

# Module 4: The Presidency

## Topic 3 Content: The Federal Bureaucracy

### Introduction



**Glover Mint:** The President may be the head of the executive branch, but by no means does any President work alone. Preston Dent joins us in the studio to discuss the Cabinet, the Executive Office, dependent agencies, and independent agencies.

## Module 4: The Presidency

### Topic 3 Content: The Federal Bureaucracy

#### Presidential Presence



**Preston Dent:** Almost three million people work for the federal government and that is not even counting military personnel. Most of these positions serve the executive branch. The Cabinet, the executive departments, the Executive Office of the President, and other agencies are collectively referred to as the federal bureaucracy. We are going to focus on the portions of the federal bureaucracy that serve the executive branch.

## Module 4: The Presidency

### Topic 3 Content: The Federal Bureaucracy

#### Executive Departments



**Preston Dent:** The President's Cabinet is comprised of fifteen Cabinet positions. These Cabinet members are in charge of their respective executive departments, which consist of the following:

- the Department of Agriculture;
- the Department of Commerce;
- the Department of Defense;
- the Department of Education;
- the Department of Energy;
- the Department of Health and Human Services;
- the Department of Homeland Security;
- the Department of Housing and Urban Development;
- the Department of the Interior;
- the Department of Justice;
- the Department of Labor;
- the Department of State;
- the Department of Transportation;
- the Department of the Treasury; and
- the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Cabinet members are appointed by the President and approved by the Senate. With the exception of the head of the Department of Justice, or the Attorney General, the Cabinet members are referred to as Secretaries. For example, the Secretary of State is the head of the State Department, which handles foreign policy. The Secretary of Defense is the head of the Department of Defense, which is in charge of the United States armed forces.

## Module 4: The Presidency

### Topic 3 Content: The Federal Bureaucracy

#### Dependent Agencies

## Dependent Agencies

Dependent agencies have a narrow area of responsibility and are directly part of the Cabinet.



The image displays four logos on a dark blue background. In the top left is the circular seal of the Department of Health & Human Services, featuring a stylized eagle and the text 'DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES' and 'USA • DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES'. In the top right is the circular seal of the Department of Transportation, featuring a stylized white wave and the text 'DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION' and 'UNITED STATES OF AMERICA'. In the bottom left is the white 'FDA' logo. In the bottom right is the logo for the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, featuring a stylized white wave and the text 'U.S. Department of Transportation' and 'Federal Highway Administration'.

**Preston Dent:** Each executive department is responsible for a broad area, but is often broken down into smaller agencies with a narrow area of responsibility. These are known as dependent agencies, since they are directly part of the Cabinet. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is an agency of the Department of Health and Human Services. The Federal Highway Administration is part of the Department of Transportation.

## Module 4: The Presidency

### Topic 3 Content: The Federal Bureaucracy

#### The Executive Office

## The Executive Office

- Early Presidents maintained small personal staffs.
- As the nation continued to grow, so did the President's need for staffing.
- In 1939, Franklin Roosevelt established the Executive Office of the President (EOP).
- These are traditionally the President's closest advisors.
- Most members of the EOP are nominated and confirmed.
- The White House Office does not require Senate confirmation.
- The EOP is overseen by the White House Chief of Staff.



**Preston Dent:** Presidents in the early years of our nation's history maintained small personal staffs. Sometimes they would have unofficial unpaid advisors as well. As the nation continued to grow, so did the President's need for staffing. In 1939, President Franklin Roosevelt established the Executive Office of the President, also known by the acronym EOP. These are traditionally some of the President's closest advisors and their offices are located in the West and East Wings of the White House.

Generally, members of the EOP are nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate, similar to the Cabinet members. A few exceptions include the White House Office, which serves as the President's key personal and political staff. These members do not require Senate confirmation and serve at the discretion of the President. The EOP is overseen by the White House Chief of Staff and includes positions such as the Press Secretary and the National Security Advisor, just to name a few.

**Module 4: The Presidency**  
**Topic 3 Content: The Federal Bureaucracy**

**Independent Agencies**



**Preston Dent:** Unlike dependent agencies, which are part of the Cabinet, there are independent agencies. They do not answer directly to the President and are mostly self-regulated. These agencies tend to have a more specific area of specialization and can be divided into three different types.

