

Levels of Government in Canada

Canada has several levels of government, which all have different roles and responsibilities in running the country day-to-day. Every level of government has its own group of elected representatives.

The **Federal Government** is the highest level of government in Canada. The Federal Government has power over all of Canada and handles issues that are important for the entire country. The Federal Government is led by the Prime Minister and is based in Ottawa, Ontario. Some responsibilities of this level of government are:

- Citizenship and passports (deciding who is and is not a citizen of Canada)
- Criminal law
- National defense and border protection
- Fisheries and oceans
- Currency (printing the money we use across Canada)

Provincial and Territorial Governments is the next level of government in Canada. These governments have power over their own province or territory and handle issues that are important for the people living in that province or territory and are led by a Premier. There are thirteen Provincial and Territorial governments in Canada (one for each province and territory), and they each meet in their own capital city (in New Brunswick, they meet in Fredericton). Some responsibilities of Provincial and Territorial Governments are:
































- Education
- Healthcare
- Social services
- Maintaining highways
- Drivers' licenses

Municipal Governments are in charge of smaller areas inside of provinces and territories called municipalities. Municipalities are usually called cities, towns, and villages. Municipal governments take care of issues most important at the local level and are usually led by a mayor or reeve and meet in a municipal building, usually called a city hall, town hall, or village hall. There are about 3,700 municipal governments in Canada, with 104 in New Brunswick. Some responsibilities of municipal governments are:

- Fire protection
- Local police
- Parks
- Public transportation (buses, subway trains)
- Garbage collection

First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Governments are in charge of many areas with mostly indigenous populations. These governments are often led by a Chief and share responsibilities with the other three levels of government.

ACTIVITY 3.1: Government Responsibilities

FEDERAL	PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL	MUNICIPAL/LOCAL
 Citizenship and passports	 Colleges and universities	 Animal control
 Criminal law	 Drivers' licensing and highways	 Fire protection
 Currency	 Education	 Land use planning (zoning)
 Federal taxes	 Healthcare	 Local parks and recreation
 Fisheries and oceans	 Municipalities	 Local police
 Foreign affairs and trade	 Natural resources	 Property taxes
 Indigenous lands and rights	 Property and civil rights	 Public transportation
 National defence	 Provincial law and courts	 Streets and sidewalks
 Official languages	 Provincial taxes	 Waste management
 Postal service	 Social services	 Water supply and treatment
 Veterans affairs		

- 1 In the chart above, highlight or circle all the government areas that affect your life.
- 2 Identify two examples where different levels of governments may have to work together. Connect the areas by drawing a line between them.
- 3 Which level of government do you think affects you the most?