



# **West Virginia Office of Lt. Governor Data Sheet**

*As of April 23, 2019*

## **History of Office**

In 2000, the West Virginia legislature adopted West Virginia Code Chapter 6A, section 1 – 4(b). Chapter 6A, Article 1, Section 4(a) identifies the order of gubernatorial succession. The official first in line of gubernatorial succession is the President of the Senate. In Chapter 6A, Article 1, Section 4(b), Code states: "...the President of the Senate is functioning similarly to a lieutenant governor. Therefore, the Legislature determines that the President of the Senate shall be additionally designated the title of "lieutenant governor" in acknowledgement of the president's responsibility as first successor to the governor."

## **Origins of the Office**

The title "Lieutenant Governor" was designated to the West Virginia President of the Senate in 2000. The state Constitution says when a vacancy occurs in the office of governor before the first three years of the term is expired, the President of the Senate acts as governor until a special election for a governor is completed.

## **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**

The state has had two gubernatorial successions. In 1869, President of the Senate Daniel Farnsworth filled an unexpired term for governor. In 2010, President of the Senate Earl Ray Tomblin acted as governor through succession until a special election for governor was held. He ran in and won the special election to governor.