

Executive Branch

The executive branch: profile of the executive branch and descriptions of constitutional offices, departments, independent agencies, state authorities, regional agencies, and interstate agencies and compacts

Langlade County Courthouse



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ELECTIVE CONSTITUTIONAL EXECUTIVE STATE OFFICERS

Office	Officer/Party	Residence ¹	Term Expires	Annual Salary ²
Governor	Jim Doyle (Democrat)	Madison	January 1, 2007	\$131,768
Lieutenant Governor	Barbara Lawton (Democrat)	Green Bay	January 1, 2007	69,579
Secretary of State	Douglas J. La Follette (Democrat)	Kenosha	January 1, 2007	62,549
State Treasurer	Jack C. Voight (Republican)	Appleton	January 1, 2007	62,549
Attorney General	Peggy A. Lautenschlager (Democrat)	Fond du Lac	January 1, 2007	127,868
Superintendent of Public Instruction	Elizabeth Burmaster (nonpartisan office)	Madison	July 4, 2005	109,587

¹Residence when originally elected.

²Annual salary as established for term of office by the Wisconsin Legislature.

Sources: 2003-2004 Wisconsin Statutes; Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau, Wisconsin Brief 04-20, *Salaries of State Elected Officials*, December 2004.



The State Capitol dominates a 13.5 acre park on Madison’s isthmus. (Kathleen Sitter, LRB)

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

A PROFILE OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

Structure of the Executive Branch

The structure of Wisconsin state government is based on a separation of powers among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. The legislative branch sets broad policy objectives and establishes the general structures and regulations for carrying them out. The executive branch supervises the day-to-day administration of the programs and policies, while the judicial branch is responsible for adjudicating any conflicts that may arise from the interpretation or application of the laws.

Constitutional Officers. The executive branch includes the state's six constitutional officers – the governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, state treasurer, attorney general, and state superintendent of public instruction. Originally, the term of office for all constitutional officers was two years, but since the 1970 elections, their terms have been four years. All, except the state superintendent, are elected on partisan ballots in the fall elections of the even-numbered years at the midpoint between presidential elections. Though originally a partisan officer, the superintendent is now elected on a nonpartisan ballot in the April election.

The governor, as head of the executive branch, is constitutionally required to “take care that the laws be faithfully executed”. In Article V of the state constitution, as ratified in 1848, the people of Wisconsin provided for the election of a governor and a lieutenant governor who would become “acting governor” in the event of a vacancy in the governor’s office. Originally, the lieutenant governor was also the presiding officer of the senate. (By subsequent amendments, the lieutenant governor was relieved of senate duties and now assumes the full title of “governor” if the office is vacated.)

In Article VI, the constitution provided for three additional elected officers to assist in administering the laws of the new state. The first session of the legislature in 1848 authorized the secretary of state to keep official records, including enrolled laws and various state papers, and to act as state auditor by examining the treasurer’s books and preparing budget projections for the legislature. The state treasurer was given responsibility for receiving all money and tax collections and paying out only those amounts authorized by the legislature for the operation of state government. The attorney general was to provide legal advice to the legislature and other constitutional officers and represent the state in legal matters tried in the courts of this state, other states, and the federal government.

The sixth officer, created by Article X of the constitution, was the state superintendent of public instruction. The first legislature gave the superintendent very specific duties, including the mandate to travel throughout the state inspecting common schools and advocating good public schools. The superintendent was to recommend texts, take a census of school age children, collect statistics on existing schools, and determine the apportionment of school aids.

The simplicity of administering state government in the early years is illustrated by the fact that total expenditures for 1848 government operations were only \$13,472, which included the expenses of the legislature and circuit courts. As prescribed by the constitution and state law, the salaries of all six constitutional officers totaled \$5,050 that year. (The lieutenant governor did not receive a salary, but he was given a double legislative per diem.) The state’s annual budget totaled \$24.3 billion in 2004-2005, and many of the duties first assigned to the constitutional officers are now carried out by specialized state agencies.

1967 Reorganization. Over a century later, the Wisconsin Committee on the Reorganization of the Executive Branch, in its report to the 1967 Legislature, concluded that state government

could no longer be neatly divided into precise legislative, executive, and judicial domains. In many instances the subjects of legislation had become so technically complex that the legislature found it necessary to grant rule-making authority to the administrative agencies. The courts had also encountered a staggering load of technical detail and had come to depend on administrative agencies to use their quasi-judicial powers to assist the judicial branch.

