

Florida Capitol Visitors Guide



Table of Contents

Welcome	1
History of the Capitol	2
About the Construction	3
The Capitol Complex.....	4
Design Notes.....	5
About the Capitol Building	
The Plaza Level	6
The Heritage Chapel	7
Weissenborn Plaque.....	7
Art.....	8
The Observation Deck	9
The Capitol Welcome Center.....	10
Self-Guided Tours	10
Tour Requirements	10
Touring the Historic Capitol	11
Capitol Gift Shops	11
Flown Flags Over the Capitol.....	11
Decorum.....	12
About the Chambers	13
Touring During Legislative Session.....	14
Viewing During Legislative Session.....	14
Cabinet Meeting Room.....	14
Governor Requirements	14
Cabinet Requirements.....	14
The Florida Channel.....	14
Capitol Event Calendar	14
Capitol Information	15
Times of Operation.....	15
State Holidays Closed	15
Scheduling Events at the Capitol	15
Access and Accessibility	15
Restrooms and Water Fountains	15
ADA Access to the Legislature	15
Requirements for Entry	16
Food Service	16
Security.....	16
Capitol Complex Map	17
Parking	17
Visitor Parking	17
Capitol Loading Zone.....	17
Downtown Map	18
Frequently Asked Questions.....	19-20

Welcome

Thank you for planning a visit to Florida's Capitol, the center of Florida's government. This is where many decisions are made about how to make Florida a thriving and successful place for Florida's families and businesses.

The Capitol Complex and museums in the downtown Tallahassee area offer a wealth of history and insight into Florida's government and history.

Guided and self-guided tours are available, but whichever you choose, make sure you allow plenty of time for your visit. Please take a moment to review decorum guidelines that visitors should follow during tours.

This Florida Capitol Visitors Guide provides information that will help you get the most out of your visit. The Capitol has a diverse legacy that is inspiring and often amusing, and we hope you enjoy exploring and learning about Florida's government.





Chief Justice Rivers Buford administers the oath of office to Governor David Sholtz on the Capitol steps in 1933
Image courtesy of Museum of Florida History

History of the Capitol

Florida's Capitol building has a rich ancestry, which began in 1824 with the establishment of Tallahassee as the capital city. As Florida's population has continued to grow, so has its need for government services. The Capitol symbolizes the growth and development of Florida. The Capitol Complex, located in downtown Tallahassee, is the headquarters for state government. The Capitol is a 22-story building and is home to Florida's executive and legislative branches. Other buildings at the Capitol Complex include the two five-story office buildings for the House of Representatives and Senate as well as the Historic Capitol and the Knott Building.

On inauguration day, Florida's first families have a variety of official and social duties. Since 1873, the date set for the inauguration of Florida's Governors has been the first Tuesday after the first Monday in January, following the November general election. On this special occasion, Governors and their families participate in swearing-in ceremonies, parades and a variety of gala celebrations in Tallahassee.

The Capitol Complex is open to the public Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and is closed on weekends and holidays. The Historic Capitol Museum is open Monday - Friday (10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), Saturday (10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) and Sunday and Holidays (12 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.).

About the Construction

The current Capitol is the fourth building to serve as Florida's Capitol building. The first Capitol was a log cabin built in 1824 with the establishment of Tallahassee as the state's territorial capital.

In 1826, a two-story frame structure replaced the first Capitol. The construction of the third Capitol started in 1839 and was completed by 1845. This Capitol was expanded four times. There has been debate about relocating the Capitol to another area of the state. In 1900, relocation was placed on the ballot, but it was voted down.

In 1969, the Governor and the Cabinet approved the plans for a new Capitol when it was determined the previous Capitol could no longer accommodate state government and legislators. Debate on relocation resurfaced in the early 1970's. Relocation never made it to the ballot, but it was passionately debated nonetheless.

The architects and engineers for the current Capitol were Edward Durell Stone of New York and the firm of Reynolds, Smith and Hills of Jacksonville. Instead of the traditional brick and column, a design reflective of modern Florida was chosen. The current Capitol Complex reflects the New Classicism style.

Capitol Architects

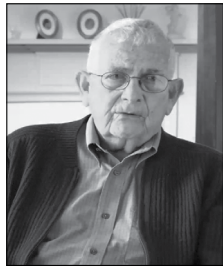
Photo
not
Available



Frank Pierce
Milburn (Dome),
1900



Henry J. Klutho
(Additions), 1923,
1936 and 1947



Herschel E.
Shepard (1902
Restoration), 1982



Edward Durell
Stone (Capitol),
1973



The State Capitol, 1824
Image courtesy of the Florida Archives



The State Capitol, 1830
Image courtesy of the Florida Archives



The State Capitol, 1845
Image courtesy of the Florida Archives

The Capitol Complex

Florida's new Capitol building began in 1824 with the establishment of Tallahassee as the new capital city. The Capitol Complex consists of the Capitol, the 22-story building, which is home to Florida's executive and legislative branches. Other buildings include the Historic Capitol Museum and Knott Building, as well as two five-story office buildings for the House of Representatives and Senate.

The Capitol Center is located at the intersection of Apalachee Parkway and Monroe Street and is open to the public from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

It is closed on weekends and holidays.

In 1970, the first phase of the new Capitol started with site preparation of the House and Senate's five-story office buildings. These buildings were designed to provide legislative committee rooms and member offices. Excavated in November 1973, the three lower level floors of the Capitol are below street level. It took three years and 10 months for the 718,080 sq. ft. Capitol to be declared complete in August 1977.

The Knott Building is named for Comptroller and Treasurer William V. Knott. Originally built by the city of Tallahassee in 1940, the State of Florida purchased the building in 1951. In 1999, a skywalk was added to connect the Knott Building to the Capitol.



Stained glass serves as an oculus in the Senate dome.



Florida Fallen Firefighter Memorial, located in the Capitol Complex Courtyard, is one of the statutes located on the grounds.

