

## Legislative Representation

In November, 1972, Maryland voters approved a constitutional amendment dividing the State of Maryland into 47 legislative districts. Each of these districts is represented by one senator and three delegates. Each district represents citizens and must, by the State constitution, be of equal population. Each district may be divided into three delegate sub-districts or one multi-member delegate district.

In districts that contain more than two counties or parts of more than two counties, and where the delegates are elected at large, no county or part of county is allowed to have more than one resident delegate.

Legislative districts are re-defined every 10 years according to population recorded by a census. The governor, according

to the constitution, must present his legislative districting plan to the General Assembly for adoption.

The legislative powers of the State of Maryland are vested in the General Assembly, which consists of two branches—the Senate and the House of Delegates. Every senator or delegate must be a citizen of the State and a resident for at least one year preceding the date of his or her election. For six months prior to his election, he must have resided in his legislative district. A senator must be at least 25 years of age at the time of his or her election and a delegate must be at least 21 years of age.

The term of each senator and delegate is four years from the second Wednesday of January following the date of election.

When a vacancy occurs in either house through death, resignation, or disqualification, the governor is required to appoint a person whose name is submitted by the State Central Committee of the political party with which the vacating delegate or senator has been affiliated.

The General Assembly meets annually. Sessions begin the second Wednesday in January for a period of not longer than 90 days. The General Assembly may extend its sessions for an additional 30 days by resolution approved by three-fifths vote of the membership in the House and three-fifths in the Senate.

The governor may call special sessions at any time he deems necessary, for a period no longer than 30 days.

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