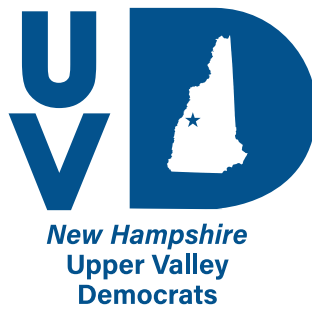
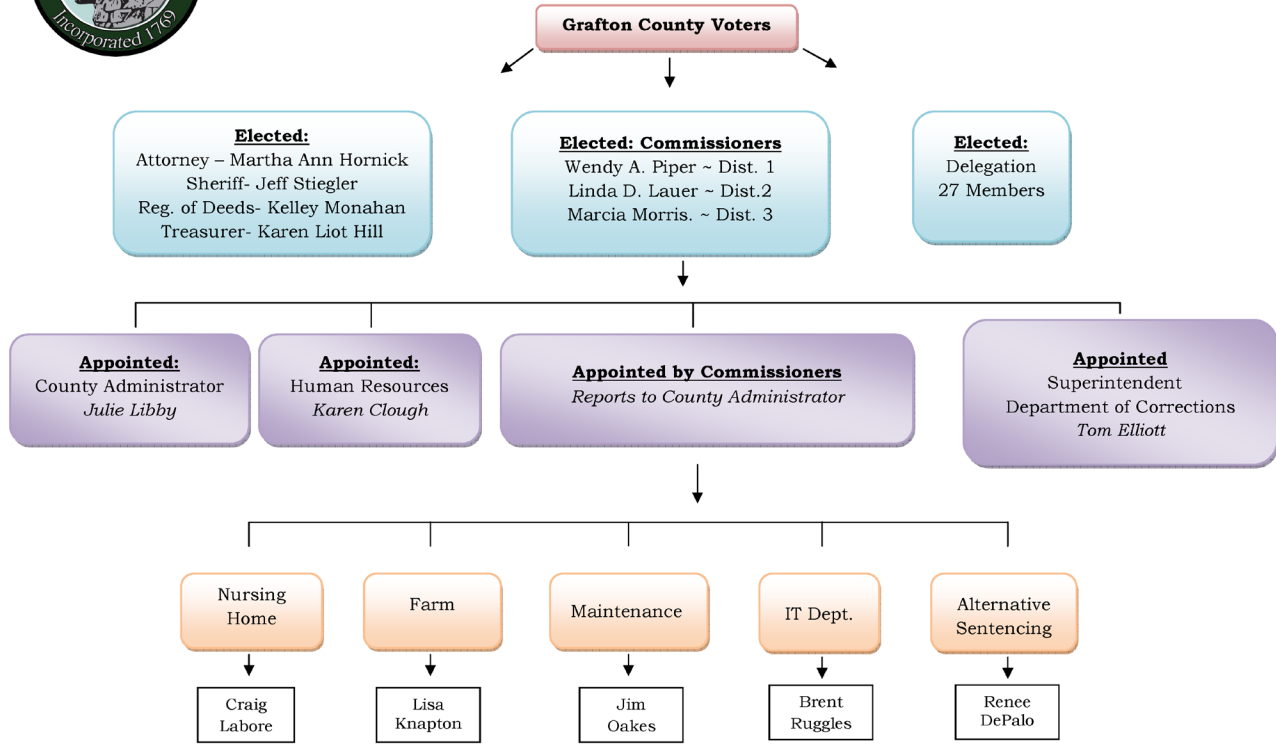