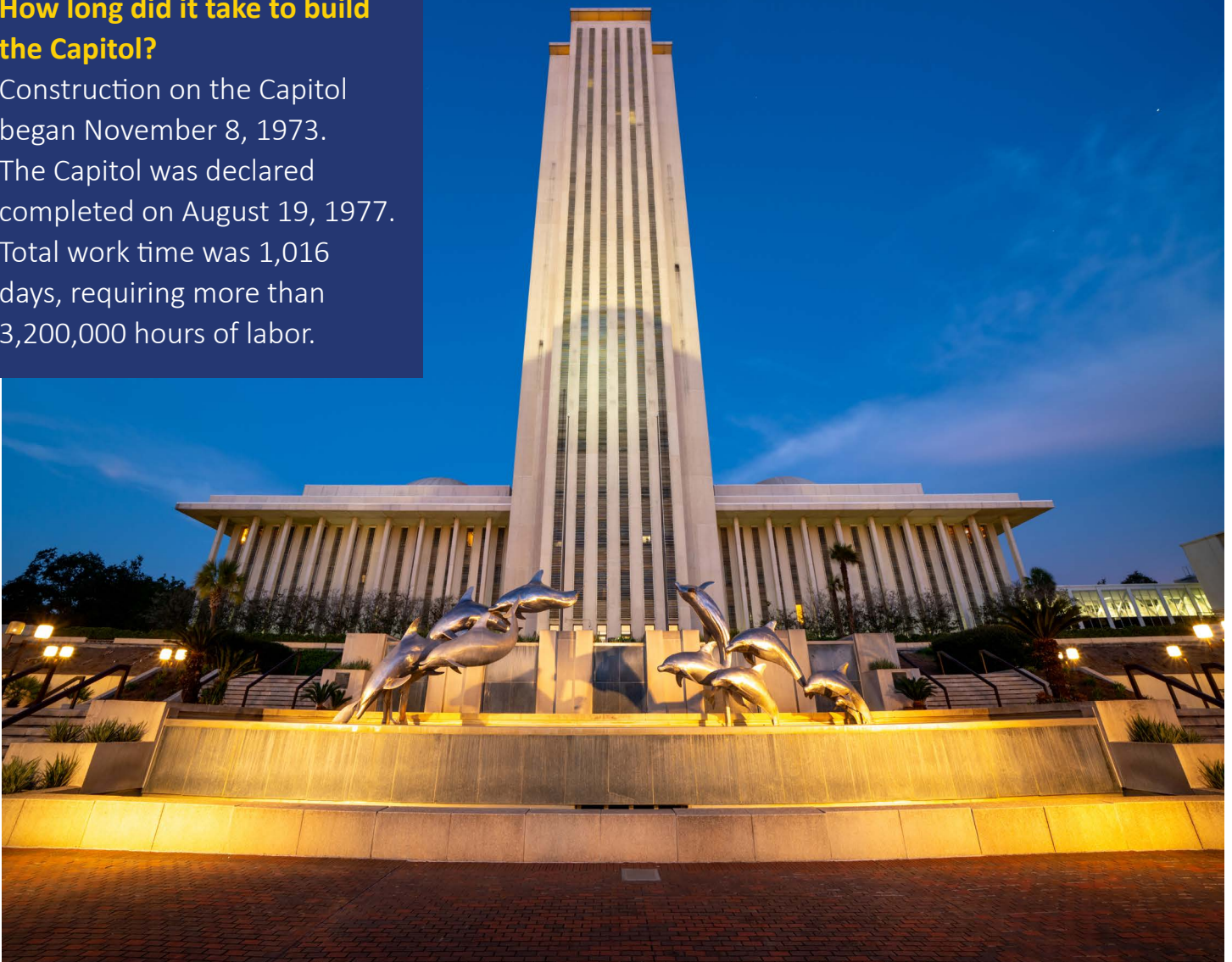
Since 1845, the Historic Capitol symbolized Florida state government. Restored to its 1902 appearance, the Historic Capitol Museum under the stained-glass dome comes alive through photographs, recordings and audiovisual displays. There are more than 250 artifacts in 21 rooms that trace the evolution of Florida government from territorial days to the present.

The Capitol Grounds features a variety of memorials and monuments dedicated to Florida's history. This include the Florida Fraternal Order of Police Law Enforcement Memorial, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Florida Veterans Walk of Honor, R.A. Gray Park Memorial Plaque, Liberty Bell replica, Florida Sri Chimnoy Peace State Marker, Purple Heart Memorial Monument, Florida Fallen Firefighter's Memorial, POW/MIA Chair, Old Capitol historical marker, a time capsule and two marble obelisks.

In 2003, Waller Park was added on the west side of the Capitol. "Stormsong," a sculpture of a pod of dolphins in the Florida Heritage Fountain is the centerpiece of the park. The area and sculpture are temporarily inaccessible due to Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility improvement projects.

How long did it take to build the Capitol?

Construction on the Capitol began November 8, 1973. The Capitol was declared completed on August 19, 1977. Total work time was 1,016 days, requiring more than 3,200,000 hours of labor.



Design Notes

Three other state capitols use the same tower design (Louisiana, Nebraska and North Dakota). Construction of the Capitol began on November 8, 1973, and was declared completed on August 19, 1977. To ensure that there would be no “mortgage” on this new building, the \$43,070,741 price tag was paid before the first cornerstone was laid. An additional \$1,957,338 was committed to landscaping the west front area known as Waller Park. The park is named after Judge Curtis L. Waller of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals. Upon the Capitol’s completion, restoration on the Historic Capitol began. The Historic Capitol was refurbished to the way it looked in 1902. Herschel Shepard, a restoration architect, was quoted as saying, “The Old Capitol will be like a jewel worn by the New.” The Historic Capitol is now called the Florida Historic Capitol Museum.



