

# ABOUT COUNTY SERVICES



*Visit the County of Stokes' web site: [www.co.stokes.nc.us](http://www.co.stokes.nc.us)*

The County of Stokes is known for its stunning natural beauty, endless outdoor recreation, and rich history, but many people don't realize that our local government is comprised of over 20 different departments and divisions working to maintain the high expectations of the County's citizens and visitors. As such, it is often difficult to know who to contact for more information about the County of Stokes' available services.

This section was created to aid the reader in learning the duties and responsibilities of each department and division. We have also provided an email address for each department contact and a phone list at the end of this section for common requests and services.

## GENERAL GOVERNMENT

### **Governing Body ([ojessup@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:ojessup@co.stokes.nc.us))**

The Governing Body of the County consists of a five-member board. The Board of Commissioners provides overall policy guidance for all county operations. To affect this, the Board considers and adopts local ordinances and resolutions to provide for the health, safety, and overall quality of life for the citizens of Stokes. The Board determines the level of service the County will provide to its citizens. The governing body of the County makes appointments to various volunteer boards and commissions that act in an advisory and quasi-judicial role for the County. The Board also selects and contracts with the County Manager and County Attorney for services. All Board actions are made to advance the County's vision to be a "dynamic, thriving community that is rich in natural beauty and embraces the future while respecting its rural heritage and history."





### **Administration ([jsanborn@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:jsanborn@co.stokes.nc.us))**

The Administration Department provides top-level support to the County Commissioners and County Manager. The County Manager and the Assistant County Manager lead the County's senior staff. The department also serves as a support and liaison to the 20 plus other departments and divisions of the County to ensure that services are provided to County residents in an effective, responsive, and cost-efficient manner. The office of the County Manager is responsible for the overall operations of the County.

### **Finance ([tkeaton@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:tkeaton@co.stokes.nc.us))**

The Finance Director reports directly to the County Manager and serves as a member of the senior staff. The Finance Department oversees the fiscal operation of the County, which includes cash and investment management, debt management, financial reporting, and preparation of the annual budget and five-year financial forecast. The Finance Department's mission is to provide financial expertise and promote fiscal responsibility in a challenging and rewarding environment.

### **Human Resources ([jclark@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:jclark@co.stokes.nc.us))**

The Human Resources Director reports directly to the County Manager and is a member of the senior staff. The Human Resources Department provides the traditional human resources services for both management and staff but also extends that role to include the design and implementation of services and programs to enhance employee job satisfaction, retention, and a balanced family/work life. Employee training and reward and recognition of both employees and volunteers are also critical to the success of our organization.

### **Purchasing & Project Management ([gpruitt@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:gpruitt@co.stokes.nc.us))**

The Purchasing and Project Manager reports directly to the County Manager and is a member of the senior staff. The manager develops integrated procurement strategies, aligned with County department needs for goods, services, and technology. They ensure that all procurement activity is conducted in compliance with applicable State and Federal laws and regulations, local ordinances and approved policies and procedures. The manager also oversees and executes County projects ensuring that they abide by scheduled timelines, are within budget, and are aligned with the vision of management and the governing body.



### Tax Office ([rbrim@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:rbrim@co.stokes.nc.us))

The Stokes County Tax Administrator serves as both Tax Assessor and Tax Collector and is appointed by the Board of Commissioners. The Tax Office is composed of five divisions. *Tax Administration* coordinates all activities within the Tax Office and works with county management, county departments, the NC Department of Revenue, and reports to the County Commissioners monthly. The *Appraisal/Revaluation Division* oversees the valuation of approximately 31,600 parcels. This includes valuing all new construction, conducting an in-house county-wide revaluation every four years, and administering the Present Use Value Deferment Program. The *Assessment Division* is responsible for the valuation of all personal property, including business and individual listings. Staff oversee the Elderly/Disabled and Veteran's Exemption Programs and work with NC VTS in the valuation of motor vehicles. *Collections* is responsible for collecting all property taxes including all three municipalities, as well as EMS billing and collections. The fifth division, *GIS/Mapping*, maps all property conveyances, assigns E-911 addresses, and manages all land transfer records. Each division plays a vital role in the taxing process.



