

ELECTED OFFICES IN WISCONSIN

FALL PARTISAN ELECTIONS

Partisan elections occur in the fall. The Fall Primary is the 2nd Tuesday in August. The Fall General Election is the Tuesday after the 1st Monday in November.

PARTISAN ELECTED OFFICES

PRESIDENT +

The President is the highest officer in the federal government's executive branch. The president implements and enforces the laws that Congress passes. The president may propose laws and legislation to Congress, but cannot make laws. The president can sign or veto legislation passed by Congress. The president appoints federal judges, diplomats and cabinet officials (subject to Senate approval). The president may make treaties with foreign countries (also subject to Senate approval). The president also serves as commander-in-chief of the armed forces. Voters elect the president to serve a four-year term. The constitution limits an elected president to two terms in office. *(Presidential Primary Elections are in April.)*

VICE PRESIDENT +

The Vice President is the second highest officer in the federal executive branch. Voters elect the vice president to serve a four-year term on the same ballot as the president. If the president cannot complete their term, the vice president becomes president. The vice president presides over the Senate, but may not vote except to decide a tie vote.

U.S. CONGRESS +

The United States Congress consists of two bodies: the Senate and the House of Representatives. Congress is the law-making body of the federal government. Congress also allocates federal spending through the budget and appropriation bills. Proposed laws (bills) can start in either the Senate or the House of Representatives. Both houses must pass a bill before sending it to the president for signature or veto. Congress can vote to override a veto.

U.S. SENATE

The United States Senate consists of 100 senators. Each state elects two senators, regardless of the state's population. Each state's voters elect their senators to serve a six-year term. The senators serve in staggered terms, so that every two years approximately 1/3 of the Senate is elected. There is no term limit.

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The United States House of Representatives currently consists of 435 members. The elected members are called either representatives or congresspersons. Members of the House represent the people in a state's congressional district. Each congressional district has roughly the same number of residents. U.S. Census information is used to create the districts. The number of districts in each state depends on the state's population. Wisconsin has 8 representatives. Voters elect representatives to serve for a two-year term. There is no term limit.

GOVERNOR *

The Governor implements and enforces Wisconsin's laws. The governor appoints the heads of most state agencies (subject to senate approval). The governor proposes a budget and can propose legislation to the State Legislature. The governor can sign or veto legislation. Voters elect Wisconsin's governor to serve a four-year term. There is no term limit.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR *

Voters elect the Lieutenant Governor to serve a four-year term, on the same ticket as the governor. If the governor cannot complete their term, the lieutenant governor becomes governor. The lieutenant governor may also temporarily serve as acting governor if the governor is out of state or unable to act.

STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL *

The Attorney General is the head of the state Department of Justice. They also provide legal advice and representation for state agencies and all three branches of government. Voters elect the attorney general to serve a four year term. There is no term limit.

STATE TREASURER *

The State Treasurer is the state's chief financial officer. The treasurer serves on the State of Wisconsin Investment Board, the Public Employee Trust Fund and the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands. Voters elect the treasurer to serve a four-year term. There is no term limit.

SECRETARY OF STATE *

The Secretary of State manages many of the state's official records. The secretary of state assumes the role of governor, if the governor leaves office during their term, and there is no lieutenant governor. Voters elect the secretary of state to serve a four-year term. There is no term limit.

WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE *

Wisconsin's legislature makes state laws. The legislature has two houses: the Wisconsin Senate and the Wisconsin Assembly. Proposed laws (bills) can originate from either the state senate or assembly. Both houses must approve the bill before it is passed on to the governor for signature or veto. The legislature can override a veto with a two-thirds majority vote in each house. The legislature controls the spending of state funds through appropriation.

WISCONSIN SENATE

The Wisconsin Senate has thirty-three senators. Voters elect state senators to represent their senate district for a four-year term. Each senate district includes three assembly districts. There is no term limit.

WISCONSIN ASSEMBLY

The Wisconsin Assembly has ninety-nine representatives. Voters elect representatives to represent their assembly district for a two-year term. There is no term limit.



