging on to www.masc.sc with your user identification number and password, and then navigating to the MEO Institute page.

Advanced Continuing Education

The Advanced Continuing Education track provides the Association's top level of graduates with a pathway to stay current on the latest issues in local government. This track is self-directed for mayors and councilmembers who seek to continually work toward being the best public servant for their cities and towns. These courses focus on current topics and will be available exclusively to Advanced MEO Institute graduates.

Advanced Continuing Education classes are offered with each advanced training session held in January and October.

January 22, 2025 Topics

- Municipal Leadership
- Workforce Training and Trends

October 2025 Topics

The topic descriptions will be available at a later date.

2025 Schedule

ACE courses (Registration fee: \$125)

January 22, 2025 | 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center, Columbia, SC

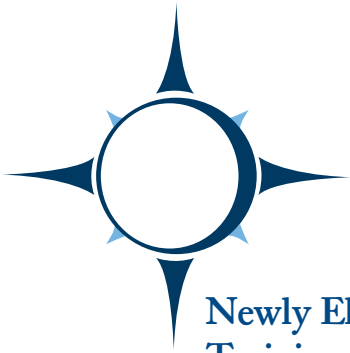
- Municipal Leadership
- Workforce Training and Trends

October 2025 | 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Columbia, SC

- *The topic descriptions will be available at a later date.*

Information will be mailed in July 2025.



Save the Date

Newly Elected Officials Virtual Training Session

January 8, 2025 | 9 a.m. – noon

Registration open online Monday,
December 2, 2024

This is a free, noncredited event.

Access the Association's online registration at
www.masc.sc. Select Education & Events from the
menu and then Calendar.