Although the Wisconsin Constitution delegated ultimate responsibility for state administration to the governor, the proliferation of agencies over the years had made it increasingly difficult for one official to exercise effective executive control. The committee identified 85 state agencies within the executive branch of Wisconsin state government, many of which had no direct relationship to the governor. Chapter 75, Laws of 1967, attempted to integrate agencies by function and make them responsive to the elected chief executive, by drastically reducing the number of executive agencies from 85 to 32. Like everything else, state government does not remain static, however. Since the 1967 reorganization, the legislature has created new state agencies, while abolishing or consolidating others. The following sections describe the current organization of the executive branch.

Departments. The term “department” is used to designate a principal administrative agency within the executive branch. Within a department, the major subunit is the division, which is headed by an administrator. Each division, in turn, is divided into bureaus, headed by directors. Bureaus may include sections, headed by chiefs, and smaller units, headed by supervisors. There currently are 17 departments in the executive branch.

Wisconsin Administrative Departments

Administration	Natural Resources
Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection	Public Instruction
Commerce	Regulation and Licensing
Corrections	Revenue
Employee Trust Funds	Tourism
Financial Institutions	Transportation
Health and Family Services	Veterans Affairs
Justice	Workforce Development
Military Affairs	

In the majority of cases, the departments are headed by a secretary appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate. Only the Department of Employee Trust Funds and the Department of Veterans Affairs are headed by boards that select the secretary. When administrators are personally chosen by and serve at the pleasure of the governor, they usually work in close cooperation with the chief executive.

Debate about whether the governor should directly appoint department heads continues. Public administration theory has long held that a governor can be the chief executive only if he or she has the authority to hold department heads directly accountable. On the other hand, the original purpose of a board was to insulate a department from politics, thereby enabling its head and staff to develop expertise and a sense of professionalism.

Independent Agencies. In addition to constitutional offices and administrative departments, there are 12 units of the executive branch that have been specifically designated as independent agencies.

Independent Executive Agencies

Educational Communications Board	Public Service Commission
Elections Board	State Historical Society of Wisconsin
Employment Relations Commission	State Investment Board
Ethics Board	State Public Defender Board
Higher Educational Aids Board	Technical College System
Office of the Commissioner of Insurance	University of Wisconsin System

Although the independent agencies are usually headed by part-time boards or multiple commissioners, the governor appoints most of these officials, with advice and consent of the senate, which serves to strengthen executive control of these units.

Authorities. In some instances, the legislature has decided to create corporate public bodies, known as “authorities”, to handle specific functions. Although they are agencies of the state, the authorities operate outside the regular government structure and are intended to be financially self-sufficient. Currently, there are four authorities operating in Wisconsin – the Wisconsin Health and Educational Facilities Authority (WHEFA), the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA), the University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority, and the Fox River Navigational System Authority. (A fifth, the World Dairy Center Authority is currently inactive.) WHEDA, WHEFA, and UW Hospitals and Clinics Authority are authorized to issue bonds to finance their respective activities. Most authority members are appointed by the governor with advice and consent of the senate, but some are chosen from the legislature or serve as *ex officio* members.

Nonprofit Corporations. In 1985, the legislature created the Bradley Center Sports and Entertainment Corporation, a public, nonprofit corporation, which operates the Bradley Center in Milwaukee, the home of the Milwaukee Bucks, the Milwaukee Admirals hockey team, and the Marquette University basketball team. The corporation is headed by a board of directors appointed by the governor.

1999 Wisconsin Act 105 created the Wisconsin Technology Council, referenced in the statutes as the High-Technology Business Development Corporation. It supports the creation, development, and retention of science-based and technology-based businesses in the state.

The Wisconsin Artistic Endowment Foundation, created in 2001 Wisconsin Act 16, supports the arts by converting donated property and art objects into cash and distributing these and other moneys to the arts board that provide operating support to arts organizations.

Special Districts. The legislature may create special districts that serve “a statewide public purpose.” These districts oversee the management of facilities for exposition centers, sports teams, and the cultural arts. Members of the governing boards are appointed by public officials. Currently, the Wisconsin Center, Miller Park, Lambeau Field, and the Madison Overture Center operate as special districts.

