

Jackson County Citizens Academy Overview 2021

Jackson County established a Citizens Academy in 2017. The Citizens Academy offers a unique opportunity for county residents to get an in-depth look at the functions of county government. The participants get a behind-the-scenes look into various departments within county government. The Citizens Academy provides interaction with department heads and elected officials allowing the participants to learn more about their roles throughout the county. The main goals are knowledge (learn how county government operates), involvement (let citizens know how they can be involved) and public relations (the chance to meet and make connections with county employees and other civic-minded residents).

The program is an 8 week course, beginning on Thursday, September 9, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. with a meal served promptly at 5:00 p.m. The first session will focus on services provided by the county, such as Administration/Governing Body, Register of Deeds, Finance, Human Resources and our County Attorney. Following sessions will include county entities: such as, Emergency Management, Public Works (Solid Waste/Recycling, Green Energy Park, etc.), Sheriff's Office, Health Department (Public/Environmental Health, Animal Shelter), Soil and Water Conservation, Social Services, Planning, Permitting and Code Enforcement and Parks and Recreation just to name a few. In 2018, an Education session covering Jackson County Public School System and Southwestern Community College were added to the academy. The program consists of interactive sessions facilitated by various local government officials. A program agenda will provide individual session information and specify where each session will take place. Sessions will be held at various county offices and Smoky Mountain High School. Sessions will be held once a week for 8 weeks with two sessions on (Tuesday, September 28th and Thursday the 30th) that last week of September. Each session will last 3 hours.

An application should be submitted to the County Manager's Office during the recruitment period. Applicants must be 18 years old, be a resident of Jackson County, and commit to attend all sessions. Applicants will be selected to create a diverse participant population and obtain a mix that will represent a cross-section by commissioner's districts. Space is limited to 25 participants. Applications will be accessible through the Jackson County website (www.jacksonnc.org). If you have questions, please contact Kerri Tucker at (828) 631-2207 or kerritucker@jacksonnc.org.

The benefits to the organization, participants and community are:

- Familiarize citizens with the function and purpose of Jackson County Government.
- Increase citizen's awareness of services offered by local government.
- Meet county government officials.
- Learn how citizens can take a more active role in local government.
- Better informed citizens through first-hand knowledge of the structure of County government.
- Gain knowledge and personal contacts to become more effective leaders in their communities by sharing new information with friends and neighbors.
- An understanding of opportunities to serve the county through advisory boards.
- Get to know the men and women who oversee the day-to-day operation of departments that provide services.

Changes regarding date, time, location and material covered will be made, if necessary.

Applications are being accepted at this time. The application deadline is Thursday, August 12, 2021. Those chosen to participate will be notified by Wednesday, August 18, 2021.

Jackson County Citizens Academy Timeline 2021

Applications Deadline – August 12th

Finalize Participants – August 17th, 2021 – Finalize with the Board

Notify Participants -- August 18th, 2021

Academy Date Schedule

Sessions Begin	Sessions End	Number of Weeks
Thursday, September 9th	Thursday, October 28th	8

The Jackson County Citizens Academy will be held for eight weeks beginning on Thursday, September 9, 2021 and will end on Thursday October 28, 2021. Each session will be held weekly on Thursday evenings from 5:30 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. The week of September 27th, there will be a class on Tuesday September 28th and September 30th. This will allow us to include a session on Education which will cover Jackson County Public Schools and Southwestern Community College. The sessions will be held at various county locations and an outline detailing locations will be shared at a later date. Each session will have a meal provided starting promptly at 5:00 p.m. Participants will be dismissed no later than 8:30 p.m., or earlier if presentations have been completed for that session.

