ACCG, Georgia’s county association, believes a commitment to continuing education provides county officials with tools, resources and leadership skills to enhance decision-making within their communities. For more than two decades, ACCG has offered training and certification courses for county officials in partnership with the Carl Vinson Institute of Government (CVIOG) at University of Georgia, and we continue to build upon that groundwork with the Lifelong Learning Academy.

**CORE CERTIFICATION**
The foundation for your education as a commissioner is the Core Certification. It includes 9 courses covering 66 hours of required courses. Upon completion officials achieve the status of “Certified County Commissioner” and are eligible for a $100 monthly stipend from their county.

**COUNTY GOVERNMENT 101**
Study how and why counties exist, their role and responsibilities - what they must do and what they may do - and how you as a commissioner can influence the future positively.

**COUNTY GOVERNMENT FINANCE**
Gain a working understanding of county government finance and tools that will help you to better fulfill your financial decision-making and policy adoption responsibilities.

**COUNTY GOVERNMENT LAW**
Discover the legal role a county has, how counties fit within the legal hierarchy of U.S. government, the legal context of commissioner powers and duties, and the legal roles and relationships between the board of commissioners and other members of the county team.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**
Explore county government’s role in economic development, understand the roles of private and non-profit entities, and learn about strategies, tools, and best practices to identify your community’s assets, develop an economic development plan, and work with regional partners.

**ETHICS**
Examine your legal, moral, and ethical public sector obligations as a county commissioner with a focus on the key principles of public sector ethics, the range of consequences for public servants when ethical decision-making is in question, and the public perception/appearance of impropriety.

**HUMAN RESOURCES**
Learn why county employees are the single most important resource in your goal to provide service to citizens with a discussion ranging employment and labor laws to understanding the value of employees and how decisions, policies, and practices strengthen the county team while meeting existing law.

**LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE**
Discover “I, You, Me and We!” Communication and interpersonal relationships are critical to being an effective leader, and the focus is on assessing personal styles, relating to others, and building board and community relationships as you realize how these skills can guide your journey as a public leader.

**PROPERTY APPRAISAL AND TAXATION**
Study the complex, but important, topic of property appraisal and taxation and its significance to county government operations. Tax digests, types of property, and property tax revenues as well as the role of commissioners, assessors and development authorities are discussed.

**PUBLIC SAFETY AND PUBLIC HEALTH**
Understand the role and responsibilities of counties and commissioners during this look at the services that must be provided by law in public safety and public health, their budgetary impact, ways to allocate resources and strategies for working with other governmental and industry partners.
### Specialty Track Certification

Typically taken following completion of the core certification, Specialty Track classes are designed to engage the learner at a much deeper level. The course topics are more refined in scope and class participants have more opportunity to become truly immersed in the subject matter. To obtain a Specialty Track certification, a participant must complete eight (8) courses in the track [a minimum of five (5) courses in any track must come from the list of primary courses as designated below, with the remainder coming from the same list or from designated ‘cross-over’ courses].

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT</th>
<th>ECONOMIC &amp; COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT</th>
<th>LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT</th>
<th>REVENUE &amp; FINANCE</th>
<th>QUALITY OF LIFE/SOCIAL ISSUES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An active, involved public is essential to the proper functioning of government. This track seeks to provide county officials information on strategies to motivate your citizens to become involved and stay involved with their county government. Communication, customer service and accessibility highlight the courses in this track.</td>
<td>A vibrant economic base is vital to all communities. This track explores the many facets of economic and community development so that all the pieces of this important puzzle are understood. Land use planning, the financial implications of economic development, and the role of training and education are a few of the focal topics of this track.</td>
<td>Leadership is necessary for the success of communities and finding ways to identify and prepare leaders is not always simple. This track examines how you can bring out the leader in yourself and others. Working together, developing personal leadership skills, and understanding leadership styles and motivation are the nucleus of this track.</td>
<td>All public servants have goals and dreams for their communities but none of those can be accomplished without the dollars! This track tackles the task of managing your county’s money and ways to increase revenue. Budgeting, financial policies and enhancing financial efficiencies are some of the subjects discussed in this track.</td>
<td>Everyone wants to live in a nice place - and county commissioners are an integral part of making sure that counties meet that goal! This track surveys the many factors involved in providing livable communities. Community health, parks and sustainability, and policy decisions regarding these complex issues are some of the topics studied in this track.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Bringing People Together</td>
<td>- Global Commerce and Georgia’s Targeted Industries</td>
<td>- Board Dynamics</td>
<td>- Budgeting for Long-Term Fiscal Sustainability</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Civic Engagement</td>
<td>- Land Use and Planning</td>
<td>- Collaborative Leadership</td>
<td>- County Audit Process</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Community and Media Relations</td>
<td>- Managing Growth</td>
<td>- Leadership in Local Government</td>
<td>- Debt Financing</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Improving Organizational Effectiveness</td>
<td>- Regional Economic Development Training</td>
<td>- Motivation and Management</td>
<td>- Developing Financial Policies</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Managing Change</td>
<td>(12 hours)</td>
<td>- Personal Power and Influence</td>
<td>- Efficiencies in County Financing</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Strategic Planning</td>
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<td>- Team Building</td>
<td>- Federal and State Budgeting</td>
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<td>- Transparency in Government</td>
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<td>- Understanding Leadership Styles</td>
<td>- Intergovernmental Agreements and Private Partnerships</td>
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<td>- Policy Development and Implementation</td>
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### County Operations and Management