Boards, Councils, and Committees. Many departments and agencies have subordinate part-time boards, councils, and committees that carry out specific tasks or act in an advisory capacity. Boards may function as policy-making units, and some are granted policy-making or quasi-judicial powers. Examining boards set the standards of professional competence and conduct for the professions they supervise, and they are authorized to examine new practitioners, grant licenses, and investigate complaints of alleged unprofessional conduct. Councils function on a continuing basis to study and recommend solutions for problems arising in a specified functional area of state government. Committees usually are short-term bodies, appointed to study a specific problem and to recommend solutions or policy alternatives.

Boards are always created by statute. Councils are usually created by statute, but committees, because of their temporary nature, are created by session law rather than being written into the statutes. In addition, agency heads may create and appoint their own councils or committees as needed. The *Blue Book* describes only those units created by statute.

Attached Units. Under the 1967 reorganization, certain boards, commissions, and councils were attached to departments or independent agencies for administrative purposes only. These units are sometimes referred to as “15.03 units” because of the statutory section number that defines them. The larger agencies are expected to provide various services, such as budgeting and program coordination, but the 15.03 units exercise their statutory powers independently of the department or agency to which they are attached.

Government Employment

Classified Service. An important feature of Wisconsin state government employment is the merit system. Wisconsin’s civil service, which is called “classified service”, is designed to ensure that the most qualified person is hired for the job, based on test results and experience, rather than political affiliation. In 1905, Wisconsin was one of the first states to adopt such a system, and the Wisconsin classified service was considered one of the strongest because it encompassed the major portion of state personnel.

Since the 1967 reorganization of the executive branch, the trend has been to make top agency positions, including deputy secretaries, executive assistants, and division administrators, unclassified appointments. Despite this change at the top levels, most state employees, with the principal exception of legislative staff and the University of Wisconsin faculty and academic appointments, are hired and promoted through the classified service on the basis of merit.

Salaries. All positions in the classified service are categorized so that those involving similar duties, responsibilities, and qualifications are paid on the same basis. The Office of State Employment Relations (OSER) is directed to apply the principle of equal pay for equivalent skills and responsibilities when assigning a classification to a pay range.

State employees may join labor unions and engage in collective bargaining, but they are prohibited by state law from striking. Collective bargaining agreements, negotiated between OSER and labor organizations, are submitted to the Joint Committee on Employment Relations. The committee forwards its recommendations to the legislature in bill form for approval of salaries, fringe benefits, and other changes in the law. If the committee or legislature does not approve the proposed agreement, it is returned for renegotiation.

Each biennium, OSER establishes the compensation plan of classifications and related salary ranges for those classified employees not covered by collective bargaining agreements, subject to modification by the Joint Committee on Employment Relations. The governor may veto the committee's actions, although the vote of six committee members can override a veto. Some provisions of the compensation plan, as approved by the committee, may require changes in existing law, in which case they must be presented in bill form to the legislature for enactment.

Number of State Employees. The increasing size and complexity of state government is reflected in the number of employees. To illustrate this, a total of 1,924 people worked for Wisconsin state government in 1906. By contrast, in 2004, full and part-time state employees totaled 77,258. According to the Legislative Fiscal Bureau, this corresponds to 68,074 full-time equivalent employees.

Housing State Government

The first capitol in Madison was built during the Wisconsin Territory days at a cost of more than \$60,000. Construction began in 1837 but was not completed until 1845. The building, which served as the first state capitol, was demolished in 1863 to make way for a larger second capitol, which was completed in 1866. When the second state capitol was extensively damaged by fire in 1904, construction of the current capitol began. The present capitol, which was completed in 1917 for \$7,203,826.35, has recently undergone extensive restoration and renovation, costing more than \$140 million, to prepare it for the 21st century.

Today, the agencies of state government in Madison are housed in the capitol and various state-owned office buildings, with additional space leased from private landlords. There are also state office buildings in Eau Claire, Green Bay, La Crosse, Milwaukee, Waukesha, and Wisconsin Rapids, plus district offices maintained throughout the state for the field units of many of the operating departments.

Besides its office buildings, the state owns or maintains a variety of educational, correctional, and mental health institutions across Wisconsin. The University of Wisconsin System operates 13 degree-granting institutions and 13 two-year colleges that feature freshman-sophomore instruction.

