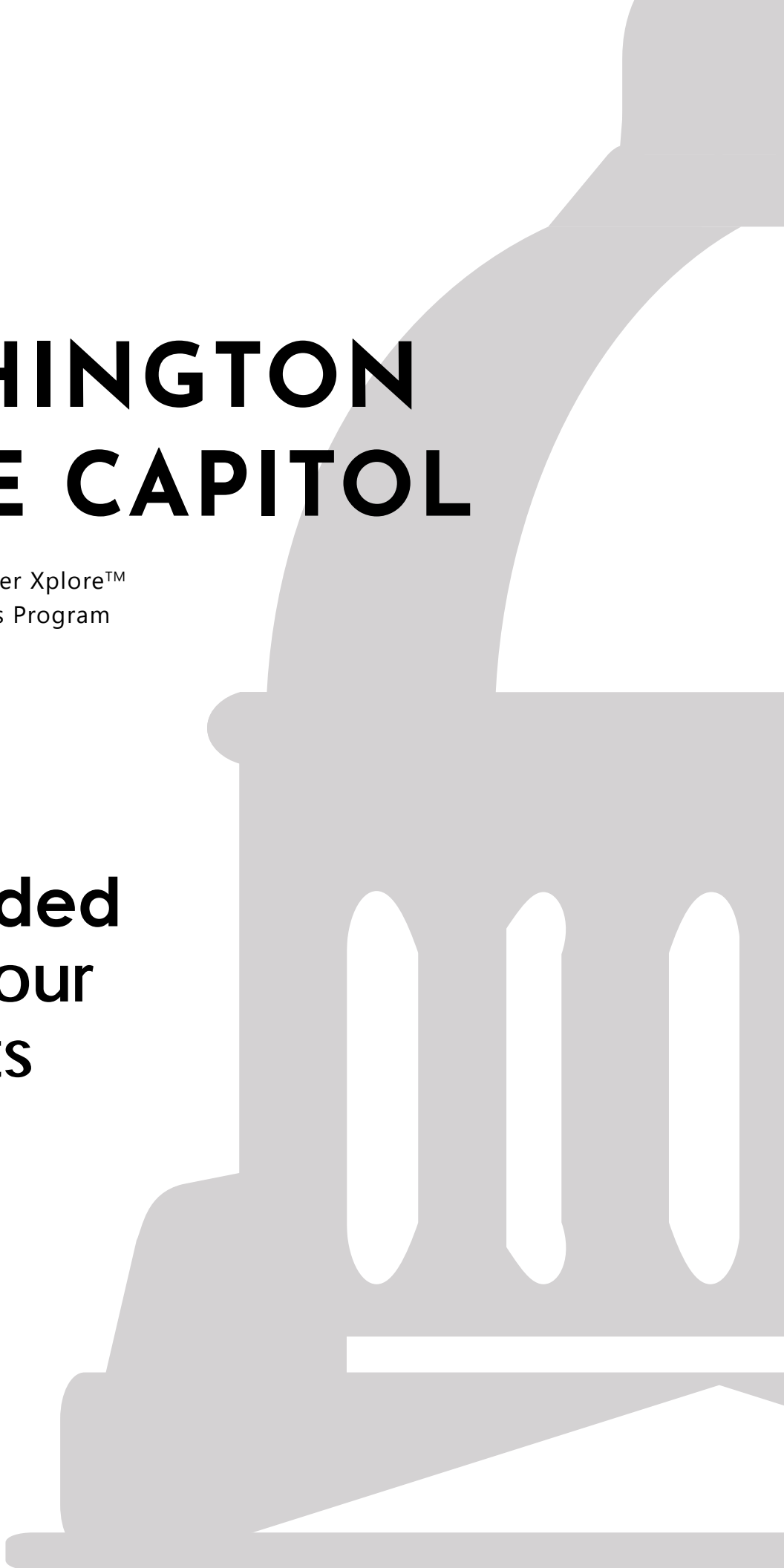


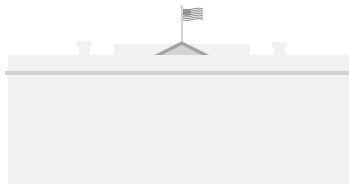
WASHINGTON STATE CAPITOL

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contents**



THE THREE BRANCHES



LEGISLATIVE

EXECUTIVE

JUDICIAL



Congress

President

Fed Supreme Court



WA House & Senate

Governor

WA Supreme Court



City Council

Mayor

Municipal Courts

We will be talking only about Washington State Government. Government at the state level is just one of the layers of government in our country. There is the federal government that oversees the entire United States, there are state governments that oversee individual states, and there are local governments that oversee cities and counties. The laws passed here at the capitol only apply to Washington State.

