

# EXPECTATIONS FOR CHCS

## COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION TEMPLATES

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County Historical Commissions (CHC) may use this information to strengthen organizational structures and appointee management policies. CHCs should work with county officials to ensure that language and intention is constructive, ethical, and legal prior to applying or implementing related policies.

NOTE: County commissioners courts are governing authority for CHCs. THC has no role in administering CHC business; this information simply provides support for CHCs that want to formalize responsibilities in writing.

INSTRUCTIONS: Below is a listing of expectations our agency has for CHC appointees, CHC chairs, and the CHC as a whole. Use this information for reference only or include comments in your job descriptions and appointee agreements.

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### **Texas Historical Commission's expectations for appointees (including chair)**

- Secure access to the Internet and be able to send/receive email messages. [While this item may be challenging for some individuals/counties, most appointees should be able to fulfill expectation.]
- Complete Texas Open Meetings training and make every effort to attend all full commission meetings.
- Familiarize self with CHC Statute, CHC bylaws (if ratified), and recently completed CHC annual reports.
- Provide continual service throughout the term. If health or circumstance prevent appointee from fulfilling responsibilities for more than 4 months, appointee should request a formal hiatus from service.
- Consider CHC appointment as a professional commitment—as representatives of the county, appointee must maintain respectful behavior at all times and submit to the direction of the county commissioners court. Court may remove appointee who does not adhere to these professional standards of etiquette.
- Disclose conflicts of interest and/or any direct or indirect personal financial gain that may result from this appointment.

### **Texas Historical Commission's expectations for CHC chairs**

- Chair must have access to the Internet and be able to send/receive email messages.
- Chair must provide accurate contact information—including phone number and email address—to the THC. Chair must notify THC of changes to contact information for chair and/or appointees.
- Chair must read and distribute CHC listserv messages to fellow appointees. FYI—CHC listserv hosted by THC. Chairs are automatically added to this listserv; appointees added upon request.
- Chair should read and distribute THC correspondence and recommendations to appointees (as needed) and respond to THC information requests in a timely manner.
- When considering THC correspondence and training opportunities, chairs (and appointees) should give each issue equitable consideration, being careful not to dismiss a resource, resource type, or training simply because the chair may not be personally interested.
- Chair should encourage fellow appointees to take advantage of training opportunities within and outside the county.

## Texas Historical Commission's expectations for CHC (collective action)

- Able to update historic resource surveys/historic property inventories for county; see box below for more info.
- Promote a diverse interpretation of all county historic and cultural resources—this appointment should not be viewed as a time to prioritize personal/family-related interests.
- Actively partner with local, regional, and statewide organizations in constructive ways.
- Plan in such a way as to avoid conflicting dates of local events and maximize participation.
- Maintain contact with surrounding CHCs when planning, developing, and implementing programs. Planning allows CHCs to support one another's events, to prevent conflicting dates for events, and collaborate on regional events.
- Invite surrounding CHCs to events and training opportunities, when appropriate.
- Make every effort meet to regionally with other CHCs to learn more about projects and goals.
- Ensure information collected today will be accessible in the future. Research conducted by CHC appointees during their term/s of service is for the benefit of the public at large and should be kept in CHC physical and/or digital files.

**Notes about survey:** As documented in excerpt below, historic resource survey is a statutory directive. Unfortunately, many counties have not pursued this item of work. The Texas Historical Commission recommends that historic resource survey be the foundation of every CHC's program of work. Even if formal survey is not feasible, CHCs should pursue simple inventories of historic resources, expanding to full surveys when possible.

**Survey information here:** <https://www.thc.texas.gov/preserve/projects-and-programs/historic-resources-survey>.

**CHC statute here:** [www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/LG/htm/LG.318.htm](http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/LG/htm/LG.318.htm). Note survey excerpt below.

### *Sec. 318.006. RESOURCE IDENTIFICATION.*

*(a) The commission should institute and carry out a continuing survey of the county to determine the existence of historic buildings and other historical and archeological sites, private archeological collections, important endangered properties, or other historical features within the county, and should report the data collected to the commissioners court and the Texas Historical Commission.*

*(b) The commission should develop and maintain its inventory of surveyed individual properties and districts in accordance with standards established by the Texas Historical Commission.*

*(c) The commission should establish a system for the periodic review and assessment of the condition of designated properties in the county, including Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks, State Archeological Landmarks, and individual historic properties or districts listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The commission should report the results of the review and assessment to the Texas Historical Commission.*