

331.247 City-county consolidated form.

1. A commission appointed pursuant to section 331.233A may propose a charter under which a county and one or more cities within the county may unite to form a single unit of local government, or may propose a charter under which a county and one or more cities within the county may create a unified government empowered to govern a city and a county with each retaining the separate status and power of a city or a county for all purposes and constituting separate political subdivisions under combined governance. Either option proposed shall be referred to as a city-county consolidated form of government. If more than fifty percent of the population of a city resides within the affected county, it is a city within the county for the purposes of this section and may continue its status as a city within the county even if the population of such city falls below the more than fifty percent threshold in a future census.
2. A majority vote by the charter commission is required for the submission to the electorate of a proposed charter for a city-county consolidated form of government.
3. A city-county consolidated form of government does not need to include more than one city. A city shall not be included unless the city participates in the commission process.
4. Adoption of the proposed consolidation charter requires the approval of a majority of the votes cast in the entire county and requires the approval of a majority of the votes cast in one or more cities named on the ballot. The consolidation charter shall be effective in regard to a city named on the ballot only if a majority of the votes cast in that city approves the consolidation charter.
5. An adopted charter takes effect July 1 following the general election at which it is approved unless the charter provides a later effective date. If the adopted charter calls for a change in the form of government, officers to fill elective offices created by the charter shall be elected in the general election in the even-numbered year following the adoption of the charter.
6. A city may request to join an existing city-county consolidated government by resolution of the city council or upon petition of eligible electors of the city equal in number to at least twenty-five percent of the persons who voted at the last regular city election. Within fifteen days after receiving a valid petition, the city council of the petitioning city shall adopt a resolution in favor of participation and shall, within ten days of adoption, forward the resolution to the governing body of the city-county consolidated government. If a majority of the governing body of the city-county consolidated government approves the resolution, the question of joining the city-county consolidated government shall be submitted to the electorate of the petitioning city within sixty days after approval of the resolution.
7. *a.* If a charter is adopted, it may be amended at any time by one of the following methods:
 - (1) The governing body of the city-county consolidated government, by resolution, may submit a proposed amendment to the voters, and the proposed amendment becomes effective only upon approval by a majority of those voting on the proposed amendment within the city-county consolidated area.
 - (2) The governing body of the city-county consolidated government, by ordinance, may amend the charter. However, within thirty days following publication of the ordinance, if a petition valid under the provisions of section 331.306 is filed with the governing body of the city-county consolidated government, the governing body must submit the charter amendment to the voters and, in such event, the amendment becomes effective only upon approval of a majority of those voting on the proposed amendment within the city-county consolidated area.
 - (3) If a petition valid under the provisions of section 331.306 is filed with the governing body of the city-county consolidated government, proposing an amendment to the charter, the governing body must submit the proposed amendment to the voters and, in such an event, the amendment becomes effective only

upon approval of a majority of those voting on the proposed amendment within the city-county consolidated area.

b. The proposed amendment shall be submitted at the general election. However, if the amendment is proposed pursuant to paragraph "*a*", subparagraph (1), the proposed amendment may be submitted at a special election if the resolution submitting the amendment to the voters is adopted by a two-thirds majority of the membership of the governing body.

c. If an election is held, the governing body shall submit the question of amending the charter to the electors in substantially the following form:

Should the amendment described below be adopted for the city-county consolidated charter of (insert name of county and of each consolidated city)?

The ballot must contain a brief description and summary of the proposed amendment.

d. An amendment shall not adopt an alternative form of county government.

e. Notwithstanding paragraph "*b*", if an amendment to a charter proposes to increase or decrease the number of members on the governing body, the amendment shall be submitted to the voters at a general election.

88 Acts, ch 1229, §19; 91 Acts, ch 256, §19, 20; 2004 Acts, ch 1066, §14, 31

2004 amendments to this section take effect April 13, 2004, and apply retroactively to charter commissions in existence before and on that date; 2004 Acts, ch 1066, §31