## Module 4: The Presidency

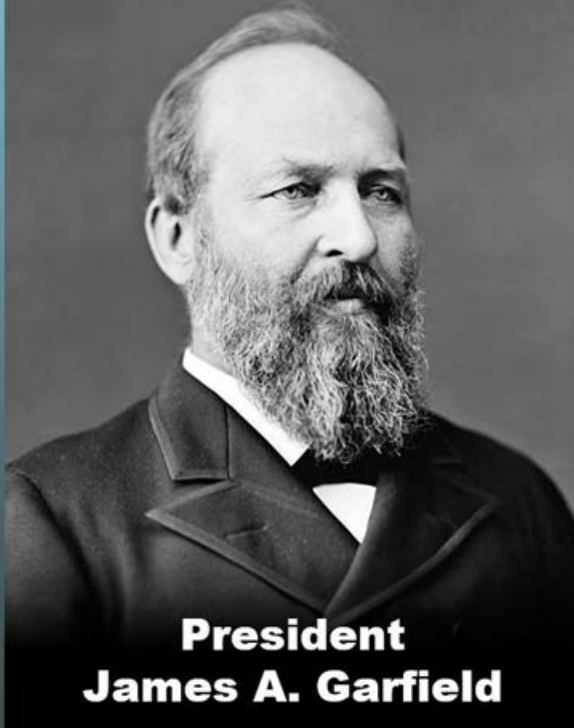
### Topic 3 Content: The Federal Bureaucracy

#### Executive Agencies

## Executive Agencies

### Civil Service

- Set up by the Pendleton Act or Civil Service Act of 1883
- Passed after Charles Guiteau shot and killed President Garfield
- Required candidates to be hired based on merit and competitive examinations
- Still required for some federal jobs



**President  
James A. Garfield**

**Preston Dent:** Some of the more well-known independent executive agencies include the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the National Security Agency (NSA), and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Although the top administrators of these agencies may be appointed by the President and approved by Congress, many of the positions within these agencies are filled through what is called the civil service.

The civil service was set up by the Pendleton Act or Civil Service Act of 1883. Prior to this act, it was a common practice to reward those who helped you get elected by giving them a government job. This was known as the spoils system. In addition to creating a system where unqualified individuals were given powerful jobs, there was a large turnover in government jobs when presidential terms ended. Severe consequences of the spoils system occurred in 1881, when Charles Guiteau felt that he deserved a government position for helping James Garfield get elected to the Presidency. When President Garfield did not give Charles Guiteau what he felt he deserved, Charles Guiteau retaliated by shooting and killing President Garfield. Realizing that the spoils system had spiraled out of control, Congress passed the Pendleton Act in response. This act required candidates to be hired based on merit and competitive examinations, ensuring a skilled and competent federal bureaucracy.

To receive these government positions today, you must apply like most other jobs. In some cases you will then need to take and pass the civil service exam. After successfully completing the exam, you would receive an interview. If hired, you remain in your career regardless of who is in the Oval Office.

**Module 4: The Presidency**  
**Topic 3 Content: The Federal Bureaucracy**

**Regulatory Commissions**

## Regulatory Commissions



- Formed to monitor different aspects of society and regulate them
- **Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC):** monitors stock market and enforces federal securities laws
- **Federal Communications Commission (FCC):** regulates radio, television, cable, satellite, the Internet
- Execute the laws, but also possess some legislative and judicial power

**Preston Dent:** Another type of independent agency is a regulatory commission. These commissions are formed to monitor different aspects of society and regulate them. You are probably familiar with several of these regulatory agencies, such as the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), which monitors the stock market and enforces federal securities laws, and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), which regulates radio, television, cable, satellite, and the Internet. These independent regulatory commissions are responsible for executing the laws, but they also possess some legislative and judicial power, when they pass regulations or are asked to resolve conflicts in their areas.



**Module 4: The Presidency**  
**Topic 3 Content: The Federal Bureaucracy**

**Government Corporations**

## Government Corporations

- Operate similar to private corporations
- Fully or partially owned by the government
- Provide services the private sector cannot or will not do

**Examples**

- United States Postal Service
- National Park Foundation
- AMTRAK



The image displays three logos for government corporations. At the top is the United States Postal Service logo, featuring a stylized eagle head in profile. Below it is the National Park Foundation logo, which includes a shield icon with a tree and the text 'National Park Foundation'. At the bottom is the AMTRAK logo, consisting of the word 'AMTRAK' in a bold, sans-serif font above a stylized graphic of three curved lines representing train tracks or wings. A yellow arrow with the word 'Next' inside it points to the right, positioned below the AMTRAK logo.

**Preston Dent:** Government corporations operate similar to private corporations; however, they are created by Congress for a specific purpose. This means that the government has full or partial ownership of these agencies. Many of these government corporations are created to provide a service the private sector cannot or will not do because it is not profitable.

The United States Postal Service (USPS) is a strong example of a government corporation. Using the Postal Service, you are able to send a letter to anyone, anywhere, within the United States for a set price. It operates as a business in order to be efficient, but it is not expected to make a profit. Two more examples of government corporations are the National Park Foundation and the National Railroad Passenger Corporation, which you may know as AMTRAK.

## Module 4: The Presidency

### Topic 3 Content: The Federal Bureaucracy

#### Ending of Episode



**Glover Mint:** While we see the Chief Executive as the symbolic leader of our country, the President has the assistance of a number of advisors and agencies. The presidential cabinet began with three people advising President Washington, and has grown to fifteen large departments. This part of the executive branch, with the Executive office of the Presidency, executive agencies, regulatory commissions, and government corporations, is known as the federal bureaucracy and is designed to help the government and the economy run smoothly.