

# Summary: State Government

## What Is State Government?

Citizens elect representatives to the state government. These leaders work in the state capitol. Each state has a constitution, or plan for the government. State constitutions are different. But states all have three branches of government that work together to run the state.

The branch that makes the laws is led by lawmakers. They make laws to improve their communities and the state.

The governor leads the second branch of government. Governors make sure laws are carried out. A governor can stop new laws if he or she disagrees with them.

The courts are the third branch of state government. Courts make sure laws follow the state and national constitutions. Courts punish people who break laws.

## States Offer Services

States collect taxes to pay for services such as roads, schools, and hospitals. The governor plans how tax money should be used. The governor chooses people to run departments that offer services. For example, one department makes decisions about highways. Another decides how schools are run.

The government that runs the entire country is called the national government. State and national governments work together. State workers plan and fix highways. The national government also makes sure they are safe.



### Before You Read

Find and underline each vocabulary word.

**capitol** *noun*, the building where leaders meet to make laws

**governor** *noun*, the head of the state's second branch of government whose main job is to carry out state laws



### After You Read

**REVIEW** What do state lawmakers do?

Underline the sentence that tells what lawmakers do.

**REVIEW** What are some of the services that state governments provide?

Highlight words that tell what services taxes pay for.