

STATE CONSTITUTIONS

Table 1.1
GENERAL INFORMATION ON STATE CONSTITUTIONS
(As of January 1, 2017)

State or other jurisdiction	Number of constitutions*	Dates of adoption	Effective date of present constitution	Estimated length (b) (number of words)**	Number of amendments	
					Submitted to voters	Adopted
Alabama	6	1819, 1861, 1865, 1868, 1875, 1901	Nov. 28, 1901	388,882 (a)	1,258	926 (c)
Alaska	1	1956	Jan. 3, 1959	13,479	43	29
Arizona	1	1911	Feb. 14, 1912	47,306	277	154
Arkansas	5	1836, 1861, 1864, 1868, 1874	Oct. 30, 1874	59,120	206	106 (d)
California	2	1849, 1879	July 4, 1879	67,048	903	535
Colorado	1	1876	Aug. 1, 1876	66,140	346	160
Connecticut	2	1818 (f), 1965	Dec. 30, 1965	16,401	33	31
Delaware	4	1776, 1792, 1831, 1897	June 10, 1897	25,445	(e)	146
Florida	6	1839, 1861, 1865, 1868, 1886, 1968	Jan. 7, 1969	56,705	173	126
Georgia	10	1777, 1789, 1798, 1861, 1865, 1868, 1877, 1945, 1976, 1982	July 1, 1983	41,684	102 (g)	78 (g)
Hawaii	1 (h)	1950	Aug. 21, 1959	21,498	140	114
Idaho	1	1889	July 3, 1890	24,626	214	126
Illinois	4	1818, 1848, 1870, 1970	July 1, 1971	16,401	22	15
Indiana	2	1816, 1851	Nov. 1, 1851	11,476	80	48
Iowa	2	1846, 1857	Sept. 3, 1857	11,089	59	54 (i)
Kansas	1	1859	Jan. 29, 1861	14,097	128	98 (i)
Kentucky	4	1792, 1799, 1850, 1891	Sept. 28, 1891	27,234	76	42
Louisiana	11	1812, 1845, 1852, 1861, 1864, 1868, 1879, 1898, 1913, 1921, 1974	Jan. 1, 1975	69,876	272	187
Maine	1	1819	March 15, 1820	16,313	205	172 (j)
Maryland	4	1776, 1851, 1864, 1867	Oct. 5, 1867	43,198	267	231 (k)
Massachusetts	1	1780	Oct. 25, 1780	45,283 (l)	148	120
Michigan	4	1835, 1850, 1908, 1963	Jan. 1, 1964	31,164	74	30
Minnesota	1	1857	May 11, 1858	11,734	218	121
Mississippi	4	1817, 1832, 1869, 1890	Nov. 1, 1890	26,229	164	126
Missouri	4	1820, 1865, 1875, 1945	March 30, 1945	69,394	189	123
Montana	2	1889, 1972	July 1, 1973	12,790	58	32
Nebraska	2	1866, 1875	Oct. 12, 1875	34,934	354 (m)	230 (m)
Nevada	1	1864	Oct. 31, 1864	37,418	235	138
New Hampshire	2	1776, 1784	June 2, 1784	13,060	289 (n)	145
New Jersey	3	1776, 1844, 1947	Jan. 1, 1948	26,360	87	71
New Mexico	1	1911	Jan. 6, 1912	33,198	304 (y)	170 (x)
New York	4	1777, 1822, 1846, 1894	Jan. 1, 1895	44,397	303	227
North Carolina	3	1776, 1868, 1970	July 1, 1971	17,177	45	37
North Dakota	1	1889	Nov. 2, 1889	18,746	280	159 (o)
Ohio	2	1802, 1851	Sept. 1, 1851	53,239	291	175
Oklahoma	1	1907	Nov. 16, 1907	81,666	368 (p)	198 (p)
Oregon	1	1857	Feb. 14, 1859	49,016	501 (q)	257 (q)
Pennsylvania	5	1776, 1790, 1838, 1873, 1968 (r)	1968 (r)	26,078	38 (r)	32 (r)
Rhode Island	2	1842 (f), 1986 (s)	Dec. 4, 1986	11,407	14 (s)	12 (s)
South Carolina	7	1776, 1778, 1790, 1861, 1865, 1868, 1895	Jan. 1, 1896	27,421	689 (t)	500 (t)
South Dakota	1	1889	Nov. 2, 1889	27,774	239	120
Tennessee	3	1796, 1835, 1870	Feb. 23, 1870	13,960	66	43
Texas	5 (u)	1845, 1861, 1866, 1869, 1876	Feb. 15, 1876	86,936	669 (v)	491
Utah	1	1895	Jan. 4, 1896	17,849	175	120
Vermont	3	1777, 1786, 1793	July 9, 1793	8,565	212	54
Virginia	6	1776, 1830, 1851, 1869, 1902, 1970	July 1, 1971	21,899	59	50
Washington	1	1889	Nov. 11, 1889	32,578	181	107
West Virginia	2	1863, 1872	April 9, 1872	33,324	123	72
Wisconsin	1	1848	May 29, 1848	15,102	196	147 (i)
Wyoming	1	1889	July 10, 1890	26,349	130	101
American Samoa	2	1960, 1967	July 1, 1967	6,000	15 (y)	7 (y)
No. Mariana Islands	1	1977	Jan. 9, 1978	13,700	60 (y)	56 (w)(y)
Puerto Rico	1	1952	July 25, 1952	9,400	8 (y)	6 (y)

