



Antigua and Barbuda



Key Facts

POPULATION (2011 Census)¹: 84,316
AREA²: 442 sq km
CAPITAL: St John's
CURRENCY: East Caribbean dollar (XCD)
HEAD OF STATE: HM Queen Elizabeth II
GOVERNOR-GENERAL: Sir Rodney Williams
HEAD OF GOVERNMENT: Prime Minister Gaston Browne
FORM OF GOVERNMENT: constitutional monarchy
PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM: bicameral
STATE STRUCTURE: unitary
LANGUAGES: English (official), Antiguan Creole (recognised)
NATIONAL ELECTIONS: last: June 2015 **turnout:** 90% **next:** 2019
LOCAL ELECTIONS: Barbuda last: March 2015 **turnout:** 82% **next:** 2017
WOMEN COUNCILLORS: 0% (2015)
LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE as a percentage of total government expenditure 2013/14: na

SUMMARY

Antigua and Barbuda is a bicameral parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy with two levels of government, central and local. Local government consists of a single local authority, the Barbuda Council, which governs the affairs of the Barbuda dependency. There is no constitutional provision for local government across Antigua; however the Barbuda Council is enshrined in the constitution. The ministry of Social Transformation & Human Resource Development in Antigua is responsible for oversight of the local government department. The Barbuda Council reports to the Ministry of Barbuda Affairs and is empowered to make by-laws, collect taxes, deliver goods and services as well as to administer and regulate agriculture, forestry, public health, public utilities and roads for the island.

1. CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Antigua and Barbuda is a federal constitutional monarchy with bicameral parliamentary democracy. The head of government is the prime minister, who advises the governor-general on the appointment of ministers. Parliament comprises the House of Representatives and the Senate. The 17 members of the House of Representatives are elected by universal suffrage for a term of up to five years. The 17 members of the Senate are appointed by the governor-general as follows: 11 on the advice of the prime minister, one of whom must be a resident of Barbuda; four on the advice of the leader of the opposition; one on the advice of the Barbuda Council; and one at the discretion of the governor-general.

Table 1. Distribution of councils and population (2011 Census)

Parish/dependency	Number of districts	Population (2011 Census)	% rural
St John's (city)	95	21,643	0.0
St John's (rural)	74	29,486	100.0
St George	22	7,976	100.0
St Peter	17	5,317	100.0
St Phillip	19	3,322	100.0
St Paul	28	8,116	100.0
St Mary	20	7,331	100.0
Barbuda	5	1,645	100.0
Total	280	84,316	74.3

Source: Government of Antigua and Barbuda, 2011 Census¹ page 181

2. LEGAL BASIS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

2.1 Constitutional provisions

There is no constitutional provision^{3a} for local government; however the Barbuda Council (see below) is enshrined in the constitution in Cap. 123.

2.2 Main legislative texts

There is presently no local government legislation on Antigua; however, the Barbuda Council is enshrined in the constitution by the Barbuda Local Government Act 1976, Cap. 44^{3b}.

2.3 Proposed legislative changes

No current legislative changes proposed.

3. STRUCTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

3.1 Local government within the state

There are no district or parish councils in Antigua. On Barbuda there is one local government body, the Barbuda Council.

3.2 Ministerial oversight

On the island of Antigua the Ministry of Social Transformation & Human Resource Development has oversight of the local government department. The ministry is providing technical support to the department in the form of a consultant dedicated to conducting a review of the existing local government system and making recommendations for its future development. The department has its own budget which mainly covers administrative costs, while community development projects are funded through alliances with the private sector and NGOs.

3.3 Council types

The Barbuda Council was established in 1976 by the Barbuda Local Government Act and is an 11-member body consisting of nine directly elected and two ex-officio members (Barbuda's House and Senate representatives) who serve four-year terms. Elections are held every two years in March with four seats and five seats becoming vacant at alternate polls. The council is empowered to make by-laws to govern the affairs of the island.



4. ELECTIONS

4.1 Recent local elections

The last local elections were held for the Barbuda Council in March 2015 with a 82% turnout. The next election is scheduled in 2017.

4.2 Voting system

Elections are undertaken by single non-transferable vote and universal suffrage of the citizens of Barbuda.

4.3 Elected representatives

The elected councillors represent the Antigua & Barbuda Labour Party (ABLP).

4.4 Women's representation

In the latest election no woman was elected as a councillor.

5. SYSTEMS FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

5.1 Legal requirement

No information available.

5.2 Implementation

No information available.

5.3 E-government

There is currently no e-government strategy.

6. ORGANISED LOCAL GOVERNMENT

There are no local government associations.

7. INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

The local government department in Antigua operates as a regular government department and not a local government structure, since there is no legislation to support this. The Barbuda Council reports directly to the Office of the Prime Minister.

8. MONITORING SYSTEMS

In Barbuda, the council prepares annual estimates of revenue and expenditure which are submitted to the Minister of Finance for the approval of parliament. The Antigua local government department is monitored by the Ministry's permanent secretary and, like all ministry departments, the audit department.

9. FINANCE, STAFFING AND RESOURCES

9.1 Locally raised revenue

The local government department in Antigua has no authority to levy taxes. The Barbuda Council is empowered by the Barbuda Local Government Act 1978, Cap. 44, section 19, sub-section xviii to collect taxes to deliver goods and services. The council proposes by-laws to implement all new taxes, which are tabled in parliament for approval.

9.2 Transfers

The Barbuda Council receives an annual grant to supplement its locally raised revenue and any deficit is covered by a transfer of funds from central government.

9.3 Local authority staff

The central government of Antigua and Barbuda covers all administrative costs and salaries for the Antigua local government department, which in 2015/16 came to XCD\$525,497. The Barbuda Council pays its secretary and all public officers from local tax revenue.

10. DISTRIBUTION OF SERVICE DELIVERY RESPONSIBILITY

District officers of the local government department in Antigua are assigned responsibilities for constituencies and are required to identify instances of need in each area and report to the relevant authorities for action. The local government department is also responsible for working with community groups to establish street names and signage and will be promoting cooperatives as a means of bringing people together to empower themselves economically.

The Barbuda Council is empowered under the Barbuda Local Government Act to administer agriculture, forestry, public health, medical and sanitary facilities and services as well as administer and regulate the provision of electricity and water services and other public utilities for the island.

References and useful websites

1. Antigua and Barbuda Census 2011
http://ab.gov.ag/pdf/2011_population_and_housing_census.pdf
2. UN statistics surface area
<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/dyb2006/Table03.pdf>
- 3a. Constitution of Antigua and Barbuda
<http://pdba.georgetown.edu/constitutions/antigua/antigua-barbuda.html>
- b. The Barbuda Local Government Act 1976
<http://laws.gov.ag/acts/chapters/cap-44.pdf>
4. Government of Antigua and Barbuda website
www.ab.gov.ag
5. Antigua and Barbuda Election Commission (under construction) www.abec.gov.ag
6. UNDP HDR Antigua & Barbuda country profile
<http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/ATG>



Annex A. Summary of service provision by different spheres of government in Antigua and Barbuda

Services	Delivering authority		Remarks
	Central Government	Barbuda Council	
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION			
Police	■		
Fire protection	■		
Civil protection	■		
Criminal justice	■		
Civil status register	■		
Statistical office	■		
Electoral register	■		
EDUCATION			
Pre-school (kindergarten & nursery)	■		
Primary	■		
Secondary	■		
Vocational & technical	■		
Higher education	■		
Adult education	■		
SOCIAL WELFARE			
Family welfare services	■		
Welfare homes	■		
Social security	■		
PUBLIC HEALTH			
Primary care	■	■	Barbuda Council has sole responsible on the island, Central Government have sole responsibility for Antigua
Hospitals	■		
Health protection	■	■	
HOUSING & TOWN PLANNING			
Housing	■		
Town planning	■		
Regional planning	■		
TRANSPORT			
Roads	■	■	Barbuda Council has sole responsible on the island, Central Government have sole responsibility for Antigua
Transport	■		
Urban roads	■	■	
Urban rail	■		
Ports	■		
Airports	■		
ENVIRONMENT & PUBLIC SANITATION			
Water & sanitation	■	■	Barbuda Council has sole responsible on the island, Central Government have sole responsibility for Antigua
Refuse collection & disposal	■		
Cemeteries & crematoria	■		
Slaughterhouses	■		
Environmental protection	■		
Consumer protection	■		
CULTURE, LEISURE & SPORTS			
Theatre & concerts	■		
Museums & libraries	■		
Parks & open spaces	■		
Sports & leisure	■		
Religious facilities	■		
UTILITIES			
Gas services	■		Barbuda Council has sole responsible on the island, Central Government have sole responsibility for Antigua
District heating	■		
Water supply	■		
Electricity	■	■	
ECONOMIC			
Agriculture, forests & fisheries	■	■	Barbuda Council has sole responsible on the island, Central Government have sole responsibility for Antigua
Local economic development/promotion	■		
Trade & industry	■		
Tourism	■		

KEY

- Sole responsibility service
- Joint responsibility service
- Discretionary service