

# The Executive Branch

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# 1 The Texas Governor

- **Formal qualifications**

- 30 years old
- American citizen
- Citizen of Texas for 5 years

- **Informal qualifications**

- WASP (White, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant)
- Male
- Middle aged
- Money. Usually a doctor, lawyer, etc.

- **Tenure, Removal, Succession**

- 4 year terms, no term limits
- While in office, there are 3 ways for the governor to leave office
  - \* Death
  - \* Resignation
  - \* Impeachment
- The Governor will be replaced by the Lt. Governor if necessary, they will serve the remainder of the term.

- **Compensation** - Governors are on the clock 24/7. They take the blame and the credit for most things. Governors get paid ~\$153,000 per year, and the governor's mansion with an expense account and professional staff.

- **Staff** - Governors get staff for the governor's mansion, as well as professional staff to help with their duties. They have the authority to appoint people to various boards, commissions, and judicial benches if one becomes empty.

## Tools of Persuasion

- **Formal powers (legal)**

- Veto - Governor has 10 days to sign or veto a bill. Legislature can override the veto (2/3 vote).
- Line item veto - Governor can veto funds without killing a bill or budget. Legislature can override this as well.
- Message power - governor is required to deliver a state of the state address. They will tell what they would like to get accomplished during the legislative session.
- Fact-finding commissions - Governors can appoint these, consisting of influential citizens, politicians, and members of special interest groups. They will do research to find if legislation has public acceptance.

- **Informal Powers**

- Threaten a veto - Legislatures don't want to be in special sessions, so the governor can threaten to make them come back in special session. This buys the governor bargaining power.
- Bargaining - Governor and presiding officers will meet before the legislative session to talk about their goals.
- Special Session - Governors have legal power to call a special session, but they can also threaten to start a special session.
- **Executive Tools of Persuasion** - Governors chair is weak. The Texas executive branch is a plural executive, so power is split between them. Other positions are elected, and the governor cannot fire (or threaten to fire) them.
  - Appointive powers - Governor can appoint allies in strategic positions throughout government. Governors can appoint people while the legislature is out of session, and they can hold the office until congress gets back in session.
    - \* Senatorial Courtesy - If someone is up for appointment but the Senator from that persons district does not approve, usually the other Senators will not vote to confirm.
  - Removal Powers - Once appointed, it's hard for the governor to remove someone without showing cause and getting 2/3 approval from the state legislature.
  - Chief of State powers - Governor serves as a symbol for the state of Texas. There are 3 required duties:
    - \* Governor serves in, or appoints representatives to, multi-state organizations and conferences.
    - \* Help gain national grants and aid for programs from the Office of State-Federal Relations. The governor can appoint/remove the director of this office.
    - \* Request federal aid
  - Budget Powers - Governor puts the budget together and gives it to the state legislature. Legislature puts together their own, then the Legislative Budget Board makes one. The governors budget is usually considered less than the other two.
  - Law Enforcement Powers - Department of Public Safety, Sheriffs, Constables, etc. are under the Director of the Department of Public Safety, appointed by a commission which was appointed by the Governor. Governor has no power over local law enforcement.
  - Military Powers - Governor is commander in chief of state military. The governor can activate the Texas National Guard, and deploy militia to enforce laws and suppress insurrection. The Texas State guard is a backup to the Texas National Guard.
  - Clemency Powers - Governor can only grant clemency based on the recommendation from a board.