

# Major Offices in New York State

## POLITICAL POSITIONS

### **District Leader**

One female and one male district leader represents the voters within their part of the assembly district. Official duties of the Democratic District Leader include electing the Chair of the county party, setting the party's platform, appointing election workers at local poll sites, and helping to select nominees for civil court judgeships. Other duties include electing the Chair of the county party, helping to select nominees for civil court, attending party meetings and events on behalf of the district.

*Requirements:* The District Leader is an un-paid elected official who serves a two-year term. The individual must reside within the district in which they want to run

### **State Committee Member**

The main responsibilities of the state committee member include attending their respective political party's state conventions, participating in the conventions, and lending their full support to the endorsement of the candidates picked by their parties at the conventions. A strong State Committee Member also serves as a liaison between the community and local officials, city government, and political candidates, and brings back information from state and federal elected officials to let the party members of the assembly district know their concerns are being listened to and being acted on

*Requirements:* The State Committee Member is an un-paid elected official who serves a two year term, and must reside in the assembly district in which they are elected.

### **County Committee Member**

This position is a stepping stone for individuals wishing to become more involved in politics. Running for this position requires petitioning, which will help you become familiar with the process, and once elected the contributions required of you are minimal. However, individuals can take charge, and it helps provide individuals a platform for leadership. A county committee member represents an election district which is the smallest political unit, usually comprising of 700 - 1000 people, or 1 to 3 city blocks.

*Requirements:* The County Committee Member is an un-paid elected official who serves a two year term, and must reside in the assembly district in which they are elected. Each election district has two to four elected county committee positions. Some election districts require one male and one female committee member.

### **Judicial Delegate**

Judicial Delegates are elected during the same time as other political positions. Unlike the other political positions, each political party elects judicial delegates. The main responsibility of judicial delegates is to attend a convention where they elect individuals to the New York State Supreme Court. This is an unpaid job, but requires little time, and is a great public service opportunity. It also gives newcomers the opportunity to learn more about petitioning and the political process.

*Requirement:* Judicial Delegates are unpaid elected officials who serve a two year term, and must reside in the assembly district in which they are elected. Each assembly district elects about six judicial delegates.

## **CITY GOVERNMENT**

### **Mayor**

The Mayor is the Chief Executive Officer of the city. He or she has the power to appoint all the heads of agencies and departments, appoint 7 of the 13 members of the City Planning Commission, and sign bills into law. The mayor is also responsible for preparing city budgets and revenue estimates.

*Requirements:* The Mayor is elected every four years by the entire city. He or she needs to be 18 years old and a resident of NYC on Election Day.

### **Comptroller**

Comptroller works as economic director of the city, advising fiscal policies and financial transactions, as well as issuing and selling city bonds. He or she also conducts performance audits of city agencies.

*Requirements:* Comptroller is elected every four years by the entire city. He or she needs to be 18 years old and a resident of NYC on Election Day.

### **Public Advocate**

The Public Advocate acts as a citizen's liaison, coordinating public information and reviewing complaints of city programs. The Public Advocate also appoints 1 of the 13 members of City Planning Commission. In a situation where the mayor is incapacitated, the Public Advocate is next in the line of succession.

*Requirements:* Public Advocate is elected every four years by the entire city. He or she needs to be 18 years old and a resident of NYC on Election Day.

### **Borough President**

The Borough President is chosen by the people of the borough to be the head of their administration. Equipped with their own cabinet and staff, this person takes lead initiative in proposing legislation, zoning changes, city wide budget recommendations, land use planning and local service delivery. They appoint 1 of the 13 members of the City Planning Commission as well as members of the community board. This person also holds public hearings concerning borough wide issues.

*Requirements:* Borough President is elected every four years by residents of that borough. He or she needs to be 18 years old and a resident of the borough on Election Day.

### **City Council Member**

The City Council is the legislative body of the city, members come together to adopt local laws, amend the City Charter, enact local taxes, approve the budget, and oversee city agencies. Most importantly, they have the power to override mayoral vetoes.

*Requirements:* City Council members are elected every four years by the residents of their City Council districts. He or she needs to be 18 years old and a resident of their City Council district on Election Day.

