



# **Rhode Island Office of Lt. Governor Data Sheet**

*As of July 18, 2016*

## **History of Office**

The Office of the Lieutenant Governor of Rhode Island was created with the Constitution of 1843.<sup>1</sup>

## **Origins of the Office**

The Office of the Lt. Governor of Rhode Island was created in 1843 with the state constitution. During the Colonial Period (1663 – 1779), the office was called Deputy Governor. The title changed to Lt. Governor in 1798. From 1663 to 1843, the people of Rhode Island were governed under a Royal Charter granted by the King of England.<sup>2</sup>

## **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**

In 1853, Governor Philip Allen resigned to take a seat in the U.S. Senate, and Lt. Governor Francis M. Dimond succeeded to office for the remainder of the term. In 1901, Governor William Gregory, a former Lt. Governor, died in office, and Lt. Governor Charles D. Kimball succeeded to Governor. In 1928, Governor Aram J. Pothier died in office, and Lt. Governor Norman S. Case succeeded to office and was then elected in his own right. In 1945, Governor J. Howard McGrath resigned to take a seat in the U.S. Senate, and Lt. Governor John O. Pastore succeeded to office and then was elected in his own right. In 1950, Governor John O. Pastore resigned to take a seat in the U.S. Senate, and Lt. Governor John S. McKiernan succeeded to office for 15 days and then returned to be Lt. Governor under Governor Dennis J. Roberts.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> State of Rhode Island General Assembly, Rhode Island State Constitution - [www.rilin.state.ri.us](http://www.rilin.state.ri.us)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> National Governors Association, Former Governors's Bios