

FOUNDATION FOR FREEDOM | CONSTITUTIONAL COUNTY TOOLKIT

COUNTY COMMISSIONER OUTREACH GUIDE

A Practical Guide to Building Relationships, Presenting the Constitutional County Plan, and Moving Toward County Action

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1. Purpose of Commissioner Outreach

County Commissioners are central to a Constitutional County effort because the Board of County Commissioners is the body that considers and adopts county ordinances and resolutions within the authority provided by state law.

The purpose of outreach is not to pressure a Commissioner into an immediate commitment. It is to build a credible relationship, understand the Commissioner's concerns, explain the proposal accurately, and develop a lawful path for county consideration.

Primary objective: move from introduction, to understanding, to sponsorship, to public consideration—without sacrificing accuracy, respect, or due process.

2. Research Before You Make Contact

Do not approach every Commissioner in exactly the same way. Learn the county and each Commissioner first.

Review the Commissioner's biography, district, committee assignments, public priorities, and recent votes.

Identify prior county resolutions or ordinances involving the Bill of Rights, Second Amendment, emergency powers, privacy, property rights, or other constitutional issues.

Review public statements and meeting minutes rather than relying on rumors or secondhand descriptions.

Identify Commissioners who may already have relationships with your team, allied organizations, churches, businesses, or community leaders.

Learn the county's ordinance process: agenda deadlines, sponsorship requirements, public-hearing procedures, county-attorney review, and voting requirements.

Identify likely legal, fiscal, administrative, or political concerns before the first meeting.

3. Identify the Best Commissioner to Approach First

Your first contact should usually be the Commissioner most likely to listen carefully and help you understand the county's process—not necessarily the person with the strongest public rhetoric.

A Commissioner with a record of supporting constitutional or civil-liberty protections.

A Commissioner who has previously supported Second Amendment or limited-government measures.

A Commissioner known to meet with citizen groups and consider constituent proposals.

A Commissioner with whom a team member or respected community leader has an existing relationship.

A Commissioner capable of becoming a credible sponsor or helping refine the proposal.

4. Request the Meeting

Ask for a short private meeting—typically 20 to 30 minutes. Keep the initial request concise.

Suggested request: “We are a group of county residents working on a Constitutional County initiative focused on protecting individual rights, constitutional government, and local accountability. We would appreciate 20–30 minutes to introduce the project, hear your perspective, and provide you with our resource materials.”

If a trusted constituent or community leader knows the Commissioner, ask that person to make the introduction when appropriate.

5. Prepare the Commissioner Meeting Packet

Do not overwhelm the Commissioner with a binder of material at the first meeting. A concise packet is more likely to be read.

One-page Constitutional County overview

One-page explanation of the Four Pillars

Constitutional County Strategy Overview

Model County Resolution, if appropriate

Model Constitutional County Ordinance

Short legal-reference sheet addressing county authority, due process, and anti-commandeering

Examples of relevant measures adopted by other counties

Your contact information and a clear invitation for follow-up

Keep longer articles, case summaries, presentations, and historical material available as supplemental resources rather than making them the center of the first meeting.

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6. Conducting the First Meeting

A productive first meeting should be conversational. Your team should listen at least as carefully as it speaks.

Suggested 25-Minute Meeting

TIME	PURPOSE
0–3 min	Thank the Commissioner; introduce the team and its local connection.

3–8 min	Explain the Constitutional County concept and why the team believes local preparation matters.
8–13 min	Explain the Four Pillars and the proposed role of the County Commission.
13–20 min	Ask questions and listen to the Commissioner's concerns, legal questions, and political considerations.
20–23 min	Discuss possible next steps: additional information, county-attorney review, another meeting, or consideration of a resolution/ordinance.
23–25 min	Confirm follow-up items and thank the Commissioner.

7. The Core Message

The presentation should be clear enough to explain in a few minutes.

The Problem — Emergencies, administrative actions, mandates, regulations, surveillance, and other government measures can create serious constitutional questions. Local officials should understand their lawful authority before a crisis occurs.

The Principle — Constitutional government requires limited power, separation of powers, federalism, due process, and meaningful accountability.

The Local Opportunity — Counties can use lawful home-rule authority, public policy, transparency, due process, and—where applicable—anti-commandeering principles to protect local interests and constitutional rights.

The Proposal — Adopt a carefully drafted resolution or ordinance establishing constitutional commitments and lawful procedures appropriate to the county.

The Long-Term Goal — Create a functioning culture of constitutional government rather than merely adopting a symbolic label.

8. Questions to Ask the Commissioner

What constitutional concerns do you believe are most important to county residents?

How do you view the county's responsibility when state or federal action raises constitutional concerns?

Has the Commission previously considered a Bill of Rights or sanctuary measure?

What concerns would you have about a Constitutional County ordinance?

What questions would the county attorney likely raise?

Would you support having county legal staff review a model ordinance?

Would a resolution be a useful first step if the Commission is not ready for an ordinance?

What would you need to see before considering sponsorship?

Who else should we meet with before bringing this forward?

9. Listen for the Real Objection

A Commissioner may agree with the Constitution but still oppose a particular ordinance. Determine whether the concern is legal, fiscal, procedural, political, operational, or simply unfamiliarity with the proposal.

Legal concern — Does the county have authority? Does the language conflict with state or federal law?

Fiscal concern — Could the ordinance create litigation, enforcement, staffing, or insurance costs?

Operational concern — Who reviews complaints? Who enforces it? What role does the Sheriff have?

Procedural concern — How does the proposal reach the agenda? Is legal review required first?

