Although the governor is probably the most well-known member of the executive branch, many other officials contribute to the smooth operation of state government. The Illinois Constitution provides for five constitutional officers in addition to the governor; all have the same qualifications and term as the governor. Article 5 of the state constitution gives the following description of these officers:

Lieutenant Governor

Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton

"The lieutenant governor shall perform the duties and exercise the powers in the executive branch that may be delegated to him (or her) by the governor and that may be prescribed by law." This person runs with the governor as a team. The lieutenant governor receives an annual salary of $139,200. These responsibilities include:

- serving as governor if the current governor is unable to serve due to death, disability, impeachment, resignation, or absence from the state;
- chairing several different boards and councils and serving on many committees, often acting as the governor's representative.

Attorney General

"The attorney general shall be the legal officer of the state, and shall have the duties and powers prescribed by law." This summarizes into these responsibilities:

- providing legal and criminal investigation for the state, including investigating consumer complaints;
- providing legal representation for the state and advising state offices of their legal rights.

Secretary of State

"The secretary of state shall maintain the official records of the acts of the General Assembly and such official records of the executive branch as provided by law...He (or she) shall keep the Great Seal of the State of Illinois and perform other duties that may be prescribed by law." In addition to the details above, this office is also responsible for:

- issuing licenses to Illinois-registered motor vehicles and their drivers;
- registering and licensing businesses in Illinois.

Comptroller and Treasurer

The comptroller and treasurer have related responsibilities. "The comptroller...shall maintain the state's central fiscal accounts, and order payments into and out of funds held by the treasurer. "Treasurer...shall be responsible for the safekeeping and investment of monies and securities deposited with him (or her), for their disbursement upon order of the comptroller." There is less possibility of wrongdoing or mismanagement by having two officers in charge of the state's money.

Terms of Office

All executive officers are elected together and serve for four years after each election. This arrangement was part of the 1970 Constitutional Convention that decided that the officials of the State of Illinois should be elected at the same time, but not when the President of the United States is elected (2024, 2028, etc.). Instead, the state officers will be chosen in off-presidential years (2026, 2030, etc.).

Executive Department Organizations

Various departments of the executive branch are organized to carry out specific tasks of the branch. These are called *Civil Administrative Code Departments*. The most important of these departments are Aging, Agriculture, Corrections, State Police, Labor, Lottery, Public Health, Financial & Professional Regulation, Revenue, Personnel, Healthcare and Family Services, Insurance, Mental Health, and Natural Resources. The governor has the responsibility of selecting and appointing the heads of these departments.

QUESTIONS

1. What are the qualifications for governor? _____

_____

_____

TRUE OR FALSE? Write a *T* or *F* in the space provided.

____ 1. The General Assembly cannot be called into special session.
____ 2. The governor may remove any officer he or she feels are incompetent.
____ 3. The governor has the job of enforcing the law.
____ 4. The governor's salary is $117,804.
____ 5. The governor is in charge of foreign affairs.
____ 6. The governor must be 35 years old or older.
____ 7. State executive officers serve four-year terms.
____ 8. The governor is elected at the same election as the president.
____ 9. There is no limit on the number of terms a governor can serve.
____ 10. The governor may partially veto a bill if it is an appropriations bill.
____ 11. Details of the executive branch are in Article 5 of the Illinois Constitution.
____ 12. The governor can only be impeached by the federal government.

WHICH STATE OFFICIAL? Which state official fits the statement given? Answer *Governor (G), Lt. Governor (LT), Secretary of State (SS), Attorney General (AG), Comptroller (C), or Treasurer (T).*

____ 1. Is the keeper of the *Great Seal*.
____ 2. Is the commander-in-chief of the state militia.
____ 3. Maintains the records of the General Assembly.
____ 4. Is the chief legal officer.
____ 5. Maintains central fiscal accounts.
____ 6. Represents the governor on boards and councils.
____ 7. Would represent the state in court.
____ 8. Issues drivers' licenses.
____ 9. Submits the state budget to the General Assembly.

