

# Chapter 4

## Georgia's Executive Branch

### Chapter Preview

#### TERMS

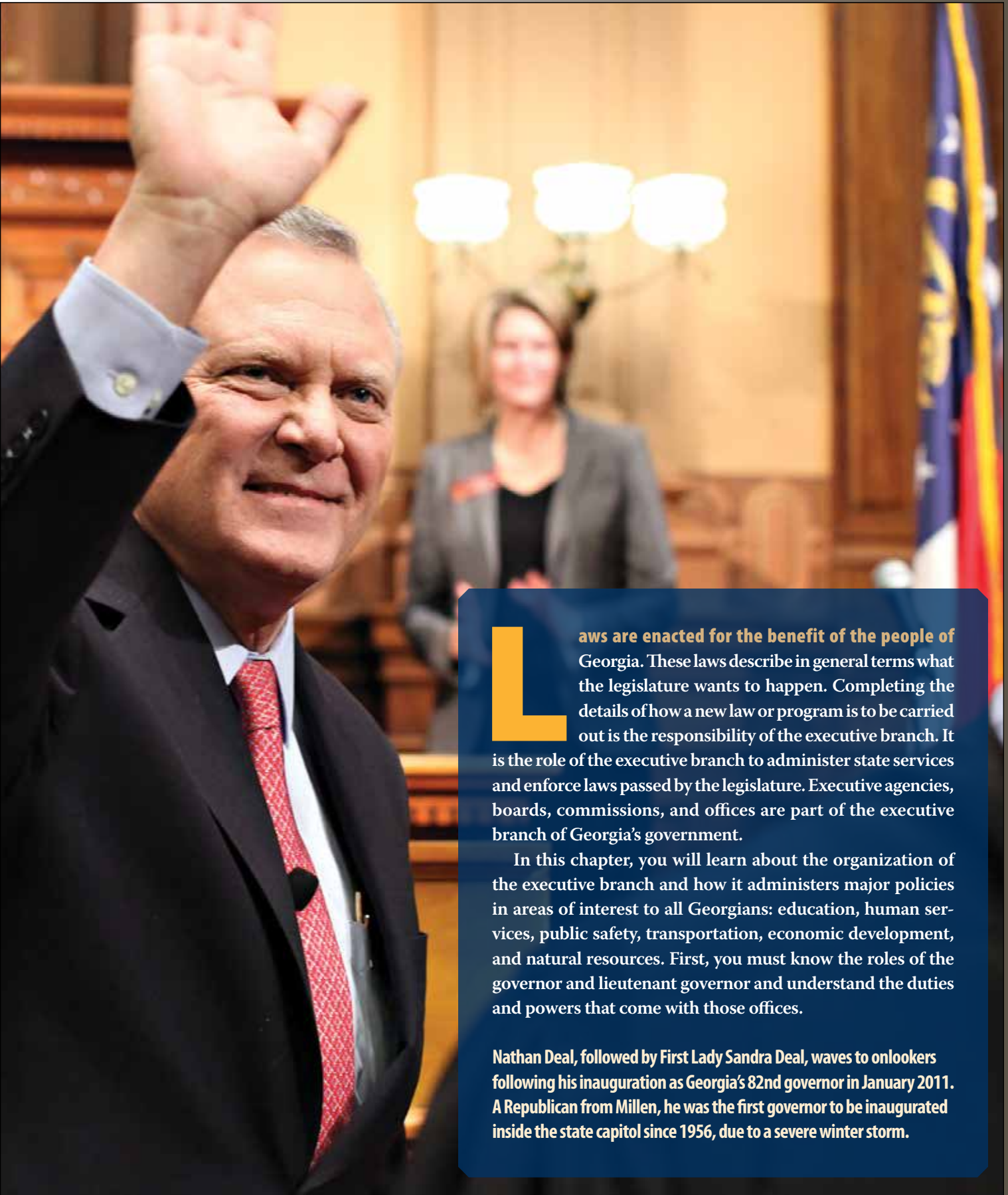
deficit, plural executive system, constitutional officer, statutory official, statute, parole, Medicaid, entrepreneur, tourism, conserve, reservoir

#### PEOPLE

governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, attorney general, state superintendent of schools, commissioner of insurance, commissioner of agriculture, commissioner of labor, public service commissioner

#### PLACES

Savannah, Brunswick



**L**aws are enacted for the benefit of the people of Georgia. These laws describe in general terms what the legislature wants to happen. Completing the details of how a new law or program is to be carried out is the responsibility of the executive branch. It is the role of the executive branch to administer state services and enforce laws passed by the legislature. Executive agencies, boards, commissions, and offices are part of the executive branch of Georgia's government.

In this chapter, you will learn about the organization of the executive branch and how it administers major policies in areas of interest to all Georgians: education, human services, public safety, transportation, economic development, and natural resources. First, you must know the roles of the governor and lieutenant governor and understand the duties and powers that come with those offices.

**Nathan Deal, followed by First Lady Sandra Deal, waves to onlookers following his inauguration as Georgia's 82nd governor in January 2011. A Republican from Millen, he was the first governor to be inaugurated inside the state capitol since 1956, due to a severe winter storm.**



# Section 1

## Georgia's Head of State

### As you read, look for

- the qualifications, term, and election of the governor,
- the powers and duties of the governor,
- the role of the lieutenant governor,
- terms: **governor**, **deficit**, **lieutenant governor**.