### **District Attorney**

District Attorney is the head prosecutor of the borough in which he or she has been elected.

*Requirements:* District Attorney is elected every four years by each borough

### **Justices of the Supreme Court of New York State**

A justice on this court may handle civil cases as well as serious felonies. Keep in mind the Supreme Court in New York is different than in other states because decisions may be appealed to a higher court (Court of Appeals).

*Requirements:* Justices of the Supreme Court of New York State are elected every 14 years on the basis of judicial districts

### **Justices of the Civil Court of the City of New York**

Justices of this court handle cases under \$25,000, including a Small Claims Court for cases under \$3000. Justices will also handle housing disputes.

*Requirements:* Justices of the Civil Court of the City of New York are elected every ten years county wide and by districts within a county.

## **STATE GOVERNMENT**

### **Governor**

The Governor is the state's chief executive and Commander-in-Chief of its military and naval forces. He is required by the Constitution to submit a yearly State Budget to the Legislature, in which he makes recommendations for legislation and proposes funding appropriations for departments and programs. The Governor also is empowered to: veto legislative bills with which he disagrees; convene the Legislature for special sessions; appoint and, under certain conditions, remove non-elected state officers; and grant reprieves, commutations and pardons.

*Requirements:* The Governor must be at least 30 years old, a citizen of the United States and a resident of New York for five years. This position is up for reelection every four years.

### **Lieutenant Governor**

The Lieutenant Governor's main function is to serve as President of the State Senate, but he/she assumes the governorship in case of impeachment, resignation, absence or death of the Governor. The Lieutenant Governor's executive duties are designated by the Governor and may include the chairing of state councils.

*Requirements:* The Lieutenant Governor must be at least 30 years old, a citizen of the United States and a resident of New York for five years. This position is up for reelection every four years.

### **Attorney General**

The Attorney General, as the State's chief legal officer, is responsible for the prosecution of all actions for or against the State, has control of the legal affairs of state officers and departments and serves as the head of the Department of Law.

*Requirements:* The Attorney General must be at least 30 years old, a citizen of the United States and a resident of New York for five years. This position is up for reelection every four years.

### **Comptroller**

The Comptroller is the chief fiscal officer of the State and serves as the administrative head of the Department of Audit and Control

*Requirements:* The Comptroller must be at least 30 years old, a citizen of the United States and a resident of New York for five years. This position is up for reelection every four years.

### **New York State Assembly**

The Assembly is part of the New York State Legislature. The Assembly has 150 members, each of whom represents the 150 assembly district in New York State. Duties of assembly members include the ability to pass laws, reapportion district after the census, and they act as the main legislative power of the state.

*Requirements:* Members of the New York state assembly must be 18 years old, a resident of state for 5 years and resident of the assembly district for 12 months immediately preceding election. (In a redistricting year, they may be a resident of the county for 12 months immediately preceding the election.)

### **New York State Senate**

New York State has 62 Senators. Senators have the power to confirm the Governor's appointment on non-elected state officials and court judges, pass laws, and act as a check upon the executive and judiciary powers of the State.

*Requirements:* New York State Senators must be 18 years old, residents of the state for 5 years and residents of their senate district for 12 months immediately preceding election. (In a redistricting year, may be a resident of county for 12 months immediately preceding the election.)

## **FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

### **U.S. House of Representatives**

Members of the House of Representatives have certain exclusive duties which include, initiating revenue bills, impeaching federal officials, and electing the president in case of an electoral tie.

*Requirements:* Members of the U.S. House of Representatives are elected every two years. They must be at least 25 years old, U.S. citizens for at least 7 years, and residents of the state, not of the district, in which they were elected.

### **U.S. Senate**

Each state elects two senators whom serve upon the Senate. The major duties of members of the Senate include ratifying treaties, confirmation of Cabinet secretaries, federal judges, Supreme Court Justices, and other federal executive officials, and the trial of federal officials impeached by the House.

*Requirements:* U.S. senators need to be at least 30 years old, a citizen for at least 9 years, and residents of the state they represent. U.S. senators are elected every six years.