### Register of Deeds ([bhooker@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:bhooker@co.stokes.nc.us))

The Register of Deeds is elected to four-year terms by the citizens in Stokes County. The Register of Deeds Office serves as the primary record custodian for most legal documents and all vital records in the county. Its responsibilities include recording, preserving, indexing, providing access to, and safeguarding all documents recorded for permanent retention. The Register of Deeds is governed by NC General Statutes, which set strict policies and procedures for staff to follow in discharging their duties.

### Board of Elections ([jperry@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:jperry@co.stokes.nc.us))

The Elections Director reports directly to the Stokes County Board of Elections. The five-member County Board of Elections is, among other responsibilities, tasked with general oversight of the office and shares that responsibility with both Stokes County Administration and the NC State Board of Elections. Board of Elections staff manage the day-to-day operations of the office and conduct fair and efficient elections in the county, including special, municipal, county, state, and federal elections. Responsibilities include keeping all registration records up-to-date and accurate such as new registrations, party and address changes, transfers, as well as removing deceased and felons from records. The office maintains precinct lines and provides elected officials, candidates, and the public with reliable information as requested.



## INTERNAL SERVICE DEPARTMENTS

### **Vehicle Maintenance ([dttriplett@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:dttriplett@co.stokes.nc.us))**

The Vehicle Maintenance Department reports directly to the Assistant County Manager. Vehicle Maintenance is responsible for providing regular and preventative maintenance for all vehicles and equipment operated by the County. This department performs lube, oil, and filter changes, tire replacements and repairs, and engine and pump repairs. When introducing new vehicles into the fleet, Vehicle Maintenance personnel also install equipment and upfit vehicles with necessary accessories customized for the employees needs to better serve the public.

### **Public Buildings & Maintenance ([seaster@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:seaster@co.stokes.nc.us))**

The Public Buildings and Maintenance Division reports directly to the Public Works Director. It is responsible for providing regular and preventative maintenance for all buildings owned by the County and also for the grounds maintenance in Moratock Park and other facilities. This division oversees custodial operations to ensure clean facilities and coordinates repairs for all heating systems, electrical systems, and any other building systems as needed. The Public Buildings and Maintenance Division is also responsible for miscellaneous building maintenance, such as replacing light bulbs, routine cleaning of system filters, upkeep of parks and trails, and maintaining trees and shrubs.



### **Information Technology ([kfarmer@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:kfarmer@co.stokes.nc.us))**

The Chief Information Officer reports directly to the Assistant County Manager. The Information Technology Department provides hardware and software support to County employees and is responsible for the maintenance and security of the County's network infrastructure. The Information Technology Department is also responsible for the County's internet and intranet web sites.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

### **Sheriff's Office ([jmlemons@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:jmlemons@co.stokes.nc.us))**

The Sheriff is elected to four-year terms by the citizens in Stokes County and serves as the chief law enforcement officer of the county. It is the mission of the Stokes County Sheriff's Office to protect the county, its various communities, and citizens from injury, danger, or loss while enforcing North Carolina State laws and county ordinances. The Sheriff's Office is responsible for coordinating and leading efforts within the county to preserve the public peace, protect property and the rights of persons, prevent crime, and provide any reasonable assistance to citizens within the scope of their authority. Divisions within the Sheriff's Office include Patrol, Court Services, Detectives, School Resource Officers, and Administrative Support.



