



*The Executive and Legislative  
Branches: SS.7.CG.3.8*  
**National Government:  
Executive Branch  
READING #2**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**SS.7.CG.3.8 Benchmark Clarification 2:** Students will compare and contrast executive authority at the local, state and national levels.

The executive branch's role is to ensure that rules and laws are followed for the safety and security of citizens. The responsibility of enforcing laws is necessary at the local, state, and national levels.

The head of the executive branch at the national level is the president. The president selects a vice president to serve with them. Presidents can only serve two four-year terms, while vice presidents have no limit to how many terms they may serve in that role. The president has certain powers, including the power to **veto**, or reject a bill (proposed law) that the legislative branch has made. The national executive branch also includes 15 **cabinet**-level departments.

The head of the executive branch at the state level is the **governor**. The governor selects a lieutenant governor to serve with them. In Florida, governors may serve for two 4-year terms, while lieutenant governors are not limited to how many terms they may serve. The governor's responsibility is to enforce state laws. The governor has certain powers, including using a **line-item veto**, or rejecting a certain part of a bill that the **state legislature** has passed. In Florida, the state executive branch also includes three cabinet-level departments.

**Local governments** are structured differently when it comes to how they are run. Local governments include municipalities, such as cities, towns, or villages, counties, and school districts. A local government can be organized in three ways: mayor-council, council-manager, and commission.

The mayor-council structure usually works best in very large or very small cities. In this structure, an elected **mayor** and a **city council** govern the people.

The council-manager structure usually works best in mid-sized cities. In this structure, a city manager governs with an elected council.

The commission structure is the least common in the United States. In this structure, there is not a mayor, but a board of elected **commissioners** who governs. Each commissioner represents a specific area of a municipality, county, or school district and may interact with local departments such as law enforcement and fire.

**cabinet** - people appointed by the president or governor to head executive departments of government and act as official advisers.

**city council** - the governing body of a city

**commissioner** - a member of the governing body of a city, town, county, or special purpose district (school district)

**governor** - the head of a state government

**line-item veto** - a decision by a state executive authority such as a governor to reject certain parts of a bill or law passed by the legislative branch

**local government** - the government of a municipality (city, town, or village), county, or special purpose districts (school districts)

**mayor** - the head of government for a city or town

**president** - the head of the executive branch

**state legislature** - the lawmaking branch of the state government

**veto** - a decision by an executive authority such as a president or governor to reject a law passed by the legislative branch