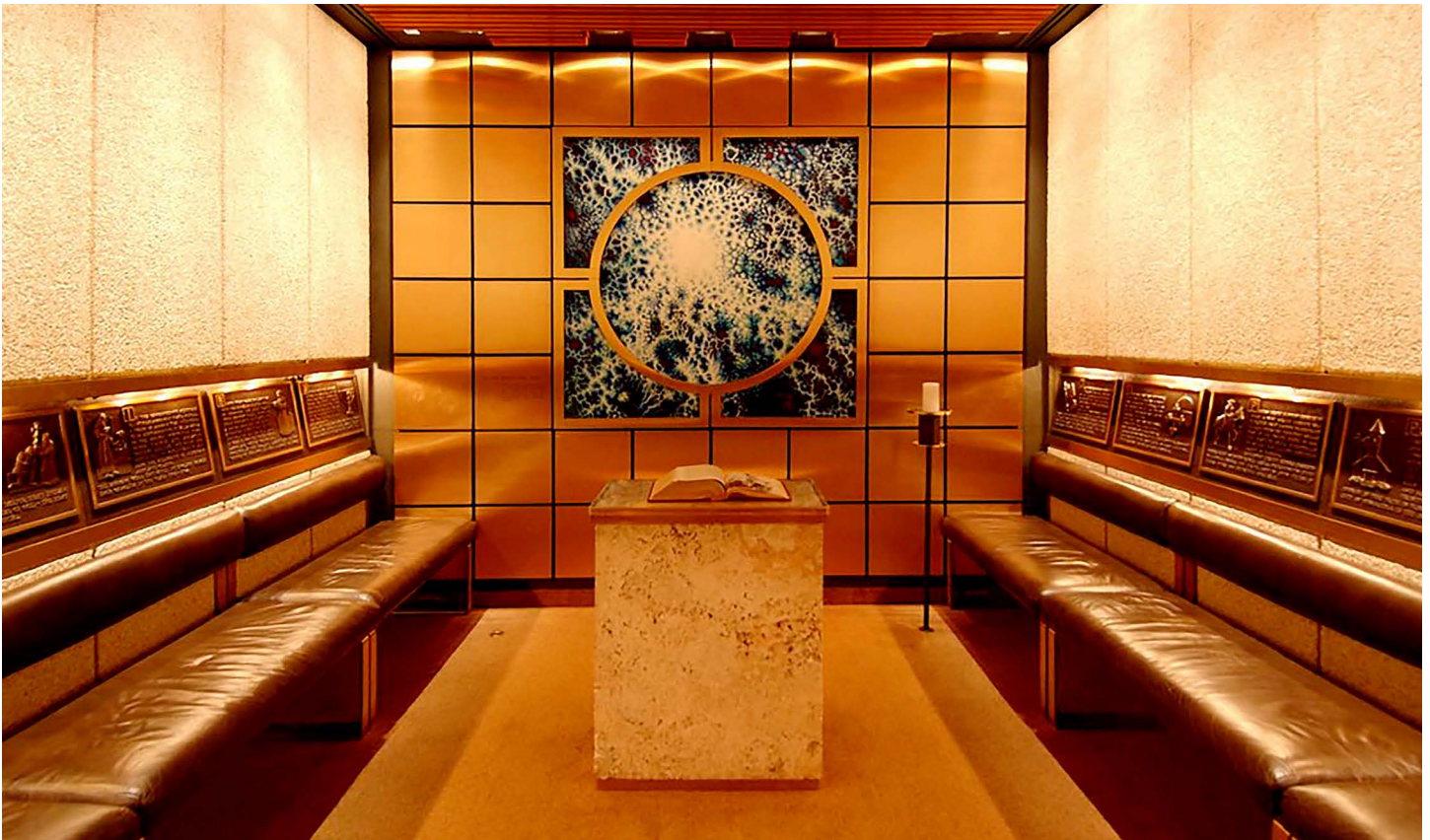
The Plaza Level

The Great Seal of the State of Florida is located on the east side of the Plaza Level inside the Capitol. This area is known as the Rotunda. This is the seal that was in use when the building was dedicated. The diameter of the display is 10 feet, with the state seal being eight feet across and each small seal measuring three feet across.

Surrounding the Rotunda are various halls of fame and walls of honor. They are:

- The **Florida Women's Hall of Fame** was created in 1982 by the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women. In 1994, the permanent display in the northwest corner of the Rotunda was unveiled. Each person inducted has a plaque with her photo and biography.
- The **Fallen Firefighters Wall of Honor** lists firefighters killed in the line of duty.
- The **Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame** recognizes military veterans who made a significant contribution to the State of Florida during or after their military service.
- The **Florida Civil Rights Hall of Fame** is dedicated to those who contributed to the struggle for equality and justice for all.
- **Congressional Medal of Honor Plaques** display biographies of the recipients.
- The **Florida Artists Hall of Fame** displays plaques with an image of the inductees and their biographies.

The **Executive Office of the Governor** is located on the Plaza Level, south of the Great Seal. The corridor leading to the office is lined with portraits of former Florida governors. The Governor's reception area is open to the public. Beyond the reception area, behind secured doors, is the Governor's Office. The Lieutenant Governor also has an office here, and this is where the Governor's meeting room is located. Members of the Cabinet also have offices located on the plaza level. The Attorney General's Office sits in the south wing with the Governor's Office. The north wing houses offices of the Commissioner of Agriculture and Chief Financial Officer.



The Heritage Chapel

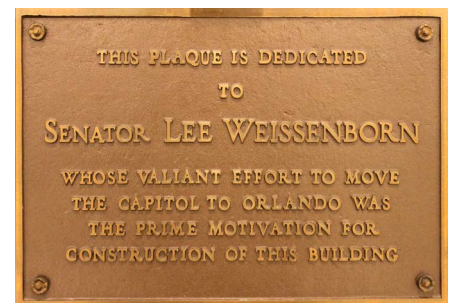
Florida is one of only a few statehouses that have a chapel. A special commission converted the area into the chapel, using special donations. Upon completion in 1980, the chapel was officially dedicated as a meditation room. Unlike the rest of the building, which uses Italian marble in the public areas, materials in the chapel are from Florida. The walls are made of coquina cast from the beaches between Jacksonville and St. Augustine. The ceiling and entryway walls are made of tidewater cypress that was submerged in the Apalachicola River for more than 50 years before reclamation. Both the fountain and the table are made of keystone from a quarry in Florida City. The painting on the back wall is called "Creation" and was made by Florida artist Jean Welsh to symbolize, "the mystery of ordering ourselves, through God, out of the chaos of a natural world." The painting was set up to be viewed in conjunction with the door. The spheres embedded in the door are made of glass that washed onto Florida's shores. The plaques on the walls trace Florida's religious heritage from the prehistoric Native Americans to the present day.

Weissenborn Plaque

This plaque is the result of conflicts over the Historic Capitol restoration. According to section 5 of Senate Bill 678 (passed May 29, 1978), a plaque shall be placed in the lobby of the Capitol and shall be inscribed as follows: "This plaque is dedicated to Senator Lee Weissenborn whose valiant effort to move the Capitol to Orlando was the prime motivation for the construction of this building."

Senator Jack Gordon of Miami Beach added the above language to the bill, and House members supporting the restoration kept the section. They

did not want to send it back to the Senate and have it die, so the bill passed. Former Senator Kenneth Plante, at the request of Senator Gordon, provided the plaque. The plaque was affixed to the north center wall of the Plaza Level in 1982.





Art

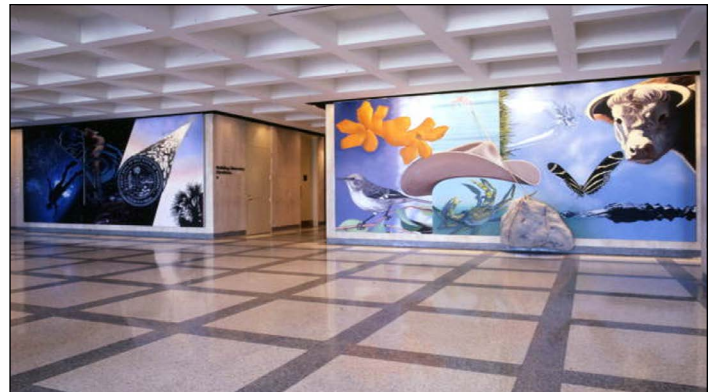
The Capitol has both permanent and temporary art displays.

