



Who does what in Vermont's government? Here's a guide for Vermonters preparing to vote.

There are six elected officers in Vermont who serve the entire state, along with 180 state legislators who represent smaller districts. These positions are filled through a general election every two years in November. The state's three major parties choose their nominees for these offices through primary elections held in August.

This year's general election is Nov. 5, 2024. The primary is Aug. 13.

As voters prepare to fill these positions for the next two years, VTDigger has summed up the primary responsibilities of each:

State legislator

Members of the Vermont House and Senate propose, debate and approve state laws. They play a key role in writing the annual state budget, which determines how Vermont spends its resources, as well as determining tax policy. The Legislature confirms certain appointments made by the governor, including judges, and conducts oversight of the executive branch. Though the two chambers have similar powers, the Vermont Senate has 30 members and is elected largely along county lines, while the House has 150 members who typically represent a handful of towns or a portion of a city.

Governor

The governor of Vermont leads the state's executive branch. The officeholder appoints those who lead the agencies and departments that provide all state government services, as well as state judges. The governor proposes a state



budget to the Legislature each year and can veto bills the Legislature passes, with some exceptions. This person carries out state laws and implements the state budget. The governor oversees the Vermont National Guard and can assume additional powers during a time of emergency.

Lieutenant governor

Vermont's lieutenant governor is largely a ceremonial role. The officeholder serves as the presiding officer of the Vermont Senate, able to vote on measures before the body only in case of a tie. The lieutenant governor steps in to perform the governor's duties when that person is out of the state or incapacitated. More informally, people in the role have used it as a platform for advocacy and to convene Vermonters in public discussions of important issues to the state.

Attorney general

Vermont's attorney general leads an office that, like county-level state's attorneys, can represent the state in all civil and criminal legal matters. The attorney general tends to focus on more significant cases in state and federal court — and joins other states in national litigation. Lawyers in the office advise state officials, departments and agencies on questions of law. They defend legislative acts and administrative rules in court. The office enforces state laws on civil rights, charitable fundraising and consumer protection, as well as particular areas of criminal justice, including gun regulations, computer crimes and fraud by health care providers against the federal Medicaid program.

Treasurer

Vermont's state treasurer leads an office that serves as the bank for all state activities. The treasurer manages the state's cash accounts, including processing checks and reconciling vendor payments and payroll. The office is also tasked



with the investment of state reserve funds and the issuing of all state bonds. It oversees the state's three major employee pension programs and other retirement benefits for state employees, teachers and the staff of participating municipalities. It also receives, holds in trust and seeks to return abandoned or unclaimed financial property.

Secretary of state

Vermont's secretary of state leads a team tasked with a wide range of essential administrative functions, from overseeing the integrity of elections to maintaining the state's historical records. Among other duties, the office licenses, investigates and disciplines those in more than 50 professions. It maintains records on businesses and other organizations registered to operate in the state. Along with overseeing elections, the office also receives and retains campaign finance reports and the registration of all active professional political lobbyists.

Auditor of accounts

Vermont's auditor of accounts seeks to hold state government accountable by evaluating how taxpayer funds are spent. The auditor's office performs and contracts a variety of required audits of the activities, receipts and expenditures of the state. It also regularly takes on performance audits to determine whether a particular public program is reaching its intended purpose or whether a particular department or agency is operating efficiently.