### CIVICS DICTIONARY

| presidential | ambassador |
| succession   | embassy    |
| State of the Union | minister |
| Address      | consul     |
| foreign policy | consulate |
| treaty       | passport   |
| diplomacy    | visa       |
| diplomatic note | counterfeiting |
| reprieve     | civilian   |
| pardon       | Joint Chiefs of Staff |
| commutation  | independent |
| budget       | agency     |
| executive    | regulatory |
| department   | commission |
| secretary    | bureaucracy |
| attorney general |         |

The executive branch, described in this section, is responsible for实施, the national government headed by the president.

In 1789, the nation's first cabinet officers have served in various capacities, including the president as the chief executive official.
Every four years Inauguration Day draws thousands of visitors to the nation’s capital. These visitors and millions more watching on television will witness the swearing in of a new president. Perhaps you were one of the people watching the most recent inaugural ceremony on television. If so, you know that the ceremony is held on a large, flag-draped platform set up at the Capitol. There, the president-elect takes the oath of office, repeating these words from the Constitution:

I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of the President of the United States, and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States.

The president then delivers an Inaugural Address, a speech listened to by people throughout the world. They know, as you know, that one of the most powerful people in the world is speaking—the person who will lead the United States for the next four years.

---

Study Guide

- What are the qualifications for president?
- What are the president’s powers and roles?
- How is the executive branch organized?
- What are the executive departments and the independent agencies?

---

Qualifications

The Constitution sets forth certain qualifications that the president of the United States must meet. The president must:

- be a native-born U.S. citizen,
- be at least 35 years of age, and
- have been a resident of the United States for at least 14 years.

These are the only qualifications for president mentioned in the Constitution. There also have been a number of “unwritten rules,” however, about who could be elected president. For example, all U.S. presidents have been men. All have been white. All have been Christian. Most presidents have attended college. Many have been lawyers. Most have held other political offices at the state or national level for several years before becoming president.

These unwritten rules, however, can change. For example, for most of the nation’s history, only Protestants were elected president. John F. Kennedy, who was a Roman Catholic, broke that unwritten rule when he was elected president in 1960.

Recently, more women and other minority group members have become involved in...
presidential politics. In 1984, for example, Geraldine Ferraro was the Democratic nominee for vice president. Jesse Jackson, an African American, made a strong bid for the presidency in 1984 and again in 1988.

**Term of Office**

The president is elected to a four-year term and may be reelected for a second term of office. The original U.S. Constitution, however, did not state how many terms the president could serve.

George Washington set the tradition of a limit of two terms. He refused to run for the presidency a third time when he was urged to do so. This two-term tradition was not broken until Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected to a third term as president in 1940. In 1944 he won a fourth term.

In 1951 the number of terms a president can serve was limited by passage of the Twenty-second Amendment. This amendment set a two-term limit to the presidency.

**Salary and Benefits**

The salary the president receives is set by Congress. Congress cannot, however, change the salary during a president's term of office. This restriction was included in the Constitution to prevent Congress from punishing or rewarding a president.

Today the president is paid a salary of $50,000 a year plus $50,000 for official expenses. Since the president must travel frequently, there is also an annual allowance for travel costs.

The president is provided with many additional benefits. The president's family lives in the White House. This beautiful building has been the home of all U.S. presidents since John Adams. The White House is also the site of the president's office and the offices of the president's closest assistants. Parts of the White House are open to the public.

For special meetings and for relaxation on weekends or holidays, the president can use Camp David, located in the mountains of Maryland. A large fleet of cars, helicopters, and planes—One—is available.

**The Vice President**

The Constitution gives the vice president the important job of president of the Senate. If there is a tie vote in the Senate, the vice president has the power of casting a deciding vote. (John Adams, the second vice president, reversed the outcome of the election of 1800.)

The vice president is elected on the same ticket as the president. In recent years the same parties have nominated the president and the vice president.

The vice president is fourth in line of succession, after the president, the Speaker of the House, and the president pro tempore of the Senate.

Vice presidents are chosen for their political experience, their party loyalty, and their ability to work with Congress and the president.

**President and the Vice President**

Eight U.S. presidents have been impeached, but only one—Richard Nixon—was removed from office. The Constitution requires the president to decide whether to resign or to stand for re-election.
planes—including the special jet *Air Force One*—is also available to the president.