Governors' Portraits on Display

Beginning with Governor Francis Fleming in the 1890s, every chief executive of Florida has had an official portrait painted and hung in the Capitol building. All of the Governors' portraits are represented at the Historic Capitol Museum. The more recent Governors' portraits appear in the first-floor hallway of the Capitol Tower, beginning with Claude Kirk (1967–1971). In keeping with traditions, our current governor, Ron DeSantis, will not commission his portrait until the end of his term.

Murals

In 1978, artist James Rosenquist created Images of the Sunshine State murals, which represent various recreational activities and industries in Florida. The left mural uses the cosmic background to symbolize space and Florida's aquatic fun in the sun activities. The pine tree above the Great Seal represents north Florida's lumber, pulp and paper industries. The mural on the right represents Florida's flora and fauna from the mockingbird, Florida cattle ranchers, ocean life, lakes and the Everglades. The [House](#) Chambers also have commissioned murals.



Capitol Tower

Each year, middle-school students (grades 6-8) enter their artwork in their respective school district's Art in the Capitol competition. Judged by a panel of art teachers, the winning pieces are displayed at the Capitol during the Legislative Session. Art may also be viewed online in a 360° tour and [Art in the Capitol Guide](#).

The Capitol lower floors and legislative office buildings are photographs from Florida's history. This permanent display was chosen from the Florida Photographic Archives by the Florida Legislative Research Center.

The 22nd Floor Capitol Gallery is managed by the Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, which maintains the temporary art in an [exhibition calendar](#).

Historic Capitol Museum

The Historic Capitol Museum has [archival](#), [long-term](#) and [temporary art](#) displays.



The Observation Deck

The 22nd floor of the Capitol is an enclosed observation deck. The east side is the Capitol Gallery. The gallery displays the work of Florida artists. The displays changed about every three months. The Division of Cultural Affairs manages the gallery. The west side may be reserved for government-related functions, though fees apply. The Freedom Shrine, a collection of historical document reproductions donated by the Exchange Club, is located on the south wall.



North View

The large V-shaped area to the far northwest is Lake Jackson. The immediate center view is the downtown historic district. The broad brick-paved street is known as Adams Street Commons. The brick building at the south end of Adams Street is Tallahassee's City Hall. The Challenger Learning Center and IMAX are also visible. To the northeast is Leon High School, built in 1936. East of the high school is Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare, one of the city's two major medical facilities.



West View

The center of this view immediately overlooks the R.A. Gray Building that houses the State Archives and the Museum of Florida History. The oval-shaped, red brick building beyond the Gray Building is the Donald L. Tucker Civic Center. West and northwest of the Civic Center is Florida State University (FSU), home of the FSU Seminoles. The FSU College of Law occupies the group of buildings behind the Gray Building.



South View

The immediate view is comprised primarily of state office buildings. The tall triangular-shape building to the far right is the Turlington Building, which houses the Department of Education. To the far left is the historic Bloxham Building, with a terracotta tile roof. Beyond these buildings and slightly to the right is a large complex of red brick buildings, which is home to the Florida A&M University Rattlers and their famous Marching 100 band. The large treeless area in the southwest quadrant is the Tallahassee Regional Airport, and beyond it is the Apalachicola National Forest.



East View

The immediate center view overlooks Apalachee Parkway (U.S. Highway 27) stretching to the east. This is one of Tallahassee's major roadways. To the right and across the street from the Historic Capitol are the Florida Vietnam Memorial and the Union Bank Museum. To the left is the Leon County Courthouse.



The Capitol Welcome Center

Contact the Capitol Welcome Center at 850-488-6167 for holiday hours and tours.
The Welcome Center is open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

Self-Guided Tours

Self-guided tours of the Capitol can be taken between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding any weekday holidays.

Pick up a self-guided tour sheet at the Capitol Welcome Center at the Plaza Level. The tour begins in the Courtyard between the Historic Capitol Museum and Capitol.

Large Groups: Be sure to check ahead for availability for weekday guided tours.

- For groups of 45 or more, consider dividing your group in half and send half to the Capitol and half to the Historic Capitol and then switch after each tour.
- Tours of the Capitol generally last 45-60 minutes.

Tour Requirements

- Tours are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. Scheduling of a tour does not guarantee that a guide will be available.
- When the tour guide is unavailable, information for self-guided tours are available.
- Groups do not need to schedule a tour to visit the Capitol. However, it is strongly recommended that they inform the Welcome Center of their intention to visit. This assures that the visiting group will be

aware of all security policies.

- The best time for school groups (especially grades 4-7) to visit the Capitol is when the Legislature is not in session.
- Each tour must have at least 15 people and no more than 50, including chaperones.
- School groups must provide one chaperone for every 10 children.
- Guided tours are available for fourth grade students or higher.
- Tour times are Monday through Friday at 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 2 p.m.
- Tours cannot be scheduled on Saturdays, Sundays or state holidays.
- You must inform the Welcome Center whenever any changes are made to your group.

You will need to provide the following group information when scheduling your tour:

- Name of group or school.
- Age and/or grade level.
- Size of the group.
- Contact person(s) with contact number(s) and email address(es), if available.
- Preferred date and time. Alternate dates or times should be kept in mind if primary date or time is already booked.
- Any special needs of the group.



Touring the Historic Capitol Museum

The Historic Capitol Museum was the last statehouse in which all of Florida's political business was housed under one roof. The Historic Capitol is located in front of the Capitol building. This architecturally- and historically-significant building, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was restored and refurbished to its 1902 appearance and was reopened to the public in 1982.

Historic Capitol Museum Public Hours

Monday-Friday: 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Saturday: 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Sunday and Holidays: 12 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Phone: 850-487-1902

www.flhistoriccapitol.gov

Entrance and Exit Procedures

Visitor access is either from the west (near the Florida Heritage Fountain) or the east. For ADA-assistance use the entrance located on the north side of the West Portico. For information about security requirements for entry, see [page 15](#).

Capitol Gift Shops

Florida's History Shop, located on the West Plaza Level, is open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. The shop offers visitors a variety of items related to the Capitol and Florida. A selection of books, postcards, apparel (e.g., Florida ties, socks, jewelry), toys, Seminole crafts, artwork by Florida artisans and other souvenirs are available in a range of prices. Additional stores are located at the Historic Capitol and the Museum of Florida History. To learn more about the shop or to shop online, visit [Florida's History Shop](#).

