

Florida Capitol Visitors Guide



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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 ([page 8](#)) 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.



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 continues 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 four-story office buildings for the House of Representatives and Senate as well as the Historic Capitol and the Knott Building.

The Capitol is located in downtown Tallahassee at the intersection of Apalachee Parkway and Monroe Street. The Capitol is open to the public Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and is closed on weekends and holidays.

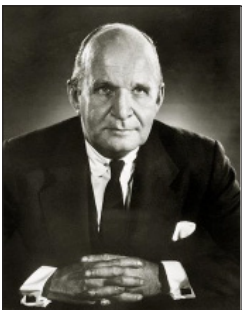


About the Construction

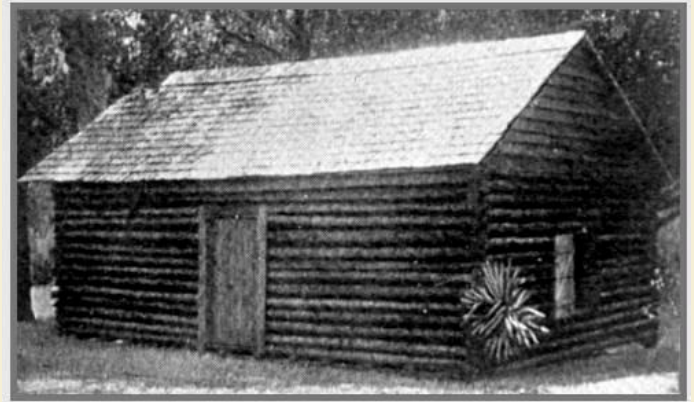
The current Capitol is the fourth building to serve as Florida's Capitol building. The first Capitol was a log cabin built in 1824 with the establishment of Tallahassee as the state's territorial capital. In 1826, a two-story frame structure replaced the first Capitol. The construction of the third Capitol 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.



Edward Durell Stone, Architect



The State Capitol, 1824
Photo courtesy of Florida State Archives



The State Capitol, 1830
Photo courtesy of Florida State Archives



The State Capitol, 1845
Photo courtesy of Florida State Archives

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.



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.

The Capitol Complex

The Capitol Complex is home to five buildings: the Capitol, the House and Senate office buildings, the Knott Building, and the Historic Capitol Museum. The Capitol has been located in Tallahassee since 1824.

To allow emergency vehicles access to the buildings and to keep the building historically accurate, the north, south, east, and west wings were removed, and the dome was added back when the Historic Capitol underwent restoration from 1978-1982. This introduced Floridians to the 1902 version of the building when it opened as the Historic Capitol Museum.

The House and Senate office buildings are located on north and south ends of the Courtyard, respectively.

The House Office Building is four-stories high and is located on the north end of the Courtyard. The second and third floors have bridges that connect the Capitol and office buildings.

The Complex features a variety of memorials and monuments dedicated to Florida's history.

The Senate Office Building is four stories high and is located on the south end of the Capitol Complex. The second, third, and fourth floors have bridges that connect to the Capitol and office buildings.

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 newly renovated Knott Building to the Capitol.

Waller Park is located on the west side of the Capitol. "Stormsong," a sculpture of a pod of dolphins in the Florida Heritage Fountain that is the centerpiece of Waller Park, was added in 2003.





The Capitol Welcome Center

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

Self-Guided Tours

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

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

Large group tours: 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 can be made 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 4th 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); and
 - Any special needs of the group.



Touring the Historic Capitol

Entrance and Exit Procedures

Visitor access is either from the west (near the Florida Heritage Fountain) or the east. The Historic Capitol can be entered using the handicap entrance located on the north side of the West Portico.

For information about security requirements for entry, see [page 15](#).

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, and 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.
- The schedule of legislative meetings for the Senate and the House of Representatives is continually updated during session and is available [online](#).

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.
- Students should not run in the Capitol public areas, hallways, or stairwells, nor should they lean over any balcony railing. To minimize hallway and stairwell congestion, stay to the right and in single file.
- Food, gum, beverages, and the use of electronic devices such as earphones or cellular telephones are not permitted while on tour.
- No storage is available for groups to leave belongings, lunches, ice chests, etc. 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 a flash in a chamber viewing gallery area.
- Certain areas will have limited access at times and security procedures may be modified from time to time.





