

# The Orange County Government Gazette

Serving Orange County Residents since 1752

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## Orange County Announces 2026 Government Academy

**Registration Deadline is Feb. 11**  
Orange County is excited to announce the launch of the 2026 Government Academy, a comprehensive program designed to educate residents about the inner workings of Orange County government. The program begins Wednesday, Feb. 25, and concludes with a graduation ceremony on Tuesday, April 21, at the Whitted Human Services Building in Hillsborough. The 2026 Government Academy offers an eight-session curriculum held mostly on Wednesday evenings from 6 to 8:30 p.m. Sessions include in-person tours of key county facilities. Participants must attend five classes to qualify for graduation. The course is open to all county residents aged 16 and older.

**Key Highlights of the 2026 Academy:**  
**Interactive Learning:** Faculty from the UNC School of Government will provide an overview of county government, while Orange County staff will present insights into their departments.

**Exclusive Tours:** Participants will explore facilities such as the 911 Call Center, Animal Services, and the new Drakeford Library Complex.

**Graduation Ceremony:** The cohort will graduate in person on April 21, followed by recognition at the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) meeting.

**Tentative Schedule Overview:**  
The academy covers a wide range of topics, including presentations from 19 county departments:

**Wednesday, Feb. 25** – the cohort will get to know each other, set goals for the course, and hear a County Government 101 presentation from the School of Government. Location: TBD

**Wednesday, March 4** – the cohort will meet at the Animal Services facility in Chapel Hill to get a behind-the-scenes tour and will also get a tour and presentation from the Solid Waste Department. Location: 1601 Eubanks Road, Chapel Hill

**Wednesday, March 11** – the cohort will meet with Dept. on Aging staff and get a tour of one of their facilities. They will also hear presentations from Child Support Services and the Tax Department. Location: Seymour Center, 2551 Homestead Road, Chapel Hill

**Wednesday, March 18** – the cohort will get a tour of the Drakeford Library Complex in Carrboro by Orange County Public Library staff. They will also hear presentations by the Economic Development Department and the Housing Department. Location: 203 S. Greensboro St., Carrboro

**Wednesday, March 25** – the cohort will hear from the Sustainability Program, the Criminal Justice Resource Department, the Department of Environment, Parks, and Recreation, and the Planning and Inspections Department. Location: TBD

**Wednesday, April 1** – TBD

**\*Thursday, April 9** – the cohort will get a behind-the-scenes tour of the 911 call center and hear presentations from the Emergency Services Department, as well as the Office of Civil Rights and Civic Life and the Health Department. Location: 510 Meadowlands. Road, Hillsborough

**\*Tuesday, April 21**, the cohort will be joined by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) Chair Jean Hamilton for a graduation ceremony. They will hear a presentation from the clerk to the Board about volunteer opportunities for Boards and Commissions. At 7 p.m., the cohort will be recognized at the beginning of the BOCC meeting and will have a group photo with the Board. Location: Whitted Human Services Building, 301 Tryon St., Hillsborough

**About Orange County Government Academy**  
The Government Academy is a dynamic program that fosters community engagement and understanding of county government operations. Participants gain firsthand insights into county departments, engage with county staff, and explore how they can contribute to their community's growth and well-being.

**Apply Today**  
Applications are open until Feb. 11, 2026. To join the 2026 cohort, fill out the application at this link.

Learn more about the County Government Academy: <https://orangecountync.gov/countygovernmentacademy>  
For questions, contact Wil Glenn at 919-245-2302 or [wglenn@orangecountync.gov](mailto:wglenn@orangecountync.gov).

## Orange County Lands Legacy Program Ends 2025 with a Bang!

Orange County closed out 2025 with major conservation successes, completing two significant land protection projects in December that underscore the county's ongoing commitment to preserving natural and working lands.

On Dec. 11, staff closed on the purchase of just under 20 acres of a high-priority natural area, which will serve as a future nature preserve and an expansion of the Seven Mile Creek Natural Area with a trailhead for the Mountains to Sea Trail. The acquisition of this land was done in partnership with the Eno River Association and the North Carolina Land and Water Fund.

The property features more than 1,600 linear feet of Rocky Run, a tributary to the Eno River, and is recognized as part of the State Inventory of Natural Heritage Areas. This project highlights the critical role that strong partnerships with local nonprofit land conservancies play in advancing Orange County's conservation goals.

Just 10 days later, staff closed on a 28-acre working lands conservation easement on property owned by RambleRill Properties LLC. For more than a decade, the land has supported a mix of organic farming, environmental education, and a community farmers market. The conservation



easement will ensure the property remains in agricultural use while permanently protecting its valuable natural resources.

The farm contains over 1,700 linear feet of streams, with a tributary and a section of New Hope Creek, part of the Jordan Lake Watershed.

Together, these projects bring Orange County's total park and nature preserve lands to 1,133 acres, with an additional 3,068 acres protected through county conservation easements—marking a strong and impactful conclusion to the year for the Lands Legacy Program.