Just like the federal government, Washington State Government is divided into three separate, but equal, branches. There is the Legislative branch that writes the laws, the executive branch that carries out the laws, and the judicial branch, or court system, that interprets the laws and determines if they are constitutional.

In Washington State, each branch of government has its own work space on campus.



FLAG CIRCLE



The Washington State Capitol is where many of the most important laws, or rules, that affect Washingtonians are made. Think about all the ways that government affects you – What laws keep you safe? What state parks do you enjoy visiting? What school do you attend? What roads do you drive on? Chances are, many of the decisions that led to the creation of those laws, parks, schools, and roads were made right here at your state capitol.



The Washington State Capitol has been located at the southern tip of Puget Sound since its territorial days. Architects Walter Wilder and Harry White designed our current capitol which is made up of five stone clad buildings known as the “Capitol Group.” The centerpiece of the group, and the third building to be constructed, is the 287-foot-tall Legislative Building. The Washington State's Legislative Building was completed in 1928.



LEGISLATIVE (CAPITOL) BUILDING





NORTH STEPS



Did you know that there are a lot of ways you as a citizen can have your voice heard?

Voting, once you turn 18, may be the most important, but your voice can be heard long before you are a registered voter. In fact, that is where the capitol steps come in. They serve as one important place where, under the US and Washington State Constitutions, you can peacefully assemble, exercise your right to freedom of speech, and ask your government to hear your concerns.

In addition to visiting the capitol in person, citizens can also write, text, email, or call their elected officials to share their concerns. Remember, your elected officials work for you so they want to hear what you have to say!



ARCHITECTURE



The Washington State Legislative (Capitol) Building is designed in a Greco-Roman, or Classical Style. This means that when you look at it, you are reminded of the ancient temples of Greece and Rome. This is important because we get our ideas about democracy and the rule of law from the Greeks and Romans.

It took six years for our capitol to be finished. Construction began in 1922 and was completed in 1928. The building is constructed out of five primary materials: Granite, Sandstone, Brick, Plaster, and Marble. A lot of the stone, including the decorative portions of the columns, were carved in place.



BRONZE DOORS



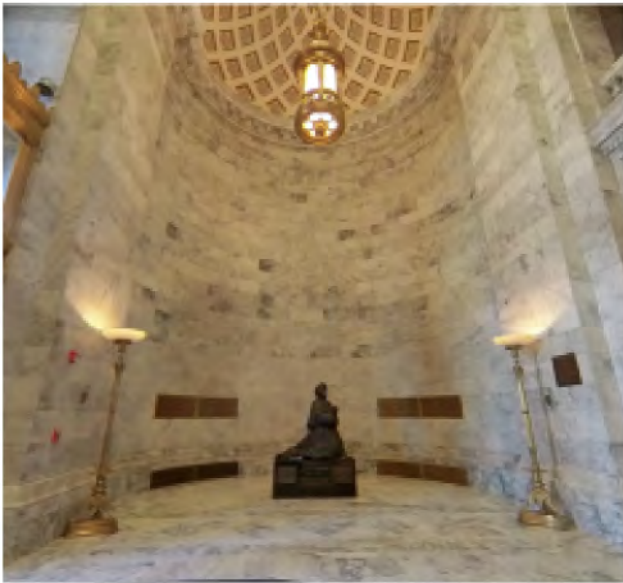
Six decorative bronze doors serve as the main entrance into the Legislative Building.

Weighing one ton each, or 2,000 lbs., they show different scenes from Washington's territorial years, including the first territorial capitol building and a typical pioneer homestead of the times.

As heavy as the doors are, they can still be opened and closed easily because of the great hinges that support them!



FOYER



The foyer is the grand entrance into the Legislative Building. Visitors have to climb 42 granite steps to enter here, but it has a beautiful view! The 42 steps represent Washington's entrance into the union as the 42nd state on November 11, 1889.

Once inside the building, a statue on either side of the grand foyer greets visitors as they walk in. These two statues are copies of the original statues that reside in our nation's capital in Washington DC.

