

Constitutional Officers

California has eight statewide Constitutional Officers: Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, State Controller, State Treasurer, Insurance Commissioner, and State Superintendent of Public Instruction. These officers are all elected at the same time in a General Election and may be re-elected to a maximum of two four-year terms.

In the event of a vacancy in the office of the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor shall become Governor. In the event of a vacancy in both the offices of the Governor and the Lieutenant Governor, the succession order is as follows: first, the last duly elected President Pro Tempore of the Senate; second, the last duly elected Speaker of the Assembly; third, the Secretary of State; fourth, the Attorney General; fifth, the State Treasurer; and lastly, the State Controller.

GOVERNOR

Gavin Newsom

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The supreme executive power of the State of California is vested in the Governor, whose duty it is to see that the law is faithfully executed.

The Governor is the Commander-in-Chief of this State's militia. The Governor is the official communicator among this state's government, the federal government, and other states of the United States. The Governor supervises the official conduct of all executive and ministerial officers, and the Governor sees that all offices are filled and their duties are performed. The Governor's appointment power extends over significant areas of state government. First, the Governor has the authority to fill vacancies in the judiciary (i.e., Municipal, Superior, Appeals, and Supreme Courts), and to fill newly created judgeships. Second, the Governor has the power, subject to confirmation by the State Senate, to appoint many positions throughout the executive department.

The Governor communicates with the Legislature during each calendar year regarding the state's condition and makes recommendations. The Governor submits an itemized budget to the Legislature within the first ten days of each year.

The Governor may veto any bill passed by the Legislature and return it, with his objections to the house of origin. The Governor may also reduce or eliminate one or more items of appropriation while approving other portions of a bill. The Governor utilizes, in addition to immediate staff, a cabinet that is composed of the ten major state agency secretaries (i.e., Business, Transportation and Housing; Corrections and Rehabilitation; Environmental Protection; Food and Agriculture; Health and Human Services; Labor and Workforce Development; Resources; State and Consumer Services; and Veterans Affairs), plus the Director of Finance and Secretary of Education. This group serves as the Governor's chief policy advisory body and, in their capacities, each implement and coordinates the Governor's policies throughout the state. The Cabinet supplies the Governor with a comprehensive view and current resume of the state operations and serves as a source for long-range planning.

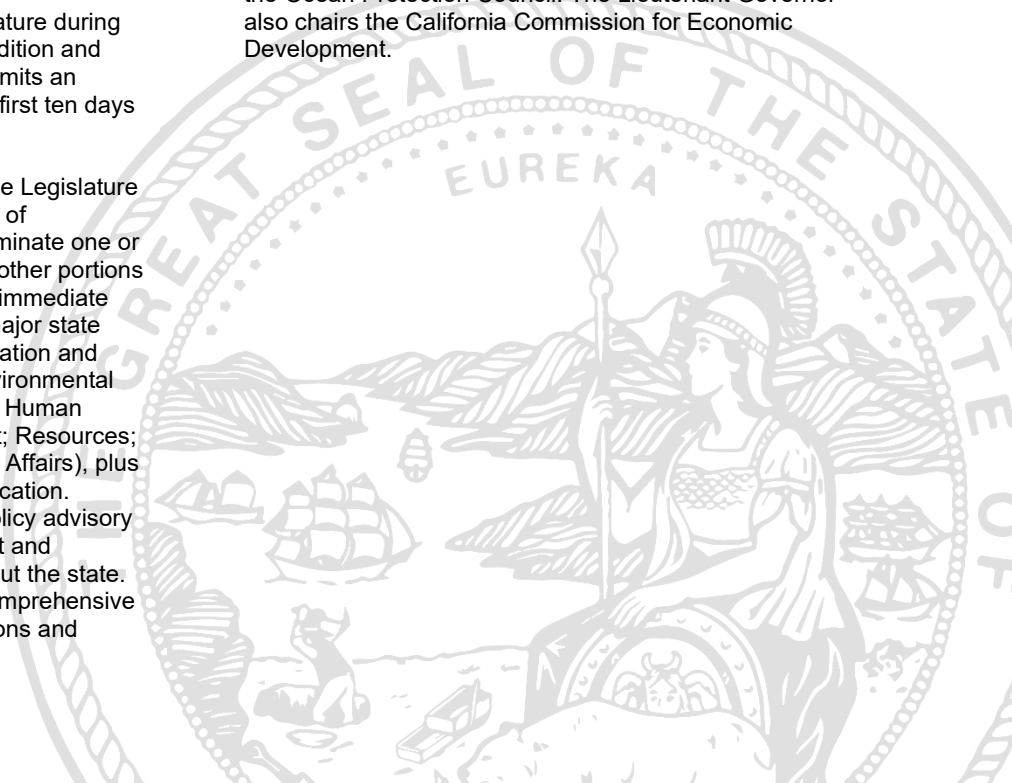
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

Eleni Kounalakis

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The Constitution provides that the Lieutenant Governor shall become Governor in the event of a vacancy. The Lieutenant Governor shall serve as acting Governor in the event of the Governor's absence from the state, temporary disability, or impeachment. The Constitution also provides that the Lieutenant Governor shall be President of the Senate, but that they shall have only a casting vote. The purpose of a casting vote is to break a tie. The casting vote may be used only if it provides the necessary majority required.