Citizens Academy Sessions Summary

Session	Summary of Presentations
Week 1 (Septmeber 9th, 2021)	Welcome (What is a County?) Video Presentation
	Indroduction to County Government
	Elections, Administration, Finance, HR, County Attorne
Week 2 (September 16th, 2021)	Public Safety
	Sheriff's Office Administration
	Patrol and Detention
Week 3 (September 23rd, 2021)	Economic Development
	Tourism Development Authority
	Parks and Recreation
Week 4 (September 28th, 2021)	Register of Deeds
	Tax Administration and CoOP Extension
	Soil and Water
Week 4 (September 30th, 2021)	Education
	Southwestern Community College
	Jackson County Public Schools
Week 5 (October 7th, 2021)	Emergency Management, Communications
	Fire Marshal
	GIS
Week 6 (October 14th, 2021)	Human Services Department of Public Health
	Permitting and Code Enforcement
	Planning Department
Week 7 (October 21st, 2021)	Transit Office Complex
	Public Works - Soild Waste, Maintenance and Grounds
	Green Energy Park
Week 8 (October 28th, 2021)	Department of Social Services
	Veterans Services
	Department on Aging
Week 8 (October 28th, 2021)	GRADUATION!



Jackson County Citizens Academy Application

The Citizens Academy offers a unique opportunity for county residents to get an in-depth look at county government. Thank you for applying to Jackson County Citizens Academy. Applicants must be 18 years old and resident of Jackson County.

Please print legibly and complete the entire application. All applications are reviewed, you will be notified if selected to participate.

Position Desired: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jackson County Citizens Academy Applicant		Class Start Date:	
Full Legal Name: (Please Print):			
Street and Mailing Address:			
City:		State:	Zip Code:
Home Phone Number:		Cell Phone Number:	
Email Address:		Driver License State and Number:	Last 4 Digits of SSN:
Date of Birth:	Ethnicity: White Black Am. Indian Asian/Pacific Islander Other	Gender: Male Female	
Are you currently employed by Jackson County? Yes No If yes, in what department?			
What do you hope to gain from attending the Citizens Academy?			

Reference & Background Information

Please provide professional or personal references to include previous employers, volunteer supervisors, program instructors or other personal references.

Reference Name:	Phone:	Relationship to you:
Reference Name:	Phone:	Relationship to you:

Have you ever been convicted or pleaded guilty before a court for any federal, state, or municipal criminal offense? (Not including minor traffic misdemeanors)
 Yes No If yes, please provide details below: (include state, county, date of offense, and details of conviction):

Consent to Perform Background Check: In connection with my application and desire to engage in Citizens Academy, I have been advised and I hereby consent and authorize Jackson County and its agent, at any time during or subsequent to my application process to conduct a background check that may include a criminal record check and such additional verifications and reference checks as deemed necessary. I do hereby consent to Jackson County's use of any information provided during the Citizens Academy application process to perform related background check.

I agree to release, indemnify, and hold harmless Jackson County and any agency used by Jackson County with regard to any information provided by the agency. I have been informed that I will have a reasonable opportunity to clear up any mistaken information provided by the agency within a reasonable time frame established within the sole discretion of Jackson County.

Further, all applicants are required to inform the county within five (5) days after he or she is convicted for violation of any federal or state laws. Such convictions are to be reported to the County Manager.

Jackson County will accept background checks completed by other entities for Citizens Academy applicants if the entity is willing to release copy. If another entity is providing copy of completed background check, please provide the organization's name and contact person.

Organization Name: _____ Contact Person: _____ Phone: _____

Certification of Information Provided:

I hereby certify and attest that the information provided is true, correct, and complete. I understand that any falsification of information will disqualify me for the Jackson County Citizens Academy. **MEDIA/PHOTO RELEASE:** I do hereby consent to and authorize the use and reproduction, in print or electronic format, of photographs and digital images of me to be used for any purpose (web pages, social medial or promotional purposes) without compensation to me. All photographs and digital images are owned by County of Jackson. By signing below I am expressly releasing County of Jackson, its agents, employees, licensees, and assignees from any and all claims which I may have for invasion of privacy, right of publicity, defamation, copyright infringement, or any other cause of action arising out of the use, adaption, reproduction, distribution, broadcast, or exhibition of such photographs and digital images. I hereby acknowledge that I have read and understand the terms of this release.

Applicant Signature:	Date:
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If approved to attend the Citizens Academy, please provide us with an Emergency Contact:

Emergency Contact Name:	Emergency Contact Phone:
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Background Check Conducted: Yes No	Background Findings: Acceptable Unacceptable
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Reviewed By: (Staff Signature)	Date:
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Return completed form to:

Kerri Tucker, Jackson County Administration, 401 Grindstaff Cove Road, Suite A-207, Sylva, NC 28779 or kerritucker@jacksonnc.org