



Arkansas Office of Lt. Governor Data Sheet

As of April 25, 2016

History of Office

The Office of the Lt. Governor of Arkansas was established in 1864 with the Unionist government. The constitution of 1868 also included the Office of Lt. Governor. The constitution of 1874 did not include the Office of Lt. Governor. The office was reestablished with in 1914 by amending the constitution. The first new Lt. Governor was elected in 1926.¹

Origins of the Office

While the Office of Lt. Governor of Arkansas was reestablished by amending the constitution in 1914, the office remained vacant as the Arkansas Supreme Court's interpretation of the referendum was that items had to receive a majority of votes from those participating in the election rather than a majority of votes cast on the particular referendum issue. The high court reversed itself in 1925 and ruled that its reversal applied to the Office of Lt. Governor in 1926.²

Qualifications for Office

The Council of State Governments (CSG) publishes the Book of the States (BOS) 2015. In chapter 4, Table 4.13 lists the Qualifications and Terms of Office for lieutenant governors: [The Book of the States 2015 \(CSG\) at www.csg.org](#).

Method of Election

The National Lieutenant Governors Association (NLGA) maintains a list of the methods of electing gubernatorial successors at: <http://www.nlga.us/lt-governors/office-of-lieutenant-governor/methods-of-election/>.

Duties and Powers

A lieutenant governor may derive responsibilities one of four ways: from the Constitution, from the Legislature through statute, from the governor (thru gubernatorial appointment or executive order), thru personal initiative in office, and/or a combination of these. The principal and shared constitutional responsibility of every gubernatorial successor is to be the first official in the line of succession to the governor's office.

Succession to Office of Governor

Lt. Governors Harvey Parnell (1928), Jim Guy Tucker (1993), and Mike Huckabee (1996) all became governor upon the resignation of their predecessors and were then elected to subsequent terms as governor. Lt. Governors Lee Cazort, Bob Riley, and Joe Purcell each served as governor for a few days between the resignation of the then-current governor and the inauguration of the governor-elect. Despite the fact that these three individuals did serve,

¹ <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/>

² Ibid

constitutionally, as governor—they are not counted in the official list of governors by the Arkansas Secretary of State's office.³

³ *Ibid*