Grafton County Organizational Chart

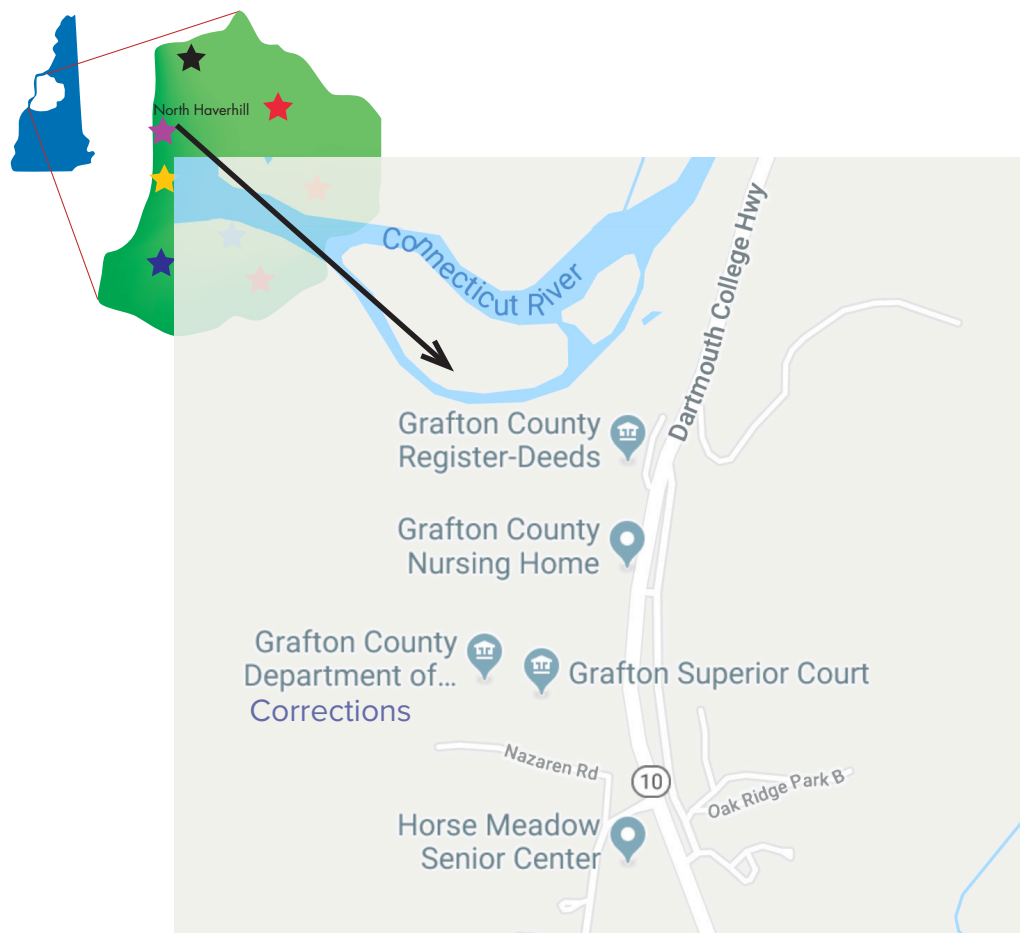


We engage, educate, and empower our electorate to vote,
and we provide support and resources to the political
candidates of our member towns.

Grafton County Government – Quick Facts

Venue:

The Grafton County government complex is located on 757.7 contiguous acres of land on the Dartmouth College Highway in North Haverhill, New Hampshire. County government buildings include the Grafton County Courthouse, the Grafton County Nursing Home, the Grafton County Administrative Building, the Grafton County Farm, the Grafton County Department of Corrections, and the Biomass Plant, which itself occupies 30 acres. There are 239 acres of field and cropland, 28 acres of natural area/floodplain, and 426 acres of commercial timberland. In addition, the land supports significant wildlife habitat, public recreation, environmental educational, and scenic values.



Question: What are the purposes and structure of our county government?

County governments perform services designed to meet local needs that are too expensive or too difficult for the towns themselves to provide.

The executive branch: The county government's executive branch consists of three elected county commissioners, who jointly serve as the county's chief executive, and four elected department heads—the county attorney, sheriff, register of deeds, and treasurer. County elections are held every two years during even-numbered years. Commissioners are elected from individual districts, while the other four officials are elected countywide.

The legislative branch: The county legislative delegation consists of all the state representatives from the county (twenty-seven in Grafton County). This delegation adopts an annual county budget, which raises revenues and appropriates funds for county departments and programs. The county legislative delegation elects a nine-member executive committee that meets with the commissioners regularly to review the county's financial reports.

County finances: The county commissioners (three separately elected individuals, each representing by population one-third of the county) propose a budget from the executive branch; the county delegation's executive committee (nine members from the full delegation) modifies the proposed budget as it see fit and presents it to the FULL county delegation (all twenty-seven state representatives from Grafton County). The full county delegation, as the legislative branch of county government, votes to modify or to approve the proposed budget. Policy decisions need the budget to support them, and those decisions are part of the budget process. For example, a subcommittee of the delegation's executive committee and the county commissioners met this spring to review how policy may affect the Human Services budget.

Grafton County has a budget of \$46,611,726 for fiscal year 2020 with \$27,086,914 to be raised by property taxes. The rest is raised through fees and federal grants. In addition to fees (which are very few), the county receives grants—especially in corrections, the sheriff's office, and the county attorney's office. The nursing home receives Medicare and Medicaid for its residents, and some services in alternative sentencing are also reimbursed by Medicaid dollars.

**Question: How is the tax rate determined?
How is funding apportioned to different functions?**

The county tax rate is a function of how much funds are required to support the county budget, subtracted by funds projected to be received through non-property tax generated revenues (e.g., fines collected by the sheriff's office, Medicare/Medicaid reimbursements to the nursing home, state/federal grants, etc.), then divided by each of the towns (and the one city) according to their equalized property assessments. The county tax rate is the average tax rate that would be required to raise the property tax revenue needed for the budget, but the county tax rate can vary by town based on their equalization ratio. New Hampshire communities are required by the State Constitution to complete townwide (or citywide) property assessment revaluations every five years to bring their equalization ratio to 100%, meaning that their property assessments reflect 100% of market value. However, communities do these revaluations on different schedules. If a community is at 100% equalization, their tax rate will be very close to the "county tax rate." However, for example, if they have not done a revaluation in a few years and sales have been strong, their equalization rate may be closer to 90%, and the county tax rate for that particular community will thus be higher than the county average.

