

# WE ARE ALL WEST VIRGINIA

## A Civics Education Program

By  
Secretary of State  
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### What does the Secretary of State actually do?

The Secretary of State is a statewide elected position that is put on the ballot every four years. The Secretary of State performs many important functions in West Virginia state government.

The Secretary is the official keeper of the State Seal. This is the seal you see flying on our state flag as well as affixed to any official state documents. If any group plans on using the state seal for any purpose, they must receive written permission from the Secretary.

One of the main functions served by the office is the registering of businesses and corporations that operate in West Virginia. There are over 80,000 businesses and limited liability companies doing work in West Virginia. All of these businesses must register with the Secretary of State in order to operate legally.

The Secretary of State is the Chief Election Officer for the state of West Virginia. What this means is that the office helps administer elections as well as set statewide policies for conducting elections. As the Chief Election Officer, the Secretary of State has the power to investigate any suspicions of illegal or fraudulent activities made during an election. Anyone that wishes to run for an elected position in state government must first register this intent with the Secretary of State to be included on the ballot. Once people are registered any citizen may find a list of candidates at the Secretary of State's office.

Any charity or professional fundraiser for a charity operating in West Virginia must also register with the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State's website provides basic financial information on each charity registered with the office. The office is also responsible for issuing notary commissions to authorized public notaries.

Anyone who wishes to become a private investigator, sports agent, or perform marriages in West Virginia must register with the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State's office also publishes the State Register, notice of public meetings, as well as the code of state rules from the many agencies making up state government.

Lastly, the Secretary of State is exactly that, the secretary to the state of West Virginia. State documents are authenticated by the Secretary. As you can see the Secretary of State has a multitude of duties to perform within West Virginia state government. If you have any questions about any of the responsibilities or services we can perform please visit our [homepage](#) or call us at 1-304-558-6000.

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