

CHAPTER 6

Executive Departments



Highway Patrol at the Missouri State Fair, Otto the Car.
(Missouri State Archives, State Fair Collection)



Executive Departments

Government exists to serve, and a broad network of government organizations has been created to accomplish the purpose. Because of the many different names used by these groups—departments, divisions, agencies, boards, commissions, bureaus, units, sections, programs and others—it can be difficult to determine which area of government is responsible for certain services, or to sort out responsibilities or relationships within the governmental framework.

The Missouri Constitution (Article II, Section 1) states: “The powers of government shall be divided into three distinct departments—the legislative, executive and judicial.” This section also prohibits persons within each branch from exercising powers of the other branches.

From these three branches spring the variety of organizations which deliver services of state government. Generally speaking, the legislative and judicial branches rely on committees or other small, appointed groups to perform research, develop policy, provide advocacy services or handle administrative duties. In these two branches, most services are delivered through the offices of the elected officials themselves and not by related agencies.

It is through the executive branch that the greatest proportion of state services are delivered. The Constitution (Article IV, Section 12) and the Reorganization Act of 1974 have established a number of “executive departments” to deal with specific areas of interest. A chart showing the present state departments is shown on the following page.

The Missouri Constitution, provides for 16 specific departments: the Office of Administration and the departments of Agriculture, Conservation, Corrections, Economic Development, Elementary and Secondary Education, Health and Senior Services, Higher Education, Insurance, Labor and Industrial Relations, Mental Health, Natural Resources, Public Safety, Revenue, Social Services and Transportation.

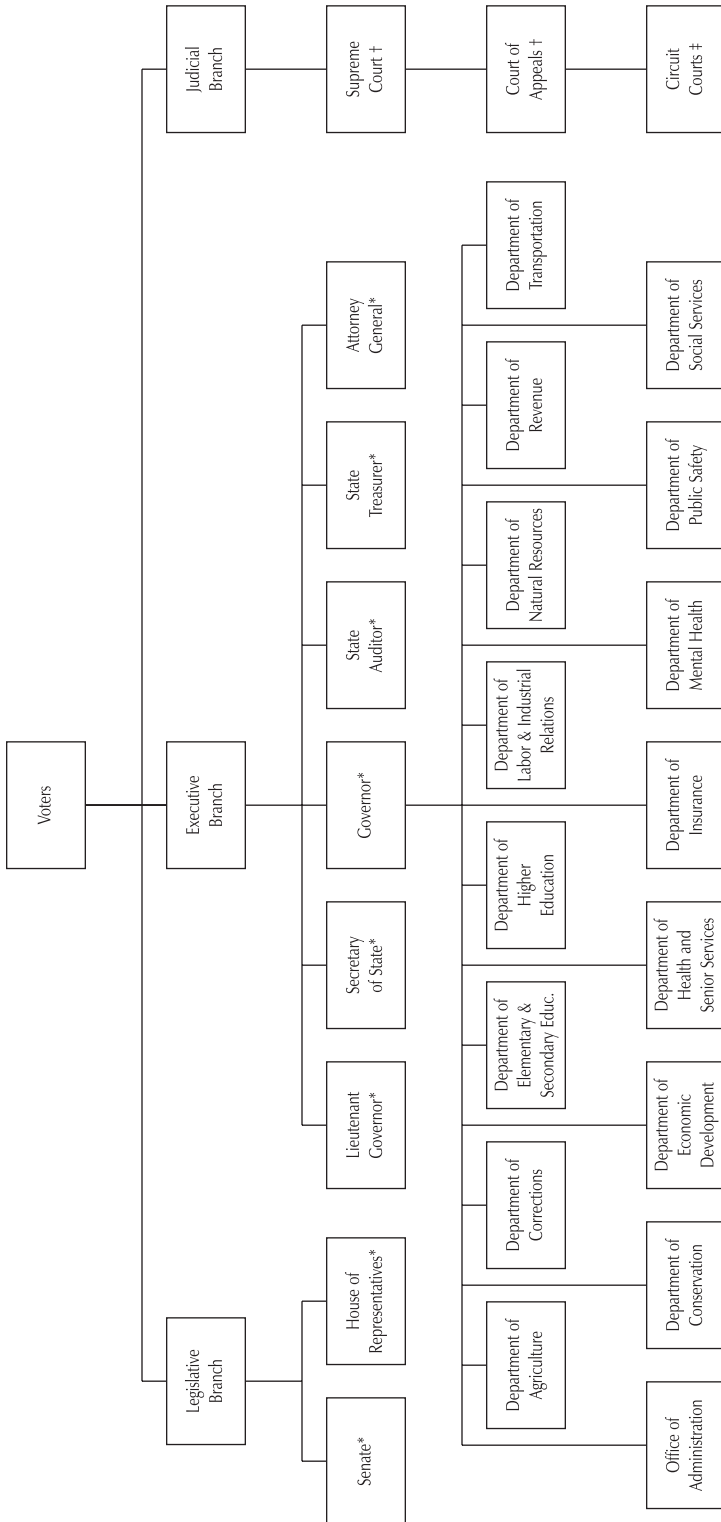
Within each executive department exists a variety of offices of varying size and scope which deal with specific services. Traditionally, “divisions” are the next-largest organizations within departments and function to bring together smaller-sized groups, such as “bureaus,” “sections” or “units.” Divisions may be governed by a “board” or “commission” composed of members who are either appointed by the governor, made members by law or appointed by a department official. State agencies may administer certain sections of state law, as defined by the *Revised Statutes of Missouri*, may develop their own rules and regulations as promulgated in the *Missouri Register* and *Code of State Regulations* or may institute programs and policies which address the needs of their areas of service.

The Missouri Constitution

Since achieving statehood in 1821, Missouri has had only four Constitutions. The first was adopted in 1820 and was presented to Congress before Missouri was allowed to enter the union of states. The state’s second Constitution was drafted and adopted in 1865. It was replaced by a third Constitution only ten years later. The current Constitution was adopted in 1945 and has been amended a number of

times in order to meet the changing needs of our state and its people.

The Constitution of the State of Missouri is published by the Office of Secretary of State pursuant to the *Revised Statutes of Missouri* (RSMo 2.110). Copies of the Missouri Constitution, which also includes the text of the U.S. Constitution, are available without charge by writing to: Secretary of State Matt Blunt, Publications Division, PO Box 1767, Jefferson City, MO 65102.



* Indicates elected offices

† Indicates appointed offices subject to public vote for retention

‡ Some circuit court judges are elected. Others are appointed under the Missouri Nonpartisan Plan. All are subject to public vote for retention