**Above:** The governor is limited to two consecutive terms of four years each. Gov. Nathan Deal, a Republican, was elected in 2010 and will be eligible to run again in 2014.

The executive branch is the largest branch of state government. It is headed by the **governor**.

### Qualifications for Governor

Georgia's governor must be at least thirty years old. A candidate for governor must also be a United States citizen for at least fifteen years and a legal resident of Georgia for the six years immediately before the election.

### Term of Office and Election

The governor is elected for a four-year term. He or she may run again for a second four-year term. But after eight consecutive years in office (two terms), the governor must step aside. Former governors are allowed to run for office for a third term, but only after four years have passed from the end of their second term.

Georgia holds its election for governor and other state executive officers on a different cycle than U.S. presidential elections, which also occur every four years. In other words, the scheduled elections for governor of Georgia are 2010, 2014, 2018, and so on.

### Formal Powers of the Governor

The governor has a number of *formal* powers that are outlined in the Georgia constitution. As the chief executive of the state, the governor oversees the operation of the executive branch. The governor is also the chief law enforcement officer. Article V of the Georgia constitution says that governors are to “take care that the laws be faithfully executed and shall be the conservator of peace” in the state.



In addition, the governor is the commander-in-chief of the state's military forces. This means that the governor may deploy (send) the state militia—Georgia's National Guard—to restore order in emergency situations. The governor may also call out the Georgia State Patrol (the state troopers) for law enforcement assistance when needed.

The governor proposes an annual budget for the state and presents it, along with a "state of the state" address, to the General Assembly each year. The governor may recommend new laws and have the administration floor leaders introduce them into both chambers of the legislature. As you learned in Chapter 3, the governor has the power to veto legislation passed by the General Assembly.

The governor can appoint replacements to fill vacancies when they occur in the General Assembly or in executive and judicial offices. If a judge or other elected official dies, resigns, or is permanently disabled, the governor's appointee serves until the next general election or, in some cases, until a special election is held.

The governor can call the General Assembly into special session when necessary. Two examples would be if the legislature has to deal with redistricting after the U.S. Census report is issued or if there is an extreme shortfall in state revenue. The governor must manage the state budget and make spending cuts in state programs in order to avoid a **deficit** (a shortage of funds).

**Above:** The governor of Georgia lives in the Governor's Mansion on West Paces Ferry Road in northwest Atlanta. The house was built in 1967, the third Governor's Mansion since the state capital moved to Atlanta.

## Something Extra!

Due to the 2010 census, Georgia is now entitled to 14 members of the U.S. House of Representatives. The Georgia legislature will meet in special session to determine where the new 14th district will be.





**Above:** The wife of the governor is given the title “First Lady of Georgia.” Here, First Lady Sandra Deal (second from right) chats with visitors and artisans at the Southeast Quilt and Textile museum quilt show at the Georgia State Capitol in 2011.

## Something Extra!

The office of lieutenant governor was created when the state constitution was rewritten in 1945.

Finally, the governor appoints members to a number of executive commissions and boards. In some cases, this power is shared by the legislature, where the Senate either confirms or denies the appointment.

### Informal Powers of the Governor

Some duties and powers of Georgia’s governor as head of state are *informal*, meaning they have come about through custom or tradition. Some are ceremonial. Among the governor’s informal powers are

- serving as spokesperson for the State of Georgia; meeting with the news media and speaking officially for state government as well as unofficially on behalf of Georgia’s citizens;
- serving as the official channel of communication between Georgia and the national government as well as between Georgia and other states;
- leading trade delegations to other countries in order to encourage foreign consumers to buy Georgia-made products and do business with Georgia industries;
- acting as honorary head of the political party to which he or she belongs;
- issuing proclamations to honor individuals, holidays, or special events and, with the legislature’s approval, adding new state symbols.

### The Role of Lieutenant Governor

The Georgia constitution states that the **lieutenant governor** will be elected “at the same time, for the same term, and in the same manner” as

the governor. Because the lieutenant governor may have to take over the governor's role, the lieutenant governor must meet the same qualifications for office as the governor. Unlike the governor, however, the lieutenant governor may serve an unlimited number of consecutive terms in office. And, unlike the U.S. vice president, who is a member of the same political party as the president, the lieutenant governor may belong to a different political party than the governor.

In Chapter 3, you learned about the lieutenant governor's legislative role as president of the Georgia Senate. The constitution does not assign any additional executive branch duties to the lieutenant governor except those that the governor may assign. The lieutenant governor does serve as the chief executive when the governor is out of the state.

### **Succession to Executive Power**

In case of the death, resignation, or permanent disability of the governor, the lieutenant governor becomes the governor and serves until a new governor is elected. If something should happen to both the governor and the lieutenant governor and those offices are vacant, the next person in line is the speaker of the Georgia House of Representatives. The constitution calls for the speaker to take over the powers and duties of the governor until a new governor is chosen in a special election, which must be held within 90 days.



