



Introduction

When you think about state government, you may think of the highway near your home, the state park your family is planning to visit, or one of the state colleges or universities. State government delivers many different services and touches our lives in many ways.

The following pages describe the major departments and agencies that make up the executive branch of state government. These administrative divisions are directed by the governor and the governor's appointees.

The state constitution divides the powers of state government into three distinct branches—the legislative, the executive, and the judicial. The legislative authority of the state is vested in a General Assembly, and the judicial power of the state is vested in a Supreme Court and a system of other courts established by the Legislature.

In the case of the executive branch, the constitution places the “Supreme Executive Power” of the state with the governor. “Executive” means empowered to administer or to carry out certain duties or functions. The governor and his executive branch agencies “execute,” or administer, laws, mandates, and new programs created by the General Assembly by statute.

The executive branch delivers a wide range of services to citizens, and it employs more than 44,500 people in twenty-two Cabinet-level departments and other agencies.

On the following pages, you will see how such a large organization fits together. You will also find addresses, phone numbers, websites, and email addresses for the agencies and programs with services, if you would like to learn more.