**The Vice President**

The Constitution provides that if the president dies, resigns, or is removed from office, the vice president becomes president. The Constitution gives the vice president only one other job—to preside over the Senate. Because the power of the vice president is so limited, John Adams, the first vice president of the United States, called the office “the most insignificant” ever invented.

In recent years, however, presidents have given their vice presidents more responsibilities. Vice presidents must be fully informed and prepared to take over the important job that could become theirs. In fact, nine vice presidents have taken over the office of president. The first was John Tyler, who became president in 1841 when President William Harrison died. In the twentieth century, five vice presidents have assumed the presidency.

The vice president must meet the same constitutional qualifications as the president. The vice president also serves a four-year term, and receives a salary of $171,500 a year plus a sum for official expenses.

Vice presidential candidates often are chosen for their ability to help the presidential candidates win election. Increasingly, political parties have also chosen vice presidential nominees who are fully qualified in experience to succeed to the presidency.

**Presidential Succession**

Eight U.S. presidents died while in office. One president resigned. In each case, the vice president took the oath of office and became president as provided by the Constitution.

What would happen if both the president and the vice president should die while in office? The Constitution gave Congress the right to decide who should then fill the office of the presidency. This is known as the order of presidential succession.

According to a law passed by Congress in 1947, the Speaker of the House of Representatives becomes president if both the regularly elected president and vice president die or are removed from office. If the Speaker dies or is removed from office, then the president pro tempore of the Senate succeeds to the presidency. Following them in succession to the presidency are the members of the president’s Cabinet, in the order in which their departments were created.

**The Twenty-fifth Amendment**

If the president dies or resigns and is succeeded by the vice president, who then becomes vice president? Until 1967 the answer to this question was no one. The office of the vice president remained empty when the vice president assumed the presidency.

Chief Justice Warren Burger swore in Gerald R. Ford as the 38th president of the United States on August 9, 1974, the day that President Richard M. Nixon resigned from office.
Adopted in 1967, the Twenty-fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution provides for the new president nominating a new vice president. The nomination of the vice president must then be approved by a majority vote of both houses of Congress.

The first use of the Twenty-fifth Amendment occurred in 1973. Vice President Spiro Agnew resigned after he was charged with income tax evasion. President Richard M. Nixon nominated Gerald R. Ford as the new vice president. Ford's nomination was confirmed by Congress.

The amendment was used again in 1974. When President Nixon resigned because of the Watergate scandal, Vice President Ford became president. Ford then nominated Nelson A. Rockefeller as vice president, and Congress approved the nomination. For the only time in its history, the nation had a president and a vice president who had not been elected to office by the people.

The Twenty-fifth Amendment also provides that if the president is too ill to serve, the vice president will serve as acting president until the president is well again. Suppose, however, that the president wants to resume the duties of office, but the vice president and the Cabinet do not think the president is fit to do so. Then Congress must decide by a two-thirds vote whether the president will return to office or whether the vice president will continue as acting president.

**SECTION 1 REVIEW**

1. Define the following term: presidential succession.
2. What are the constitutional qualifications for the presidency and the vice presidency?
3. How many terms can a president serve, and what salaries do the president and vice president receive?

4. Identify the order of presidential succession.
5. What happens if a president becomes too ill to serve?

6. **THINKING CRITICALLY** As you have learned, the Twenty-second Amendment places a limit on the number of terms that a president can serve in office. What advantages might there be to limiting a president's length of time in office? What disadvantages might there be to this limit? Write a position statement for or against repealing the Twenty-second Amendment.

---

**Powers and Roles of the President**

Article 2, Section 1, of the Constitution provides that "the executive power shall be vested in [given to] a President of the United States of America." This clause means that the president, as head of the executive branch, is responsible for executing, or carrying out, the laws passed by Congress.

Because the president has the job of executing the nation's laws, the president is often called the nation's chief executive. As chief executive, the president must take an active role in all phases of government.

**Legislative Leader**

The president plays a large role in shaping the laws of the United States. As you know, the president recommends, or suggests, needed laws to Congress. In fact, the Constitution requires that the president "shall from time to time give to the Congress information of [about] the state of the Union, and recommend to their [Congress's] consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary. . . ."
To carry out this constitutional provision, the president delivers several messages to Congress each year. These messages may be delivered as speeches before Congress or be sent in writing.

Every year, usually in late January, the president delivers to Congress a **State of the Union Address.** This speech, which is televised to the public, sets forth the programs and policies that the president wants Congress to put into effect as laws. These programs and policies usually address the nation's most pressing concerns.

