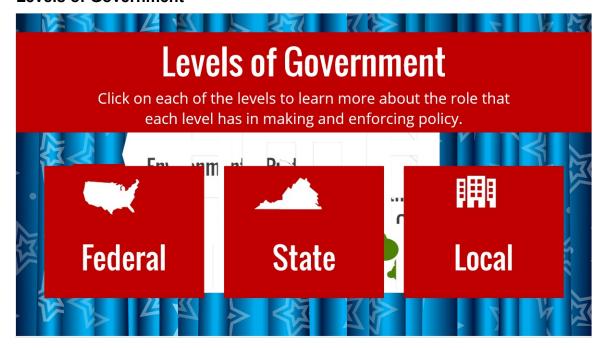
Levels of Government



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.





Federal Level



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.





State Level



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.





Local Level



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.



