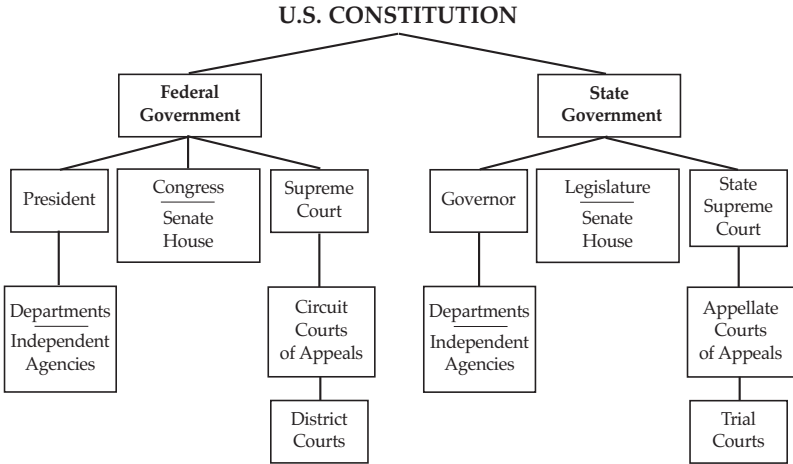


# FEDERAL-STATE GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

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Under the U.S. Constitution, the nation is a federal republic that splits governing powers between the federal government and the states. The federal government is organized into three branches: Executive, Legislative and Judicial. The President of the United States heads the Executive Branch and carries out the laws passed by Congress. The Legislative Branch is made up of the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives. The court system, headed by the U.S. Supreme Court, makes up the Judicial Branch and interprets the laws.

**State Powers:** The U.S. Supreme Court has the final authority in any disputes, such as constitutional issues or treaties, between the states and the federal government. States cannot prevent the federal government from exercising its powers under the U.S. Constitution. However, the states do retain powers as specified in the 10th Amendment, one of the 10 amendments known as the Bill of Rights, which states: “The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to their States respectively, or to the people.”

**Amendments and Elections:** The federal government depends on the states for two major responsibilities: approving amendments to the U.S. Constitution and the election of federal officials. Amendments must be proposed by a two-thirds vote of both houses of Congress and ratified by three-fourths of state legislatures or special conventions. Subject to some limitations, the states have the right to determine the voting ballot form, conduct the elections, and tabulate and certify election results.

**Intergovernmental Cooperation:** State governments cooperate with the federal government in many ways, including the implementation of joint law enforcement programs to prevent and detect crime, and the allocation of federal grants for specific purposes such as transportation construction or safety programs. In Illinois, federal aid accounts for about one-quarter of total state revenues. Of that, about 50 percent consists of federal reimbursements for public assistance expenditures.