The president also sends Congress a budget message, recommending how the federal government should raise and spend its money. In an economic message to Congress, the president reviews the nation's economic condition and recommends various laws and programs to help the economy.

The president also influences legislation by the power to veto, or reject, laws. Sometimes the threat of a presidential veto discourages Congress from passing a bill. Congress knows how difficult it is to pass a bill after it has been vetoed by the president. For this reason, Congress considers the issues carefully before passing a bill it knows the president does not favor.

**Commander in Chief**

As head of the U.S. armed forces, or commander in chief, the president has important powers. All military officers, in time of war or in peacetime, take their orders from the president. The president does not actually lead U.S. forces into battle. The president is, however, in constant contact with the nation's military leaders. The president also has the final word in planning how a war is to be fought.

Under the Constitution, only Congress can declare war. As commander in chief of the armed forces, however, the president may send U.S. forces into any part of the world where danger threatens. Presidents have sent troops into action in foreign lands many times in the nation's history.

**Foreign Policy Leader**

The president, as chief executive of one of the most powerful nations of the world, must give constant attention to U.S. foreign policy—the nation's plan for dealing with the other nations of the world. As the person in charge of conducting U.S. foreign policy, the president seeks to secure friendly relations with foreign governments while preserving the security of the United States.

To conduct relations with other governments, the president appoints officials to represent the United States government in foreign nations. The president also meets with leaders of other nations and with their representatives in the United States. In addition, the president...
often travels abroad to other countries to meet with foreign leaders.

In pursuing its foreign policy, the U.S. government makes written agreements, called treaties, with other nations. The president is responsible for making these treaties with foreign governments. Many officials work to reach agreements with other nations. The president, however, assumes the final responsibility for all treaties.

All treaties must be made with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Senate must approve a treaty by a two-thirds vote before it becomes effective. If the treaty is approved, the president has the responsibility of seeing that its provisions are carried out.

---

**Powers of the President**

**The President of the United States**

- Approves or vetoes all bills passed by Congress
- Is commander in chief of the armed forces
- Appoints Cabinet members, ambassadors, and federal judges
- Proposes laws and programs to Congress
- Keeps Congress informed about the state of the nation and the economy
- Prepares the federal government’s budget
- Receives foreign ambassadors
- Conducts U.S. foreign relations and makes treaties
- Can pardon those guilty of crimes against the federal government

---

**Judiciary**

The U.S. government has many other departments that handle various aspects of the government.

The judicial system is made up of judges and juries. It gives people a chance to gather information and to act on behalf of the person or group. It also provides a fair and just process for settling disputes and imparting justice.

---

**Other**

Over the years, other constitutions and political systems have been created and developed.
Chief Diplomat

Great skill and tact are required in dealing with friendly and unfriendly nations. The art of dealing with foreign governments is called diplomacy. The president is the nation's chief diplomat. Presidential visits to foreign nations build international friendship and security and promote U.S. interests.

As the nation's chief diplomat, the president often corresponds with the leaders of foreign governments. These written communications are called diplomatic notes. Also, the president has access to a computerized communications system. This system enables the president to make a direct connection with other governments quickly in an emergency. Such a method of communication between world leaders is important. It can prevent governments from taking hasty actions that might have dangerous consequences for the United States and the world.

Judicial Powers

The Constitution gives the president the power to appoint Supreme Court justices and other federal judges. These judicial appointments must be approved by a majority vote of the members of the Senate.

The president also has the power to grant reprieves and pardons to those who have committed certain federal crimes. A reprieve postpones the carrying out of a person's sentence. It gives a convicted person the opportunity to gather more evidence to support his or her case or to appeal for a new trial. A pardon forgives a person convicted of a crime and frees him or her from serving out the sentence. The president also has the judicial power known as commutation, or making a convicted person's sentence less severe.

Other Presidential Roles

Over the years the president has assumed other roles that are not mentioned in the Constitution. These roles include chief of state and political party leader.

As chief of state, the president is the symbol of the United States and its people. It is the president who greets visiting foreign leaders and travels to other countries to strengthen ties and improve relations. The president performs many ceremonial duties as well. These include awarding medals to honor worthy citizens, lighting the nation's Christmas tree, and throwing out the first baseball to open the baseball season.

