

The Executive Branch

The executive branch consists of the President, Vice President, and the Cabinet. The job of the executive branch is to carry out and enforce laws.

The job of the President is to look at bills passed by the Congress and he or she can veto the bill or sign it into a law. If the President chooses to veto a bill, it is sent back to Congress and if two thirds of the Congress approve of the bill, it becomes a law regardless of the veto. The President is also the Chief Commander of armed forces, although he or she can't declare war, only Congress can. Some other major responsibilities of the president are appointing federal judges, negotiating foreign treaties, enforcing the laws, recommending laws, creating policies, hiring and firing officials within the executive branch, and granting pardons to federal offenses. Lastly, even though the president is the head of government, he or she can't disobey the laws. Overall, the president is the head of government but most things have to be approved by the Congress as well to prevent tyranny.

The Vice President must meet the same criteria as the President, which means they have to be a natural born US citizen, at least 35 years of age, and a US resident for the last fourteen years. The role of the Vice President is to serve as an advisor to the President. This can be in the form of making public appearances to represent the President. If something were to happen to the President, such as a resignation or death, the Vice President would take over their job, and then choose a new Vice President. A Vice President also has a job in the legislative branch. A Vice President serves as the chair or president of the Senate and votes on laws when there is an even tie.

The Cabinet of the United States includes the vice president of the United States and the heads of the executive branch's departments in the federal government of the United States. The Cabinet's role is to advise the President on certain subjects and problems that the President might have to face. George Washington's cabinet included only four original members, which were the Secretary of State, Thomas Jefferson, Secretary of Treasury, Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of War, Henry Knox, and Attorney General, Edmund Randolph. Today, 15 executive departments make up the Cabinet and carry out the everyday administration of the federal government. Some examples include the Department of Agriculture, Department of Education, and Department of Energy.

To vote for the president, we use a system called the Electoral College. First, citizens vote for which candidate they prefer. Each state has a different number of electoral votes based on population. The number of electoral votes depends on the

number of representatives and senators they have, with some states like California having 55 votes, while North and South Dakota have 3 votes. In fact, our state Connecticut has 5 electoral votes. If a state has more than half of the votes leaning towards a preferred candidate, then that candidate earns the number of electoral votes from that state. In the end, the presidential candidate that reaches 270 electoral votes wins.

Signed,

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