How is funding apportioned to different functions?

Funding is apportioned to different functions according to the budget. Each year, the County Administrator works with department heads (e.g. corrections, nursing home, sheriff, registry of deeds, human resources, etc.) as well as outside agencies (e.g. human services, economic development, etc.) to prepare a budget, which is then reviewed by the three elected county commissioners. these commissioners perform an exhaustive review with each department to understand the budget requests and operational needs. the commissioners then vote to recommend a budget, which is then reviewed by the executive committee of the county's legislative delegation, who perform their own detailed review of the department budget requests. ultimately, the executive committee of the legislative county delegation recommends a budget to the full legislative county delegation, who hold a public hearing and vote to adopt the budget. it is then the county administrator's role and the department heads of the various departments to ensure that the funds are used according to the budget that has been adopted by the county legislative delegation.

The court system: Counties were originally organized to provide regional courts at convenient locations throughout the state so that people would not have to travel to the Portsmouth or Exeter for court business. Since 1984, the State of New Hampshire has funded a Unified Court System, but most counties maintain courthouses that they rent to the state. The Grafton County Courthouse, located on Dartmouth College Highway in North Haverhill, houses the Grafton County Superior and Circuit Courts.

Question: What separate functions do county jails and state prisons perform?

There are no "town jails" in New Hampshire. Every county has a county jail that holds people for no longer than one-year sentences. Essentially, New Hampshire has ten counties and ten county jails. The state has two primary men's prisons, one in Concord and one in Berlin, as well as a new women's state prison in Concord. County jails will sometimes swap people around from one county facility to another so they can accommodate whatever needs are in focus. A good example would be that Coos County has no female holding accommodations at its facility, so Coos contracts out to Grafton or Carroll County to detain sentenced female inmates in those locations. The New Hampshire State Prison system lodges people sentenced for felony level crimes that are beyond one year and will sometimes move prisoners to other states to accommodate whatever needs that have been identified.

Question: Who uses the nursing home?

There are two levels of care in most nursing homes: 1) rehab, which is paid for by Medicare, and 2) extended care, which is paid out of pocket by the individual or by New Hampshire Medicaid. Extended care is more custodial. Long term care (LTC) is very complicated. There is a moratorium on adding nursing home beds in New Hampshire because the counties pay the Medicaid bill, and they can't afford to pay for more beds. LTC is by far the biggest cost center in the Grafton County budget, and there are very strict criteria for Medicaid coverage for nursing home admissions. Medicaid LTC patients are not only housed in the county nursing home but in private nursing homes as well.

Presently there are about 135 residents at the Grafton County Nursing Home, but there are Medicaid patients in our private nursing homes too—for a possible total of about of 300 patients in Grafton County. The county budget subsidizes these programs and loses about \$40-50.00/day on each patient. Medicaid does not come close to covering the cost.



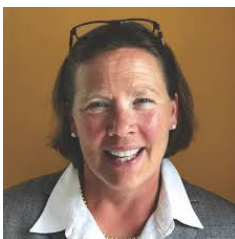
County Commissioner Wendy Piper served two terms representing Enfield in the NH House, serving on the Public Works and Highways Committee. Her priorities were public education and small businesses, and effective protection for families. She was the prime sponsor of HB 645, known as “Willa’s Law.” The new law helps protect children as it tightens state oversight of child care facilities. She has taught at Dartmouth College for 12 years and has had a long career in education.



County Treasurer Karen Liot Hill is serving her second term and serves as a city councilor in Lebanon, including a term as mayor. As Treasurer, Karen provides investment advice and recommendations to the commissioners and the County’s Legislative Delegation. She is a graduate of Dartmouth College and a co-owner/operator of the Lebanon Diner on the downtown Lebanon Mall.



County Sheriff Jeff Stiegler was elected in 2018. While a policeman/detective in Laconia, he was assigned to the NH Attorney’s General’s Drug Task Force and to the Support Services Division conducting and overseeing investigations of felony and serious misdemeanor crimes, during which time he also served as the assistant city prosecutor. Jeff is certified as a policeman in both Vermont and New Hampshire and lives in North Haverhill with his family.



County Attorney Marcie Hornick was elected a year ago. Previously, she worked for the New Hampshire Public Defender program. She is the representative on the Inter-Branch Criminal and Juvenile Justice Commission; she’s on the Child Advocacy Center Advisory board, the elected governor for Grafton County on the New Hampshire Bar Association Board of Governors, and on the Senate Commission to Address Childhood Hunger.



County Register of Deeds Kelley Monahan was elected to her fifth term a year ago. Kelley is responsible for protecting the historic documents of the past, providing quality service to the public in the present, and preparing for the technological innovations coming. The eight-year plan to make the technological transition has just been completed this year. The database consists of over 3,000,000 digitized images and over 24,000 subdivision plans. Kelley lives in Orford.