

The Levels of Government in Canada

Canada is a huge country and each community has its own **unique** needs and interests.

To serve Canadians most effectively, the government is split into three levels:

The federal government is responsible for the entire country; **provincial** and territorial governments are responsible for their province or territory; and local or municipal governments manage their city or town.

So what exactly does the federal government do?

They handle all matters of national and international concern, like national defence, foreign affairs and trade, **currency**, fisheries and oceans, and citizenship and immigration.

Provincial and territorial governments are responsible for regional issues like education, health care delivery, natural resources, transportation, and highways.

Local and municipal governments represent the interests of cities, towns and villages, and they're responsible for local matters such as waste removal, water and sewage, libraries, and parks and recreation.

In Canada, we **vote** for people to represent us at each level.

These representatives are then responsible for proposing, studying, debating, and voting on bills, which are potential laws.

Still unsure of who's who?

Here's a quick overview:

Federal **elected representatives** are called **Members of Parliament**, or **MPs** for short.

They gather to **debate** and pass laws in the House of Commons in Ottawa.

Then, depending on where you live, the provincial or territorial elected representatives are known as Members of the Legislative Assembly, Members of Provincial Parliament, Members of the National Assembly or Members of the House of Assembly.

They meet at their respective legislatures in the capital of the province or territory.

Finally, at the municipal level, our elected representatives are normally called councillors or aldermen, and they meet at their city or town hall.

Each level of government also has a leader: the head of the federal government is the prime minister, the leader of the provincial or territorial government is the premier and the leader at the municipal level is usually called a mayor, or a reeve.

Every day, many parts of your life are impacted by the different levels of government, and each government is led by politicians that we elect.