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LIVEWORKSHEETS

Supreme Court oversees the entire state court system, monitoring court workload, seeking improvements to the court system, and establishing an administrative office to watch over these lower courts.

The Illinois Supreme Court is required to hear cases from the lower courts that involve constitutional issues or matters of extreme importance. It has *original jurisdiction* (hearing a case for the first time) in the following circumstances:

1. *revenue* - involving taxes;
2. *mandamus* - ordering a public agency or governmental body to perform an act required by law when it has neglected or refused to do so;
3. *habeas corpus* - requiring a person to be brought before a judge to determine if a person is lawfully held in prison or jail. Otherwise, it is simply the final court of appeal on all other state matters that come from the circuit court on appeal.

The judges are elected by the people to serve 10-year terms. There are seven Supreme Court judges: three from the First Judicial District and one from the second, third, fourth, and fifth districts. The seven justices select one of their members to act as chief justice for a three-year term. A *quorum* of four judges is required for the transaction of court business, and there must be agreement among at least four justices on any decision or opinion rendered by the court.

The court convenes in the Illinois Supreme Court Building in Springfield on the second Monday in the months of September, November, January, March, and May.

Re-election of Judges

Unlike most states, Supreme and appellate court justices in Illinois are elected to represent specific districts. Once judges have been selected, they may run for re-election on their records, without opposition. In these cases, voters simply vote yes or no on their retention. If three-fifths say yes, the judge gets another term. If three-fifths approval is not obtained, the judge must be replaced.

Judge Qualifications

All judges must be citizens, licensed attorneys of the state, and residents of the districts from which they were elected. Judges must devote full time to their judicial duties and may not engage in law practice or hold another office, including offices in political parties. Judges can be disciplined by a Judicial Board of Inquiry and a Courts Commission. All courts of the state are under the supervision of the chief justice of the Illinois Supreme Court.

Visiting a Court

While the state court system details are complex, you can learn a lot about the court system by visiting a local court. A circuit court is located not far from your home and probably has hours that would allow you to watch the proceedings of some of the cases that come before it.

QUESTIONS

MULTIPLE CHOICE- Circle the letter of the correct answer.

1. Which of the following is NOT a state court?
   a. District Court b. Supreme Court
   c. Appellate Court d. Circuit Court
2. What are responsibilities of the IL Supreme Court?
   a. supervise lower courts b. interpret state laws
   c. monitor court workload d. all of the above
3. How are judges usually selected?
   a. by the governor b. by General Assembly
   c. by the people d. by the president
4. Most of the state's court cases would take place in the following court:
   a. Circuit b. Appellate
   c. Supreme d. District

SHORT ANSWER

1. What are the three types of courts in Illinois?

   _____

   _____

2. The average citizen is likely to come in contact with this branch of government. Name one reason why you would be required to go to court.

   _____

   _____

VOCABULARY MATCH - Match the statement in ***Section A*** with the vocabulary word in ***Section B***.

A

____ 1. The minimum number of judges required to perform court business.
____ 2. Hearing a case for the first time.
____ 3. The judicial process of the state begins here.
____ 4. To order a public agency to perform an act required by law which it has neglected.
____ 5. The legal procedure that keeps the government from holding you indefinitely without showing cause.

B

a. original jurisdiction **b.** mandamus **c.** quorum **d.** habeas corpus **e.** circuit courts

ILLINOIS JUDICIAL BRANCH BY THE NUMBERS. Choose the correct number from the bank that matches the statement.

Number Bank: 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 12, 23, 30

____ Number of appellate districts in Illinois
____ Number of IL Supreme Court justices
____ Number of circuit court judicial districts
____ Term (in years) of an IL Supreme Court justice
____ Judicial branch and its powers are listed in this article of the Illinois Constitution

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LIVEWORKSHEETS

...racy, a citizen has the responsibility for the ...ent under which he or she lives. By voting and ...nformed on the issues, he or she takes part in the ...s of government. With every freedom we enjoy, ...are also corresponding duties. We must perform ...e duties, such as voting, if we expect to enjoy our ...dom.