DISTRICT ATTORNEY ^

The District Attorney is the chief law enforcer in every county in Wisconsin. The county district attorney's office investigates and prosecutes violations of state laws and county ordinances. They also litigate child protection cases in the County Circuit Court. Voters elect the district attorney to serve a four-year term. There is no term limit.

COUNTY CLERK ^

The County Clerk issues various licenses (ex. marriage licenses and birth certificates). The clerk maintains central files for county reports, records, contracts and corporate documents. They also receive competitive bids for county contracts. The clerk provides public access to legislative documents and county board meetings. Voters elect the county clerk to serve a four-year term. There are no term limits.

COUNTY TREASURER ^

The County Treasurer handles county government funds. The treasurer tracks all funds as they come in and out as provided by state law and county ordinance. They ensure the county has enough money on hand to meet the daily cash requirements of the county. They also oversee the investment of public funds not used for daily operations. The treasurer maintains property tax data. Voters elect the county treasurer to serve a four-year term. There is no term limit.

CLERK OF CIRCUIT COURT ^

The Clerk of Circuit Court handles record keeping, finance, and administration for the court as well as jury management. Clerks of circuit courts work with all those involved in the county judicial process including judges, county boards and the public. Voters elect the clerk of circuit court to serve a four-year term in countywide races.

COUNTY SHERIFF ^

The County Sheriff is the county's chief police officer. The sheriff manages the activities of the sheriff's deputies, who carry out most of the county's law enforcement duties. This includes arresting persons accused of committing crimes and running the county jail. Voters elect the county sheriff to serve a four-year term. There are no term limits.

COUNTY REGISTER OF DEEDS ^

The County Register of Deeds records and provides access to certified copies of birth, death and marriage records, real estate documents, corporation papers, military discharges, and other documents. Voters elect the county register of deeds to serve a four-year term. There are no term limits.

SPRING NONPARTISAN ELECTIONS

Nonpartisan elections occur in the spring. The Spring Primary is the 3rd Tuesday in February. The Spring General Election is the 1st Tuesday in April.

NONPARTISAN ELECTED OFFICES

STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION *

The State Superintendent of Public Instruction supervises the state's public schools. Voters elect the state superintendent of public instruction to serve a four-year term. There is no term limit.

WISCONSIN SUPREME COURT *

The Wisconsin Supreme Court is the highest court in the state. It has the final word on whether a state law agrees or conflicts with the Wisconsin Constitution. The Supreme Court consists of seven justices. Voters elect justices to serve 10-year terms. There is no term limit.

WISCONSIN COURT OF APPEALS *

The Wisconsin Court of Appeals consists of 16 judges serving in four districts. The Court of Appeals serves as the intermediate appellate court. It hears cases appealed from the circuit courts. The court will only overrule trial court decisions to fix important legal or procedural errors. Voters elect Court of Appeals judges to serve six-year terms. There is no term limit.

WISCONSIN CIRCUIT COURTS *

The Wisconsin Circuit Courts are the main trial courts for civil and criminal cases in the Wisconsin court system. They also hear cases appealed from Municipal Courts and from administrative hearings. At least one circuit court judge serves in each of the state's 72 counties. Voters elect Circuit Court judges to serve six-year terms. There is no term limit.

COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ^

The County Board of Supervisors is the legislative body in every county in Wisconsin. The county board adopts an annual county budget, resolutions and local ordinances (laws). They also establish programs and public services for the county. Voters elect supervisors to represent their supervisory district for a two-year term. There are no term limits.

COUNTY EXECUTIVE ^

Most Wisconsin counties are led by unelected county administrators. However, some counties are led by elected county executives. They are responsible for implementing local laws (ordinances) passed by the County's Board of Supervisors. The County Executive proposes an annual budget for the county. They also appoint members of boards, commissions, and heads of departments. The county executive can sign or veto actions of the County Board. Voters elect county executives to a specific term. There are no term limits.

COUNTY COMPTROLLER ^

The County Comptroller oversees all the county's finances. This includes monitoring contracts and auditing county programs and operations. Voters elect the comptroller to serve a four-year term. There are no term limits. *Not every county in Wisconsin has an elected comptroller.*

SYMBOLS KEY

Level of Office: + Federal * State ^ County

Election Cycle:  Fall  Spring