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.

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.

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.





The Capitol Welcome Center is located on the West Plaza Level and is one of five official Florida welcome centers in the state. The others are on I-10 (Pensacola), U.S. 231 (Campbellton), I-75 (Jennings), and I-95 (Yulee). Florida was one of the first states to establish highway welcome centers, with the U.S. Highway 17 Yulee Welcome Center the first to open in 1949. The official Florida welcome centers provide visitors with information relating to travel, highways, sports, climate, resort areas, cities, outdoor recreation, and attractions.

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



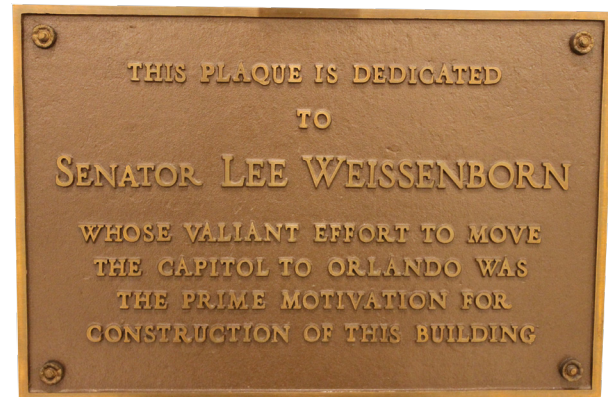
room. Unlike the rest of the building, which uses Italian marble in the public areas, materials in the chapel are from Florida. The walls are made of coquina cast from the beaches between Jacksonville and St. Augustine. The ceiling and entryway walls are made of tidewater cypress that was submerged in 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 symboliz "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 Indians to the present day.

Weissenborn Plaque

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." This plaque is the result of conflicts over the Historic Capitol restoration. Senator Jack Gordon of Miami Beach added the above section 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.





“Images of the Sunshine State” Murals

Artist James Rosenquist created the two “Images of the Sunshine State” murals in 1978. The murals represent various recreational activities and industries in Florida. The left mural uses the cosmic background to symbolize space travel and the Kennedy Space Center. The scuba diver and woman in the pool represent Florida’s “aquatic fun in the sun” activities. The pine tree above the Great Seal represents north Florida’s lumber, pulp, and paper industries. In the lower right corner is a palmetto scrub, a ubiquitous Florida bush.

The mural on the right represents the flora and fauna of Florida, the Mockingbird, Florida cattle ranchers, ocean life, lakes, and the Everglades.

Cason Memorial Stairwell

Owen “Casey” Cason served as a law enforcement officer for Florida for 52 years. He regularly jogged stairwell number nine for exercise. After his death in 1992, Governor Lawton Chiles and the Cabinet declared that stairwell number nine would henceforth be known as the Captain Owen “Casey” Cason Memorial Stairwell.

Permanent and Temporary Art Exhibits



The Capitol has both permanent and temporary art displays.

On the lower floors of the Capitol and legislative office buildings are photographs from Florida’s history. These images from Florida’s Photographic Archives are on permanent display. They were chosen and placed by the Florida Legislative Research Center.

The rotating display areas at the Capitol Complex include the 22nd Floor Capitol Gallery, the Cabinet Meeting Room, and the gallery at the Historic Capitol. The Capitol Gallery is managed by the Florida Department of State’s Division of Cultural Affairs, which maintains an [exhibition calendar](#).

The Florida House of Representatives

The Florida House of Representatives has 120 members. The Speaker of the House decides the seating arrangement in this chamber.

The House Chamber underwent a major renovation in 1999, from modern to Victorian. 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 faux alabaster and glass chandelier hangs over the chamber, and the dark-colored wood used throughout the chamber is mahogany. Surrounding the chamber floor are portraits of former Speakers of the House, and at the head of the center walkway is a color rendition of the seal of the House of Representatives. The filming of the floor debate is done with the help of eight robotic cameras operated by The Florida Channel. A stadium-style TV screen is located on the back wall above the Speaker's level. The screen can be used to show 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. Another light

indicates that the Speaker would like to see that representative up front. The next two lights deal with the desk phone. Each representative has a phone attached to the underside of the desk that connects directly to the representative's office. The press is seated in a glassed-in room above the House floor entrance.