**Above:** As lieutenant governor, Casey Cagle's primary function is to preside over the Georgia Senate. Unlike the governor, he can serve an unlimited number of consecutive terms of office.

### **Reviewing the Section**

1. Define: deficit.
2. Give an example of one formal power and one informal power of the governor.
3. Why is it necessary to have a line of succession?

## Section 2

# The Organization of the Executive Branch

### As you read, look for

- elected officials of state departments,
- major policy areas of state programs,
- terms: **plural executive system, constitutional officer, statutory official, statute, parole, Medicaid, entrepreneur, tourism, conserve, reservoir.**



**Above:** One of the most important parts of Secretary of State Brian Kemp's job is to supervise all of the state's elections.

**The U.S. Constitution calls for voters to elect** a president and a vice president. In effect, the executive branch starts with two people, and more are added as the new president selects heads of departments and members of his or her cabinet. Georgia's executive branch is organized slightly differently.

### Georgia's Other Elected Officials

Unlike the executive branch of the federal government, Georgia has a **plural executive system**. In Georgia, the voters elect a governor and a lieutenant governor. But that is not all. The voters also elect state executive officers. These officials are not appointed by the governor but are chosen in statewide elections. They are sometimes called **constitutional officers** because their offices are specifically designated in the Georgia constitution.

These constitutional officers include:

- The secretary of state, who keeps the state's official records, publishes laws passed by the legislature, supervises elections, appoints examining boards, grants corporate charters, and regulates corporations and nonprofit organizations;
- The attorney general, who is the chief legal officer for the state and the head of the Department of Law;
- The state superintendent of schools, who is the head of the Department of Education. The superintendent directs statewide educational programs,



enforces state education regulations and laws, administers state and federal education funds, certifies and licenses teachers and other educators, and approves textbooks for use in Georgia schools;

- The commissioner of insurance, who regulates insurance carriers and issues insurance licenses;
- The commissioner of agriculture, who is the head of the Agriculture Department. The commissioner directs agricultural or agribusiness programs, maintains state farmers' markets, supervises services such as inspections, and expands market opportunities for Georgia agricultural products;
- The commissioner of labor, who is the head of the Labor Department. The labor commissioner regulates the health and safety of workers, enforces state labor laws, administers unemployment insurance programs, and maintains statistical data in the state's labor force.

Each of these elected officials heads an executive department, each with its own area of responsibility. All of these officials serve four-year terms of office.

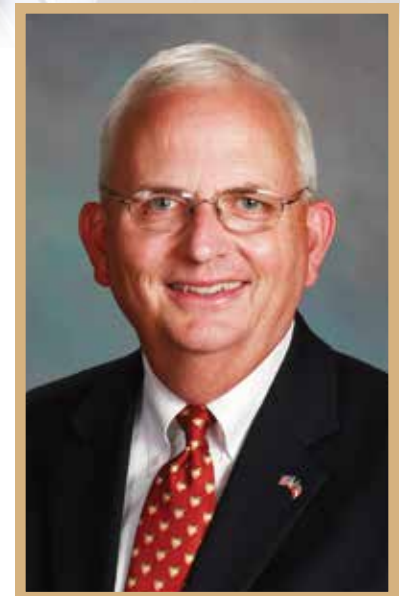
Also considered constitutional officers are the *public service commissioners*. The five members of the Public Service Commission regulate utilities in Georgia. They also control the rates and services of bus, limousine, and moving companies; telephone companies; electric companies; and certain natural gas companies. The commissioners serve six-year terms.

## Executive Branch Departments and Agencies

In addition to the officials named in the Georgia constitution, there are a large number of government officials known as **statutory officials**. Their positions are not provided for in the state's constitution, nor are they elected officials. But their jobs are called for by **statute** (a law enacted by the legislature). These officials are appointed either by the governor or by the head or directing board of the department in which they serve.

Article IV of the state constitution establishes a number of boards and commissions, including the Public Service Commission and the Board of Pardons and Paroles. Georgia's constitution defines the membership, duties, and powers for certain boards and commissions. Some of these boards set policy (overall plans) and oversee executive departments. Some perform specific functions. Other departments in the executive branch were established by statute.

Georgia has hundreds of state departments, agencies, boards, and commissions—large and small. In this section, you will look at several of these because the policies they set affect all Georgians.

