

Vote Missouri!

MISSOURI'S SUPERPOWER—THE GOVERNOR



It is highly unlikely that you will see a caped crusader flying around the State Capitol with the words Governor of Missouri emblazoned on his chest, but by law the governor of Missouri

is our superpower. The Missouri Constitution actually says, “The supreme executive power is vested in a governor.”

Exactly what kinds of things does someone with “supreme executive power” do? The Constitution simply says that the governor must make sure that the laws of our state are obeyed and that the governor is in charge of keeping Missouri a peaceful place. But there is nothing simple about this job.

Missouri has thousands of laws about health, education, crimes, taxes, business, prisons, roads, the environment and many other topics.

The governor has 16 departments that help him do this job, like the Department of Transportation and the Department of Elementary and

Secondary Education. These

departments have hundreds of employees all over the state that the governor is responsible for. The governor also has the job of appointing a variety of judges for the courts and can pardon someone who has been convicted of committing a crime.

The governor, as are almost all state officials, is elected in November every four years.

LEARN MORE ABOUT ELECTIONS AND VOTING IN MISSOURI, INCLUDING CURRENT CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE—mo.gov and sos.mo.gov/elections/goVoteMissouri.

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Governor Facts

1. Before Missouri became a state and was a territory, both Meriwether Lewis and William Clark served as territorial governors.
2. Former Gov. Sterling Price was a Confederate general.
3. When the Civil War broke out, Claiborne Jackson was governor. He left the office and went to fight for the Confederacy when Union soldiers came to Jefferson City and declared Missouri as a Union state.
4. Two governors—Phil Donnelly (1945–49, 1953–57) and Christopher Bond (1973–77, 1981–85) are the only two past governors to serve two non-consecutive terms.
5. The governor may serve only two terms of office.

LEARNING EXTENSIONS

1. For all grade levels, go to www.mo.gov for more information on the office of governor and a description of the various departments in the executive branch.
2. Grades 4-6: **ACTIVITY #1**—Discuss the following as a class: What are some things you would do if you were a governor to make sure all Missourians were safe? Think about your own community—what would you want to do for it if you were governor?

ACTIVITY #2—Visit your county government center and see how many state executive departments have offices in your county! Is there a Missouri Transportation Department office? What about a Social Services office?

3. Grades 7-12: **ACTIVITY #1**—In the executive branch, only the governor and state treasurer are restricted to serving two terms of office. The secretary of state, the lieutenant governor, the auditor and the attorney general can serve as many terms as they want. Do you agree with these term limits for the governor? Why or why not? What are the advantages and disadvantages?

ACTIVITY #2—Visit www.mo.gov and look at the list of the 16 departments in the executive branch. Choose one department and make a PowerPoint presentation on the various duties and activities of the department.

MISSOURI STANDARDS ALIGNMENT:

GLE—SS3-A1, C, CA2, 3, 1.6 (for grades K-8)

CLE—SS2C, CA 2, 3, 1.6 (for grades 9-12)