

## **ARIZONA**

Arizona ranks 40th among the states in number of local governments, with 645 as of October 2007.

### **COUNTY GOVERNMENTS (15)**

There are no areas in Arizona lacking county government. The county governing body is called the board of supervisors.

### **SUBCOUNTY GENERAL PURPOSE GOVERNMENTS (90)**

#### **Municipal Governments (90)**

Municipal governments in Arizona include cities and towns. There are no significant differences in population, legal powers, or status between city and town governments that would affect their classification for census purposes. The minimum population requirement for incorporation is 1,500. Municipalities may also be incorporated in a community within ten miles of the boundary of a national park or monument that contains a population of 500 or more residents.

#### **Township Governments (0)**

Arizona has no township governments.

### **PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEMS (253)**

#### **School District Governments (239)**

The following types of school districts in Arizona are counted as governments for census purposes:

- Common school districts
- Community college districts
- Joint common school districts
- Joint technological education districts
- Joint unified school districts
- Provisional community college districts
- Unified school districts
- Union high school districts

All types of school districts listed above are governed by elected boards. With the exception of provisional community college districts, these districts may levy ad valorem taxes and, with voter approval, may issue bonds. Provisional community college districts are primarily funded through voted- approved ad valorem tax levies. In addition to ad valorem taxes, community college districts may also receive money from transient lodging taxes.

#### **Dependent Public School Systems (14)**

Arizona statutes authorize the following types of dependent public school systems:

Systems dependent on county governments:  
County accommodation schools  
County special education cooperatives

The county accommodation schools, which provide education on military reservations or in territory that is not included within the boundary of a school district, are directly under the supervision of the county superintendent of schools. They are not counted as separate governments.

County special education cooperatives, which provide special education programs for exceptional children, are formed by agreement between two or more school districts. They are administered by one of the participating school districts or by the county superintendent of schools. They are not counted as separate governments.

### **SPECIAL DISTRICT GOVERNMENTS (301)**

Arizona statutes authorize the creation of a variety of special districts or authorities that are counted as governments. These are discussed in detail below.

#### **Agriculture Preservation Districts**

Districts for the maintenance of land for agricultural purposes may be established upon petition of property owners to the county board

of supervisors, followed by a public hearing. A board elected by landowners and appointed by cities and counties having land in the district governs each district. The district may collect fees, rentals, and charges for services.

### **Community Park Maintenance Districts Encompassing an Area of 160 Acres or More**

Districts for the maintenance of community parks may be established by petition to the county board of supervisors, followed by a public hearing. An elected board of directors governs each district. The districts may fix fees, rentals, and charges and set property taxes. No districts of this type were reported in operation as of October 2007.

Districts having fewer than 160 acres are governed by the county board of supervisors and are not counted as separate governments. See "Subordinate Agencies and Areas," below.

### **Drainage Districts**

Drainage districts are established upon petition of landowners to the county board of supervisors, followed by a hearing and referendum. An elected board of directors governs each district. The districts may set ad valorem taxes, and, with voter approval, impose special assessments, and issue bonds. For irrigation and drainage districts, see "Irrigation Districts," below.

### **Electrical Districts**

Electrical districts for the purpose of obtaining power for irrigation water pumping are established by the county board of supervisors upon petition of landowners, followed by a hearing and referendum. An elected board of directors governs each district. The districts may levy ad valorem taxes and charge rates. The districts may also issue bonds upon voter approval.

### **Fire Districts**

Districts to provide fire protection in unincorporated areas are formed by petition to the county board of supervisors, followed by a public hearing. An elected district board, or an elected chief and secretary-treasurer, govern each district. The district may levy ad valorem taxes and may, upon voter approval, issue bonds.

### **Flood Protection Districts--1921 Law**

These districts, formerly known as flood control districts, are created upon petition of landowners to the county board of supervisors, followed by a public hearing. An elected board of directors governs each district. The districts may levy ad valorem taxes. Voter approval is required for the levy of assessments and the issuance of bonds.

County flood control districts established under the 1978 law and governed by the county board of supervisors are not counted as separate governments. See "Subordinate Agencies and Areas," below.

### **Groundwater Replenishment Districts**

Groundwater replenishment districts are established in active management areas meeting certain criteria on petition by a municipality to the county board of supervisors, followed by a public hearing and resolution. An elected board of nine directors governs each district. The districts may collect fees and charges, set ad valorem taxes, levy replenishment taxes and, with voter approval, issue general obligation and revenue bonds. No districts of this type were reported in operation in October 2007.

### **Health Service Districts**

These districts to provide health clinics and related facilities and ambulance services are established in medically-under serviced areas meeting certain criteria upon petition of voters to the county board of supervisors, followed by

public hearing and referendum. An elected board of directors governs each district. The districts may fix rentals and charges, set ad valorem taxes, and, upon voter approval, issue bonds.