The president is also the leader of a political party. Members of the president's political party worked hard to help elect the president. In return, the president makes speeches to help other party members who are running for public office. The president also helps the party raise money for its political campaigns, candidates, and programs.
Presidential Daily Life

The president must find time to carry on a wide range of activities from day to day. At all times the president's office must be in touch with other key officials of the nation's government. Thus the president can never be far away from the telephone.

The activities that occupy the president's time are varied. Many hours of the day are spent in meetings with presidential advisers. When Congress is in session, the president may have a breakfast or luncheon meeting with congressional leaders. Meetings are also held with members of the president's political party to discuss the bills before Congress, appointments of officials, or political plans and strategies important to the party. In addition, the president meets regularly with members of the Cabinet.

The president delivers a great number of speeches. President Franklin D. Roosevelt established the custom of reporting directly to the American people. He did so by radio talks, which he called "fireside chats."

Today the president still delivers radio talks to the public, usually every week. More and more, however, presidents rely on television broadcasts. The president appears on television to speak directly to the American people, to inform them of proposed new programs, and to ask for their support. The president also holds press conferences to explain government decisions and answer questions from reporters.

The president must find time to attend to many other important duties. The president must sign (or veto) bills submitted by Congress, write speeches, appoint officials, and examine budget figures. The president must deal with matters of foreign policy and reach decisions on national defense issues. The president must find time to read newspapers and magazines and to study reports received from government officials at home and abroad. This enables the president to stay informed about events taking place in the nation and throughout the world.

Section 2 Review

1. Define or identify the following terms:
   - State of the Union Address
   - foreign policy
   - treaty
   - diplomacy
   - note
   - reprieve
   - pardon
   - commutation

2. How does the president influence legislation? What are the judicial powers of the president?

3. How does Congress limit the military powers of the president?

4. What are the president's duties as foreign policy leader?

5. What duties does the president have as chief of state?

6. Thinking Critically: Using the president's State of the Union Address as a model, write a "State of the School Address." In your speech identify some of the challenges facing your school. For each issue, propose a possible solution. Conclude by telling the school's citizens (your class) what you will do to help the school prosper.

Executive Departments and the Cabinet

The duties of the executive branch of the federal government have grown significantly since George Washington served as the nation's first chief executive. During the early years of the nation, presidents carried out their executive duties with the help of a few assistants. Today there are thousands of people who assist the president.

Executive Office of the President

The president's closest advisers and aides are part of the Executive Office of the President. They schedule and write speeches, and the president's secretary represents the president to the media and the public.

The Executives

The leaders who drew up a plan for growth did not try to plan for growth.
The Executive Office was established in 1939. It has been reorganized by every president since then. The agencies and offices that make up the Executive Office advise the president on current issues, including important domestic and international matters.

The Council of Economic Advisers, for example, furnishes the president with facts and figures about the nation’s economy. It recommends programs to promote economic growth and stability.

Another agency of the Executive Office is the Office of Management and Budget. This agency assists in the preparation of the federal budget, which the president must present to Congress. A budget is a plan of income and spending.

The National Security Council (NSC) is the president’s top-ranking group of advisers on all matters concerning the nation’s defense and security. The Office of National Drug Control Policy coordinates federal, state, and local activities designed to stop the use of illegal drugs. The Council on Environmental Quality monitors the environment and makes recommendations to the president.

The White House Office includes the president’s closest personal and political advisers. Also part of this office are researchers, clerical staff, social secretaries, and the president’s doctor. Members of the White House staff perform many important jobs for the president. They schedule the president’s appointments and write speeches. They help maintain good relations with Congress and with other departments and agencies of the government. A press secretary represents the president to the news media and the public.

**Executive Departments**

The leaders who wrote the U.S. Constitution drew up a plan of government with plenty of room for growth. They did not try to work out every detail of government. For example, they did not try to plan for each person who would help the president carry out the nation’s laws. Thus the Constitution makes no mention of the president’s assistants other than to state that “he may require the opinion, in writing, of the principal officer in each of the executive departments. . . .”

Today there are 14 executive departments in the federal government. Each department has specific areas of responsibility. The chart on page 107 shows the principal duties of each executive department.

Congress has the power to establish executive departments, reorganize and combine different departments, or even eliminate a department. The power to change the executive departments helps the presidency and the nation adapt to changing times.

