

Do you know what they do?

Voters are entrusted to elect candidates into many offices, perhaps without always knowing the qualifications and full responsibility of an office. Following are the descriptions for some of the offices appearing on your ballot.



Federal Offices

President/Vice President

Under the U.S. Constitution, the President must be at least 35 years old and a native-born citizen of the United States. The President's term of office is four years; no person may serve more than two consecutive terms as president.

The President's functions, powers, and responsibilities are defined by Article II, Section 1 of the Constitution. The chief duty is to ensure that the laws are faithfully executed, and this duty is performed through a system of appointed executive agencies that includes cabinet-level departments. The President appoints all the cabinet heads and most other high-ranking officials of the executive branch of the federal government. The President also nominates all judges of the federal judiciary, including the members of the Supreme Court; nominees are subject to confirmation by the Senate. The President is the commander in chief of the nation's armed forces, in times of peace as well as war. The President has the power to make treaties with foreign governments, though the Senate must approve such treaties. Finally, the president has the power to approve or reject (veto) the laws passed by Congress.

The Constitution stipulates that the Vice President shall become President in the event the President dies, resigns, or is removed from office. The Vice President also serves as the presiding officer of the U.S. Senate.

U.S. Representative

The U.S. Constitution prescribes that a Representative must be at least 25 years of age, have been a citizen of the United States for seven years, and, when elected, be a resident of the State from which he or she is chosen. A Representative's term of office is two years; the total membership of the House is elected in even-numbered years.

The Constitution assigns the Senate and House equal responsibility for declaring war, maintaining the armed forces, assessing taxes, borrowing money, minting currency, regulating commerce, and making all laws necessary for the operation of the government.



State Executive Offices

Governor

The Governor is the chief executive officer of the state, elected to serve a four-year term. The Governor's executive branch responsibilities include appointing the heads of departments, agencies, and institutions. The Governor's legislative responsibilities include reporting to the Legislature annually on affairs of the state and submitting a budget recommendation. The Governor may veto legislation passed by the Legislature.

The office was created by Article III, Section 2, of the

Washington Constitution. The Governor's powers and duties are outlined in Section 5-13 of the Constitution and RCW 43.06.

Lieutenant Governor

The Lieutenant Governor is elected independently of the Governor and holds office for four years. The Lieutenant Governor acts as Governor if the Governor is unable to perform his/her official duties, and is the presiding officer of the State Senate.

The Lieutenant Governor is elected to a four-year term. The office was created by Article III, Section 16 of the State Constitution.

Secretary of State

The Secretary of State is the state's chief elections officer, chief corporation officer, supervises the State Archives, and oversees the State Library. Primary functions include supervising state elections and certifying election results; filing and verifying initiatives and referendums; publishing the state voters' pamphlet; registering and licensing corporations, limited partnerships and trademarks; registering charitable organizations; collecting and preserving historical records of the state; administering the state's Address Confidentiality Program; and filing official acts of the Legislature and Governor.

The Secretary of State is elected to a four-year term. The office was created by Article III, Section 17 of the State Constitution. The duties are outlined in RCW 43.07.

State Treasurer

As the state's fiscal officer, the State Treasurer's principal duties are to manage and disperse all funds and accounts; be responsible for the safekeeping and interest on all state investments; accounting for and making payments of interest and principal on all state bonded indebtedness and maintaining a statewide revenue collection system for the purpose of expediting the deposit of state funds into the Treasury.

The State Treasurer is elected to a four-year term. The office was created by Article III, Section 19 of the State Constitution. The duties are outlined in RCW 43.08.

State Auditor

Working with more than 2,600 state and local governments, the State Auditor's Office conducts independent financial, accountability, and performance audits of all Washington governments. The State Auditor conducts investigations of state employee whistleblower assertions about state agencies and also investigates reports of fraud, waste, and abuse received through its citizen hotline. Audit and investigation results are documented and reported to governments and the public.

