

Middle School Career Investigations

Levels of Government

Levels of Government

The graphic features a red header with the title "Levels of Government" in white. Below the header is a white instruction: "Click on each of the levels to learn more about the role that each level has in making and enforcing policy." At the bottom, there are three red buttons. The first button has a white outline of the United States and the word "Federal". The second button has a white outline of the state of Virginia and the word "State". The third button has a white icon of a city building and the word "Local".

In the United States, our government has local, state, and federal (or national) levels. Power to make decisions and impact the public are different at each level. For example, if you would like to work to protect the environment, you might want to work at the national level with the United States Environmental Protection Agency by helping create environmental policy based on laws set by Congress. If you want to protect Virginia's parks and wildlife at the state level, you would work with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. If you are mostly interested in the local environment, like local parks and waterways, you would work with your city or county's environmental agency. Click on each of the levels to learn more about the role that each level has in making and enforcing policy.

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Federal Level

The graphic features a red banner at the top with the title "Levels of Government" in white. Below the banner, a blue background with a white star pattern contains three overlapping boxes representing government levels: Federal (red), State (light blue), and Local (light pink). The Federal box is highlighted with a white outline and contains a white map of the United States and the word "Federal" in white. To the right of the boxes, a white text box contains the following text:

Deals with problems, issues, and laws that impact the entire country

More powerful than state or local laws

Focus is on all citizen, not on citizens of any one community

The federal level of government deals with problems, issues, and laws that impact the entire country. The laws set by the federal government are more powerful than laws set at the state or local level. The federal government does not focus on the citizens in any one community; instead, it tries to protect and help all Americans.

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State Level



The infographic features a blue background with a pattern of white stars and vertical stripes. On the left, there is a red square containing a white silhouette of a mountain range and the word "State" in white. To the right of this square is a white rectangular box with a light blue border containing text.

Deals with problems, issues, and laws that affect state citizens, people visiting the state, and anyone who wants to do business in the state

Cannot disagree with federal law, but over local law

Focus is on all communities in a state

The state government deals with problems, issues, and laws that affect state citizens, people visiting the state, and anyone who wants to do business in the state. The laws in a state cannot conflict with federal law, but do set the guidelines for local laws. The state government focuses on all communities in a state.

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Local Level



Local

Addresses local jurisdiction items like county road maintenance, library services, and sewers/water

Cannot disagree with federal or state laws

Focus is on one city, county, or town

A local government addresses local jurisdiction items like county road maintenance, library services, and sewer and water lines. Local laws only apply to local citizens and they cannot conflict with federal or state laws. Local governments focus on one city, county, or town.