Of course, the president, as chief executive, has a great deal of influence in these changes. Congress listens carefully to the president’s wishes and requests regarding the executive departments. The president also has the power to direct the executive departments, working within the structure established by Congress.
The Cabinet

George Washington had the help of only three executive departments: the Departments of State, Treasury, and War. He met frequently with the heads of these departments to discuss policy and to seek their advice on important matters. The heads of these executive departments, as you recall, became known as the president's Cabinet. Every president since Washington has followed the custom of holding Cabinet meetings.

The Cabinet consists of the heads of the 14 executive departments and any other officials the president chooses. The president often invites other key government officials, such as the vice president, to attend Cabinet meetings. Cabinet meetings are led by the president.

Members of the Cabinet are appointed by the president. These appointments, however, must be approved by a majority vote of the Senate. The title of most Cabinet members is secretary. For example, the head of the Department of State is called the secretary of state. The head of the Department of the Treasury is called the secretary of the treasury. The head of the Department of Justice, however, is known as the attorney general.

On the next few pages, you will read about each of the 14 executive departments. All of these departments work to improve the lives of all Americans.

Department of State

The conduct of the nation's relations with other countries is the special responsibility of the Department of State. The secretary of state heads a large staff of officials in Washington, D.C., who direct the worldwide work of the department. U.S. officials sent to other countries to represent the nation also report to the Department of State.

Ambassadors are the highest-ranking U.S. representatives in foreign countries. The official residence of an ambassador in a foreign country is called an embassy. In a few smaller countries, the United States is represented by officials called ministers.

There is another kind of representative, called a consul. An American consul's office, or consular, is a civic center for American citizens in a foreign country. It provides services for citizens, helps them get visas, and helps them get assistance if they need it.

At home, the Department of State is called The Great Seal of the United States. It is a symbol of the unity of the states and the power of the federal government. It is a symbol of the division of power between the federal government and the states. It is a symbol of the rule of law and the protection of civil liberties. It is a symbol of the United States' commitment to peace and international relations.

Department of the Treasury

The Department of the Treasury is the nation's mouthpiece on economic issues. It is responsible for collecting and distributing the nation's income and for managing its budget. It is also responsible for overseeing the federal debt and for ensuring that the government's financial operations are conducted in a responsible and efficient manner.

The secretary of the treasury is the nation's chief fiscal officer. He or she is responsible for ensuring that the government's financial operations are conducted in a responsible and efficient manner. The secretary of the treasury is also responsible for overseeing the Federal Reserve System and for ensuring that the nation's monetary policies are conducted in a responsible and efficient manner.

Until 1947, the Department of the Navy was a separate department from the Department of the Treasury. In 1947, the Department of the Navy was transferred to the Department of the Treasury. This transfer was made to streamline the nation's government and to make it more efficient.
or consulate, can be found in most large foreign cities. The consuls and the members of their staffs work hard to improve trade between the United States and other nations. They also help protect American citizens who conduct business and own property in foreign countries. American citizens traveling in foreign lands may go to U.S. consulates if they need help.

At home the Department of State is the keeper of the Great Seal of the United States. The Great Seal is put on all laws and treaties. [See page 577.] The Department of State also issues documents known as passports and visas. Passports allow U.S. citizens to travel abroad. Visas allow people from other nations to come to the United States.

**Department of the Treasury**

The Department of the Treasury manages the nation’s money. It collects taxes from citizens and businesses and pays out the money owed by the federal government. When necessary, the Department of the Treasury borrows money for the government. It also supervises the coining and printing of money, and it keeps the president informed about the financial condition of the country.

There are several divisions within the Department of the Treasury. The Internal Revenue Service [IRS] collects individual and corporate income taxes. The Customs Service collects taxes on goods brought into the country. The Secret Service protects the president and helps prevent counterfeiting—the making or distributing of fake money.

**Department of Defense**

Until 1947 the nation’s armed forces were directed by two separate departments—the Department of War and the Department of the Navy. In 1947 Congress placed all the armed forces—the Army, Navy, and Air Force—under one department, the Department of Defense. Its head, the secretary of defense, is always a civilian, or nonmilitary person. The secretary has, however, many military officers as assistants. These officers help the secretary plan military defense and provide for the training and equipping of the armed forces.

There are three major divisions within the Department of Defense. The Department of 

(continued on page 106)
the Army commands land forces. The Department of the Navy has charge of seagoing forces and includes the Marine Corps. The Department of the Air Force is responsible for air defenses. Each of these divisions is headed by a civilian secretary.