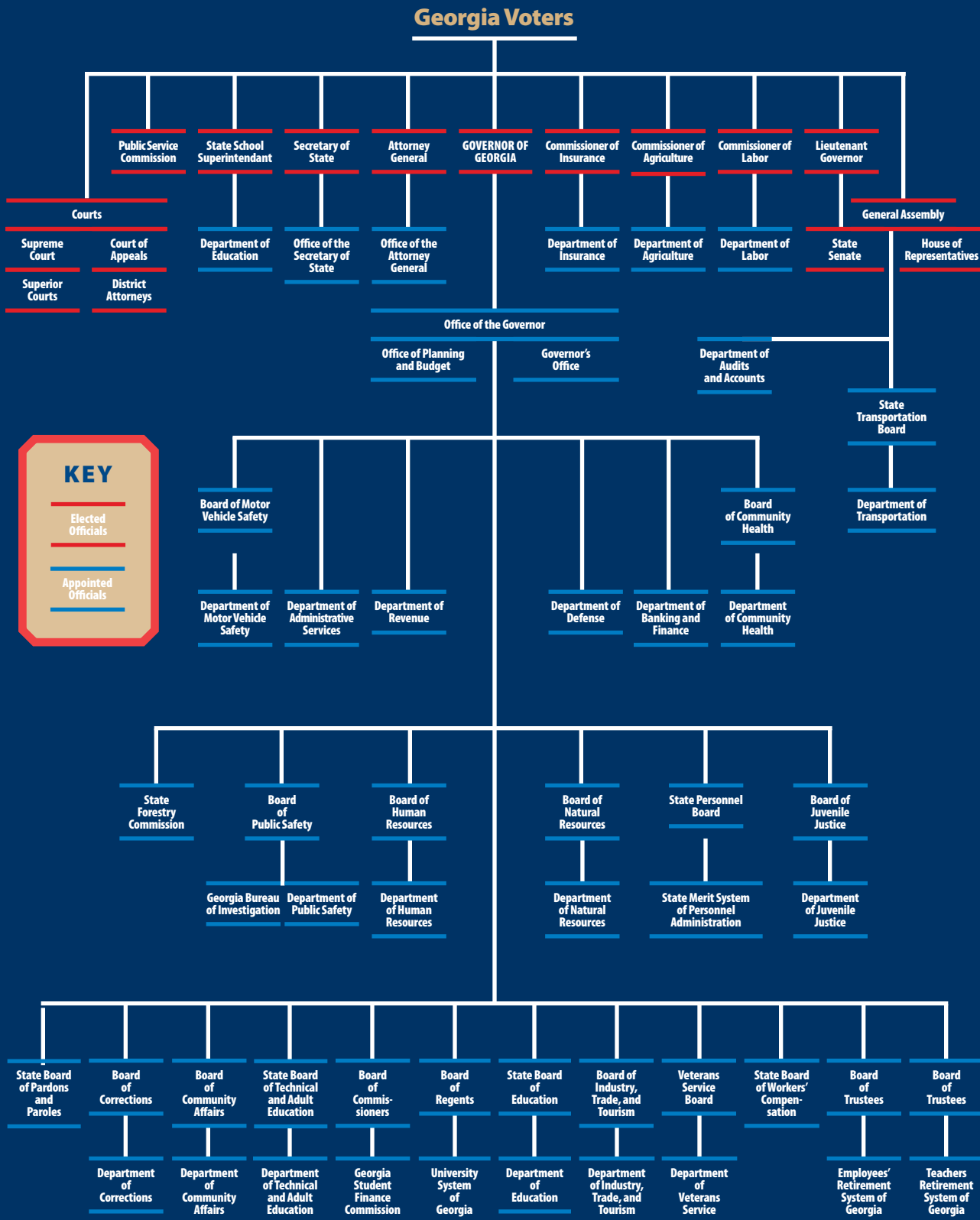


**Top:** Sam Olens became Georgia's 53rd attorney general in 2011.

**Above:** Gary Black is Georgia's new commissioner of agriculture, elected in November, 2010.



# Figure 8 Georgia State Government



**KEY**

- Elected Officials
- Appointed Officials

## Public Service Commission

The *Public Service Commission* (PSC) is the only constitutional board whose members are elected statewide. The PSC regulates public utilities (electric power; telephone, cable and other telecommunications; and natural gas). Although these utilities are provided by private companies, the PSC must approve any changes in rates they plan to charge their customers. The PSC also enforces regulations for passenger buses and household goods movers (moving vans).

## Board of Pardons and Paroles

The *Board of Pardons and Paroles* is an independent agency that has the power to grant pardons, parole, and other forms of clemency (acts that reduce the severity of a punishment) to criminal offenders. A *pardon* officially releases an offender from most of the consequences of a criminal conviction. In Georgia, parole is more common. **Parole** is the decision to conditionally release an offender from prison after he or she has served a certain part of his or her prison sentence. A person released on parole remains under state supervision and control. The parolee must follow certain conditions, such as getting a job, obeying the law, or even attending counseling. If the parolee violates any of these conditions, he or she may be sent back to prison.

Members of the Board of Pardons and Paroles are appointed to seven-year terms by the governor, with Senate confirmation.

## Education

Education is the most important responsibility of state government, and it is the one that consumes the largest portion of the state budget. This is because Georgia needs a workforce of educated and skilled people who can compete in our globally interdependent world. More importantly, our democratic way of life depends upon citizens who are not only literate (can read and write) but who also have the knowledge needed to make informed decisions and choices.

Maintaining and operating schools (kindergarten through twelfth grade) is historically the job of local government. Counties, and sometimes cities, establish school districts for this purpose. Over the years, the state has taken on greater responsibility. Today, state government plays a major role, particularly in funding and setting standards in a variety of areas—from teacher certification to high school graduation requirements. Curriculum standards and standardized testing are at the forefront of state-mandated practices for public education in Georgia.

The *State Department of Education* is the executive branch responsible for putting these measures into practice. Many of these measures are a result of laws passed by the General Assembly. The department is headed by the state superintendent of schools. Actual policy direction comes from the State Board of Education, whose members are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Senate.

