

Office of Lt. Governor

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

(as of 10-3-16)

Data reflects the forty-three (43) states with a statewide, elected office of lieutenant governor.

Which state has had the most gubernatorial successions (since statehood)?

- Connecticut – 13 successions
- South Carolina, Massachusetts, and Kentucky – 12 successions
- Indiana – 10 successions

What are some 'firsts' in the office of lieutenant governor?

- The first elected black Lt. Governor was Louisiana's Oscar Dunn in 1868.
- Louisiana Lt. Governor Pinckney Pinchback was the first U.S. Governor of African descent and he succeeded from the office of Lt. Governor in 1872.
- In 1871, California Lt. Governor Romualdo Pacheco became the first Hispanic Lt. Governor in the U.S. He succeeded to Governor in 1875 and remains the only Hispanic Governor of California since statehood.
- Kentucky Lt. Governor J.C.W. Beckham is the only Lt. Governor to succeed to governor due to the assassination of a Governor. Kentucky Governor William Goebel was assassinated in 1899, and remains the only sitting Governor ever assassinated.
- The first female Lt. Governor was Matilda Dodge Wilson, appointed Lieutenant Governor of Michigan in 1940 by Governor Luren Dickinson.
- The first Hispanic female elected to the Office of Lt. Governor was Evelyn Sanguinetti of Illinois in 2014.
- The first blind Lt. Governor was Bob Cowley Riley of Arkansas, who briefly succeeded to Governor in 1975, becoming the first blind Governor of a U.S. State.
- The longest serving Lt. Governor is Lt. Governor Brad Owen of Washington, who became Lt. Governor in 1997.
- Colorado is the only state to have three different governors in the same day.

What is the most recently created office of lieutenant governor?

1. New Jersey created the office of lieutenant governor in 2005 (*electing its first in 2009*).

2. Utah created the office of lieutenant governor in 1975 by abolishing/renaming the Secretary of State's office (*the previous successor*).
3. Alaska created the office of lieutenant governor in 1970 by abolishing/renaming the Secretary of State's office (*the previous successor*).

Maryland re-established the office in 1970 and Florida re-established the office in 1968 (see *next entry*). Hawaii established the office in 1959, Arkansas in 1914 and New Mexico in 1912. Alabama reestablished the office in 1901. Beyond that, the office of lieutenant governor has existed in states since the 1800s and even 1700s.

Have any states eliminated the office of lieutenant governor?

Only five states eliminated the office of lieutenant governor, each in the 1800s, and every one re-established the office. Mississippi eliminated the office in 1832 and reestablished it in 1868. Maryland eliminated the office in 1867 and re-established it in 1970. Arkansas eliminated the office in 1874 and re-established it in 1914. Alabama eliminated the office in 1875 and re-established it in 1901. Florida eliminated the office in 1885 and re-established it in 1968.

Which state has had the fewest gubernatorial successions (since statehood)?

- Hawaii, Virginia – 0 successions
- Georgia, Maryland, Utah – 1 succession
- Alaska, North Dakota, South Dakota – 2 successions
- Delaware, Florida, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Washington - 3 successions

- END -