The highest-ranking military officers of the Army, Navy, and Air Force are members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The head of the Marine Corps attends all meetings of the Joint Chiefs and takes part as an equal member when matters concerning the Marines are discussed. Members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff have the duty of advising the president on military matters.

The Department of Defense is also responsible for four officer-training schools. These are the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York; the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland; the U.S. Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs, Colorado; and the U.S. Coast Guard Academy at New London, Connecticut.

Academy candidates are nominated by their district representatives or by their state senators. Usually, four candidates are named for each opening. All candidates must have good high school academic records and must pass scholastic and physical tests.

The successful candidate receives a free four-year college education and upon graduation becomes an officer in one of the military services. Since 1976 women have been admitted into all the service academies on an equal basis with men.

Department of Justice
The Department of Justice, under the attorney general, enforces federal laws. This department also defends the United States in court when a lawsuit is brought against the federal government for any reason.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is an important agency of the Department of Justice. The FBI investigates crimes that break federal government laws and arrests those accused of crimes against the United States.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and the Bureau of Prisons are also part of the Department of Justice.

Department of the Interior
The Department of the Interior manages the nation’s natural resources. Its duties are to encourage the wise use of U.S. land, minerals, water, fish, and wildlife. The department also manages national parks and federal dams.

There are several important divisions within the Department of the Interior. The Bureau of Indian Affairs deals with matters involving Native Americans. The Bureau of Reclamation sponsors irrigation, flood control, and hydroelectric power projects. Other divisions include the National Park Service, the Bureau of Mines, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Department of Agriculture
The Department of Agriculture helps farmers in the important task of raising and marketing crops. Special agencies in the department, such as the Agricultural Research Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service, encourage better methods of farming. The department also prepares reports on market conditions for crops and livestock that assist farmers in their planning and planting.

Other divisions within the Department of Agriculture include the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA), which provides loans for buying and operating farms, and the U.S. Forest Service, which helps protect the nation’s woodlands. The Food and Consumer Service manages the Food Stamp and National School Lunch programs.

Department of Commerce
The Department of Commerce encourages U.S. trade and business. There are many important agencies within this department. For example, the Bureau of Economic Analysis studies business conditions in the United
Principal Duties of the Executive Departments

- **Department of State (1789)**
  - Conducts foreign relations
  - Protects U.S. citizens abroad
  - Issues passports and visas

- **Department of the Treasury (1789)**
  - Prints, coins, and issues money
  - Collects taxes and pays bills
  - Manages government funds

- **Department of Justice (1789)**
  - Investigates violations of federal laws
  - Prosecutes cases before courts
  - Administers naturalization laws
  - Enforces immigration laws

- **Department of the Interior (1849)**
  - Controls public lands
  - Maintains public parks
  - Supervises Native American reservations
  - Controls water resources

- **Department of Agriculture (1862)**
  - Conducts studies to help farmers
  - Manages Food Stamp and School Lunch programs
  - Helps farmers raise and market crops
  - Directs soil conservation programs

- **Department of Commerce (1903)**
  - Sets standards for weights and measures
  - Encourages and regulates foreign trade
  - Publishes reports on business and trade

- **Department of Labor (1913)**
  - Determines standards of labor
  - Publishes employment information
  - Directs public employment services

- **Department of Defense (1949)**
  - Maintains U.S. armed forces
  - Conducts military studies
  - Operates military bases

- **Department of Health and Human Services (1953)**
  - Directs public health services
  - Sees that foods and medicines are safe

- **Department of Housing and Urban Development (1965)**
  - Helps urban housing programs
  - Helps cities plan traffic control
  - Helps cities plan mass transportation
  - Cooperates with metropolitan area planners

- **Department of Transportation (1966)**
  - Helps develop the nation's transportation policy
  - Supervises federal-aid highway program
  - Promotes transportation safety

- **Department of Energy (1977)**
  - Helps develop the nation's energy policy
  - Promotes energy resources

- **Department of Education (1979)**
  - Sets guidelines for granting financial aid to schools
  - Conducts research on educational subjects
  - Administers federally sponsored education programs

- **Department of Veterans Affairs (1949)**
  - Administers medical and disability benefits to veterans and their families
  - Provides pensions and death benefits for veterans
  - Guarantees home loans to veterans

---

1. Year in parentheses indicates the year the department was established.
States. The Minority Business Development Agency assists in creating and strengthening minority-owned businesses. The Patent and Trademark Office protects the rights of inventors. The International Trade Administration promotes world trade and seeks to strengthen the U.S. position in such trade. Also within this department is the Bureau of the Census, which counts the U.S. population every 10 years. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which monitors and forecasts the nation’s weather, is also part of the Department of Commerce.