## Something Extra!

By law, most inmates are eligible to be considered for parole after serving about one-third of their prison sentence. Some prisoners, however, are not eligible for parole.



**Above:** State Superintendent of Schools Dr. John D. Barge is responsible for overseeing 2,487 public schools in the 198 school districts across Georgia.



**Above:** The University System of Georgia administers the state's thirty-five public colleges and universities, of which the largest is the University of Georgia in Athens, founded in 1785.

The *University System of Georgia* (USG) is the separate agency responsible for the state's thirty-five institutions of higher learning (schools beyond high school). The system is governed by a Board of Regents appointed by the governor.

Georgia also has thirty-four technical colleges and schools that offer training in occupation-based skills needed in the workplace. These include computer skills (information technology); nursing, dental hygiene, and other health professions; automotive or construction technology; culinary arts; and cosmetology. The *Technical College System of Georgia* (TCSG) is a separate agency.

## Human Services

The state of Georgia takes seriously its responsibility for ensuring the well-being of its citizens—their physical health, mental health, and basic needs (food and shelter). Human services is the second largest expense in the state budget. A large part of the funding for health and welfare costs actually comes from federal dollars that the state then distributes.

The *Department of Human Services* (DHS) is the state agency that oversees welfare and mental health-related issues. It helps persons who need treatment or support services for mental illness or substance abuse problems. One of its units is the Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS), which administers Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). TANF assists low-income families with food stamps and other necessities while the parents enroll in job training to find employment and become financially able to support their children.

The *Department of Community Health* (DCH) was created in 1999 to serve as the lead agency for health care planning and purchasing issues in Georgia. In 2009, the Division of Public Health and Emergency Preparedness became part of DCH.

**Medicaid** is a jointly funded federal and state program that provides health care for individuals whose incomes are below a certain level. It is administered through the DCH. Medicaid recipients include many elderly Georgians, and those who are blind or disabled. This department is also responsible for disease control and prevention by providing immunizations and flu vaccinations at local health clinics.

## Public Safety

The executive branch, under the direction of the governor, has the duty of protecting the state's people and property. Public safety rules and regulations



are set with the idea of assuring Georgians that they can go about their daily lives without fearing for their personal safety.

The most visible part of the *Department of Public Safety* is the Georgia State Patrol. State patrol officers enforce traffic laws in order to prevent accidents, injuries, or deaths on public highways in the state.

One state agency known to every teenager is the *Department of Driver Services* (DDS). You will encounter this office when you apply for a driver's license. This department is also responsible for ensuring that the vehicles people drive are properly registered and covered by auto insurance.

The *Georgia Bureau of Investigation* (GBI) helps local law enforcement by providing the people and resources needed to solve criminal cases that may extend beyond a county's boundaries. For example, a sheriff or police chief can ask the GBI to investigate arson, murder, or other serious crimes. Often evidence from a crime scene must be tested in a laboratory if it is to be used in a trial.

## Transportation

An executive branch agency that has a direct impact on our ability to travel to school or work each day is the *Georgia Department of Transportation* (GDOT). Enough direct routes to where we need to go and the ease of getting there are high on the list of state services people expect in their daily lives. Businesses rely upon streets and highways to get their products shipped or their service people (repair trucks, etc.) out on calls in a timely manner.

With this in mind, GDOT is responsible for planning and mapping out routes for new highways as the population grows and shifts to new locations. It hires the construction companies who build the roads. It also sets up routine road maintenance and expansion or improvements (road widening and resurfacing) for existing highways.

Another form of transportation, one that we do not often think about, is water transport. The *Georgia Ports Authority* (GPA) operates the state's two deepwater seaports—Savannah and Brunswick. These ocean-access ports are key to shipping Georgia goods internationally and bringing goods from other states and countries into Georgia. For example, agricultural products can be moved quickly from rural south Georgia by truck or rail to Savannah or Brunswick and shipped out to the rest of the world.

## Economic Development

Reliable transportation is essential for Georgia to prosper and continue to provide the human services and consumer goods where and when we

## Something Extra!

The Port of Savannah is the second-largest container port in the Southeast and the fastest-growing port in the United States.



**Above:** Georgia's two international ports at Savannah (above) and Brunswick are operated by the Georgia Ports Authority.



**Above:** In 2010, Gov. Sonny Perdue, third from left, and U.S. Sen. Saxby Chambliss, second from right, participated in the ribbon-cutting ceremony to open the first U.S. manufacturing plant in West Point for Kia Motors, a Korean automobile company.

## Something Extra!

Of Georgia's 716,000 incorporated businesses, over 97 percent are considered small businesses and have fewer than 500 employees. Ninety-five percent of those businesses employ fewer than 50 people.

need them. Equally important is the state's role in encouraging a healthy economy so that Georgians will find and keep jobs that provide them with income. Jobs and businesses also generate state tax revenue to continue paying for the programs already mentioned: education, public safety, public health, and safe roadways.

The Georgia General Assembly has passed several business-friendly laws that encourage small companies and entrepreneurs to start up or expand businesses in Georgia. (An **entrepreneur** is one who organizes, operates, and assumes the risk for a business venture.) These laws include tax deferments (postponing tax payments) or reduced costs for renting or purchasing land for the business.