### **Hospital Districts**

After petition by voters, public hearing, and approval by the state department of health services, hospital districts may be established by the county board of supervisors to provide hospital facilities. An elected board of directors administers each district. The districts may set ad valorem taxes and rents and, after voter approval, may issue bonds.

### **Irrigation Districts**

Irrigation districts may be created to provide irrigation, domestic water supply, and electric power after petition of landowners to the county board of supervisors, followed by hearing and referendum. An elected board of directors governs each district. The districts may set a water tax, ad valorem taxes, and special assessments and may fix tolls and charges. Voter approval is required for bond issues. In addition, "irrigation and drainage districts," with both irrigation and drainage powers, may be established under this law.

### **Irrigation Water Delivery Districts**

These districts are established by the county board of supervisors after petition of landowners and a public hearing. An elected board of trustees governs each district. The districts may set ad valorem taxes, fix rates and fees, and incur indebtedness.

### **Maricopa County Special Health Care District**

This district was created by the county board of supervisors, and approved at referendum to provide medical care and ambulance services. An elected board of directors governs the district. The district may set rents and, upon

voter approval, issue bonds and set ad valorem taxes.

### **Mohave County Water Authority**

This authority was created by a special act of the legislature for purpose of acquiring, constructing and operating projects to transport, deliver and treat water. The board of directors consists of persons appointed by the member local governments. The authority may collect dues from its membership, and fees from subcontractors.

### **Multijurisdictional Water Facilities Districts**

Two or more municipal water providers may form districts established by the county board of supervisors after a hearing and referendum. A private water company may be included as a municipal water provider; however, a district cannot be solely comprised of private water companies. An elected board of directors governs each district. Districts may establish and collect user fees, rates, and charges and, upon voter approval, issue refunding and revenue bonds. Private water companies that are participating municipal water providers are subject to additional limitations.

### **Pest Abatement Districts--1983 Law**

Districts to control public health pests may be established upon petition to the county board of supervisors, after public hearing and voter approval. An elected board of directors governs each district. The districts may set ad valorem taxes.

### **Pest Control Districts--1957 Law**

These districts are created by the county board of supervisors upon petition of crop owners or landowners, after hearing and referendum. An elected board of directors governs each district. The districts may set property taxes.

### **Pinal County Water Augmentation Authority**

This authority was created by a special act of

the legislature. The authority is governed by a board of directors appointed by the governing bodies of the county and the participating cities, towns, and irrigation and drainage districts. The authority may set and collect fees and issue bonds.

### **Power Districts**

Districts to generate and distribute electric power may be established by the county board of supervisors upon petition of landowners followed by a public hearing and referendum. An elected board of directors governs each district. The districts may set ad valorem taxes and, upon voter approval, issue bonds.

### **Public Transportation Authorities**

Intergovernmental public transportation authorities may be established in counties with fewer than 400,000 in population. The governing body of one or more incorporated cities or towns may petition the county board of supervisors to establish an authority after a public hearing. If the municipalities are in different counties, they may petition for the creation of a joint authority by intergovernmental agreement. Any state university located in a participating municipality may become a member by intergovernmental agreement. Each authority is governed by a board of directors appointed by participating entities. The authorities may set fares.

State law established a regional public transportation authority upon voter approval of a transportation excise tax levy in Maricopa County. The authority is governed by a board of directors consisting of one elected official selected by each member city plus one member appointed by the county. The authority may issue revenue bonds, fix fees and charges, and determine additional funding required from members.

A regional transportation authority was established by the state legislature in Pima County. The authority is governed by a board consisting of the members of the regional

council of governments, which includes the county and all municipalities in the county. The authority may fix fares and other charges and issue bonds. The authority may receive the proceeds of the county transportation excise tax with voter approval. Voters must approve the regional transportation plan.

### **Recreational Corridor Channelization Districts**

Districts may be established in areas that are the subject of a watercourse master plan to construct and maintain flood conveyance and recreational facilities. Districts are created by the county board of supervisors on a memorandum and petition signed by landowners after a hearing and approval from the governing bodies of participating municipalities. A board, appointed by the county board of supervisors, governs each district. The districts may levy ad valorem taxes and special benefit assessments and may issue bonds.

### **Salt River Project Agricultural Improvement and Power District**

This districts, which provides for irrigation, drainage, water storage, and electric generation and transmission facilities, was created by the county board of supervisors upon petition of landowners, followed by a hearing and referendum. A board of directors elected by land owners governs the district. The district may fix charges and issue revenue bonds and, with voter approval, may issue general obligation bonds. The authorizing legislation specifies the method for computing the ad valorem taxes to be levied for the district.

### **Sanitary Districts Encompassing an Area of 160 Acres or More**

Sanitary districts to provide sewerage facilities may be established by the county board of supervisors upon petition of property owners followed by a public hearing. An elected board of directors governs each district. The districts

may fix fees and rent, set ad valorem taxes and, after voter approval, may issue bonds.

Districts having fewer than 160 acres are governed by the county board of supervisors and are not counted as separate governments. See "Subordinate Agencies and Areas," below.