The state's adult corrections program, under the direction of the Department of Corrections, currently operates 5 maximum security prisons, 11 medium security prisons, 2 minimum security institutions, a prison for women, and 16 correctional centers. The department's juvenile corrections program operates Ethan Allen School at Wales and Lincoln Hills School at Irma for male juveniles and Southern Oaks Girls School at Union Grove, along with the Mendota Juvenile Treatment Center, an inpatient mental health treatment center.

Through the Department of Health and Family Services, the state operates 4 mental health institutions at Madison, Oshkosh, and Mauston, and 3 centers for the developmentally disabled at Madison, Chippewa Falls, and Union Grove.

The Department of Public Instruction maintains a school that offers special training for blind and visually impaired students at Janesville and a similar school for the deaf and hard-of-hearing at Delavan. The Wisconsin Veterans Homes at King in Waupaca County and Union Grove in Racine County are operated by the state to serve eligible Wisconsin veterans and qualifying spouses.

Functions of the Executive Branch

Governor and Lieutenant Governor. The governor, as Wisconsin's chief executive officer, represents all the people of the state. Because of this, the Office of the Governor is the focal point for receiving suggestions and complaints about state affairs. Administratively, the governor exercises authority through the power of appointment, consultation with department heads, and execution of the executive budget after its enactment by the legislature. The governor plays a key role in the legislative process through drafting the initial version of the biennial budget, which is submitted to the legislature in the form of a bill. Other opportunities to influence legislative action arise in the chief executive's state of the state message and special messages to the legislature about topics of concern. The governor also shapes the legislative process through the power to veto bills, call special sessions of the legislature, and appoint committees or task forces to study state problems and make recommendations for changes in the law.

Based on a 1979 amendment, the constitution provides that if the incumbent governor dies, resigns, or is removed from office, the lieutenant governor becomes governor for the unexpired term. The lieutenant governor serves temporarily as "acting governor" when the governor is impeached, incapacitated, or absent from the state.

Commerce. While the U.S. Constitution specifically delegates to Congress the regulation of interstate commerce, each state regulates intrastate commerce within its borders. The definitions of interstate and intrastate commerce overlap at times, and over the years the U.S. Supreme Court has greatly broadened the meaning of the "commerce clause" in the federal constitution. Despite this broad interpretation, the states continue to exercise considerable authority over commerce.

Commerce involves goods, services, and commercial documents, as well as transportation and communication, so the state's involvement in regulating commerce is broad. The state's primary objective is to protect the public as consumers and as participants in financial transactions. Wisconsin state government is also interested in maintaining a stable, orderly market for carrying out commercial activities and for promoting the state's economic development.

One aspect of consumer protection is the inspection of farm products and the conditions under which they are produced. The state inspects cattle for infectious diseases, conducts research in animal and plant diseases, regulates the use of pesticides, grades fruits and vegetables for marketing, and sets standards for processed food. Explicit standards are set by law or in the administrative rules promulgated by the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. The department is concerned not only with the conditions of growing and processing food but also with fair trade practices in its sale.

Another important aspect of consumer protection is the licensing of various trades and professions. Individuals working in certain professions must achieve state-mandated levels of training and proficiency before they can offer their services to the public. Examples include professions affecting public health, such as doctors and nurses, or public safety, such as architects and engineers. The Department of Regulation and Licensing assists a variety of examining boards associated with various trades and professions and directly regulates certain types of professional activity.

The state protects consumers by maintaining an orderly market in which the public can conduct business. State activities include specifying methods of fair competition, regulating rates for public utilities, setting standards for the operation of financial institutions, regulating gambling, and regulating the sale of securities and insurance. The Department of Financial Institutions regulates banks, savings institutions, credit unions, and the sale of securities. It also registers trademarks, corporations, and other organizations and files Uniform Commercial Code documents. The Office of the Commissioner of Insurance regulates the sale of insurance. The Public Service Commission regulates public utility rates and services. The Gaming Division in the Department of

Administration regulates racing and charitable gambling and oversees gaming compacts between Indian tribes and the state. The Department of Revenue administers the Wisconsin Lottery.

The state is concerned with promoting economic development. The Department of Commerce provides assistance to communities and small businesses, promotes international trade, and recommends private and public sector programs to further long-term growth. Through the Wisconsin Development Fund, it awards grants or loans to fund technical research, labor training programs, and other major economic development projects that promise to create jobs and increase capital investment. The Department of Tourism promotes travel to Wisconsin's scenic, historic, artistic, educational, and recreational sites. It stimulates the development of private commercial tourist facilities and encourages local tourist-related businesses.