**Department of Labor**

American workers receive important services from the Department of Labor. This department gathers information on working conditions in various businesses and industries. The Employment Standards Administration is responsible for carrying out federal laws that regulate the wages and hours of workers and seeks to improve working conditions.

Another division of the Department of Labor is the Bureau of Labor Statistics, which collects information about employment and labor-management relations. The Women’s Bureau is responsible for promoting the employment opportunities and personal well-being of working women.

**Department of Health and Human Services**

The Department of Health and Human Services gathers information, conducts research, and runs programs to promote the health and well-being of all citizens. It was created from the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) in 1980. Its largest division, the Social Security Administration, became an independent agency early in 1995.

**Department of Housing and Urban Development**

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) seeks to improve the housing conditions in U.S. cities. It runs programs to help people buy homes, and it helps city and state governments provide public housing and improve neighborhoods.

**Department of Transportation**

The Department of Transportation helps coordinate and develop the nation’s ground, water, and air transportation systems. It also promotes public safety and deals with mass transportation issues. The Coast Guard is part of the Department of Transportation in peacetime. In wartime it becomes part of the Navy and the Department of Defense.

**Department of Energy**

The Department of Energy helps plan and manage the nation’s energy policy. One of the department’s main goals is to lessen the amount of energy that is wasted in the nation. In addition, this department is responsible for enforcing energy laws. It also regulates the development and use of nuclear and hydroelectric power, gas and oil pipelines, and other energy resources.

**Department of Education**

The Department of Education provides advice and information to the nation’s school systems. It is also responsible for distributing federal funds and administering federal programs in schools throughout the United States.

**Department of Veterans Affairs**

The Department of Veterans Affairs replaced the Veterans Administration (VA), a government agency, in 1989. This department is responsible for administering government benefits to U.S. veterans and their families. These benefits include health care, pensions, and education loans.
SECTION 3 REVIEW

1. Define or identify the following terms: budget, executive department, secretary, attorney general, ambassador, embassy, minister, consul, consulate, passport, visa, counterfeiting, civilian, Joint Chiefs of Staff.

2. What is the purpose of the Executive Office of the President?

3. What is the relationship between the Cabinet and the executive departments?

4. Identify the 14 executive departments.

5. THINKING CRITICALLY Imagine that your recent appointment to head an executive department (of your choice) has been approved by the Senate. As a new secretary, your first task is to write a memo to the president. In the memo describe what you believe is the most pressing national issue facing your department, and explain how your department will address it.

4 Independent Agencies and Regulatory Commissions

In addition to the executive departments, Congress has set up a number of independent agencies. These agencies help the president carry out the duties of office.

The independent agencies are separate from the executive departments because they perform specialized duties that often do not fit into any regular department. In addition, some of these agencies serve all the departments. Therefore, they function best as separate and independent organizations.

Independent Agencies

There are more than 60 independent agencies. Each was created by Congress to perform a specific job. For example, the Commission on Civil Rights collects information about discrimination. The Farm Credit Administration helps farmers obtain loans. The Small Business Administration makes loans to small businesses. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) runs the nation's space program.

Several independent agencies assist the work of the entire government. For example, the Office of Personnel Management gives tests to people who want to apply for jobs with

In the Summer of Service program, an independent agency project, young people spent their summers helping communities in need.
the federal government. The General Services Administration buys supplies for the federal government. It also builds and maintains federal buildings.

Regulatory Commissions

Some independent agencies have the power to make rules and bring violators to court. These are called regulatory commissions. Their decisions often have the force of law.

The Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC), for example, regulates railroad, bus, truck, and water transportation that crosses state lines. The commission has the power to regulate rates and services. Established by Congress in 1887, it is the nation's oldest independent regulatory commission.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) sets and enforces safety standards for consumer products. It also conducts safety research and provides education programs.

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) helps enforce laws regulating the buying and selling of stocks and bonds. This helps protect Americans' investments.

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) helps enforce federal labor laws. It also works to prevent and remedy unfair labor practices among businesses.

Who Runs the Regulatory Commissions?