As one of the informal powers, the governor has a highly visible role as a promoter of Georgia as a good place to do business. Since the 1970s, governors have led trade missions to Europe and Asia seeking investment (persuading international companies to build manufacturing plants) in Georgia. The governors' trade missions have also sought out foreign buyers for Georgia's goods.

The *Georgia Department of Economic Development* (GDEcD) is the state's marketing agency. It is responsible for attracting new business investment, encouraging existing industry and small businesses to expand, and developing new domestic and international markets for Georgia products.

**Tourism** is a major component of economic development today. Georgia's natural beauty, with its coastal and lake waters and mountain vistas, is a magnet for visitors. The state's investment in historic sites with educational exhibits and its recreation opportunities in state parks make it easy to attract visitors. The GDEcD operates a tourism website that highlights the state's attractions and special events.

You may have seen popular television shows or movies filmed on location in Georgia, including *The Blind Side*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, and *Forrest Gump*. The state's *Film, Music & Digital Entertainment Office* promotes Georgia as the ideal backdrop for film and video production projects.

## Natural Resources

With its scenic richness, Georgia has miles and acres of unspoiled natural resources that are prized by its residents and visitors alike. The *Department of Natural Resources* (DNR) administers laws passed by the General Assembly that are designed to **conserve** (avoid the wasteful or destructive use of) land and water resources for the future. For example, the DNR



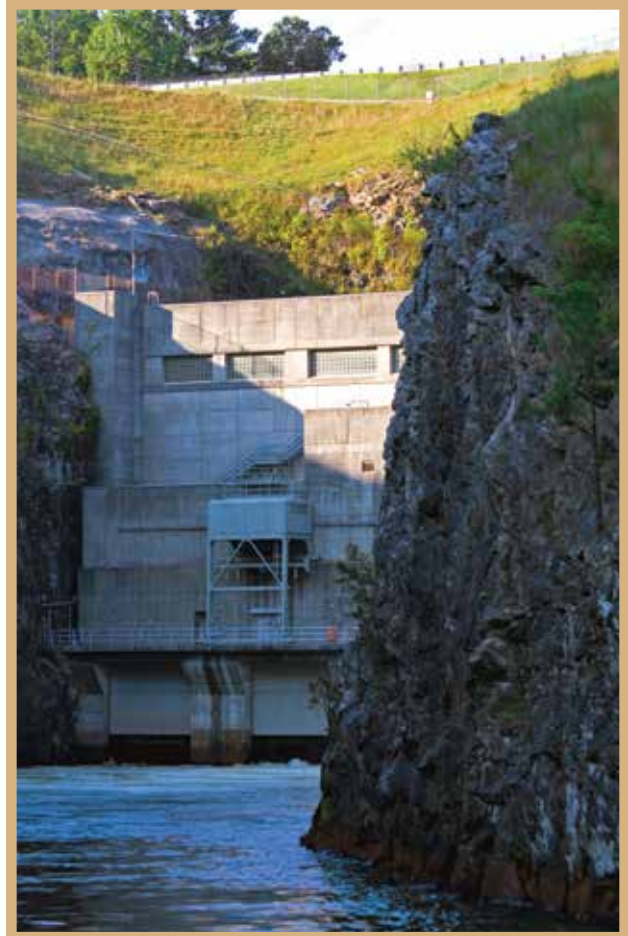
- sets limits on the amount of groundwater (water flowing from underground aquifers) that can be used for large-scale irrigation of farmland;
- prohibits certain building projects or soil disturbance in wetlands;
- restricts the cutting of trees and vegetation in areas, such as hillsides, that could lead to erosion.

Heavily populated areas in northern Georgia (Atlanta and its suburbs) depend upon the surface water in rivers and lakes for drinking water, for industrial use, and to generate electricity. Problems arise when the limited amount of water in the Chattahoochee River and its **reservoirs** (manmade lakes where water is collected and stored) is so widely used upstream that there is less available for downstream users in the middle of the state. Also, land-clearing and the construction of new houses and shopping centers in the fast-growing counties surrounding Atlanta lead to run-off and silt, which can clog streams and cause flooding. Sewage spills are another problem for river water purity.

To monitor these problems, Georgia established the *Environmental Protection Division* (EPD) within the Department of Natural Resources. The EPD implements the regulations for water quality as well as air pollution. It is also the agency that monitors hazardous waste handling.

The DNR operates the state parks, campsites, lodges, and historic sites popular with both tourists and state residents. It manages sixty-three properties that preserve the state's environment and history. These sites offer a variety of activities, such as hiking and biking, fishing and boating, picnicking, ranger-guided walks, and historic enactments for more than 11 million visitors each year.

The Department of Natural Resources enforces state laws designed as safety measures for hunting, fishing, and boating activities. Georgia's forests—a highly prized natural resource—come under the protection of the *Georgia Forestry Commission* (GFC). Forestry service personnel are active in detecting fires, putting out and preventing wildfires, offering forest management advice to landowners, and growing tree seedlings for planting and replenishing the forests.