In the interests of public safety and welfare, the state enforces laws that regulate public and private buildings. The Department of Commerce enforces dwelling codes, reviews construction plans for new buildings, inspects subsystems that serve buildings, and performs training and consulting services for the building industry.

Education. Wisconsin officially recognized the importance of education within a democratic society at statehood in 1848 when it provided for the establishment of local schools in the state constitution and required that education be free to all children. The constitution further directed the legislature to establish a state university at Madison and colleges throughout the state as needed.

Wisconsin's public educational institutions now enroll over one million students each year. In fall 2003, there were 880,031 pupils in the public elementary and secondary schools and 173,058 students enrolled in the University of Wisconsin System in the fall of 2004. The Technical College System enrolled 113,253 students in its associate degree programs in the fall of 2002 and 316,102 in its vocational, technical diploma, and college transfer classes.

Wisconsin relies on 426 local school districts to administer its elementary and secondary programs. Twelve cooperative educational service agencies (CESAs) furnish support activities to the local districts on a regional basis, and the Department of Public Instruction, headed by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, a nonpartisan constitutional officer, provides supervision and consultation for the districts.

In 1970 the state was divided into 16 vocational, technical, and adult education districts. These districts, renamed technical college districts, are each supervised by a district board that has taxing power. At the state level, the Technical College System Board supervises the districts.

At the collegiate level, all state-financed institutions of higher education are integrated into a single University of Wisconsin System. The system's two largest campuses at Madison and Milwaukee offer programs leading to doctoral degrees. Eleven other degree-granting institutions provide 4-year courses of baccalaureate study, and 13 UW Colleges provide 2-year courses of college-level study. State funding also supports Wisconsin residents enrolled at the Medical College of Wisconsin, Inc.

Three other state agencies perform educational functions. The Higher Educational Aids Board administers federal and state student financial assistance programs. The Educational Communications Board operates the state's networks for educational radio and educational television. The State Historical Society of Wisconsin maintains the state historical library, museum, and various historic sites.

Environmental Resources and Transportation. From a wilderness inhabited by 305,391 people in 1850, the state has evolved into a complex society with an estimated 2005 population of 5,563,896. Most of Wisconsin is not densely populated, and the state has a comparatively large amount of open space. However, population growth, higher levels of consumption, and industrial development have increased environmental pollution.

Once pioneers could come to a wilderness, cut the forests, clear the land, and hunt and fish with little thought of damage to the soil, streams, or wildlife. Now these resources must be protected from destruction, depletion, or extinction. The Department of Natural Resources administers numerous programs that control water quality, air pollution, and solid waste disposal. Under state regulations, municipalities and industries cannot dump untreated sewage or industrial wastes into surface waters; smokestacks and automobiles must meet air pollution limits; farmers are encour-

aged to preserve soil and groundwater quality; and solid waste disposal facilities must meet construction and operation standards. The department regulates hunting and fishing to protect fish and wildlife resources and manages other programs designed to conserve and restore endangered and threatened species. It also promotes recreational and educational opportunities through state parks, forests, trails, and natural areas.

The Department of Transportation administers a variety of programs related to environmental resources. The highways that crisscross the state have a major impact on land use and people's lifestyles. Urban freeways and interstate highways greatly affect the use and development of surrounding land. They determine where people live, work, and play. When state government plans the location and financing of highways and roads, it must carefully consider both short- and long-range consequences.

The state's highway system consists of interstate highways, state highways, county trunk highways, town roads, city and village streets, and park and forest roads. The state is concerned not only with building and maintaining adequate roads to meet demands, but also with providing for the safety of travelers using those roads. In 2005, more than 5 million vehicles were registered in Wisconsin, and more than 3.8 million residents were licensed to drive. With 836 traffic fatalities in 2003, and 784 in 2004, traffic safety is a constant concern.

The department must ensure that licensed drivers know the laws, are physically fit to drive, and have the required driving skills. It keeps track of drivers' records and can suspend the licenses of those who prove hazardous to themselves or others. It oversees highway construction and maintenance, highway patrol, and enforcement of driver and vehicle standards. The department is also involved in developing aviation and airports in Wisconsin and with promoting mass transit and passenger rail transportation.

