

87 Counties

447 County Commissioners

40,371 County Employees

5.72 Million Residents

From urban to rural
and from large to small,
Minnesota's 87 counties
are diverse communities
that serve a
wide variety of needs.

*AMC unites them all
in achieving
public service excellence.*

 Association of
Minnesota Counties

www.mncounties.org



Association of
Minnesota Counties

INTRODUCTION TO COUNTY GOVERNMENT & AMC

COUNTIES BY THE NUMBERS



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- 87 counties
- 447 county commissioners
 - 81 boards have five county commissioners.
 - 6 boards have seven county commissioners.
- Smallest county Ramsey/Largest St. Louis County
- Total county expenditures per year range from \$15.3 million to \$2 billion
(2022 estimate, OSA)



BASICS OF MINNESOTA COUNTY GOVERNMENT

- In Minnesota, counties are both a local government and the administrative arm of the state.
- Minnesota is organized under the *Dillon Rule*. This essentially means that counties can only act when explicitly authorized to do so by the state.



General County Duties

- Administer property tax system, land/deed/vital records
- Run elections
- Corrections/probationary services
- Invest/manage roads, ditches, bridges, transit infrastructure
- Develop land use & water policy
- Workforce and economic development
- Public health authority
- Provide an array of social services—housing, food, rental, mental health, child/family wellbeing services
- Manage solid waste & recycling services
- Elected officers—county sheriff's office/county attorneys office
- Additional duties as assigned (“fall back”)
 - Rental supports, bus support, feed lot inspection, ditch/fence authority, indigent funeral expenses

Pandemic Roles

- Pine County worked with their local technical college to create a “Work Fast” training program geared at providing scholarships to unemployed workers in targeted career training fields such as welders, CNAs, machinists, and more.
- Cass County partnered with private communications firms to get internet services to neighborhoods with no service so they could work and attend school virtually throughout the year.
- Todd county conducted mass testing opportunities at their local fairgrounds and appropriated nearly one million dollars for their own version of a small business and non-profit relief program.
- Sherburne County had their own business relief program but also a side program geared at local restaurants to help/finance their purchasing of extra tables, tents, and outdoor equipment to make dining safe.
- In the North, several counties created their own unique relief programs targeted at paper and logging industry that was hurting from a non-existent office workplace economy but so important for their own regional economies. (Koochiching, Itasca, St. Louis)
- Wright county provided business grants of \$20K per awardee to 250 business owners.
- Le Sueur spent significant amount of their CARES dollars on expanding internet access within their community and also providing childcare assistance to providers within the community.
- In Rock county, the board decided to use upwards of 70% of their funds for business assistance. Commissioners literally walked up and down their main streets handing out applications.
- Hennepin and Ramsey counties spent millions trying to assist with a surge in homelessness and housing instability, purchasing and operating their own shelter spaces to try to meet demand.
- After holding multiple town forums discussing community needs, Stevens County used part of their ARP funds to build a multi-pod childcare facility strategically located in the center of the county.
- One county even used the dollars to provide for one of the most basic needs: access to reliable fresh water for a rural Minnesota family whose well water had high and unsafe levels of iron that was causing rashes on their children.



WHAT IS AMC?



Association of
Minnesota Counties

- A Voluntary Association of Minnesota's 87 Counties Since 1909
- The Voice of County Government in Minnesota
- An Advocacy, Education, Training, Research, & Communication Resource for Counties and County Officials

LEGISLATIVE PRINCIPLES



- AMC strives to preserve local control so that counties have the flexibility to address the most pressing needs of their communities.
- AMC supports state budget solutions that avoid adding or shifting a disproportionate burden to counties through cost shifts, cost shares and unfunded mandates.
- AMC believes that funding for county-administered services should be commensurate with the level of service or results deemed acceptable.

2023 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



- County Program Aid/Property Tax Relief
- Mental Health
- Community Supervision
- Housing Investments
- Transportation Funding
(Dedicated Funding and Bonding)
- SCORE/SWMT
- Local Public Health Funding
- Family First and Family Resource Centers
- Broadband
- Systems Modernization
- PILT Sustainability
- Changing Trends in Duty Disability Departures

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS



Association of
Minnesota Counties



Matt Hilgart

Government Relations Manager
GENERAL GOVERNMENT & TAXES



Brian Martinson

ENVIRONMENT
& NATURAL RESOURCES



Emily Murray

TRANSPORTATION
& INFRASTRUCTURE



Carli Stark

PUBLIC SAFETY
& CORRECTIONS



Matt Freeman

HUMAN SERVICES



Kari Oldfield

PUBLIC HEALTH



Angie Thies

CHILD WELLBEING



Nathan Zacharias

TECHNOLOGY



Jeanna Fortney

WORKFORCE, ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT & HOUSING