



## Roles of Executive Branch

### Governor is:

- Elected every four years by a popular vote and is limited to two consecutive four-year terms.
- An elected constitutional officer, the head of the executive branch, and the highest state office in Nebraska.
- The commander-in-chief of the state military forces (Nebraska National Guard) in the state of Nebraska.
- The chief budget officer and must present the state legislature with a complete budget for all expenditures to run the state's regular business.
- Responsible for signing or vetoing bills passed by the Legislature.
- Responsible for appointing certain Cabinet officers as required by the constitution and statutes and filling vacancies in state offices.

### The Governor's cabinet includes:

- Secretaries of Agriculture, Banking, Corrections (Prison System), Crime Commission, Economic Development, Energy, Fire Marshal, Health & Human Services, Labor, Revenue, State Patrol, Transportation, Veteran's Affairs.

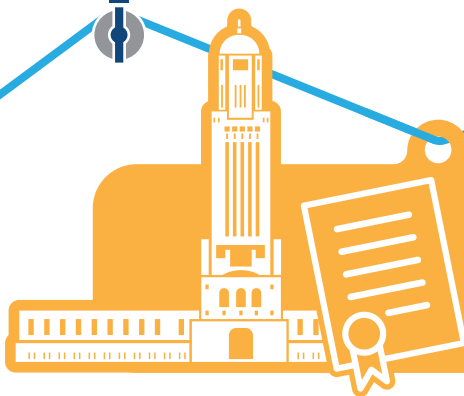
### Nebraska State Symbols



Great Seal of the State of Nebraska



The Sower



## Roles of Legislative Branch

### Legislature - Nebraska Unicameral

#### Basic Overview of Unicameral

The state of Nebraska is the only state in the country that does not have a bicameral legislature. Instead, the Nebraska Legislature has only **one house** called the **Unicameral**. Representatives from the Unicameral are called senators. With 49 senators, it is also the smallest legislature of any U.S. state. The senators work together to create laws for the state.

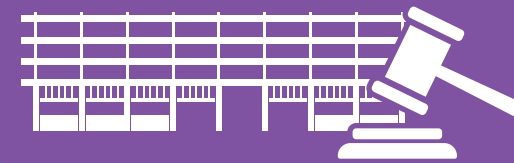
#### What is a nonpartisan legislature?

Being a nonpartisan legislature means that a candidate's political party is not listed on the election ballot. The two candidates who obtain the most votes in the primary election face each other in the general election.

There are 49 state senators in the Nebraska Legislature. Each one represents an area of the state called a district that has about 38,000 people living in it. Senators are elected by the people in their districts. They serve four years and can be re-elected to serve another four years.

#### Roles of Legislature- State Senators

- The state is divided into sections called districts, and each senator represents one of those districts.
- The Nebraska Legislature is a "citizen legislature," which means that many senators have other jobs.
- Senators are also farmers, teachers, business owners, social workers, lawyers, pilots, radio broadcasters, bankers and engineers.
- To be a state senator, you must be at least 21 years old, have lived in your district for at least one year, and be a registered voter.
- Senators are elected by citizens and serve up to two consecutive four-year terms.
- A senator's job at the State Capitol is to gather ideas from people they represent and introduce bills to solve problems.



## Roles of Judicial Branch

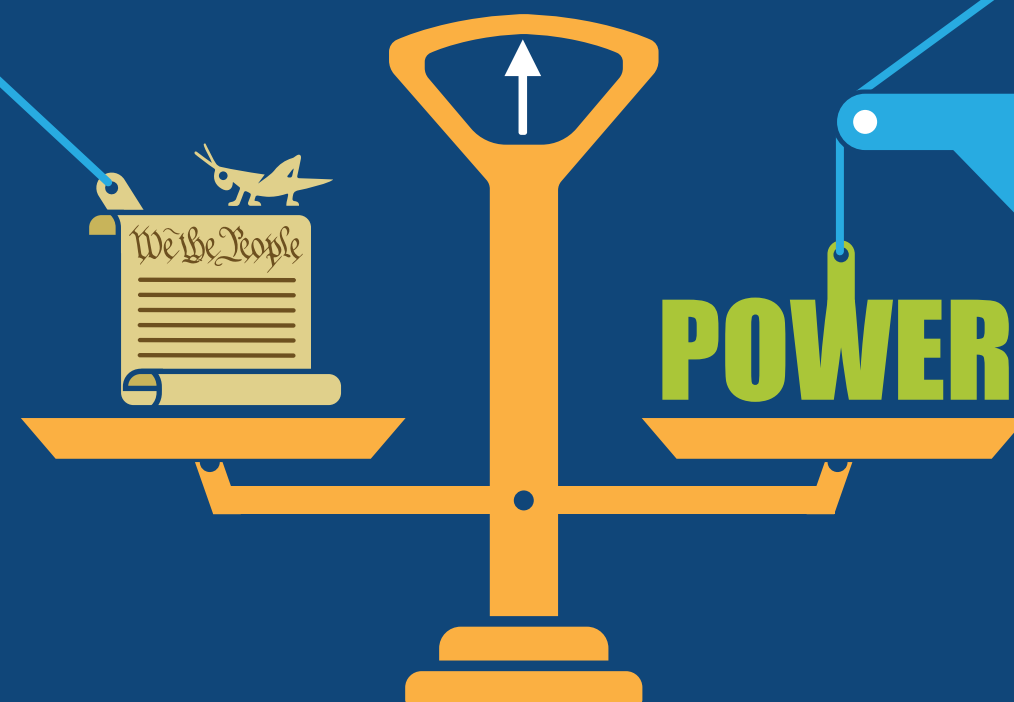
The judicial branch interprets the meaning of laws, applies laws to individual cases, and decides if laws violate the Constitution.

#### Judicial Branch Overview

The Constitution of the State of Nebraska distributes the judicial power of the state among the State Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, district courts, and county courts. All state courts operate under the administrative direction of the State Supreme Court.

In addition, to the courts created by the State Constitution, the Nebraska judicial system has two other courts – the separate juvenile courts located in Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy Counties, and a statewide Workers' Compensation Court

**Laws are rules that tell people how to act in society. People who do not follow the laws may be arrested, fined, or both.**



This ability of each branch to respond to the actions of the other branches is called the system of **checks and balances**.

# Facts about the Nebraska Unicameral Legislature

- U.S. Sen. George William Norris, considered the architect of Nebraska's unicameral system, served in the United States Senate from 1913-1943. Norris was instrumental in generating support for Nebraska's switch to a unicameral legislature, and produced several articles and speeches detailing his support for the change.
- Citizens passed an initiative to amend the Nebraska Constitution in 1934, and the first session of the Unicameral Legislature was held in 1937.
- The Legislature is now in session every year. A session lasts 60 legislative days in even-numbered years and 90 legislative days in odd-numbered years.

# Facts about the Nebraska Constitution

- The Nebraska Constitution is the basic governing document of the State of Nebraska. All acts of the Nebraska Legislature, the governor, and each governmental agency are subordinate to it.
- The constitution has been amended 228 times since it was first adopted in 1875, most notably to include the creation of a unicameral legislature.
- At the same time of the Nebraska constitutional convention in 1875, an immense concentration of grasshoppers known as Albert's swarm, covered the Western United States, including parts of Nebraska. Due to this the Nebraska constitution is also known as the "Grasshopper Constitution".



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