

GOVERNORS OF NEW YORK  
(Date ELECTED TO OFFICE follows the name)

George Clinton, July 9, 1777

*The Constitution of 1777 did not specify when the Governor should enter on the duties of his office. Governor Clinton was declared elected on July 9 and qualified on July 30. On February 13, 1787, an act was passed for regulating elections. It also provided that the Governor and Lieutenant Governor should enter on the duties of their respective office on July 1 after their election.*

John Jay, April 1795

George Clinton, April 1801

Morgan Lewis, April 1804

Daniel D. Tompkins, April 1807

John Taylor, March 1817

*Lieutenant Governor; Acting Governor*

De Witt Clinton, July 1, 1817

Joseph C. Yates, November 6, 1822

*The Constitution of 1821 provided that the Governor and Lieutenant Governor enter on the duties of their offices on the January 1 following their election.*

De Witt Clinton, November 3, 1824

Nathaniel Pitcher, February 11, 1828

*Lieutenant Governor; Acting Governor*

Martin Van Buren, November 5, 1828

Enos T. Throop, March 12, 1829

*Lieutenant Governor; became Governor upon the resignation of Van Buren in 1829; elected November 1830 for a full term.*

William L. Marcy, November 7, 1832

William H. Seward, November 7, 1838

William C. Bouck, November 8, 1842

Silas Wright, November 5, 1844

John Young, November 3, 1846

Hamilton Fish, November 7, 1848

Washington Hunt, November 5, 1850

Horatio Seymour, November 2, 1852

Myron H. Clark, November 7, 1854

John A. King, November 4, 1856

Edwin D. Morgan, November 2, 1858

Horatio Seymour, November 4, 1862

Reuben E. Fenton, November 8, 1864

John T. Hoffman, November 3, 1868

John A. Dix, November 5, 1872

Samuel J. Tilden, November 3, 1874

Lucius Robinson, November 7, 1876

Alonzo B. Cornell, November 4, 1879

Grover Cleveland, November 7, 1882

*Elected President of the US in 1884; resigned as Governor, January 6, 1885*

David B. Hill, January 6, 1885

*Lieutenant Governor; became Governor upon resignation of Cleveland in 1885; subsequently elected to two full terms, on November 3, 1885 and November 6, 1888.*

Roswell P. Flower, November 3, 1891

Levi P. Morton, November 6, 1894

Frank S. Black, November 3, 1896

Theodore Roosevelt, November 8, 1898

Benj. B. Odell, Jr., November 6, 1900 and November 4, 1902

Frank W. Higgins, November 8, 1904

Charles E. Hughes, November 6, 1906 and November 3, 1908

*Appointed Justice of the United States Supreme Court and resigned the office of Governor on October 6, 1910.*

Horace White, October 6, 1910

*Lieutenant Governor; became Governor upon resignation of Hughes.*

John A. Dix, November 8, 1910

William Sulzer, November 5, 1912

Martin H. Glynn, October 17, 1913

*Succeeded Sulzer; who was removed from office.*

Charles S. Whitman, November 3, 1914 and November 7, 1916

Alfred E. Smith, November 5, 1918

Nathan L. Miller, November 2, 1920

Alfred E. Smith, November 7, 1922; November 4, 1924; and November 2, 1926

Franklin D. Roosevelt, November 6, 1928 and November 4, 1930

Herbert H. Lehman, November 8, 1932; November 6, 1934; November 3, 1936; and November 8, 1938

Charles Poletti, December 3, 1942

*Lieutenant Governor; became Governor upon resignation of Lehman.*

Thomas E. Dewey, November 3, 1942; November 5, 1946; and November 7, 1950

Averell Harriman, November 2, 1954

Nelson A. Rockefeller, November 4, 1958; November 6, 1962; November 8, 1966; and November 3, 1970

Malcolm Wilson, December 18, 1973

*Lieutenant Governor; became Governor upon resignation of Rockefeller.*

Hugh L. Carey, November 5, 1974 and November 7, 1978

Mario M. Cuomo, November 2, 1982; November 4, 1986; and November 6, 1990

George E. Pataki, November 8, 1994; November 3, 1998; and November 5, 2002

Eliot Spitzer, November 7, 2006

David A. Paterson, March 17, 2008

*Lieutenant Governor; became Governor upon resignation of Spitzer.*

Andrew M. Cuomo, November 2, 2010; November 4, 2014



Department  
of State

# New York State History

New Yorkers are rightfully proud of their state's many achievements and contributions. This synopsis is adapted from a brief history previously printed in the *Legislative Manual*.