Political concern — Is there enough public support? Will the measure become unnecessarily partisan?

Drafting concern — Are particular definitions, penalties, or provisions too broad?

10. Common Objections and Productive Responses

“The Constitution already protects these rights.” Agree that the Constitution is supreme law, then explain that the initiative is intended to improve local education, policy, procedures, and accountability—not replace the Constitution.

“The county cannot nullify federal or state law.” Do not argue that a county has unlimited nullification power. Emphasize lawful county authority, constitutional review, due process, anti-commandeering where applicable, and judicial remedies.

“This will get us sued.” Ask which provisions create the concern. Invite legal review and focus on drafting language that is defensible, clear, and within county authority.

“The Sheriff is independent of the Commission.” Agree. The Sheriff has independent constitutional and statutory responsibilities. The ordinance should respect that independence rather than purport to place the Sheriff under Commission control.

“This is too political.” Bring the discussion back to enduring principles: due process, free speech, property rights, religious liberty, privacy, public accountability, and lawful limits on government.

“We should pass a resolution instead.” A resolution may be a useful first step. Ask whether the Commissioner would support a resolution now while continuing discussion of stronger lawful protections.

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11. Working with the County Attorney

County legal review is likely to be one of the most important stages. Treat the county attorney as a professional legal stakeholder, not as an adversary.

Ask that objections be identified by specific section and legal authority.

Distinguish policy objections from legal objections.

Request proposed alternative wording where counsel believes a provision is defective.

Keep the ordinance's purpose intact while being willing to improve definitions, procedures, due process, severability, and enforcement language.

Use independent qualified counsel when necessary to evaluate competing legal interpretations.

Do not represent disputed legal propositions as settled law.

12. Finding a Sponsor and Building the Votes

Once a Commissioner is receptive, determine whether that person is willing to become the sponsor or champion who helps move the proposal through the county process.

Ask the sponsor what information colleagues will need.

Meet other Commissioners individually rather than relying solely on the sponsor.

Keep a private vote assessment: supportive, leaning supportive, undecided, leaning opposed, opposed.

Focus most effort on informed undecided Commissioners.

Resolve legitimate concerns before the hearing when possible.

Do not publicly announce a Commissioner's support until the Commissioner has authorized or publicly stated it.

13. Build Public Support Before the Hearing

Educate supporters on the ordinance before asking them to speak.

Recruit respected local voices from multiple parts of the community.

Prepare concise talking points rather than identical scripted speeches.

Encourage speakers to explain why the issue matters personally and locally.

Submit useful written material into the public record when permitted.

Follow meeting rules, time limits, decorum requirements, and lawful security procedures.

Avoid personal attacks on Commissioners, staff, counsel, or opponents.

14. Preparing for the Public Hearing

Before the hearing, the team should be able to answer four questions:

What exactly does the proposed measure do?

What legal authority supports the provisions being requested?

How will the measure be administered and enforced?

What changes have been made in response to legitimate concerns?

Designate a small number of speakers to cover different subjects: constitutional purpose, legal framework, local need, implementation, and citizen support.

15. When Amendments Are Proposed

Not every amendment weakens the proposal. Some improve legality, clarity, due process, or political viability. Evaluate amendments according to function rather than emotion.

Does the amendment preserve the ordinance's core constitutional purpose?

Does it improve legal defensibility?

Does it clarify who has authority to act?

Does it preserve due process?

Does it remove the practical ability to enforce or implement the ordinance?

Is the change necessary to secure passage without making the ordinance merely symbolic?

16. After the Vote

If It Passes

Thank Commissioners and supporters.

Obtain the final adopted text rather than relying on earlier drafts.

Confirm effective-date and filing requirements.

Begin public education and implementation planning.

Track whether procedures promised in the ordinance are actually established.

If It Fails

Do not treat the campaign as over.

Identify the specific reasons each Commissioner opposed it.

Preserve relationships where possible.

Determine whether a revised ordinance, resolution, or longer-term education strategy is appropriate.

Move into the Long Game and set measurable goals for the next opportunity.

17. Commissioner Outreach Tracking Sheet

COMMISSIONER	POSITION	KEY CONCERNS	FOLLOW-UP	NEXT CONTACT

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18. Commissioner Meeting Checklist

- ☐ Research Commissioner and district
- ☐ Review relevant votes and public statements
- ☐ Understand county ordinance procedure
- ☐ Request 20–30 minute meeting
- ☐ Prepare concise meeting packet
- ☐ Choose 1–3 team representatives
- ☐ Practice the three-minute explanation
- ☐ Prepare questions
- ☐ Listen and record concerns
- ☐ Agree on follow-up items
- ☐ Send thank-you/follow-up communication
- ☐ Provide requested legal or policy information
- ☐ Update team vote/position assessment
- ☐ Schedule next contact

19. Recommended Toolkit Resources

What Is a Constitutional County?

Constitutional County Strategy Overview

How to Organize a Constitutional County Team

Sheriff Outreach Guide

Constitutional Compliance Committee Model

Petition for Redress Template

Sample County Resolution

Model Constitutional County Ordinance

Educational & Legal Notice

This guide is provided for educational and civic-organizing purposes and is not legal advice. County powers, ordinance procedures, lobbying rules, public-meeting requirements, ethics rules, and legal authority vary by jurisdiction. Proposed resolutions, ordinances, penalties, and enforcement procedures should be reviewed by qualified counsel for compliance with current federal, state, and local law.

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS. EDUCATE. LISTEN. PERSUADE. ACT.

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