Every state chooses two individuals of historic significance to represent them and Washington State chose Mother Joseph, known for founding schools and hospitals in the Pacific Northwest, and Marcus Whitman, a medical missionary and Oregon Trail pioneer.





ROTUNDA



The rotunda is the center of the Legislative Building and the capitol grouping. It is an incredibly impressive space architecturally since visitors can look up to see the inside of the dome!

The rotunda is the space for all types of special events, such as bill signings, speeches, military balls, proms, weddings, state celebrations, and so much more! It truly is the people's space and a space where history is made!

County Flags

Thirty-nine flags are on display in the rotunda, each flag represents one of the 39 counties in Washington. They are organized geographically by the four corners of the state - northeast, northwest, southeast and southwest.



ROMAN FIREPOTS



The United States of America got many of its ideas for our representative form of government from the ancient Romans. Throughout the capitol you will see many details inspired by ancient Rome, but perhaps none so closely tied with the spirit of democracy as these firepots. Each time the Roman Senate met they would light firepots as part of their ceremonies. The citizens of Rome would see these lit firepots and know that the senate was meeting.

We have the firepots in this space as a symbol to the people of Washington that their capitol is the center of democracy and the rule of law.



CHANDELIER



The Washington State Legislative Building has a large collection of original Tiffany lighting fixtures.

Among this collection is the largest chandelier ever designed and manufactured by the Tiffany Studios of New York.

It is 25 feet long, weighs 10,000 pounds, is made of solid bronze, and has over 200 lights on it!



STATE SEAL PRESS



The State Capitol has many decorative state seals throughout the capitol campus, and many can be found on draperies, benches, door knobs, banisters, elevator doors and more.

By law, the Secretary of State is the custodian of the Great Seal, which is attached to official documents and certificates issued by the state. The original press for the Great Seal – now more than 100 years old – is still used by the Secretary of State to stamp the seal on official state documents.



STATE SEAL



This is the largest of the state seals and it is located here in the middle of the rotunda floor. The story of how the state seal was created is an interesting one. A short time before Washington became a state in 1889, the state seal design committee brought a complicated sketch to Olympia jeweler Charles Talcott and asked him to make the die and press. The design depicted the port of Tacoma, wheat fields, grazing sheep and Mount Rainier. Talcott argued the design was too complicated and would be quickly outdated. Something simple, he suggested, would be timeless. He picked up an ink bottle and drew a circle around its base. Next he placed a silver dollar in the circle and drew an inner circle. Between these circles, he lettered the words "The Seal of the State of Washington, 1889." In the center he pasted a postage stamp bearing a picture of George Washington. The design was quickly accepted by the Legislature with one slight modification. The original picture of George Washington created for the seal was poorly detailed, so George Talcott, Charles's brother, found a suitable replacement on a packing box of "Dr. Jayne's Cure for Coughs and Colds"!



TIME CAPSULE



Time capsules capture a moment in time and the items placed inside have special significance for the generation that placed them there.

This time capsule was placed in 1976, when the United States turned 200 years old. It will be opened in 2076, our nation's 300 birthday!

Every state in the union received one of these bicentennial time capsules, and each state filled their time capsule with items unique to their state.

Washington State's bicentennial time capsule contains a can of Olympia Beer, a sample of Washington water and air from 1976, evergreen tree seeds from the Department of Natural Resources, newspaper articles from 1976, and 100 essays, written by students, about what they thought life in the year 2076 might be like.

What do you think life will be like then?



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES





ABOUT THE HOUSE

The House of Representatives is one half of the Washington State Legislature, the branch of government in charge of making laws. The other half is the Senate.

The House of Representatives is made up of 98 state representatives who serve two-year terms. Terms are the period of time that they are elected for. In the House of Representatives Chamber, visitors can watch what is happening, such as debates and voting, from the upper galleries. It is the job of each legislator to represent the people of their district, which is why they are called representatives! Their district is the area of Washington that they live in, and they are chosen by the voters of that district to represent them at our state capitol. State Representatives are citizens just like you and me who have decided on a career in public service.

Speaker of the House

The Speaker of the House is the presiding officer, or person in charge, of the House of Representatives. As the leader, the speaker oversees legislative proceedings, debate, and voting, and makes sure that the representatives conduct themselves in a respectful and polite manner.

The speaker is chosen from within the House of Representatives, with the other representatives voting for them to be their leader. The speaker leads the House of Representatives from the rostrum, located at the front of the chamber, and is assisted by clerks and secretaries who record and track what happens.



