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

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

Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor

Cesar A. Perales
Secretary of State

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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 atification. 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 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.

New York State’s Coat of Arms

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.