Efficient and cost-effective processes and procedures are necessary for successful county governments. This track focuses on ways to ensure that your county is operating at its peak. Technical assistance, human resource administration including risk management and retirement, and planning are stressed in this track.

- Capital Improvement Planning
- Commission and Staff Relations
- County Insurance and Risk Management
- County Retirement Plans
- Environmental Management
- Management and Human Resource Responsibilities
- Managing Meetings
- Public Works and Transportation
- Technology Solutions
- Water Management

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### Intergovernmental Relations

Understanding Local Economic Development: It’s getting clearer every day that a county commission does not work in a vacuum. Outside influences factor into local decisions consistently. This track looks at the other groups county officials work with and the ways they work with them in order to achieve success for their county, region and state. A study of the other “teams” involved with county commissions and methods for efficient interaction with them are the basics of this track.

- City-County Relations
- Conflict Resolution
- Constitutional Officers
- Crisis Management
- Federal and State Relations
- Negotiation and Mediation
- Regional Cooperation
- Working with School Boards,

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### Public Safety

One of the primary responsibilities of county commissioners is securing safety for their citizens. This track outlines the many facets of public safety and its implications for you as a commissioner. Law enforcement, emergency management, and the impact public safety issues have on your community are among the issues included in this track.

- Behavioral Health and Development Disabilities
- Citizen Public Safety Initiatives
- County Law Enforcement
- Courts and the Justice System
- Emergency Management
- Family and Children’s Services
- Fire, EMS, and 911
- Public Safety Policies and Practices the Strengthen Communities

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### Revenue & Finance

All public servants have goals and dreams for their communities but none of those can be accomplished without the dollars! This track tackles the task of managing your county’s money and ways to increase revenue. Budgeting, financial policies and enhancing financial efficiencies are some of the subjects discussed in this track.

- Budgeting for Long-Term Fiscal Sustainability
- County Audit Process
- Debt Financing
- Developing Financial Policies
- Efficiencies in County Financing
- Federal and State Budgeting
- Intergovernmental Agreements and Private Partnerships

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### Quality of Life/Social Issues

Everyone wants to live in a nice place - and county commissioners are an integral part of making sure that counties meet that goal! This track surveys the many factors involved in providing livable communities. Community health, parks and sustainability, and policy decisions regarding these complex issues are some of the topics studied in this track.

- Arts, Culture and Tourism
- Complex Community Issues
- Demographics and Diverse Perspectives
- Health and Wellness
- Identifying Funding for Community Enhancements
- Parks, Recreation and Active Living
- Public Health
- Sustainability
CONTINUING EDUCATION  

Georgia is a dynamic state with constantly evolving conditions, policies and laws. Continuing education is key for commissioners to stay current on issues and relevant to the constituents they serve. In order to maintain core and specialty certifications, commissioners who take office on or after January 1, 2013 are required to earn 18 hours of continuing education annually. These hours can be earned by taking additional specialty courses and attending ACCG conferences and meetings including district meetings and policy committee meetings. Commissioners who took office prior to this date are also strongly encouraged to participate in continuing education opportunities.

WATCH YOUR PROGRESS!
Keep up with your ACCG Lifelong Learning Academy record through the ACCG Dashboard. Go to www.accgdashboard.com and log in.

- If you were elected prior to 2012, you user id is the first letter of your first name and your full last name and your password is your county’s name. These will need to be all lower case. (For example, you are fictional commissioner John Doe from Campbell County. Your user id would be jdoe, your password campbell)

- If you were elected in 2012 or later, your user id is the first two letters of your first name and your full last name and your password is your county’s name. These would be all lower case as well. (For example, you are fictional commissioner John Doe from Campbell County. Your user id would be jodoe, your password campbell)

You can always contact us!
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