**Above:** Dams on the Chattahoochee River created Lake Lanier, one of the main sources of water for the Atlanta area. The sharing of the water from the Chattahoochee and Lake Lanier has been a source of dispute between Georgia, Alabama, and Florida for many years, particularly during severe droughts.

### Reviewing the Section

1. Define: constitutional officers, parole, entrepreneur.
2. Which department is responsible for Georgia's two deepwater ports?
3. Do you think the Environmental Protection Division is important? Why or why not?



# Of Special Interest

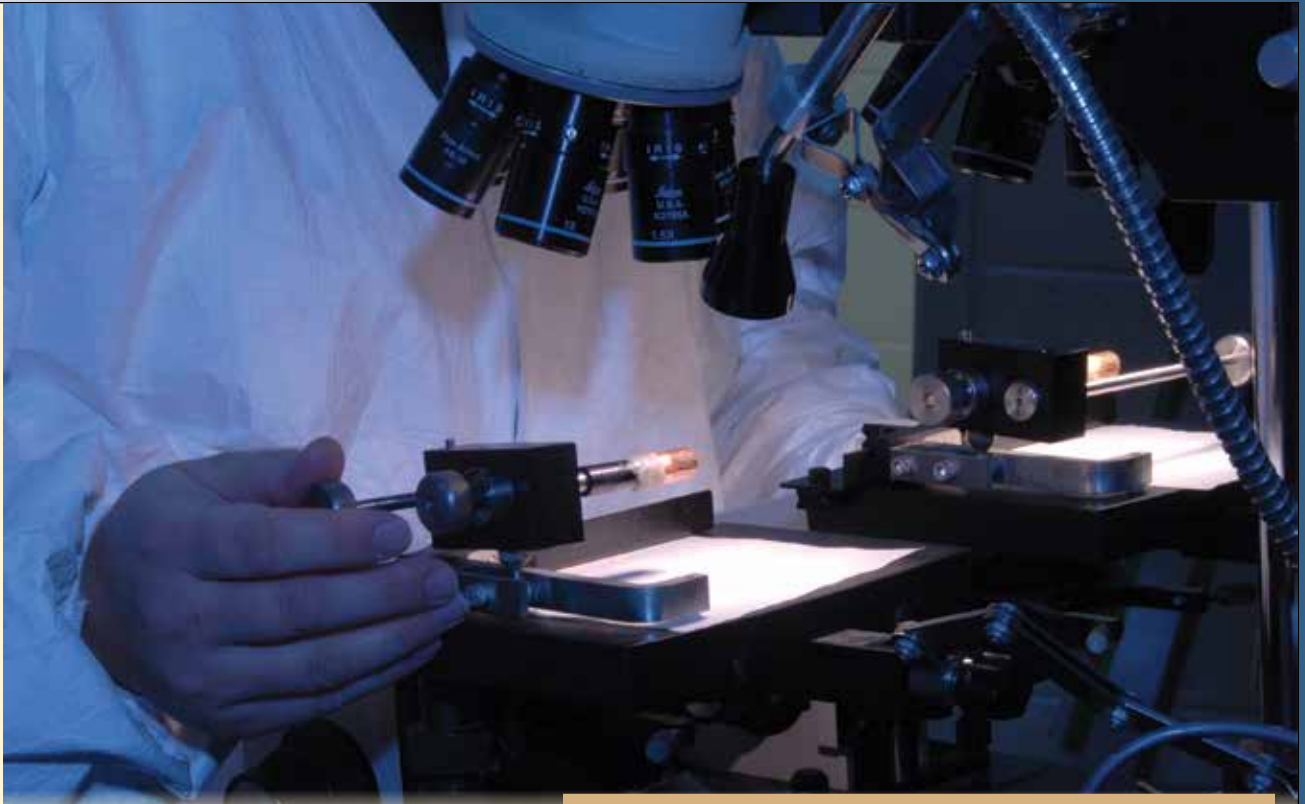
## The Georgia Bureau of Investigation

**The Medical Examiner's Office** of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation is the state's own version of "CSI." A medical examiner's job is to investigate any death that may be the result of anything other than natural causes. The Medical Examiner's Office investigates deaths that come under one or more of these categories: (a) deaths that are homicides, suicides, or a result of suspicious or unknown circumstances; (b) deaths that result from the illegal use of drugs or the abuse of chemicals or poisons; (c) deaths that take place while someone is in prison or in the custody of a law enforcement officer; (d) deaths that look

to be accidental or that follow an injury; (e) deaths from disease, injury, or a poison at the workplace; (f) deaths from disease that might be a public health threat; and (g) deaths in which human remains have been disposed of in an offensive manner.

**Below:** Lab assistants in the GBI morgue wear protective clothing to avoid the possibility of contaminating important evidence like blood. **Opposite page, above:** GBI ballistics experts use high-powered microscopes to examine bullets. **Opposite page, below:** The initial collection of evidence from a crime is conducted by GBI crime scene specialists.





During their examinations of the deceased (called *autopsies*), forensic pathologists try to determine the cause and manner of death. “Cause” refers to the medical reason for the death, or *why* the person died. “Manner” refers to *how* the person died, or the circumstances that led to the cause of death.