## EARLY VOTING SCHEDULE

March 3, 2026 Statewide Primary and Orange County Schools Board of Education Election

LOCATIONS	PHOTO ID REQUIRED TO VOTE	DAYS	DATES	TIMES
Orange Works at Hillsborough Commons (in lieu of BOE office) 113 Mayo St, Hillsborough	Many forms of government-issued IDs are acceptable. For more information, please visit <a href="http://orangecountync.gov/PhotoID">orangecountync.gov/PhotoID</a>	Thursday-Friday	February 12-13	8am - 7:30pm
Drakeford Library Complex 203 S Greensboro St Carrboro		Saturday	February 14	8am - 3pm
Chapel Hill Library 100 Library Dr Chapel Hill	Don't have a photo ID to vote? Get a FREE photo ID for voting purposes from the Orange County Board of Elections office Mon-Fri, 8am - 5pm 208 S Cameron St, Hillsborough, NC	Sunday	February 15	CLOSED
Chapel of the Cross 304 E Franklin St Chapel Hill		Monday-Friday	February 16-20	8am - 7:30pm
Seymour Senior Center 2551 Homestead Rd Chapel Hill		Saturday	February 21	CLOSED
Eland-Cheeks Community Ctr 117 Richmond Rd, Eland		Sunday	February 22	12-4pm
		Monday-Friday	February 23-27	8am - 7:30pm
		Saturday	February 28	8am - 3pm

For more information, go to [orangecountync.gov/Elect](http://orangecountync.gov/Elect) or call 919-245-2350



## Orange County Senior Games & SilverArts

*Aging Well; Living Well... Keeping Active!*

### Register Now!

Online Registration at [www.ncseniorgames.org/Orange](http://www.ncseniorgames.org/Orange)

For more information, contact:  
Latonya Brown, 919-245-4270 or [lbrown@orangecountync.gov](mailto:lbrown@orangecountync.gov)

Orange County Senior Games is much more than a friendly competition in athletics and arts. Participate, stay active, renew old skills, learn new ones and exercise a positive outlook on life. You can choose from numerous athletic events or Silver Arts.

**Early Bird Fee:** \$20.00 by Friday, March 20 and \$25.00 if received by the final deadline, Friday, March 27, 2026. (SilverArts registration deadlines are the same as for Athletic events.)

**Cost includes:** Registration Fees (Sporting Events & SilverArts), participant gift, medals, SilverArts performance and reception and closing celebration event.

[www.orangecountync.gov/SeniorGames](http://www.orangecountync.gov/SeniorGames)



## 2026 Listing Period Has Been Extended to February 13.

By law, all personal property must be listed, and changes to real property, such as additions to an existing structure, **must be reported on your listing form by January 31, 2026.**

**The Board of County Commissioners have extended the listing deadline this year to February 13, 2026.**

For help: 919-245-2100, option 2 or [tax@orangecountync.gov](mailto:tax@orangecountync.gov)



ORANGE COUNTY NORTH CAROLINA [orangecountync.gov/Tax](http://orangecountync.gov/Tax)

## Join our Citizens' Academy!

Wednesdays, March 18-May 13  
6-9 pm

This free, nine week academy is a fun and engaging program with both classroom sessions and hands-on activities, such as:

- Process a mock crime scene
- Participate with impaired driving simulation
- Tour the detention center
- Explore the technologies used in law enforcement



Learn more and apply at this link:  
[www.ocsonc.com/citizens-academy](http://www.ocsonc.com/citizens-academy)  
Application Deadline is February 27.

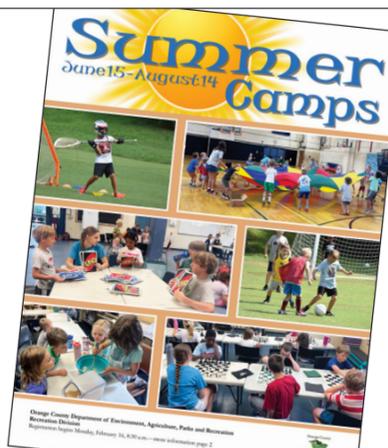
## Camp Guide Now Available!

Registration Begins Monday, Feb. 16, 8:30 a.m.

Browse the guide for 9 weeks of playing, learning, and fun for ages 3-14 years old.

Full details on camp dates, times, descriptions, fees, and more inside!

[orangecountync.gov/SummerCamps](http://orangecountync.gov/SummerCamps)



## Diabetes

*Know It, Prevent It, Manage It*

Join us for a **FREE** information session at the Main Library in Hillsborough.

**Tuesday, March 24, 10 am**

For more information, call Nutrition Counseling and Diabetes Management Services, 919-245-2380



## INNOVATE TO ELEVATE: Community Resources for Farm Profit

Monday, Feb. 16, 2026  
8:00am-2:00pm

*Incllement weather date: Feb. 23, 2026*

To Register: [orangecountync.gov/AgSummit](http://orangecountync.gov/AgSummit)

**VENUE CHANGE**  
Whitted Human Services Center  
300 W Tryon St, Hillsborough, NC



## WE ARE HIRING!

To learn more about job opportunities available in Orange County Government, please visit [www.orangecountync.gov/Careers](http://www.orangecountync.gov/Careers) or contact the Human Resources Recruitment Manager at (919) 245-2557