

Our agency suggests County Historical Commissions (CHCs) and county officials read this [memo](#) from attorney David B. Brooks, clarifying frequently asked questions from CHCs including bylaws, fundraising, and organizational structure.

Bylaws are not discussed in Texas Local Government Code, Chapter 318, the statute that enables county commissioners courts to establish CHCs. Verify with your county's judge, auditor, and attorney that bylaws are appropriate for your CHC. If appropriate, our agency recommends you reference bylaws of CHCs in your region or in counties with demographics and/or historic resources like yours. Our agency does not provide template bylaws. However, we may share copies of CHC bylaws from our files through an open records request.

While Chapter 318 provides an overview of CHC work, most CHCs prefer to establish a set of bylaws for its own regulation. Bylaws should be tailored to fit your CHC structure and to address county needs associated with the preservation of historic and cultural resources. In addition to complying with county policies, bylaws should cover the following:

- Purpose or objective of the CHC
- Membership qualifications and types (voting, advisory, ex-officio)
- Meetings (how often and attendance requirements)
- Officers and their duties (if the county approves installation of officers)
- Method of selecting officers
- Suggested committees and the purpose of each committee
- Method of reporting activities to county, partners, and the THC
- Parliamentary procedures
- Method of amending bylaws

Once a CHC has drafted bylaws, the county auditor and attorney should review the draft to ensure the language aligns with county policies rather than containing governance clauses and procedures typically associated with nonprofit organizations.