Florida Flag

Commemorate a special occasion or display your patriotic pride with an [official flag of the State of Florida or United States of America flown at the Florida State Capitol](#). An official certificate with a short personalized message accompanies each flown flag.





Decorum

- When visiting the Capitol, it is important to remember that it is a working building. To ensure a pleasant and safe visit, please advise your group to be respectful of the Welcome Center staff, Capitol staff and other visitors.
- Be respectful of the Capitol and Welcome Center property by not touching furnishings, paintings or statues.
- Take a restroom break before your scheduled tour time begins. Restrooms are located on each floor of the Capitol.
- Teachers and adult supervisors are responsible for the discipline and safety of their students throughout the tour.
- When moving around the Capitol, please do so in a quiet and orderly fashion. All conversation should be kept at whisper level. Excess noise and rowdiness could result in termination of the tour and a request to leave the Capitol.
- Do not run in the Capitol public areas, hallways or stairwells. Do not lean over any balcony railing.
- To minimize hallway and stairwell congestion, students should stay to the right and in single file.
- Food, gum, beverages and the use of electronic devices (e.g., earphones or mobile phones) are not permitted while on tour.
- No storage is available for groups to leave belongings (e.g., lunches, ice chests). Plans should be made for the retrieval of these items from outside the Capitol.
- Cameras are allowed in the Capitol tour area; however, visitors are not allowed to use flash photography in the chamber viewing gallery areas.
- Certain areas will have limited access at times and security procedures may be modified.

About the Chambers



Florida House of Representatives

The Florida House of Representatives has 120 members. The Speaker of the House decides the seating arrangement in this chamber. In 1999, the House Chamber underwent a major renovation from modern to Victorian. Dark-colored mahogany wood is used throughout the chamber with faux alabaster and a glass chandelier. Portraits of former Speakers of the House adorn the walls. At the head of the center walkway is a color rendition of the seal of the House of Representatives. During the renovation, the bulletproof glass separating the chamber floor from the viewing galleries was removed. Metal detectors and guard stations are used for screening. A first-come, first-served seating arrangement is used for the galleries, though the House may occasionally reserve a section.

A stadium-style TV screen is located on the back wall above the Speaker's level. The screen shows the text of any bill or amendment, video presentations or live transmission of the floor debate. On each side of the screen are voting boards. When a vote is cast, each representative's vote is displayed on the boards.

Each desk has three buttons located under the nameplate on the desk. The number on the nameplate indicates the Representative's district number. The red and green buttons are for voting. When a Representative needs an errand performed, the yellow button is pressed to summon a House page or messenger. There are a series of lights that can be seen only when seated at the Representative's desk. One light goes on when that Representative's microphone is live and another light indicates that the Speaker would like to see that Representative up front. The next two lights connect directly to the Representative's office. The press is seated in a glassed-in room above the House floor entrance.



Florida Senate

The Florida Senate has 40 members. The members from even-numbered districts sit on one side of the chamber while members from odd-numbered districts sit on the other. The Senate chamber, also known as the "floor," is the room on the fourth floor of the Capitol where Senators debate the merits of proposed legislation. The current chamber is the fifth used since the first session of the Senate was called to order in 1839.

In 2016, a comprehensive renovation stripped down the chamber to its concrete and steel bones and incorporated several historical elements as well as new features designed to improve accessibility for people with unique abilities.

On the floor above the chamber is the gallery. Citizens may sit there to observe the Senate in session. From the gallery, attention is drawn to the rostrum where the Senate President is presiding. Above the rostrum is the Senate Seal, which was originally adopted in 1972 and revised in 2015 and 2016. The viewing galleries are open areas that operate on a first-come, first-served basis and must pass through metal detectors and a guard station.

The chamber ceiling is designed to reflect sound to the center of the room. This design enables Senators to be heard throughout the chamber when speaking in a normal tone of voice. The Senators also use their microphones for recording purposes and for people in the hallways to hear them. There are four buttons on each Senator's desk and function the same way as the buttons on the desks of Representatives.

The paintings that surround the Senate Chamber are portraits of former presidents of the Senate dating back more than 100 years. The glassed-in area above the Senate entrance is for the media. The areas in the balconies with the black metal posts are where the television cameras are mounted.



Tours During Legislative Session

Tours during this time should be made several months in advance. Tour reservations for a legislative session will be taken beginning August 1 of the preceding year, as tours are not scheduled more than six months in advance. A seven days' notice is required to schedule a tour.

Viewing the Legislative Session

If you or a group wishes to observe the Legislature, here are some guidelines:

- Gallery seating is limited. Availability is dependent upon the length of the daily session and the number of visitors seeking admittance.
- Group leaders who wish to visit the viewing gallery of the House or Senate chambers should inform the staff outside the galleries and notify them of the number of students in their group. It may be necessary to wait before entering.
- Once inside, most groups are allowed 15 minutes to observe the lawmakers in action.
- Students should be reminded that important state business is being conducted in each chamber.
- All visitors of the galleries must remain seated and quiet and may not applaud.
- All phones and electronic devices must be turned off before entering gallery.
- Leaning over the gallery railing from the first row is prohibited.
- Flash photography is not allowed in the gallery.
- Online schedule of legislative calendars for the [Senate](#) and the [House of Representatives](#) are continually updated during session.

Cabinet Meeting Room

The Cabinet Meeting Room is located on the Lower Level. At least monthly, meetings with a set agenda are held between the Governor and the Cabinet.

Governor Requirements

The Governor is elected to a four-year term and can serve a maximum of two terms. To serve as Governor, a person has to be at least 30 years old and must have been a Florida resident for at least the last seven years. These requirements apply to the Lieutenant Governor and Cabinet members as well. The Attorney General must also have been a member of the Florida Bar for the last five years.

Cabinet Requirements

Currently, there are three cabinet posts. They are: Attorney General, Commissioner of Agriculture and Chief Financial Officer. Florida's Cabinet members are elected to a four-year term and can serve up to two terms.