### **Jail ([lgoins@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:lgoins@co.stokes.nc.us))**

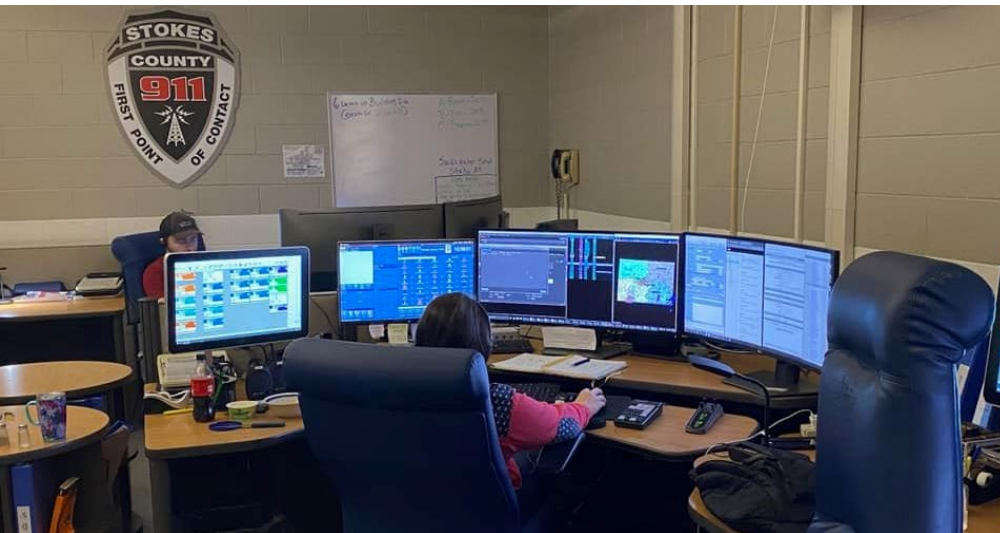
The Jail Administrator reports directly to the Sheriff and provides a divisional link and professional bridge to the Sheriff's Office. The Jail division provides for the confinement support of lawfully detained individuals who have been ordered detained, committed, or confined in the local county facility through statutory and/or judicial process. This division is duty bound to provide a safe and secure environment for the citizens of Stokes County as well as individuals confined within the Stokes County Jail.

### **Fire Marshal's Office ([saaron@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:saaron@co.stokes.nc.us))**

The Fire Marshal reports directly to the County Manager and is a member of the senior staff. The Fire Marshal's Office (FMO) conducts all fire and life safety inspections and is the liaison between the local fire departments and the County. In addition, the department conducts fire investigations, plan reviews, and provides public education to businesses, schools, and at other events. The FMO is a crucial part of the County's Emergency Management Division and provides support to Stokes County EMS and local fire departments with emergency and fire response services.

### **Emergency Communications - E911 ([jdurham@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:jdurham@co.stokes.nc.us))**

The Emergency Communications Director reports directly to the County Manager and is a member of the senior staff. The Stokes County Emergency Communications Center provides ongoing assistance and support to the public for the safety and protection of life and limb and property through 9-1-1 and radio communications. The 911 center receives approximately 76,100 calls a year and dispatches for the Stokes County Sheriff's Office, Stokes County EMS, Emergency Management, Animal Control, King Police Department, the Stokes County Fire Marshal's Office, all fire departments (both municipal and volunteer), NC Forestry Service, Probation, and Hanging Rock State Park. It is the mission of Emergency Communications to provide all the public, first responders, and City/County Departments with emergency and non-emergency services, committed to serve with empathy, honesty, and accuracy.



### **Emergency Services ([bgentry@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:bgentry@co.stokes.nc.us))**

The Emergency Services Director reports directly to the County Manager and is a member of the senior staff. The Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Division is responsible for providing emergency medical response throughout Stokes County and within all municipalities. EMS achieves this goal through specialty care and advanced life support ambulances that are supported by quick response vehicles, community paramedics, and response-ready administrative personnel. Emergency medical response is provided to both citizens and visitors of Stokes County 24 hours a day from four base locations: Danbury, Lawsonville, King, and Walnut Cove. Six fully-equipped, EMT/paramedic-staffed ambulances and three quick response vehicles are utilized to provide this service. The Emergency Management Division is responsible for preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters. This division aims to reduce the risks and impacts of natural or man-made disaster events to protect lives and livelihoods. Emergency Management ensures response and recovery readiness through prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