The Lieutenant Governor serves in an ex officio capacity as a voting member of the University of California's Board of Regents and as a voting member of the California State University's Board of Trustees. The Lieutenant Governor serves, and rotates with, the State Controller as chair of the State Lands Commission, a non-voting member of the California Coastal Commission, and a voting member of the Ocean Protection Council. The Lieutenant Governor also chairs the California Commission for Economic Development.



SECRETARY OF STATE

Dr. Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D.

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The Secretary of State is the chief elections officer of the State, responsible for overseeing and certifying elections, as well as testing and certifying voting equipment for use in California. The Secretary administers election laws, maintains a database of registered voters, certifies the official lists of candidates for each election, certifies initiatives for placement on the state ballot, publishes the Voter Information Guide before each statewide election, compiles election returns, publishes the official Statement of Vote, and certifies election results.

The Secretary of State plays a key role in making government open and accessible by providing public access to a wide range of corporate, Uniform Commercial Code, campaign finance, lobbying, and election records. The Secretary maintains online editions of the California Lobbyist Directory and the California Roster of federal, state, and local government officials.

The Secretary of State's California Business Portal provides online information, resources, and services to businesses. The Secretary receives, examines, and approves articles of incorporation for new California corporations and qualifies out-of-state and international corporations to do business in California. The Secretary's Business Programs Division also approves amendments to the records of domestic or qualified foreign corporations and registers trademarks, trade names, service marks, and fictitious names. The Secretary is responsible for appointing and commissioning public notaries and administering oaths of office for non-civil service officers and employees. The Secretary of State maintains the Domestic Partnership Registry, the Advance Health Care Directive Registry, and the Safe at Home program. Safe at Home's confidential mail forwarding program helps protect the identities of survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking victims, as well as those who work with reproductive health care clinics.

The Secretary of State keeps the complete record of the official acts of the Legislature and Executive Departments of the State government. The Secretary is charged with custody of the enrolled copy of the Constitution, all acts and resolutions passed by the Legislature, the Journals of each house, the Great Seal of California, and all books, records, deeds, parchments, maps, and papers kept or deposited in the office pursuant to law. As custodian of the public archives, the Secretary maintains and properly equips safe and secure vaults for the preservation of the documents placed in her charge. The Secretary of State affixes the Great Seal, with their attestation, to commissions, pardons, and other public documents that require the Governor's signature.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Rob Bonta

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

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The Attorney General is charged with uniformly and equally enforcing California's laws and assists district attorneys, local law enforcement, and federal and international criminal justice agencies in the administration of justice.

The Attorney General carries out his constitutional responsibilities through the programs of the Department of Justice. The Department's legal programs represent the People in civil and criminal matters before trial, appellate, and the supreme courts of California and the United States. In representing the People, the Attorney General protects Californians from fraudulent, unfair, and illegal activities that victimize consumers or threaten public safety and enforces laws that safeguard the environment and natural resources. The Attorney General also serves as legal counsel to state officers and, with a few exceptions, to state agencies, boards, and commissions. The Department's legal programs maintain major law offices in Sacramento, Fresno, San Francisco, Oakland, Los Angeles, and San Diego.

The Department's Division of Law Enforcement provides forensic services, narcotic investigations, as well as criminal investigations, intelligence, and training. The Division of California Justice Information Services facilitates the exchange of accurate, timely, and complete criminal justice intelligence using state-of-the-art computer technology.

STATE CONTROLLER

Malia M. Cohen

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The State Controller is the chief fiscal officer of the state. Responsible for accountability of the state's financial resources, the State Controller provides sound fiscal control over both receipts and disbursements of public funds; makes certain money due to the state is collected through fair, equitable, and effective tax administration; reports on the financial operations and condition of state and local governments; safeguards many types of lost and forgotten property until claimed by the rightful owners; administers the Property Tax Postponement Program; administers the payroll system for all state government employees and California State University employees; and serves on dozens of boards and commissions with authority ranging from state public land management to crime victim compensation.

The Controller is a member of numerous financing authorities and fiscal and financial oversight entities, including the Franchise Tax Board and Board of Equalization. She also serves on the boards of the nation's two largest public pension funds. No money can be drawn from the Treasury unless it is against an appropriation made by law, and upon warrants duly drawn by the State Controller. In supervising the fiscal affairs of the state, the State Controller suggests plans for the improvement and management of public revenues and keeps a separate account of each specific appropriation.

The State Controller audits all fiscal claims against the state; independently audits government agencies that spend state funds; directs the collections of all monies due to the state; and, if necessary, is authorized to go to court to recover the property or money owed.

The State Controller has general supervision over the procedure for tax sales, tax deeds, and redemptions, and makes necessary rules and regulations relating to fiscal affairs under her control.