Human Relations and Resources. Besides protecting the environment, the state must also protect its citizens directly. Population growth that affects the quality of land, water, and air resources has an increasingly complex effect on people themselves and their relationships to each other and their government. The inhabitants of a state are its prime resource, and government must ensure their general welfare. Records of birth, marriage, divorce, and death are collected and used to identify trends and potential problems.

In the state's early days, public health was primarily concerned with preventing the spread of communicable diseases. Today, the work of the Department of Health and Family Services includes protection from biological terrorist attacks, disease prevention and detection, health education programs, and maintenance of institutions for the care and treatment of the mentally handicapped or mentally ill. The department is also responsible for a broad range of social services for the aged, the handicapped, and children.

A wide range of work-related issues are subject to state regulation. Minimum wages and maximum hours are set by law. If a worker is injured on the job, state worker's compensation may be available; unemployment compensation helps many workers faced with loss of a job. If a worker is seeking a job, the state (in partnership with the federal government) provides a job service to help the individual find work or to acquire the skills necessary for employment. If a worker suspects job discrimination because of age, race, creed, color, handicap, marital status, sex, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, or arrest or conviction record, the state may investigate the matter. The Department of Workforce Development is responsible for protecting and assisting workers. The department also provides training and other services to help welfare recipients join the labor market under the state's Wisconsin Works (W-2) program and provides employment and assistance to rehabilitate the handicapped. The Employment Relations Commission mediates and arbitrates labor disputes between workers and their employers.

The Department of Veterans Affairs has grant and loan programs to help eligible veterans acquire a home, business, or education, and it provides personal and medical care for eligible elderly veterans and their spouses at the Wisconsin Veterans Homes at King and Union Grove.

The state also protects its citizens from society's lawless elements by maintaining stability and order. Law enforcement is largely a local matter, but the Department of Corrections is responsible for segregating convicted adult and juvenile offenders in its penal institutions and rehabilitating them for eventual return to society. The Office of the State Public Defender represents indigents in trial and postconviction legal proceedings. The Department of Justice furnishes legal services

to state agencies and technical assistance and training to local law enforcement agencies. It also enforces state laws against gambling, arson, child pornography, and narcotic drugs.

The state maintains an armed military force, the Wisconsin National Guard, to protect the populace in times of state or national emergency, whether natural or human caused, and to supplement the federal armed forces in time of war. These activities come under the jurisdiction of the Department of Military Affairs.

General Executive Functions. The services described so far are direct services to the public. In order for the state to perform these functions, it must also perform certain “staff” functions. The state requires general departments that oversee the hiring of agency personnel and provide space, equipment, salaries, and a retirement system for them. It must levy and collect taxes to support its activities, manage these state funds, and ensure that they are spent according to law. It also evaluates agency operations to assure that the various departments are performing their assigned tasks and preparing for future needs.

Some agencies are designed to perform staff functions almost exclusively. The Department of Administration, for example, is called the state’s “housekeeping” department. Its duties include state budgeting, preauditing, engineering and facilities management, state planning, and data processing. The Office of State Employment Relations operates the state’s classified service system. The Department of Revenue collects taxes levied by state law, distributes part of that revenue to local units of government, and calculates the equalized value of the property that has been assessed by local government.

The Department of Employee Trust Funds manages the state’s retirement systems and the employee insurance programs that cover state and local government workers. At any one time, the state must have large sums of money in its employee trust funds to meet its obligations. The Investment Board invests these funds in stocks, bonds, and real estate in order to earn the maximum amount of interest possible until the funds are needed. The Office of the State Treasurer processes the receipt and disbursement of these and other state moneys.

The Office of the Secretary of State handles general executive duties, such as keeping various state records and affixing the state seal on certain records. The Elections Board oversees the state’s election processes, monitors campaign expenditures, and keeps election records. The Ethics Board administers a code of ethics for state public officials and regulates lobbyists and their employers.

This introduction illustrates how state government both benefits and regulates dozens of aspects of life in Wisconsin. The following sections describe in detail the agencies that make up the executive branch of state government and the numerous services they perform each day.

Total Budget, under each agency’s entry, reflects the dollars budgeted through the 2003-2005 legislative session.

Number of Employees are the number of full-time equivalent positions in each agency’s “adjusted base”, which is the set of figures each agency uses to begin budgeting for the next biennium. It fully reflects the effects of 2003 Wisconsin Act 33.

Telephone numbers listed without an area code are Madison numbers in area code 608.