The State Auditor is elected to a term of four years. The office was created by Article III, Section 20 of the State Constitution. The duties are outlined in RCW 43.09 and 43.88.160.



State Executive Offices *(continued)*

Attorney General

The Attorney General serves as legal counsel to the Governor, members of the Legislature, state officials, and more than 230 state agencies, boards and commissions, colleges and universities. The office also represents the various administrative agencies and schools in court or administrative hearings. The Office of the Attorney General enforces consumer protection statutes and serves the public directly by providing information on consumer rights and fraudulent business practices.

The Attorney General is elected to office for a four-year term. The office was created pursuant to Article III, Section 21 of the Washington State Constitution. The duties are outlined in RCW 43.10.

Superintendent of Public Instruction

As head of the state educational agency and chief executive officer of the State Board of Education, the Superintendent is responsible for the administration of the state kindergarten through twelfth grade education program. The regulatory duties of the office include certification of teaching personnel, approval and accreditation of programs, and apportionment of state and local funds. The Superintendent also provides assistance to school districts' school improvement area; in statistical analysis, accounting, management, assessment, and curriculum development.

The Superintendent is elected to a four-year term of office. The office was created pursuant to Article III, Section 22 of the Washington State Constitution. The duties are outlined in RCW 28A.300.

Commissioner of Public Lands

The Commissioner of Public Lands is the head of the Department of Natural Resources, overseeing the management of 5 million acres of forest, agricultural, range, tidal, and shore lands of the state. Subject to proprietary policies established by the Board of Natural Resources, the Commissioner is responsible for the exercise of all duties and functions of the department.

The Commissioner is elected to a four-year term of office. The office was created pursuant to Article III, Section 23 of the Washington State Constitution. The duties are outlined in RCW 43.12 and RCW 43.30.

Insurance Commissioner

The Office of the Insurance Commissioner regulates insurance companies doing business in Washington, licenses agents and brokers, reviews policies and rates, examines the operations and finances of insurers, and handles inquiries and complaints from the public.

The Insurance Commissioner is elected to a four-year term of office. The office was created by the Legislature and the duties are listed in RCW 48.02.060 and 48.43.



Legislative Offices

State Senator

The State Constitution prescribes that a Senator must be a citizen of the United States and a qualified voter in the legislative district from which he or she was chosen. A Senator's term of office is four years; the Senate is made up of 49 members, one from each legislative district in the state. One-half of the membership of the Senate is elected at the General Election held in November of each even-numbered year.

During legislative sessions, the Legislature is called upon to: enact or reject legislation affecting public policy in the state; provide for the levy and collection of taxes and other revenue to support state government and assist local government; and appropriate funds for these purposes.

State Representative

The State Constitution prescribes that a Representative must be a citizen of the United States and a qualified voter in the legislative district from which he or she was chosen. A Representative's term of office is two years; the House is made up of 98 members, two from each legislative district in the state. The total membership of the House is elected at the General Election held in November of each even-numbered year.

During legislative sessions, the Legislature is called upon to: enact or reject legislation affecting public policy in the state; provide for the levy and collection of taxes and other revenue to support state government and assist local government; and appropriate funds for these purposes.

How Candidates' Names Appear on the Ballot

The order in which candidates' names appear on your ballot is established by state law or codes.

For the general election, the names of candidates for President and Vice President are placed in order of the political party which received the highest number of votes in Washington State's previous Presidential Election or, in the case of independent or minor party candidates, in the order of their qualification with the secretary of state (Chapter 29A.36.161, Revised Code of Washington). The names of candidates for all other state offices are ordered according to the number of votes those candidates received in the primary (Chapter 434-230-045(2)(b), Washington Administrative Code). For the primary, a lot draw was conducted to determine the order of candidates' names on the ballot (Chapter 434-230-045(2)(a), WAC).

Political party preferences stated by the candidates do not affect the order in which they are listed on any ballot (Chapter 434-230-045(2)(c), WAC).