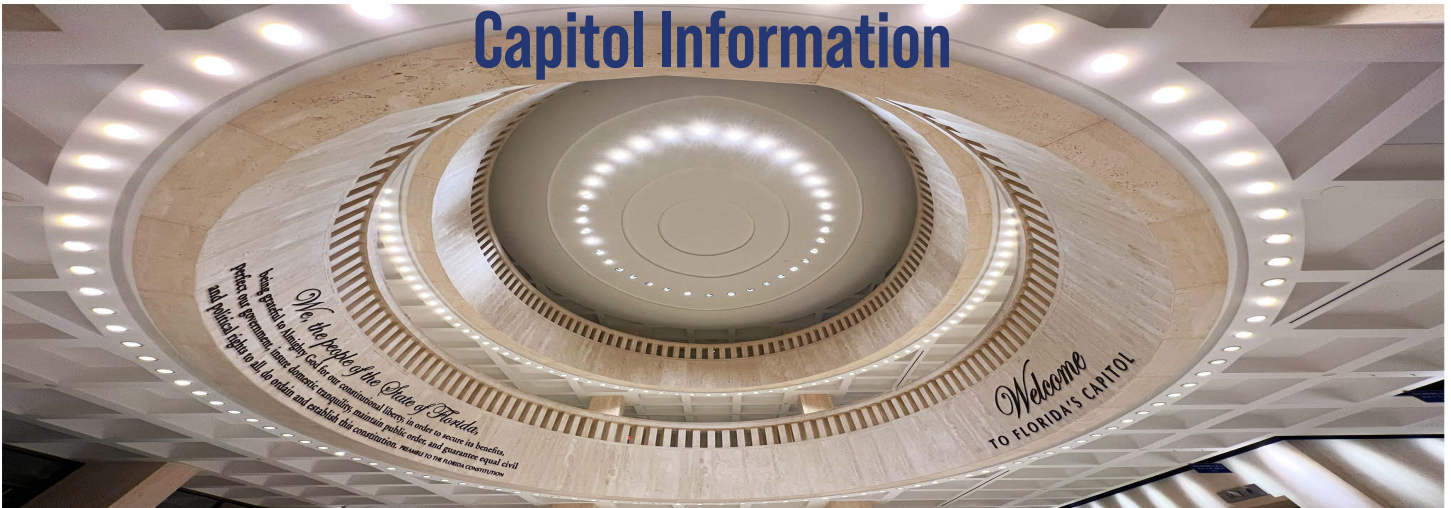
The Florida Channel

The [Florida Channel](#) is a government-access television network operated by Florida State University's WFSU-TV and the Florida State Legislature, and film the House and Senate when they are in chambers.

Capitol Events Calendars

[Capitol Event Calendar](#) is available by events at the Capitol Complex.

Capitol Information



Times of Operation

The Capitol is open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. It is closed on weekends and state holidays. These times of operation also apply to the Knott Building and the House and Senate office buildings.

All hours are subject to change without prior notice. Call 850-488-6167 to confirm availability on the day you want to visit.

State Holidays

The Capitol is closed for the following state holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Friday after Thanksgiving, and
- Christmas Day

If any of these holidays falls on Saturday, the preceding Friday is observed as a holiday. When a holiday falls on Sunday, the following Monday is observed as a holiday.

Occasionally, the Capitol may also be closed as a result of executive, legislative or security needs.

Scheduling Events at the Capitol

To reserve space for your event at the Capitol's **front steps of the Historic Capitol, Capitol Courtyard, North and South Plaza, Plaza-Level Rotunda, Waller**

Park and the west wing of the 22nd floor, contact the Department of Management Services at 850-487-2074. Event forms and guidelines are available online at [Capitol Complex Events](#).

To reserve space at the **Legislative Porticos and Rotunda** areas (second, third and fourth floors), contact the House Sergeant at Arms at 850-488-8224 and the Senate Sergeant at Arms at 850-487-5224.

To reserve interior space at the **Historic Capitol Museum** contact the museum at 850-487-1902.

Access and Accessibility

Visitors may access the Capitol either from the north, south and west. The west access is currently unavailable due to Waller Park construction. Visitors in wheelchairs may use the east entrance via the Courtyard to enter the Capitol. When the Legislature is in session, the legislative office buildings are accessible from the Courtyard. The House Office Building entrance is on the south side of the building facing the courtyard. The Senate Office Building entrance is on the north side of the building toward the courtyard.

Restrooms and Water Fountains

All restrooms and water fountains are in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

ADA Access to the Legislature

The Legislature provides wheelchair spaces in the viewing galleries for the House and Senate and all legislative committee rooms. The paths leading to the points of interest at the Capitol Complex are paved.



Capitol Tower Food Services

Capitol Cafeteria: Full-service cafeteria
7 a.m. to 3 p.m. (Service Line closed 10:30-11:30 a.m.)
Lower Level (LL) Capitol Building

Capitol Café: Full-service snack bar
7 a.m. to 4 p.m.
10th Floor Capitol Building

Vending Machines: LL, 2nd and 3rd floors (north),
10th floor (south)

Security

Security is managed by the Capitol Police. For more information, visit the [Capitol Police](#) section in the Florida Department of Law Enforcement's website.

