

372.4 Mayor-council form.

1. *a.* A city governed by the mayor-council form has a mayor and five council members elected at large, unless the council representation plan is changed pursuant to [section 372.13, subsection 11](#). The council may, by ordinance, provide for a city manager and prescribe the manager's powers and duties, and as long as the council contains an odd number of council members, may change the number of wards, abolish wards, or increase the number of council members at large without changing the form.

b. However, a city governed, on July 1, 1975, by the mayor-council form composed of a mayor and a council consisting of two council members elected at large and one council member from each of four wards, or a special charter city governed, on July 1, 1975, by the mayor-council form composed of a mayor and a council consisting of two council members elected at large and one council member elected from each of eight wards, may continue until the form of government is changed as provided in [section 372.2](#) or [section 372.9](#). While a city is thus operating with an even number of council members, the mayor may vote to break a tie vote on motions not involving ordinances, resolutions or appointments made by the council alone, and in a special charter city operating with ten council members under [this section](#), the mayor may vote to break a tie vote on all measures.

2. The mayor shall appoint a council member as mayor pro tem, and shall appoint and dismiss the marshal or chief of police except where an intergovernmental agreement makes other provisions for police protection or as otherwise provided in [section 400.13](#). However, the appointment and dismissal of the marshal or chief of police are subject to the consent of a majority of the council. Other officers must be selected as directed by the council. The mayor is not a member of the council and shall not vote as a member of the council.

3. In a city having a population of five hundred or more, but not more than five thousand, the city council may, or shall upon petition of the electorate meeting the numerical requirements of [section 372.2, subsection 1](#), submit a proposal at the next regular or special city election to reduce the number of council members to three. If a majority of the voters voting on the proposal approves it, the proposal is adopted. If the proposal is adopted, the new council shall be elected at the next regular or special city election. The council shall determine by ordinance whether the three council members are elected at large or by ward.

4. In a city having a population of less than five hundred, the city council may adopt a resolution of intent to reduce the number of council members from five to three and shall call a public hearing on the proposal. Notice of the time and place of the public hearing shall be published as provided in [section 362.3](#). At the public hearing, the council shall receive oral and written comments regarding the proposal from any person. Thereafter, the council, at the same meeting as the public hearing or at a subsequent meeting, may adopt a final resolution to reduce the number of council members from five to three or may adopt a resolution abandoning the proposal. If the council adopts a final resolution to reduce the number of council members from five to three, a petition meeting the same requirements specified in [section 362.4](#) for petitions authorized by city code may be filed with the clerk within thirty days following the effective date of the final resolution, requesting that the question of reducing the number of council members from five to three be submitted to the registered voters of the city. Upon receipt of a petition requesting an election, the council shall direct the county commissioner of elections to put the proposal on the ballot for the next regular city election. If the ballot proposal is adopted, the new council shall be elected at the next following regular city election. If a petition is not filed, the council shall notify the county commissioner of elections by July 1 of the year of the regular city election and the new council shall be elected at that regular city election. If the council notifies the commissioner of elections after July 1 of the year of the regular city election, the change shall take effect at the next following regular city election. The council shall determine by ordinance whether the three council members are elected at large or by ward.

5. City council membership reduced from five council members to three may be increased to five council members using the same procedure in [subsection 3 or 4](#), as applicable.

[R60, §1081, 1086, 1093, 1095, 1098, 1103, 1105, 1106; C73, §511, 515, 521, 524, 528, 532, 534, 535; C97, §645, 646, 652, 654, 655; S13, §645, 646, 652, 654, 655; SS15, §679-1a, 937;

C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §5631, 5634 – 5636, 6611, 6691; C46, 50, §363.9, 363.13 – 363.15, 418.1, 420.1; C54, 58, 62, §363A.2, 363A.3, 363D.1; C66, 71, 73, §363A.2, 363A.3, 363A.5, 363D.1; C75, 77, 79, 81, §372.4]

86 Acts, ch 1171, §2; 87 Acts, ch 97, §1; 91 Acts, ch 256, §36; 97 Acts, ch 23, §38; 2001 Acts, ch 35, §1; 2003 Acts, ch 80, §1, 2; 2004 Acts, ch 1101, §44; 2007 Acts, ch 55, §1; 2010 Acts, ch 1061, §180; 2025 Acts, ch 130, §6

Referred to in §372.13, 380.4

Subsection 4 amended