The GBI’s Forensic Biology Department conducts tests and DNA analysis of various body fluids (blood, saliva, and so on). Such fluids are often collected at crime scenes. The department also examines articles of physical evidence (clothing, for example). The goal is to identify what type of biological material was a factor in the crime and then, through DNA analysis, to link that material to a specific person.

An entire department of the GBI is devoted to *trace evidence*, particles so small that they can be transferred or exchanged between two surfaces without being noticed. Dust and debris on clothing or a person’s skin could indicate movement in or around a crime scene. The Trace Evidence Department runs tests on fibers and textiles, paints and coatings, gunshot residue, hair samples, and



fragments of glass, paper, metal, plastic, or wood.

Autopsies are conducted by GBI medical examiners at the headquarters laboratory in Decatur and in regional laboratories in Augusta, Macon, and Savannah. A forensic anthropologist from the University of Georgia helps the laboratory recover and identify human skeletal remains.

One of the most extensive cases undertaken by GBI forensic specialists was assisting in the recovery and identification of the 339 human remains—unburied or in mass graves—at the Tri-State Crematory in Noble in northwest Georgia in 2002.

# Chapter Review

## Chapter Summary

### Section 1 Georgia's Head of State

- Georgia's governors and lieutenant governors must be at least 30 years old, U.S. citizens for at least 15 years, and legal residents of Georgia for 6 years immediately preceding the election.
- The governor is elected for a four-year term and may be reelected for a second four-year term. The lieutenant governor is elected at the same time, for the same term, and in the same manner as the governor. The lieutenant governor may serve an unlimited number of terms.
- The governor is the chief executive of the state, the chief law enforcement officer, and the commander-in-chief of the state's military forces.
- The governor's formal powers include overseeing the executive branch, preparing the annual budget, being able to veto legislation passed by the General Assembly, filling vacancies when they occur, calling the General Assembly into special session, and appointing members to various executive commissions and boards.
- The governor's informal powers include serving as the spokesperson for the state, serving as the line of communication between the state and the federal government, leading trade delegations, acting as honorary head of his or her political party, and issuing proclamations.
- In case of the death, resignation, or permanent disability of the governor, the lieutenant governor becomes the governor and serves until a successor is elected. If something should happen to both the governor and the lieutenant governor, the next person in line would be the speaker of the House of Representatives.

### Section 2 The Organization of the Executive Branch

- Georgia voters elect not only a governor and a lieutenant governor but also public service commissioners and the state constitutional officers: secretary of state, attorney general, state school superintendent, commissioner of insurance, commissioner of agriculture, and commissioner of labor.
- Constitutional officials serve four-year terms except for the five members of the Public Service Commission, who serve six-year terms.
- Statutory officials are appointed by the governor or the head of the board or department in which they serve.
- The Public Service Commission (PSC) regulates public utilities, passenger buses, and household goods movers.
- The Board of Pardons and Paroles grants pardons, paroles, and other forms of clemency.
- The State Department of Education carries out education policy, which is set by the State Board of Education. The University System of Georgia oversees the state's institutions of higher learning.
- The Department of Human Services handles welfare and mental health-related issues. The Department of Community Health is responsible for health care planning and purchase issues.
- The Department of Public Safety includes the Georgia State Patrol. The Department of Driver Services issues driver's licenses and registers vehicles. The Georgia Bureau of Investigation aids local law enforcement in solving criminal cases.



- The Georgia Department of Transportation plans and maps out routes for new highways and handles road maintenance and improvements. The Georgia Ports Authority operates the state's two deepwater seaports.
- The Department of Economic Development is responsible for attracting new business to the state, encouraging existing industry and small businesses to expand, and developing new domestic and international markets for Georgia products.
- The Department of Natural Resources administers laws that conserve land and water resources. It also operates the state parks, campsites, lodges and historic sites. The Environmental Protection Division monitors water quality, air pollution, and hazardous waste handling. The Georgia Forestry Commission handles fire detection and prevention and forest management.



### Understanding the Facts

1. List the qualifications to serve as governor.
2. Explain the term and term limit of governor.
3. Who is elected to head the Georgia Department of Education?
4. Identify at least two other important state departments or agencies, explain who runs these offices, and list the major functions of the office.



### Developing Critical Thinking

Make a list of the pros and cons of term limits for the office of governor. Develop a proposal to change the constitution concerning term limits for governor.



### Writing Across the Curriculum

Select one important topic that you believe the executive branch needs to address. Write a short report that (a) explains the problem, (b) lists two or three facts about the problem, (c) summarizes your opinion on the issue, and (d) makes a recommendation to the appropriate executive branch leader.



### Extending Reading Skills

Use a Venn diagram with two circles to compare and contrast the powers and duties of the governor and the lieutenant governor.



### Exploring Technology

Access to fresh water is a long-term struggle between Georgia and some of its neighbor states. Use your favorite search engine to find out current facts about the water issue. Prepare a fact sheet that summarizes key points. Share your information in the class and develop ideas to resolve the problem.



### Practicing Your Skills

1. Use your favorite search engine to locate political cartoons about Georgia. Evaluate the cartoons to determine the purpose and message the artist is trying to portray.
2. Pick an issue that is important to you that involves the executive branch of our state. Draw your own political cartoon to express your opinion on the topic.