### **Special Road Districts**

These districts, which build and maintain highways and bridges, are established by the county board of supervisors upon petition of taxpayers and after a hearing and referendum. An elected board of trustees governs each district. The districts may set ad valorem taxes and, upon voter approval, issue bonds.

### **Water Conservation Districts (multicounty)**

These districts, authorized by 1971 legislation, are established by the state director of water resources on petition of three or more counties, or on petition of voters, followed by a public hearing. The districts contract with the secretary of the interior for water from the Central Arizona Project. An elected board of directors governs each district; the number of members is determined by county population. The district boards may fix and collect charges and set ad valorem taxes,. The Central Arizona Water Conservation District was established under this law.

### **Williams Gateway Airport Authority**

This authority was established by an act of the state legislature in order to use a previous military airbase for public purposes. A board of directors appointed by the governing bodies of the cities, towns, counties, and Indian tribes that are members of the authority governs this entity. The authority may impose fees and charges, collect an ad valorem and transaction privilege taxes provided by member governments, and may issue revenue and refunding bonds.

## **SUBORDINATE AGENCIES AND AREAS**

Shown below are various governmental designations in Arizona that have certain characteristics of governmental units but that are classified in census statistics as subordinate agencies of the state or local governments and are not counted as governments. Legal provisions for some of the larger of these are discussed below (see "Public School Systems," above, regarding educational agencies of this nature).

Among the subordinate agencies and areas listed below, some represent "special taxing areas" within the territory of an established government. This method of financing additional services in limited areas by property taxation, while also used by some municipal and township governments in a few states, is more widely utilized by county governments. In the listing below of authorized county-related agencies, a bullet (\*) appears for each entity of this kind--i.e., any that may individually serve a portion rather than all of a county and for which a tax may be levied against the assessed value of property in the area served.

**Arizona Power Authority (state).** This authority was created by a special act for the generation and transmission of electric power. A commission appointed by the governor governs the authority. The authority may fix rates, fees, and tolls and may issue revenue bonds.

**Housing authorities (municipal and county).** Municipalities and counties may establish housing authorities by resolution of the governing body. A board of housing commissioners governs each authority; the members are appointed by the mayor of a city or town or by the county board of supervisors. Authorities may set rents, accept federal contributions and grants. Authorities may also issue bonds, including refunding bonds, after approval by sponsoring governments.

**Industrial development authorities (county or municipal).** Authorities of this type are established to finance and lease airport, commercial, convention, electric, gas, health care, industrial, pollution control, port, residential, sewerage, solid waste disposal, and water supply facilities, on the approval of the county or municipal governing body. A board of directors, appointed by the county or municipal governing body, governs each authority. Industrial development authorities may make loans to mortgage lenders, charge rents, and issue revenue bonds.

**Natural resource conservation districts (state).** These districts may be established to carry on soil conservation programs upon petition of landowners to the state land commissioner, followed by a public hearing and referendum. A board of five supervisors governs each district; three are elected and two are appointed by the state land commissioner. District revenues are limited to voluntary donations, gifts, and contributions. The districts may receive money from the Arizona water protection fund. These districts have no bond-issuing powers.

**Slum clearance and redevelopment commissions (municipal).** General legislation authorizes cities and towns to establish these agencies. The commissioners are appointed by the mayor with the approval of the governing body. All administrative and fiscal powers are vested in the municipality; the commissioners perform only the specific duties assigned to them.

Other examples include:

### **State**

Arizona Aerospace and Defense Commission  
Arizona Exposition and State Fair Board  
Arizona Health Facilities Authority  
Arizona Housing Finance Authority  
Arizona International Development Authority  
Arizona Industrial Commission  
Arizona Water Banking Authority  
Arizona Water Protection Fund

Cotton pest control districts  
Greater Arizona Development Authority  
Radiation Regulatory Agency  
Tourism and Sports Authority  
Water districts  
Water Infrastructure Finance Authority

### **County**

Air pollution control districts  
Airport authorities  
Antinoxious weed districts  
Community park maintenance districts with an area encompassing fewer than 160 acres  
County flood control districts  
County jail districts  
County library districts  
County sports authorities  
County television improvement districts  
Domestic water improvement districts  
\*Improvement districts (county)  
County stadium districts (Maricopa County)  
"No fence" districts  
Pollution control corporations  
Public health services districts  
Road improvement and maintenance districts  
Rural road improvement districts  
Sanitary districts encompassing an area of fewer than 160 acres  
Theme Park and Support Facilities District (Maricopa County)

### **Municipal**

Airport authorities  
Community facilities districts  
Improvement districts  
Lake Havasu Sanitary District  
Municipal property corporations  
Pollution control corporations

### **Other**

Municipal property corporations also may be created by school districts, in which case, they would be dependent upon the creating school district.

The grazing districts in Arizona are areas for federal administration of grazing lands. They

are not counted as separate governments.

local areas for election purposes and administration of justice.

Arizona laws also provide for various types of