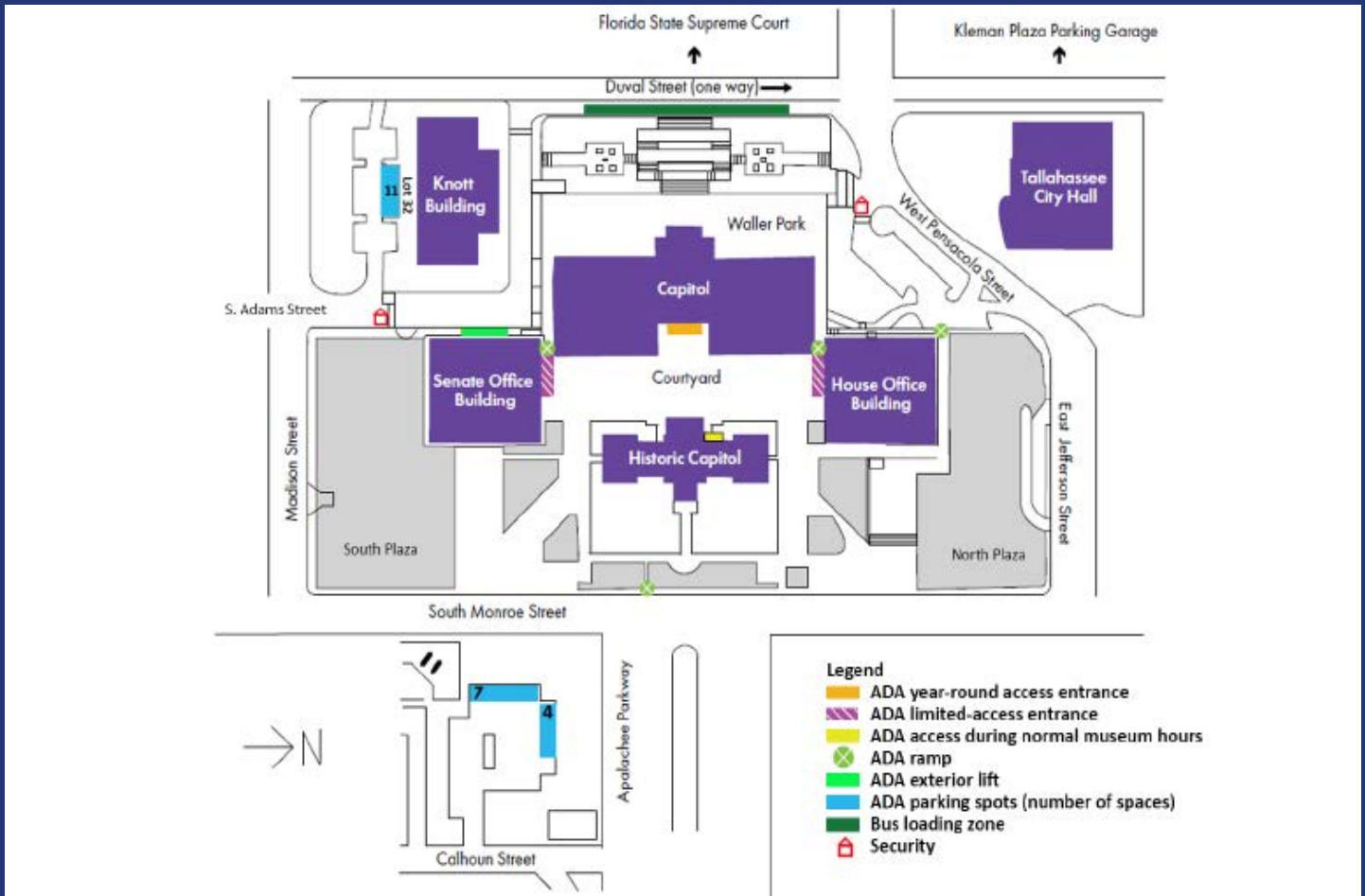
Security: 24-hour security, 7 days per week
Telephone: 850-488-1790
www.floridacapitol.myflorida.com

Requirements for Entry

For security reasons, access to the Capitol (and by extension the House and Senate Office Buildings and the Knott Building) is conditional upon consent to search.

- All persons must go through the detection aisle and must present purses, packages and other objects for separate inspection. Laptops, tablets and related items must be removed from their cases and presented for inspection. Further search may be required.
- No weapons or other potential hazards are allowed.
- No sealed envelopes or packages are allowed.
- Items may not be delivered or left behind.
- Once visitors have exited the Capitol, re-entry will require reprocessing.
- You do have the right to refuse any or all of these security screening procedures; however, entry to the building will be denied.
- Always allow time for possible delays for security processing when visiting the Capitol.

Capitol Complex Map



Parking

The Capitol Complex is bordered by South Monroe Street, Madison Street, Duval Street and Jefferson Street. Parking is limited near the Capitol, with parking available in close proximity.

Visitor Parking

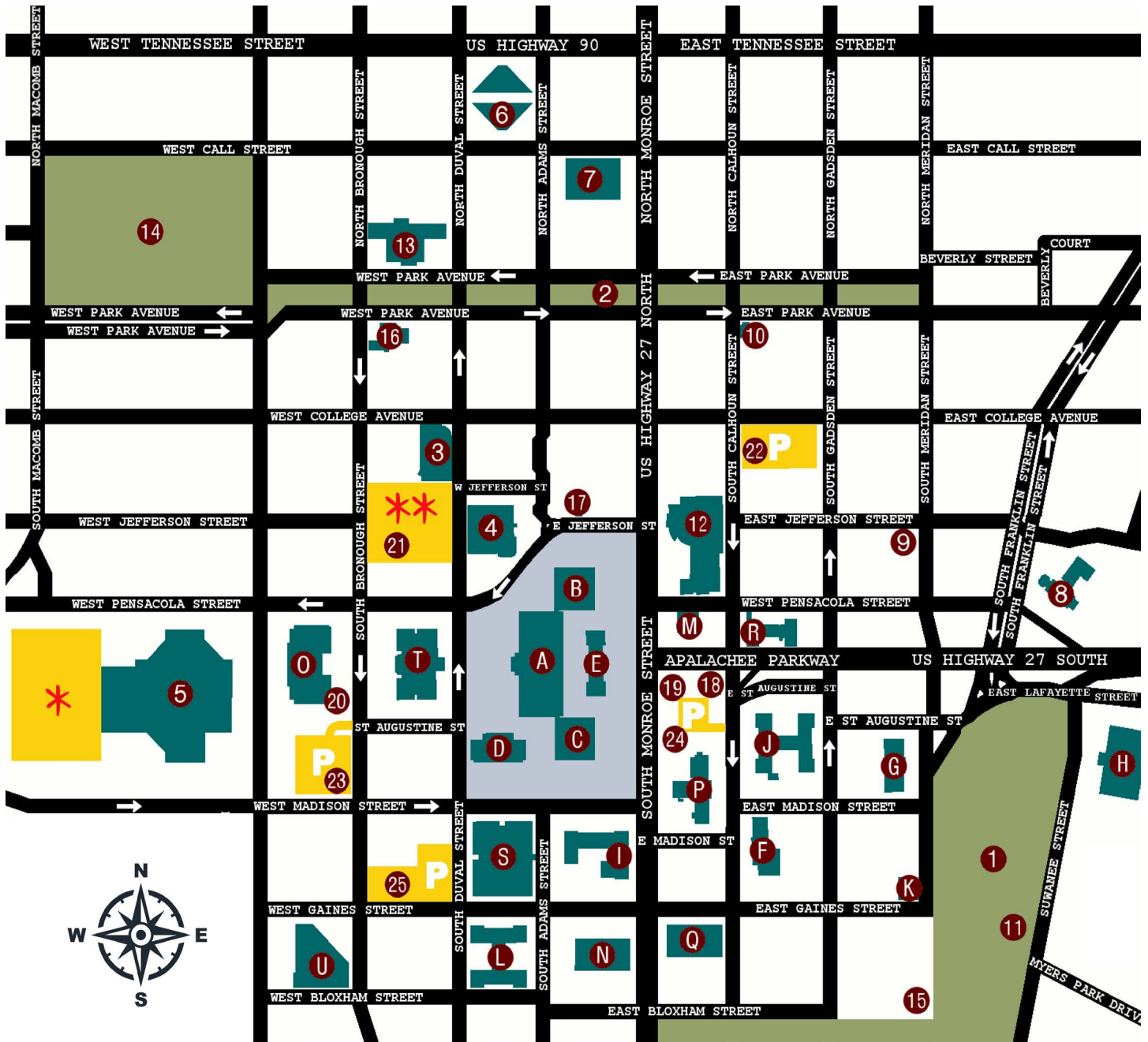
Visitor parking is available in Kleman Plaza and is managed by the City of Tallahassee. The Kleman Plaza Parking Garage is located on Duval Street, approximately one block northwest of the Capitol Complex. The Department of Management Services manages a surface parking lot (Lot 4) on Calhoun Street located one block east of the Historic Capitol and behind the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Lot 4 includes visitor and accessible parking. Metered parking spaces are located around the Capitol and are maintained by the City of Tallahassee.