### **Animal Control ([treeves@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:treeves@co.stokes.nc.us))**

The Animal Control Director reports directly to the County Manager and is a member of the senior staff. The Animal Control Department is responsible for protecting citizens by active enforcement of state and local laws, providing for humane sheltering of stray and unwanted animals, and promoting responsible pet ownership through public education. Enforcement responsibilities include laws governing animal welfare, cruelty, neglect, and rabies. Animal Control, which includes the County-operated shelter, partners with multiple animal welfare groups, especially the locally ran Friends of Stokes Shelter (FOSS), to ensure good homes are found for as many animals as possible.



## ECONOMIC AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

### Planning and Inspections ([enance@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:enance@co.stokes.nc.us))

The Planning and Inspections Director reports directly to the County Manager and is a member of senior staff. The Planning division of the department aims to preserve and enhance the unique character of Stokes County while managing and guiding growth in ways that complement the quality of life. The Inspections division is responsible for ensuring that construction meets required standards according to State Law by enforcing building, electrical, plumbing, and heating and air inspections. The Planning and Inspections Department also includes code enforcement to ensure that all activities are in compliance with the Stokes County Zoning Ordinance and other regulations to promote a healthy and safe environment for the public.

### Economic Development ([tlmabe@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:tlmabe@co.stokes.nc.us))

The Economic Development Department reports directly to the County Manager and is responsible for managing the functions of economic development, marketing, and promotion. The purpose of investing in economic development is to build and maintain a prosperous county for businesses, residents, and visitors alike and to improve upon the high quality of life already enjoyed across the county. Supporting business retention, development, and infrastructure investment is critical to department efforts. The department also has a tourism arm which encourages visitation to our county by bringing awareness to area assets and encouraging visitors to support local businesses. This is accomplished through statewide advertising and online marketing efforts in close partnership with the Tourism Development Authority (TDA).



### Cooperative Extension ([malenhar@ncsu.edu](mailto:malenhar@ncsu.edu))

The County of Stokes partners with NC State University and NC A&T State University in support and funding of programs to enrich the lives, land, and economy of citizens. The Stokes Center of Cooperative Extension works with the County to support agriculture, horticulture, conservation and environmental protection, nutrition and health, as well as a variety of consumer, youth, and economic concerns. Cooperative Extension's mission is to extend research-based knowledge to all North Carolinians, helping transform science into everyday solutions to improve lives and grow the state.

## HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

### **Social Services ([selmes@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:selmes@co.stokes.nc.us))**

The DSS (Department of Social Services) Director reports directly to the DSS Board but is a key member of the senior County staff. DSS plays a vital role in supporting individuals and families in Stokes County by providing essential preventative and supportive services. The department is committed to protecting the most vulnerable citizens from abuse, neglect, and exploitation through those services: child welfare services, adult protective services, public assistance programs, employment and workforce support, housing and emergency assistance, and family and community services. Both federal and state agencies provide oversight and establish guidelines for the County DSS office to deliver services directly to residents.



### **Public Health ([tmartin@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:tmartin@co.stokes.nc.us))**

The Health Director reports directly to the Board of Health but is a key member of the senior County staff. The Health Department is governed by the Stokes County Board of Health which is composed of up to eleven members appointed by the Board of Commissioners. The department plays a crucial role in protecting and promoting public health through providing essential services such as monitoring community health, enforcing health regulations, and ensuring access to healthcare. Programs related to communicable disease control, environmental health, maternal and child health, family planning, and emergency preparedness are overseen by the Health Department.

### **Environmental Health ([bgjoyce@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:bgjoyce@co.stokes.nc.us))**

The Environmental Health Supervisor reports directly to the Health Director and leads the Environmental Health team that is dedicated to protecting the environment and promoting public health. The department is responsible for conducting all inspections for food service establishments, institutions, childcare, temporary food events, migrant housing, tattoo artists, public swimming pools, and summer camps. This includes plan review for new construction and/or renovations of food service establishments. Another major area of responsibility is the environmental protection – conducting soil and site evaluations, permitting of septic systems for new construction or for repair, inspections of septic system installation and water supply well construction, and water sampling.