The 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.

Following the adjournment of the 2016 Legislative Session, the Senate Chamber, built in 1978, underwent a historic renovation. Prior to the renovation, only minimal updates, including those necessary to accommodate changes in technology, had been made since the original construction. The renovated Senate Chamber incorporates several historical elements as well as new features designed to improve accessibility for people with unique abilities.

The viewing galleries of the Senate are open areas. Visitors must pass through metal detectors and a guard station to enter the galleries. The galleries operate on a first-come, first-served basis, though a senator may occasionally reserve a section.

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. However, the senators still use their microphones for recording purposes and so that people in the hallways can 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. The Florida Channel films the Senate when they are in chambers.

The Cabinet Meeting Room

The Cabinet Meeting Room is located on the Lower Level. At least monthly, a meeting is held between the Governor and the Cabinet. This is a meeting with a set agenda and is open to the public. Currently, there are three cabinet posts: the Attorney General, the Commissioner of Agriculture, and the Chief Financial Officer. Florida's Cabinet members are elected to a four-year term and can serve up to two terms.

The Observation Deck

The 22nd floor is an enclosed observation deck. The east side is the Capitol Gallery. The gallery displays the work of Florida artists, and the display is 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. On each side of the deck is a kiosk indicating viewing points of interest. 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, 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. This is Florida A&M University, home of the FAMU Rattlers and the 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. Just 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.

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. Please call **850-488-6167** to confirm availability on the day you want to visit.

State Holidays Closed

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
- 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, contact the Department of Management Services at 850-487-1119. Event forms and guidelines are available online at [Capitol Complex Events](#). Areas available for reservation are the front steps of the Historic Capitol, the Capitol Courtyard, the Plaza Level Rotunda, Waller Park, and the west wing of the 22nd floor.

In addition, the Legislative Porticos and Rotunda areas (the second, third, and fourth floors) are available by contacting the House Sergeant at Arms at 850-488-8224 or the Senate Sergeant at Arms at 850-487-5224.

The Historic Capitol Museum interior is also available by contacting the museum at 850-487-1902.

Access and Accessibility

Visitors may access the Capitol either from the west (Waller Park) or the east (across from the Historic Capitol). 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.

Access to 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.





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.

