

Barack Hussein Obama II (/bəˈrɑːk huːˈseɪn oʊˈbɑːmə/ [ⓘ], *bə-RAHK hoo-SAYN oh-BAH-mə*,^[1] born August 4, 1961) is an American politician who served as the 44th [president of the United States](#) from 2009 to 2017. A member of the [Democratic Party](#), he was the first [African-American president](#) in U.S. history. Obama previously served as a U.S. senator representing Illinois from 2005 to 2008, as an [Illinois state senator](#) from 1997 to 2004, and as a community service organizer, civil rights lawyer, and university lecturer.

Obama was born in [Honolulu, Hawaii](#). He graduated from [Columbia University](#) in 1983 with a [B.A.](#) in political science and later worked as a [community organizer](#) in Chicago. In 1988, Obama enrolled in [Harvard Law School](#), where he was the first black president of the *[Harvard Law Review](#)*. He became a civil rights attorney and an academic, teaching [constitutional law](#) at the [University of Chicago Law School](#) from 1992 to 2004. He also went into elective politics; Obama represented the [13th district in the Illinois Senate](#) from 1997 until 2004, when he [successfully ran for the U.S. Senate](#). In 2008, after [a close primary campaign](#) against [Hillary Clinton](#), he was nominated by the Democratic Party for president and chose Delaware Senator [Joe Biden](#) as his running mate. Obama was elected president, defeating [Republican Party](#) nominee [John McCain](#) in the [presidential election](#) and [was inaugurated](#) on January 20, 2009. Nine months later he was named the [2009 Nobel Peace Prize](#) laureate, a decision that drew a mixture of criticism and praise.

Obama's first-term actions addressed the [global financial crisis](#) and included [a major stimulus package](#) to guide the economy in recovering from the [Great Recession](#), a partial extension of [George W. Bush's tax cuts](#), [legislation to reform health care](#), [a major financial regulation reform bill](#), and the end of a major U.S. [military presence in Iraq](#). Obama also appointed [Supreme Court](#) justices [Sonia Sotomayor](#) and [Elena Kagan](#), the former being the first [Hispanic American](#) on the Supreme Court. He ordered the [counterterrorism raid](#) which killed [Osama bin Laden](#) and downplayed Bush's [counterinsurgency model](#), expanding [air strikes](#) and making extensive use of special forces, while encouraging greater reliance on host-government militaries. Obama also ordered [military involvement in Libya](#) in order to implement [UN Security Council Resolution 1773](#), contributing to the overthrow of [Muammar Gaddafi](#).

After winning [re-election](#) by defeating Republican opponent [Mitt Romney](#), Obama was [sworn in for a second term](#) on January 20, 2013. In his second term, Obama took steps to [combat climate change](#), signing [a major international climate agreement](#) and an [executive order](#) to limit [carbon emissions](#). Obama

Barack Obama



Official portrait, 2012

44th President of the United States

In office

January 20, 2009 – January 20, 2017

Vice President [Joe Biden](#)

Preceded by [George W. Bush](#)

Succeeded by [Donald Trump](#)

United States Senator from Illinois

In office

January 3, 2005 – November 16, 2008

Preceded by [Peter Fitzgerald](#)

Succeeded by [Roland Burris](#)

Member of the Illinois Senate from the 13th district

In office

January 8, 1997 – November 4, 2004