Voting is a constitutional right. Early in American ...istory, only white men over the age of 21 could vote. Then it took two constitutional amendments, one in 1870 and the other in 1920, to give black people and women the right to vote. Then, when Americans 18 and older were in the military fighting in wars, people began to think that if young people were old enough to die for their country, they were surely old enough to vote. In 1971, the 26th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution gave 18-year-olds the right to vote, and so did the state of Illinois.

Primary Elections

Primaries are elections held before the general election in which party members select the candidates of their party, mainly the Republican Party and the Democratic Party. The winners of these primaries then face each other in the upcoming general election. The Illinois primary election for 2022 was be moved from May to June after Governor Pritzker signed a new voting bill.

Voting at Age 17

Illinois and 22 other states allow 17-year-olds to vote in primaries if they are 18 by the November election. This 2014 law allows this group to vote in primaries for federal and statewide offices. Advocates say the change allows youth to develop voting habits early, a key to ensuring they turn into lifelong voters. Critics have questioned whether teens are engaged enough to cast meaningful votes. What do you think?

General Elections

The most publicized elections in Illinois are the *general elections*. They are *biennial* elections. That is, they are held every two years in even-numbered years. The Illinois gubernatorial election is held every four years. Illinois residents also vote for the President of the United States in every other general election. The next presidential election will be in 2024 (then 2028). President Biden will be eligible to run, as he will have served only one term of the maximum two terms. A 2022 state voting bill also made the general election date, November 5th, a state holiday in 2024 (and for future general elections).

Other Types of Illinois Elections

...er types of Illinois elections include judicial, town-...p, municipal, school, village, park district, and some other miscellaneous elections. Many of these occur in the spring elections. Their dates are established by law. Watch your newspapers for elections that may be affecting your local area.

Voting Requirements

In Illinois, like any state, a citizen must obey the election laws. They also must meet the requirements that have been set up by those laws. Illinois requirements include:

1. A voter must be at least 18 years old on Election Day for general elections (see note regarding voting at age 17).
2. A voter must have lived in the election district for at least 30 days.
3. A voter must be a United States citizen.
4. A new laws allow citizens to register and vote on the *same day* and provides for *automatic voter registration* when interacting with driver's license facilities or other state offices.
5. A voter in Illinois cannot claim the right to vote anywhere else.

Early Voting and Voting by Mail

Early voting helps to eliminate the idea of absentee voting from Illinois law. In-person voting before Election Day will just be referred to as "early voting." This was created to allow citizens to vote in a designated polling place during the 22nd day through the 5th day preceding an election without supplying an excuse or reason.

Traditional absentee voting will now be referred to as the *vote-by-mail* (VBM) option, reflecting how the state conducts modern-day elections. This program was expanded to support social distancing to mitigate the coronavirus spread during the 2020 presidential election. In 2022, a new law for the first time is giving all voters the option of voting by mail permanently.

Referendums

Voters in Illinois are sometimes asked to do more than just vote for elected officials. Sometimes they vote on public issues, such as bond issues of governmental bodies or changes in the state constitution. One of the better-known *referendums* is the one school districts use to ask voters about building new schools.

QUESTIONS

SHORT ANSWER

1. In what year is the next general election? _____
2. How often is a general election held? _____
3. On what day are general elections held? _____
4. If you are going to be absent on Election Day, how can you still vote? _____
5. What are the requirements for voters? _____
6. What is the purpose of a primary election? _____
7. What is the youngest age you can vote? _____

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LIVEWORKSHEETS

VOTING AND ELECTIONS PART 2 — UNIT 32

Upcoming Elections in Illinois

Upcoming Illinois General Elections: 2024, 2026 (will include gubernatorial election), 2028

Upcoming Presidential Elections: 2024, 2028

*General elections are always held on the Tuesday following the first Monday of November in even-numbered years.