Check out the Department of State website at:

[www.dos.ny.gov](http://www.dos.ny.gov)

**Andrew M. Cuomo**

*Governor*

**Rossana Rosado**

*Secretary of State*

NYS Department of State

Division of Administrative Rules

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The New York harbor was visited by Verrazano in 1524, and the Hudson River was first explored by Henry Hudson in 1609. The Dutch settled here permanently in 1624 and for 40 years they ruled over the colony of New Netherland. It was conquered by the English in 1664 and was then named New York in honor of the Duke of York. Existing as a colony of Great Britain for over a century, New York declared its independence on July 9, 1776, becoming one of the original 13 states of the Federal Union. The next year, on April 20, 1777, New York's first constitution was adopted.

In many ways, New York State was the principal battleground of the Revolutionary War. Approximately one-third of the skirmishes and engagements of the war were fought on New York soil. The Battle of Saratoga, one of the decisive battles of the world, was the turning point of the Revolution leading to the French alliance and thus to eventual victory. New York City, long occupied by British troops, was evacuated on November 25, 1783. There, on December 4 at Fraunces Tavern, General George Washington bade farewell to his officers.

The first government of New York State grew out of the Revolution. The State Convention that drew up the Constitution created a Council of Safety which governed for a time and set the new government in motion. In June 1777, while the war was going on, an election for the first governor took place. Two of the candidates, Philip Schuyler and George Clinton, were generals in the field. Two others, Colonel John Jay and General John Morin Scott, were respectively leaders of the aristocratic and democratic groups in the Convention. On July 9, George Clinton was declared elected and he was inaugurated as Governor at Kingston, July 30, 1777. Albany became the capital of the State in January 1797.

Alexander Hamilton was a leader in the movement which ended in the development of the Federal Constitution, and he was active in its ratification. New York City became the first capital of the new nation,

where President George Washington was inaugurated on April 30, 1789.

In following years, New York's economic and industrial growth made appropriate the title "The Empire State," an expression possibly originated by George Washington in 1784. In 1809, Robert Fulton's "North River Steamboat," the first successful steam-propelled vessel, began a new era in transportation. The Erie Canal, completed in 1825, greatly enhanced

*New York State's  
Coat of Arms*



the importance of the port of New York and caused populous towns and cities to spring up across the state. The Erie Canal was replaced by the Barge Canal in 1918; and the system of waterways was further expanded by the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway. Overland transportation grew rapidly from a system of turnpikes established in the early 1880s to the modern day Governor Thomas E. Dewey New York State Thruway. By 1853, railroads, that had started as short lines in 1831, crossed the state in systems like the Erie and New York Central.

During the nineteenth century, America became a haven for many of the oppressed people of Europe, and New York City became the "melting pot." The Statue of Liberty (dedicated in 1886 in the harbor), with its famous inscription, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free," was the first symbol of America's mission. The international character of New York City, the principal port for overseas commerce, and later for transcontinental and international airways, has been further enhanced by becoming the home of the United Nations, capital of the free world. Here the people of all nations and races come to discuss and try to solve world problems in a free and democratic climate.

As one of the wealthiest states, New York made tremendous strides in industry and commerce. The New York Stock Exchange, founded in 1792, has become the center of world finance. Diversified and rich natural resources, together with unmatched facilities for transport, produced a phenomenal growth in manufacture and industry. Research and inventive genius have been extensive, especially in the field of electronics, power and the peaceful and productive use of atomic energy. New York City also became a leading national center for art, music and literature, as exemplified by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Metropolitan Opera Company, and large publishing houses.

The state has supplied more than its share of national leaders, beginning with Alexander Hamilton, the first secretary of the treasury; and John Jay, the first chief justice. Aaron Burr and George Clinton served as vice presidents. Martin Van Buren, Millard Fillmore, Chester A. Arthur and Grover Cleveland went from New York politics to the presidency. In the 1900s, Theodore Roosevelt and Franklin D. Roosevelt achieved the presidency; and Nelson Rockefeller served as vice president. Governors Charles E. Hughes, Alfred E. Smith and Thomas E. Dewey all were candidates for the presidency.