VOTING METHOD



Representatives vote electronically right from their desks! Each member's desk is equipped with a voting device that is about the size of a smart phone and is equipped with a small touch screen for voting YES or for voting NO. When representatives vote, the results appear on three large voting screens located just above the rostrum. The center display board is reserved for the title of the bill that is being voted on, a brief description of what the bill is about, and the total tally of yes and no votes. The screen to the left and right of the center board lists the last names of each of the 98 representatives. During an actual vote, each representatives' name will turn green if voting yes, or red if voting no. In order for a bill to pass, it requires a majority or more than half. In the House of Representatives that would mean at least 50 YES votes for passage.

Cameras

In addition to visiting the legislature to watch the work of government from the public galleries, citizens can watch legislative proceedings in the comfort of their own home. Television cameras are present in both the House of Representatives and the Senate and are owned and operated by TVW, a public affairs television station located in the capitol city of Olympia. The cameras provide gavel to gavel coverage of legislative floor action and provide citizens with another important way of staying informed about, and engaged with, their state government.



ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES & ARTWORK



The House of Representatives chamber is decorated with marble from France and is designed using architectural features of ancient Greece and Rome, such as archways and columns. The carpet features our state flower, the coastal rhododendron, and the smaller trillium flower as well. Four magnificent Tiffany Chandeliers hang from the chamber ceiling and add to the historic and symbolic feel of this massive space.

County Names

Around the room, at the top of the walls can be found the names of Washington State's 39 counties. The counties are paired together with each box containing a county from Western Washington and a county from Eastern Washington. The presence of these county names reminds citizens that no matter what part of Washington they are from; they are represented in these chambers of government. It also reminds legislators that it is the citizens of the state who serve as the reason and purpose for their work.



SENATE





ABOUT THE SENATE

The Washington State Senate is one half of the Washington State Legislature; the other half is the House of Representatives. The Senate is smaller than the House with just 49 Senators. However, alongside the House, it works to pass laws, establish a state budget, set levels for state spending, raise and lower taxes, and vote on public policy matters. Citizens can watch in real time the work of the Senate by visiting the public viewing galleries! Senators are elected by their legislative district to serve a four-year term. Because there are no term limits in Washington State, Senators and House of Representative members can run for re-election as many times as they would like to. It is the voters of each legislative district who decide who will represent them in their state capitol. The citizen's power of the vote determines what kind of government we create for ourselves and for future generations!

President of the Senate

One of the duties of the Lt. Governor, an elected official of the executive branch, is to serve as the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate is in charge of the Washington State Senate, and their job is to preside over debates, voting, legislative floor action, proceedings and protocol. The Lt. Governor is the only elected official in the state that serves in both the executive and legislative branches.

Session

When all the Representatives and Senators come together to make laws, we call that the legislative session. The first day of session is always the first Monday in January, with a 60-day session on even-numbered years and a 105-day session on odd-numbered years. They have extra time on odd-numbered years, because that is when they pass a two-year budget.

At the beginning and end of session each year, doors are opened and the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House can look across both chambers and the rotunda to see each other. They then in unison bring down their gavels to start and end the Legislative Session.



VOTING METHOD

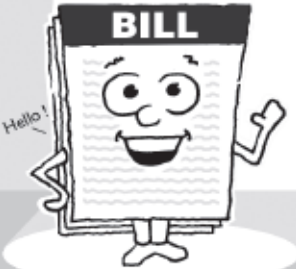
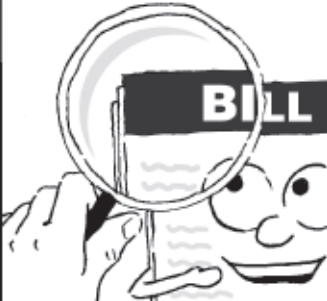