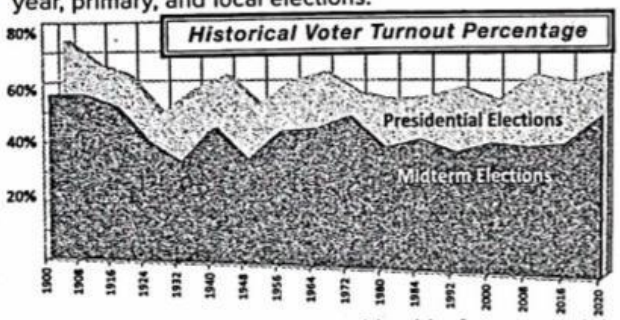
**General Election Day* is now a state holiday in Illinois.

The Two-Party System

Our political party system is called the *two-party system* because most elections are won by a candidate from either the Democratic or Republican Party. The much smaller or special-interest parties in the country may also try to elect a candidate. These smaller parties are called *third parties* and may include the Constitution, Libertarian, and Green parties.

Voter Turnout

The chart below shows the voter turnout in the United States and shows the fluctuations in presidential and midterm elections. In recent elections, leading up to the 2020 election, about 60 percent of the voting-eligible population participated in presidential elections, and about 40 percent voted during midterm elections. The 2020 election turnout of 66.2 percent set a record, with the highest turnout in 120 years. Turnout is lower for odd-year, primary, and local elections.



Voter turnout can vary considerably from one state to the next. Minnesota had the highest voter turnout in the 2020 presidential election, with 76.9 percent of the state's voting-eligible population casting a ballot. On the other hand, Indiana had the lowest turnout rate among the Midwest's 11 states (60.7 percent). Illinois was slightly better than the national average. Of the about 9.8 million voting-age citizens in Illinois, 66.9 percent made it to the polls on Election Day.

There also are striking disparities in participation among different demographic groups. For example, the turnout rate among people ages 60 and over was about 70 percent, compared to a little over 40 percent among 18- to 29-year-olds.

The United States has historically trailed most developed countries when it comes to getting people to cast a ballot for their elected officials. The record-breaking turnout in 2020 reaffirmed that voting is a right Americans are no longer taking for granted.

Are Elections Secure in Illinois?

The *Illinois State Board of Elections* adopts rules and regulations to clarify and improve the election process in Illinois. This board works closely with the federal government and receives funding from the Department of Justice for the security and safety of elections. All 102 counties have received grants for upgrades ranging from digital firewalls to security cameras deployed in ballot processing rooms and equipment warehouses.

Voter fraud is extremely rare, both in Illinois and the United States. State and local election officials work year-round to prepare for and administer elections. While important commonalities exist across and within states, each state operates under different laws and frameworks using various election systems. The complexity can lead to uncertainty in voters' minds, an uncertainty that malicious citizens and extremists can exploit. Misinformation can undermine public confidence in the electoral process, as well as in our democracy.

Constitutional Convention in Illinois

The Illinois Constitution requires that every 20 years, voters must be given a choice whether or not to call for a new constitutional convention, write a new constitution, or make changes in the old one. In 2008, Illinois voters were asked if they wanted to have a constitutional convention since it had been 20 years since the last formal request. The voters soundly defeated a constitutional convention. That question will be presented again in 2028.

QUESTIONS

FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. What are the two main political parties? _____

_____

2. Which state had the highest voter turnout in the 2020 presidential election? _____

3. When is the next constitutional convention in Illinois?

_____

4. When is the next presidential election?

_____

5. When is the next Illinois gubernatorial election?

_____

EXPRESS YOUR OPINION

Review the voter turnout data in this unit. Do you feel that the current voter participation is acceptable? When you meet the age requirement to vote, will you and why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

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