Capitol Loading Zone*

Currently the Duval Street loading zone is closed due to construction on Waller Park. The temporary loading zone is located along Madison Street and in Lot 32 behind the Knott Building. Vehicles remaining in the loading zone after 15 minutes are subject to ticketing and towing by the City of Tallahassee. Buses requiring parking should contact the FSU Civic Center. For information regarding Kleman Plaza parking and fees, call 850-561-3066. For Civic Center parking information, call 850-487-1691.

* See page 19 for locations.

Downtown Map



State Buildings

- A. Capitol
- B. House Office Building
- C. Senate Office Building
- D. Knott Building
- E. Historic Capitol
- F. Bloxham
- G. Bryant
- H. Burns
- I. Caldwell
- J. Carlton
- K. Coleman
- L. Collins
- M. Elliot
- N. Fletcher
- O. R.A Gray (Museum of Florida History)
- P. Holland
- Q. Larson
- R. Mayo
- S. Pepper
- T. Supreme Court
- U. Turlington

Parking Lots

- 1. Cascades
- 2. Chain of Parks
- 3. Challenger Learning Center
- 4. City Hall
- 5. FSU Civic Center*
- 6. C.K. Steele Bus Plaza
- 7. Federal Courthouse
- 8. Florida Bar
- 9. John G. Riley House
- 10. Knott House
- 11. Korean War Memorial
- 12. Leon County Courthouse
- 13. Leon County Library
- 14. Old City Cemetery
- 15. U.S. Post Office
- 16. Prime Meridian Marker
- 17. Tallahassee Visitors Center
- 18. Union Bank
- 19. Vietnam War Memorial
- 20. World War II Memorial

- 21. Kleman Plaza Garage**
- 22. Eastside Parking Garage
- 23. Lot E Parking Lot
- 24. Lot 4 Parking Lot
- 25. Duval Street Lot

* Large, public parking lots

Capitol Complex

Frequently Asked Questions

Q What is the function of the Capitol?

The Capitol houses the meeting chambers of the Florida Legislature, the House of Representatives in the north wing, the Senate in the south wing and includes offices for the Legislature. The Capitol also houses the offices of the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Cabinet staff and executive branch agency staff.

Q Who designed the Capitol?

The Capitol was designed by a joint venture of Edward Durell Stone of New York and Reynolds, Smith and Hills of Jacksonville.

Q When did the Legislature first meet in the Capitol?

The first legislative session in the Capitol was in 1978. Opening day of session was April 4, 1978.

Q How long did it take to build the Capitol?

Construction on the Capitol began November 8, 1973. The Capitol was declared completed on August 19, 1977. Total work time was 1,016 days, requiring more than 3,200,000 hours of labor.

Q How much did it cost to build the Capitol?

The total construction amount was \$45,028,079. The building cost \$43,070,741, with an additional \$1,957,338 committed to landscaping Waller Park.

Q Is there any symbolic significance to the design outside of the Capitol?

No. The design was Edward Durell Stone's signature late in his architectural career.

Q Is anyone buried in the Capitol?

No. Some government officials have lain in state at the Historic Capitol, such as Governor Lawton Chiles, Senator Pat Thomas and Governor Daniel McCarthy.

Q How many floors are in the Capitol?

The Capitol has 25 floors – three floors below ground and 22 above, which is why it is often referred to as a 22-story building.

Q What can be found on each of the floors?

The first five stories of the Capitol contain committee rooms and the offices of the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Cabinet members and legislative officers.

The west side of the Plaza Level contains the Capitol Welcome Center, the Heritage Chapel and the Rosenquist murals. The east side of the Plaza Level, or Rotunda, has the Great Seal of the State of Florida, three Florida Halls of Fame and a memorial to Florida's Medal of Honor recipients.

The remaining floors, with the exception of the enclosed observation deck on the 22nd floor and the snack bar on the 10th floor, are state government offices. Two of three underground floors are parking levels. The third is the Lower Level, which houses the Cabinet Meeting Room, government offices and the cafeteria.

Q How high up is the observation deck on the 22nd floor?

The observation deck rises 307 feet from the entrance on the Plaza Level. The 22nd floor is 512 feet above sea level.

Q What construction materials are used in the public areas?

The walls of the public areas are covered with imported Italian travertine marble. The floors in these areas are terrazzo.

Q What is the estimated working life of the Capitol?

The working life is estimated at 100 years.

FAQs Continues

FAQs Continued

Q How many people are in the Capitol on an average workday?

The number of people in the Capitol during a normal workday is 1,500. During legislative session, this number increases to more than 5,000.

Q How long does legislative session last?

The annual regular session runs for 60 consecutive days and begins on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March in odd-numbered years. In even-numbered years, regular session can begin earlier at the request of the Legislature. The Legislature will start session early when re-apportionment is needed. Special sessions, lasting up to 20 days, can be held by proclamation of the Governor or joint proclamation by the Speaker of the House and Senate President.

Q What is the total square footage?

The Capitol is 718,000 square feet.

Q How much and what kind of materials were used in the building of the Capitol?

- 3,700 tons of structural steel
- 2,800 tons of reinforcing steel
- 25,000 cubic yards of concrete (equal to 16 football fields)
- 12,000 square feet of walnut paneling
- 12,000 gallons of paint
- 62,000 square feet (or 1.5 acres) of marble
- 60,000 square yards of carpet
- 92,000 square feet of terrazzo
- 30 miles of telephone cable, and
- 250 miles of electrical wire

Q How can I obtain a flag that has flown at the Capitol?

Commemorate a special occasion or display your patriotic pride with an [official flag of the State of Florida or United States of America flown at the Florida State Capitol](#). An official certificate with a short personalized message accompanies each flown flag. You can obtain a flag by contacting the Department of State at 850-245-6500.

Q How do I arrange a mock session?

Contact your Legislator. The Legislator's office staff will make the appropriate arrangements. No mock sessions will be scheduled during the last two weeks of a legislative session.