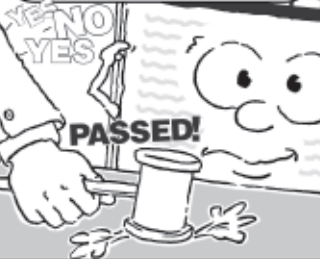
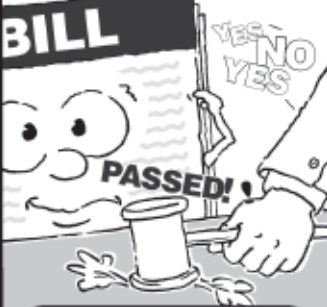
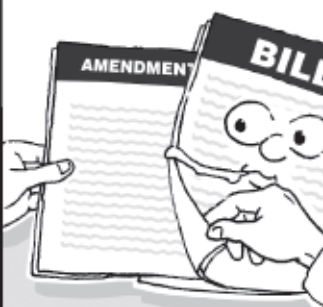
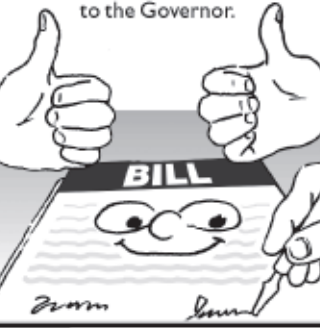




The Senate votes by roll call or voice vote. This is a traditional method of voting that the senate has used since early territorial times. During a vote, the reading clerk will call out each Senator's name alphabetically. Senators respond by saying AYE or NO when their name is called. The recording clerk records each member's response and the reading clerk calls out the results at the end of voting. A majority is required for bill passage in the Senate. In the Senate that requires a majority of 25 votes.

Bill Process

A bill is an idea for a new law. Anyone can have an idea for a new law, including you! If you think that you have a good idea for a new law you can reach out to your Legislators and ask them to support and sponsor your idea. Once they agree to support and sponsor your idea, they will have a draft of your idea, now a bill, written up and will introduce that bill into the legislature. The steps a bill has to take before it can become a law are outlined in this document. You can also have your opinion on a bill heard in a committee. While voting is incredibly important, you don't need to wait until you are 18 to have your voice heard!

HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW

<p>A bill may be introduced in either the Senate or House of Representatives.</p> 	<p>A committee studies the bill and often holds public hearings on it.</p> 	<p>A committee report is read in open session of the House or Senate, and the bill is then referred to the Rules Committee.</p>  <p>The rules committee decides which bills will be sent to the floor for further consideration and which bills won't.</p>
<p>At the second reading a bill is subject to debate and amendment before being placed on the third reading calendar for final passage.</p> 	<p>After passing one house, the bill goes through the same procedure in the other house.</p> 	<p>If amendments are made in one house, the other house must concur.</p> 
<p>When the bill is accepted in both houses, it is signed by the respective leaders and sent to the Governor.</p> 	<p>The Governor signs the bill into law or may veto all or part of it. If the Governor fails to act on the bill, it may become law without a signature.</p> 	



ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES & ARTWORK

The Senate is decorated with marble from Germany and is designed using architectural features from ancient Greek and Rome, such as archways and columns. The carpet features our state flower, the coastal rhododendron, and the smaller English dogwood flower as well. Four large Tiffany Chandeliers hang from the ceiling.



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Ceremonial Doors

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GOVERNOR'S OFFICE





ABOUT GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

The Governor is head of the executive branch of government for the state of Washington. The job of the executive branch is to carry out the laws. We often think of laws as something we should not do, for example not speeding or not stealing. However, laws can also be things that we as a state should do, such as build public schools, roads and state parks. These laws are created for the public good.

The Governor's job is to oversee the public welfare of the state and ensure that the laws are carried out. But the Governor cannot do it alone, so they appoint heads of different state agencies to help. The appointees then hire others to help them in turn. Over 65,000 employees work for agencies that are under the oversight of the executive branch of government.

The Governor's other responsibilities include signing bills into law, declaring states of emergencies and serving as chief representative for the state of Washington.



EXECUTIVE BRANCH



In every state, the executive branch is headed by a governor who is directly elected by the people. In Washington State we elect a total of nine executive branch officials:

- Governor
- Lt. Governor
- Secretary of State
- Auditor
- Treasurer
- Attorney General
- Superintendent of Public Instruction
- Lands Commissioner
- Insurance Commissioner

Each of these officials are elected by the voters of the state to serve a four-year term after which time they must run for re-election. Remember, even though the executive branch is responsible for enforcing the laws, it cannot do so without the consent of the people through their vote!



GOVERNOR'S PORTRAITS



When a governor leaves office they get to choose the artist who will paint their official portrait. Once completed, their portraits will hang alongside the others in the office.

Many Washington State governors have chosen to be portrayed sitting in the executive chair, as it represents the office. However, some governors choose to add other symbols that represent their time in office or which has special meaning for them. For example, Gary Locke, as the 21st governor, has 21 nail heads displayed down the side of his executive chair.



