

Municipal Incorporations & Dissolutions

Prior to establishment of municipal Home Rule in 1973, Florida cities were incorporated in a variety of ways. From the territorial days of 1822 through Statehood in 1845 and into the modern era, all of those methods involved some type of state act in the Legislature. Chapter 165, Florida Statutes, was revised after the ratification of Home Rule and new cities incorporating since that time have done so under the revised law. Please note, the process is completely different for new municipalities in Miami-Dade County; these are not done through Chapter 165, Florida Statutes.

Chapter 165 outlines a Feasibility Study that is required for any incorporation to be considered as a special act of the Legislature. This study contains fiscal estimates, intergovernmental relationships, a draft charter, estimates of service delivery and other elements to ensure that the community has fully explored its options and completed its due diligence. Most communities that undertake this study use university students and/or consultants to complete the work. This study is first reviewed by the community's House and Senate members (the local delegation), and if approval is received, the study and special act are filed with the Florida House and Senate. If the special act is heard and acted upon by both bodies, the usual course since the 1970s has been for the special act to establish a date for the community's referendum vote. If it passes, the municipality has an effective date to begin its governing. If it fails, the community may choose to try again or not. A model feasibility study was approved by the Legislature (it is the Palm Coast study) and both electronic and print copies are available through the League.

Just as a city, town or village can be formed, it can also be dissolved. Since Home Rule was ratified by the Florida Legislature in 1973 in the Home Rule Powers Act, these actions are done by special act of the Legislature, or by referendum vote of the citizens in the process outlined in Chapter 165, Florida Statutes.

Since the ratification of Home Rule, the following municipalities have been incorporated or dissolved.

Incorporations

- Lake Mary, Seminole County, 1973
- Sanibel, Lee County, 1974
- Noma, Holmes County, 1977
- Destin, Okaloosa County, 1984
- Jacob City, Jackson County, 1985
- Midway, Gadsden County, 1986
- Key Biscayne, Miami-Dade County, 1991
- DeBary, Volusia County, 1993
- Fort Myers Beach, Lee County, 1995
- Deltona, Volusia County, 1995
- Wellington, Palm Beach County, 1995
- Aventura, Miami-Dade County, 1996
- Pinecrest, Miami-Dade County, 1996
- Weston, Broward County, 1996
- Sunny Isles Beach, Miami-Dade County, 1997
- Marco Island, Collier County, 1997

- Islamorada, Monroe County, 1997
- Bonita Springs, Lee County, 1999
- Marathon, Monroe County, 1999
- Palm Coast, Flagler County, 1999
- Southwest Ranches, Broward County, 2000
- Miami Lakes, Miami-Dade County, 2000
- Miami Gardens, Miami-Dade County, 2004
- West Park, Broward County, 2004
- Doral, Miami-Dade County, 2005
- Palmetto Bay, Miami-Dade County, 2005
- Cutler Bay, Miami-Dade County, 2006
- Loxahatchee Groves, Palm Beach County, 2006
- Grant-Valkaria, Brevard County, 2006
- Estero, Lee County, 2014
- Westlake, Palm Beach County, 2016

Dissolutions

- Bayview, Bay County, 1977
- Munson Island, Monroe County, 1977
- Painters Hill, Flagler County, 1981
- North Key Largo Beach, Monroe County, 1982 or 1983
- Hacienda Village, Broward County, 1984: transferred assets and obligations to Town of Davie by special act
- Pennsuco, Dade County, 1986
- Ward Ridge, Gulf County, 1987: former city limits annexed by Port St. Joe
- Golfview, Palm Beach County, 1998: special act; area was sold to airport for new runway
- Cedar Grove, Bay County, 2008: by vote of citizens
- Islandia, Miami-Dade County, 2012: by County Commission because there were not any registered voters living on the island; population had dwindled to less than five; no election had been held since 1990 (inactive during the ensuing years)