**Veterans Services ([lhunsucker@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:lhunsucker@co.stokes.nc.us))**

The lead Veterans Service Officer (VSO) reports directly to the Assistant County Manager and is a member of the senior staff. The Veterans Services Office helps veterans and dependents obtain benefits and services to in hopes to improve quality of life. The veterans service officers advocate for Stokes County veterans and their families by assisting them in obtaining all federal Veterans Administration (VA) and state benefits to which they are legally entitled. Benefits and services that staff assist with include disability, dependent and survivor benefits, hospital and medical care, burial, education/training, vocational rehabilitation, home loans, and more.

**Senior Services ([yeast@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:yeast@co.stokes.nc.us))**

The Senior Services Director reports directly to the Assistant County Manager and is a member of the senior staff. The Senior Services Department provides services to and is a resource center for senior adults to access programs designed to maintain wellness, prolong independence, and improve quality of life. The department provides a wide array of services consisting of transportation, congregate and home delivered meals, fitness classes, health and wellness, and assistance with connecting to appropriate resources. The Walnut Cove Senior Center is an asset ran by the department and acts as a community hub to empower seniors and encourage participation in senior service activities and programs.

**District Resource Center ([ljones@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:ljones@co.stokes.nc.us))**

The District Resource Center (DRC) Director reports directly to the Assistant County Manager and is a member of the senior staff. The DRC is responsible for operating a local program for community-based corrections which provides a community-based sentencing alternative for the courts to use in managing certain offenders. Components of the program include a mix of punitive requirements and rehabilitative services that address areas like substance abuse, mental health, employment, education, domestic violence, and sex offender treatment. The DRC is also responsible for running the County's Pretrial Release Program. This program assists with incarcerated non-violent defendants who are not able to meet bond conditions for release prior to trial. Pretrial Release Services prevent local jail overcrowding by providing non-incarcerate, community-based monitoring of appropriate defendants while addressing rehabilitation needs.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

### **Soil and Water Conservation ([jpack@stokesswcd.net](mailto:jpack@stokesswcd.net))**

The Soil and Water Conservation Director works closely with county management, state and federal governments, and both public and private organizations in a non-regulatory capacity to carry out a comprehensive conservation program. The mission of the department is to improve the county's natural resources while assisting private landowners in using conservation practices. The Soil and Water Conservation District is governed by a five-member board of elected and appointed District Supervisors. The District administers and supports government programs which improve water quality and reduce non-point source pollution on agricultural lands.

### **Solid Waste ([seaster@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:seaster@co.stokes.nc.us))**

The Solid Waste Division falls under the Public Works Director who reports to the Assistant County Manager and is a member of the senior staff. The Solid Waste Division provides a safe a convenient way for citizens to dispose of their solid waste and the opportunity to participate in recycling. The division operates eight staffed Green Box sites throughout the county which accept household waste and recycling material.



## CULTURAL AND RECREATION

### **Arts Council ([stokesarts@gmail.com](mailto:stokesarts@gmail.com))**

The Arts Council successfully operates through two structures – the County and a non-profit. Staff salaries and benefits are provided by the County with all the programming and general operating revenue generated from the nonprofit organization. The Director of Arts and Cultural Services (County) and the Executive Director (nonprofit) positions are served by the same individual which allows for a unique structure that has helped the Arts Council succeed in redefining cultural arts. The Arts Council's mission is to support the cultural arts in Stokes County as it relates to performance, exhibit, education, preservation of traditions, outreach, economic development, agricultural heritage, tourism, recreation, community, and quality of life. Stokes Arts accomplishes this mission by operating The Arts Place of Stokes, a 7,000 square foot multi-purpose cultural venue that includes an art gallery, retail market, flexible performance and meeting space, coffee and ice cream shop, and instructional classrooms and studios.