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

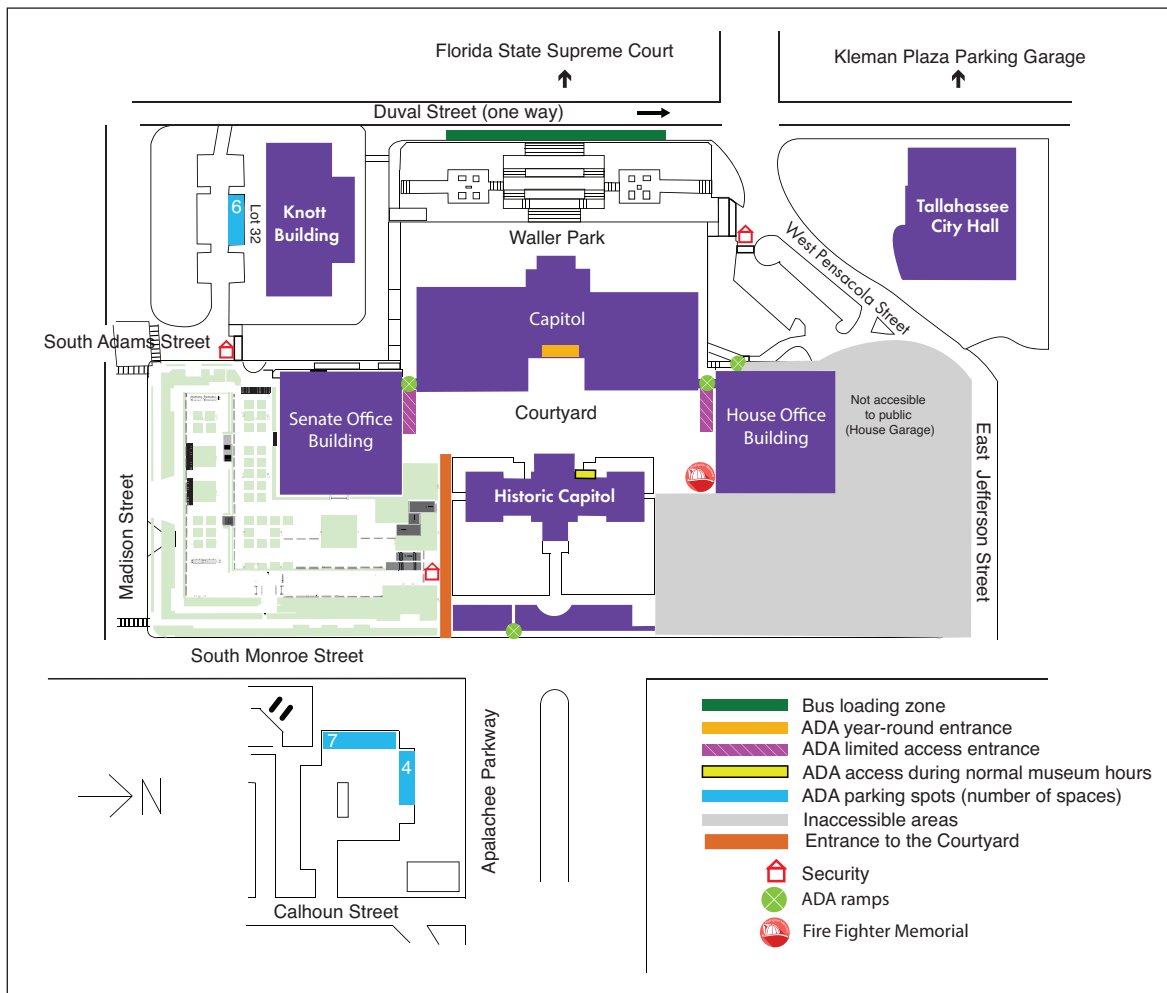
Capitol Gift Shop

Florida's History Shop, located on the West Plaza Level, is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Florida's History Shop offers visitors a variety of items related to the Capitol and Florida. A selection of books, postcards, apparel – including Florida ties and jewelry – toys and games, 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's website (www.floridashistoryshop.com).

Vending machines are located throughout the Capitol. In addition, there are many restaurants conveniently located in the downtown area. Information on these options can be obtained from the Capitol Welcome Center on the day of your visit.