The regulatory commissions were made independent so that they could have the freedom
they need to do their jobs. The heads of these commissions are appointed by the president, with the approval of the Senate. These officials serve long terms, however—as long as 14 years. Because of these long terms, a single president cannot appoint more than a few commission leaders.

The independence of the regulatory commissions often has been criticized on the grounds that it makes them too powerful. Some people say that these commissions regulate too much and interfere too much in our lives. Other people defend these commissions. They say that their regulations are needed to protect the public.

The Federal Bureaucracy

The many departments and agencies in the executive branch of the government form the federal bureaucracy. Roughly three million people work in the bureaucracy. They include administrators, lawyers, scientists, doctors, engineers, secretaries, and clerks. People in the bureaucracy perform the day-to-day work of the executive branch. They work in Washington, D.C., in other cities throughout the United States, and in other nations.

The bureaucracy has many rules and regulations for carrying out a wide range of activities. Often these rules and regulations lead to bureaucratic delay, or “red tape.” People dealing with a government agency often must spend a lot of time filling out forms. They must stand in seemingly endless lines. Sometimes they must go from department to department before getting the help they need. Despite these problems, the people in the bureaucracy keep the executive branch functioning under every president.

2. Why are the independent agencies separate from the executive departments?

3. In what ways are independent agencies and regulatory commissions similar? In what ways are they different?

4. Thinking Critically Examine the political cartoon on page 110 of your textbook. Then think of a personal experience you have had with bureaucratic red tape in the government or another large organization. Illustrate this experience in a political cartoon. Be sure to include symbols and labels or a caption for your cartoon.

CHAPTER 6 SUMMARY

As the head of the executive branch, the president is responsible for seeing that the nation’s laws are carried out. The president is elected for a four-year term. Presidents may be elected to no more than two terms.

The president has a difficult and demanding job. The president must provide leadership in such vital areas as setting foreign policy, dealing with foreign governments, planning national defense needs, and promoting the nation’s prosperity. As chief executive of one of the world’s most powerful nations, the president plays a large part in shaping the history of the nation and the world.

For help in these tasks, the president turns to the members of the Cabinet—the heads of the executive departments. These departments carry on much of the work of the executive branch of the federal government. A number of independent agencies also assist in the day-to-day work of the executive branch. These agencies deal with matters such as interstate commerce, protection of the environment, national defense, and many other important activities of government.

SECTION 4 REVIEW

1. Define or identify the following terms: independent agency, regulatory commission, bureaucracy.
Vocabulary Workshop

1. Define the term presidential succession.
2. What are the purposes of the president's State of the Union Address?
3. What group of military officers advises the president on military matters?
4. What is the term for written agreements made between nations?
5. What is the head of the Department of Justice called? What title is used for the heads of the other executive departments?
6. What three actions may the president take regarding persons who have committed certain federal crimes?
7. What is the term for the highest-ranking U.S. representatives in foreign countries?

Reviewing Main Ideas

1. What qualifications must a president meet? A vice president?
2. What are three ways that the president can influence legislation? How can the president influence the judicial branch?
3. What is the president's role in foreign policy? As chief of state?
4. How are independent agencies and regulatory commissions similar? How do they differ?

Thinking Critically

1. As you have learned, John Adams, the first U.S. vice president, called the office of the vice president "the most insignificant" ever invented. Do you think this statement holds true today? Why?
2. Officials in Washington have considered creating an executive department whose responsibilities would focus on the environment. What advantages would a Department of the Environment bring? Why might such a department be controversial?

3. The president is the most powerful member of the executive branch. Who or what has authority over the president?

Citizenship in Your Community

Cooperative Project

With your group, collect newspaper and magazine articles and photographs that illustrate the president's daily activities. Determine how each of the president's activities affects your community. What policies or laws has the president carried out that affect your daily life and that of the other members of your community? Create a collage with the materials you have collected, and present it to the class. Each member of your group should explain how one of the president's activities shown affects your community.

Building Your Portfolio

The second step of your unit portfolio project (see page 135) is to create a list of the responsibilities of the executive branch. Next to each item, indicate which part of the executive branch handles that responsibility—the president and the Executive Office, an executive department, or an independent agency. Analyze your list. Do responsibilities overlap, causing conflict and inefficiency? Are there too many departments and agencies? Too few? Write a paragraph explaining any changes you would make to the executive branch. If no changes are needed, explain why. Place your list and your paragraph in your individual portfolio for later use.