STATE RECEPTION ROOM



The State Reception Room is the most decorative room in the capitol building and is used for a variety of purposes.

It is in this room that we formally welcome dignitaries and heads of state like presidents and ambassadors and where Washington state delegates cast their ballots for president of the United States.





HEIRLOOM PIECES



Round Table

This table, along with almost all of the furniture in this room, is original to the building circa 1928. The table originally sat in the middle of the room and is round for a very important reason. Just like in the Knights of the Round Table, this table has no head, so everyone who sits around it are equals. Remember, the original purpose of this room is to be a receiving area, so if the governor, or another elected official, is meeting with a president, a king or queen, or any Washingtonian, they would all be equals at this table. It is a symbol of equality, a key ideal in a representative democracy.



Bluthner Piano

This historic Bluthner piano was gifted to the state by Dr. Hans Moldenhauer, a talented musician, composer, and skilled mountaineer who emigrated from Germany to the United States in 1938. He settled in Spokane, Washington where he taught and composed music. Upon his death, he donated this piano to the state in thanks for the freedom he had found here.



42 STAR FLAG



This is Washington's 42 Star statehood flag. While our flag today has 50 stars representing the 50 states of the United States, it didn't start out that way. A new star was added only when a new state joined the union.

When Washington became the 42nd state on November 11, 1889, a new federal flag with 42 stars was planned to fly over the US Capitol on July 4th of the following year. However, Idaho entered the union on July 3, 1890, so a 43-star flag flew over the US Capitol instead.

This flag is one of only a few statehood flags in existence today and was donated by the Thomas Wade March family of Tacoma.



TEMPLE OF JUSTICE





LOBBY



The judicial branch is made up of our court system. The job of the judicial branch is to make sure that the laws passed by the legislative branch, and enforced by the executive branch, follow the state constitution of Washington and the United States Constitution. In other words, our court system interprets or helps us to understand what the laws mean and they make sure those laws are applied fairly to all the citizens of the state.

The Temple of Justice is the government building where Washington State's highest court, the State Supreme Court, holds hearings.



CHIEF JUSTICE'S OFFICE



The Chief Justice presides over the Supreme Court's public oral arguments and the Supreme Court's private conferences, where the justices decide what cases to hear and ultimately how to vote on those cases.

The Chief Justice is elected by the other justices to serve a four-year term.



LAW LIBRARY



The Washington State Law Library has over 350,000 volumes in its collection and is comprised of three floors. It is the main research library for law in the state and is used by justices, attorneys, judges, legislators, legislative staff, state agencies and the general public. That's right, you can visit the law library to do legal research if you like.

One feature of the law library are the four historic antique book cases that hold historical and law books that were originally purchased by Washington's first territorial governor, Isaac Stevens. He purchased them from England and they became part of the territory's first library!



BOOK CASES



This built in book case is filled with books which hold all of the original written opinions dating back to when Washington first became a territory in 1853 to the present day!

The law library also has a copy of these cases that the public can use for research.



CHIEF JUSTICE RECEPTION ROOM



The Chief Justice's Reception Room is also housed in the Temple of Justice. This room was originally a small or minor courtroom but is now used to host receptions such as swearing-in ceremonies for attorneys and justices, and for staff trainings and other meetings. Portraits of the court's first two chief justices are on display, as well as the oldest book in the court's collection.



SUPREME COURT



There are nine Washington State Supreme Court Justices, who during hearings, are seated at the judicial bench at the front of the court chamber. Justices are elected by the voters of the state to serve for a six-year term.

Voting has power at all levels of government, and in all three branches, so never underestimate the power of your vote to make a positive change and to create a government that serves the will of the people.



BAILIFF'S DESK



The bailiff sits on the right side of the courtroom. The bailiff maintains order in the courtroom, records the oral arguments and times the hearings. During oral arguments, attorneys have 20 minutes each to state their argument at the podium. At the conclusion of the oral arguments, the nine justices convene in the conference room to discuss the case with the final decision announced at a later date.



COURT IN ACTION



State Seals

Another really interesting feature of the courtroom are the thirty-one state seals woven into the chambers decorations and furniture.

- 9 state seals – one on each of the justices' chairs
- 12 state seals – one on each side of the six large public benches
- 5 state seals – on the decorated draperies
- 1 state seal on the Washington State Flag
- 4 state seals – two on each of the two clocks that decorate the front and back of the courtroom.



JUDICIAL BRANCH VIDEO