STATE TREASURER

Fiona Ma

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The State Treasurer is the State's banker, investor, and lead asset manager. The Treasurer invests monies on behalf of the State government, cities, counties, schools, and other local agencies. The Treasurer sells the State's bonds, including voter-approved infrastructure bonds, and administers the State's bond program. The Treasurer serves on the boards of the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS), the California State Teachers' Retirement System (CalSTRS), and the California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA).

The Treasurer chairs and manages authorities that finance a wide range of projects, including schools, health care, affordable housing, transportation, economic development, alternative energy, and pollution clean-up. The boards, commissions, and authorities the Treasurer chairs include the California Achieving a Better Life Experience Act Board (CalABLE), the California Alternative Energy and Advanced Transportation Financing Authority (CAEATFA), the CalAccount Blue Ribbon Commission (CBRC), the California Debt and Investment Advisory Commission (CDIAC), the California Debt Limit Allocation Committee (CDLAC), the California Educational Facilities Authority (CEFA), the California Health Facilities Financing Authority (CHFFA), the California Hope, Opportunity, Perseverance, and Empowerment (HOPE) for Children Trust Account Program, the California Pollution Control Financing Authority (CPCFA), the California School Finance Authority (CSFA), the CalSavers Retirement Savings Board, the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (CTCAC), the Centralized Treasury and Securities Management Division (CTSMD), the Local Agency Investment Fund (LAIF), the Pooled Money Investment Account (PMIA), the ScholarShare Investment Board, and the Time Deposit Program.

INSURANCE COMMISSIONER

Ricardo Lara

DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE

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The Insurance Commissioner is responsible for overseeing California's insurance industry and protecting the state's insurance consumers. Insurance is a \$259 billion-a-year industry in California and contributes significantly to the state's economy. The Insurance Commissioner leads the California Department of Insurance.

The California Department of Insurance (CDI) ensures that consumers are protected; that the insurance marketplace remains vibrant and stable; and that the law is enforced fairly in an open and equitable regulatory environment.

As the head of the largest consumer protection agency in the state, the Insurance Commissioner enforces the laws of the California Insurance Code and promulgates regulations to implement these laws. The Commissioner regulates the rates of auto, homeowners, and other property and casualty insurance and has saved consumers and businesses over \$2.2 billion in premiums using that authority, but the Commissioner does not have the authority to approve or disapprove health insurance rates or premiums.

The Insurance Commissioner licenses insurance and title businesses in the California market and licenses more than 390,000 agents, brokers, solicitors, and bail bond agents domiciled in the state.

CDI's statewide toll-free hotline serves as an information clearinghouse for consumers with insurance-related questions or problems. The Consumer Services Division is staffed by insurance experts who field nearly 200,000 consumer inquiries and investigate more than 35,000 Requests for Assistance annually. To contact the Consumer Hotline, please call 1-800-927-HELP.

Acting on these Requests for Assistance, the Department investigates companies and licensees accused of insurance code violations, including fraud. The result is the return of tens of millions of dollars to consumers every year and the prosecution of those who violate the law.

STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Tony Thurmond

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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The State Superintendent of Public Instruction is the only nonpartisan of the eight statewide constitutional officers in California. The Superintendent is accountable to the people of California for administering and enforcing education laws and regulations, and for continuing to reform and improve public elementary and secondary school programs, adult education, and some preschool and childcare programs.

The Superintendent is the executive officer and secretary of the State Board of Education and the director of the California Department of Education (CDE). CDE administers California's public education system at the state level. The CDE's mission is to ensure California will provide a world-class education for all students, from early childhood to adulthood. The CDE serves our state by innovating and collaborating with educators, schools, parents, and community partners to prepare students to live, work, and thrive in a highly connected world.

The Superintendent administers the day-to-day operation of CDE and is also responsible for two schools for the deaf, one school for the blind, and three diagnostic centers for neurologically disabled pupils. In addition to serving as an ex officio member of the University of California Board of Regents, the Superintendent serves as an ex officio member of the California State University and the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing boards of trustees. The Superintendent also serves as an ex officio member or has representation on more than 100 boards, commissions, and committees established by the Department, the Legislature, or the Executive Branch.

STATE BOARD OF EQUALIZATION

Yvette M. Stowers, Executive Director

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In 1879, the California State Board of Equalization (BOE) was established under the California Constitution to regulate county assessment practices, equalize county assessment ratios, and assess properties of intercounty railroads. In subsequent constitutional and statutory amendments, the Board was directed to administer tax, fee, and appellate programs to support state and local government. Today, the BOE focuses on its Constitutional responsibilities: Property Tax, Alcoholic Beverage Tax, and Tax on Insurers. By way of agreement, the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration (CDTFA) performs billing and audit services for those programs.

Members of the Board meet monthly in Sacramento to adopt regulations, perform ministerial functions, and send policy for the direction of BOE staff about the foregoing programs. The Board also sets the taxable value of property owned by California's public utilities and railroads and the assessable value of private railroad cars operated in California. The Board hears and decides specified taxpayer appeals related to the Property Tax, Alcoholic Beverage Tax, and Tax on Insurers Programs. The Board appoints an Executive Director to head the agency and manage the activities of BOE staff.

The Board Members

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