Capitol Complex Map



Parking

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

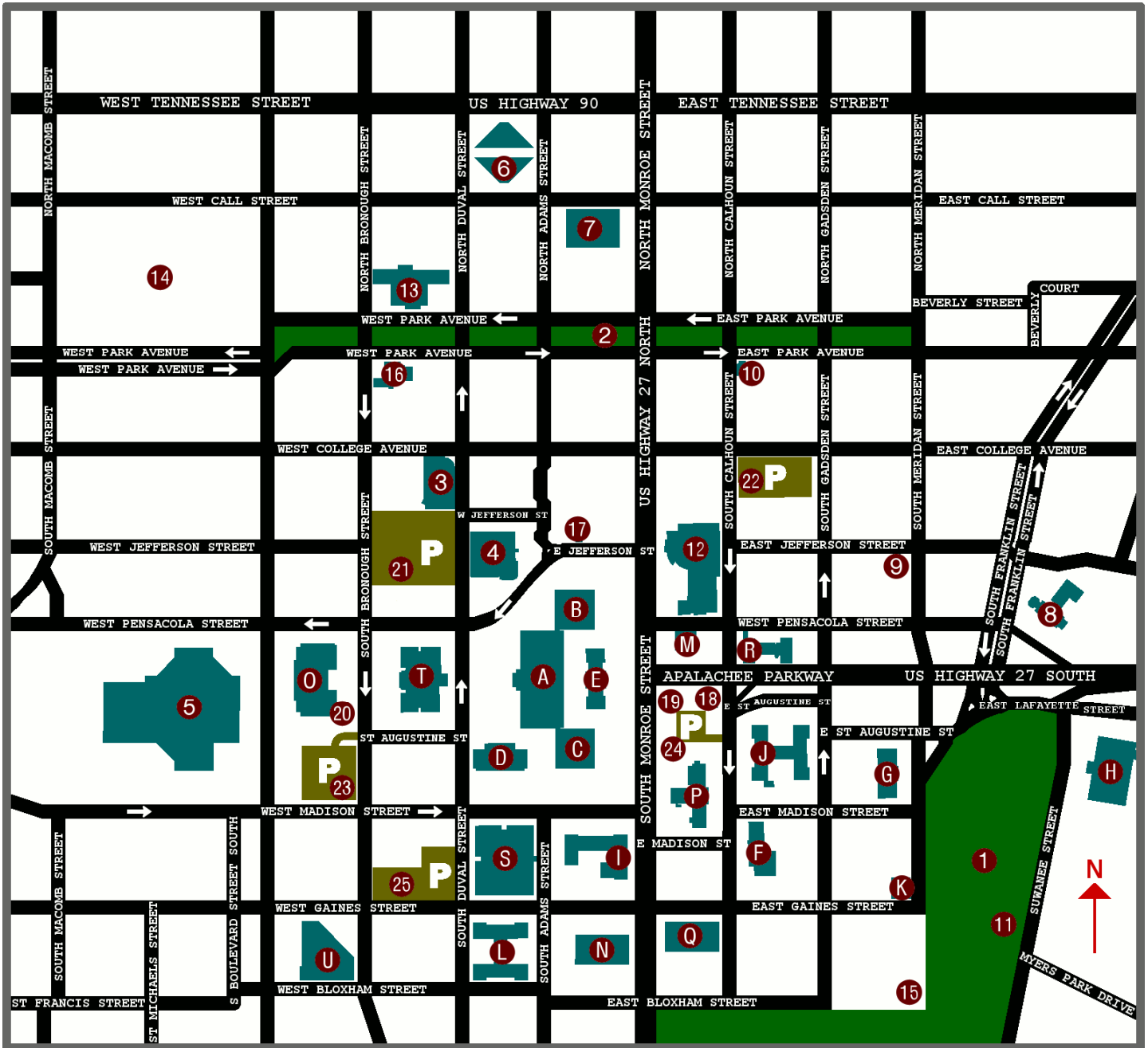
Visitor Parking

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, one block east of the Historic Capitol and behind the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Lot 4 includes visitor parking and handicap parking. Metered parking spaces are located around the Capitol and are maintained by the City of Tallahassee.

Capitol Loading Zone

Vehicles, including passenger buses, can drop off and pick up passengers on Duval Street, in front of the Capitol's Waller Park. 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, please call 850-561-3066. For Civic Center parking information, please call 850-487-1691.

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. 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 Cemetary
- 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

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, and 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 can I obtain a flag that has flown at the Capitol?

You can obtain a flag by contacting the Department of State at 850-245-6500.

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 materials are the public areas made of?

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.

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, equal to approximately 400 homes.

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
- 250 miles of electrical wire

Q How many bathrooms, doors, and elevators are in the Capitol?

There are 11 private bathrooms with showers and 66 public restrooms and more than 2,000 doors and 14 elevators. Two special elevators run between the Lower Level and the fourth floor. The remaining 12 elevators are known as the Elevator Bank. The Elevator Bank is located on the Plaza Level between the Florida Welcome Center and the Rotunda. The front four elevators, located adjacent to the Rotunda, run from the parking levels to the fifth floor. Six of the remaining eight elevators are linked together. Four of these six travel between the Lower Level and 19th floor. The fifth elevator runs from the Lower Level to the 22nd floor. The sixth elevator, the freight elevator, goes between the parking levels and the 21st floor. One of the two remaining elevators runs from the Lower Level to the third floor and 16th floor to the 22nd floor. The other elevator goes between the Lower Level to the third floor and 16th floor to the 21st floor.

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.