See footnotes at end of table.

GENERAL INFORMATION ON STATE CONSTITUTIONS—Continued (As of January 1, 2017)

Sources: John Dinan and The Council of State Governments, with research assistance from Wake Forest students Bradley Harper and Alec Papovich.

*The constitutions referred to in this table include those Civil War documents customarily listed by the individual states.

**In calculating word counts, supplemental information regarding dates of adoption and other material not formally a part of the constitution are generally excluded. In some cases, word counts are taken from the total as of January 2011.

Key:

(a) The Alabama constitution includes numerous local amendments that apply to only one county. An estimated 70 percent of all amendments are local. A 1982 amendment provides that after proposal by the legislature to which special procedures apply, only a local vote (with exceptions) is necessary to add them to the constitution.

(b) Computer word count.

(c) The total number of Alabama amendments includes one that is commonly overlooked.

(d) Eight of the approved amendments have been superseded and are not printed in the current edition of the constitution. The total adopted does not include five amendments proposed and adopted since statehood.

(e) Proposed amendments are not submitted to the voters in Delaware.

(f) Colonial charters with some alterations served as the first constitutions in Connecticut (1638, 1662) and in Rhode Island (1663).

(g) The Georgia constitution requires amendments to be of “general and uniform application throughout the state,” thus eliminating local amendments that accounted for most of the amendments before 1982.

(h) As a kingdom and republic, Hawaii had five constitutions.

(i) The figure includes amendments approved by the voters and later nullified by the state supreme court in Iowa (three), Kansas (one), Nevada (six) and Wisconsin (two).

(j) The figure does not include one amendment approved by the voters in 1967 that is inoperative until implemented by legislation.

(k) Two sets of identical amendments were on the ballot and adopted in the 1992 Maryland election. The four amendments are counted as two in the table.

(l) The printed constitution includes many provisions that have been annulled.

(m) The 1998 and 2000 Nebraska ballots allowed the voters to vote separately on “parts” of propositions. In 1998, 10 of 18 separate propositions were adopted; in 2000, 6 of 9.

(n) The constitution of 1784 was extensively revised in 1792. Figure shows proposals and adoptions since the constitution was adopted in 1784.

(o) The figures do not include submission and approval of the constitution of 1889 itself and of Article XX; these are constitutional questions included in some counts of constitutional amendments and would add two to the figure in each column.

(p) The figures include six amendments submitted to and approved by the voters which were, by decisions of the Oklahoma or federal courts, rendered inoperative or ruled invalid, unconstitutional, or illegally submitted.

(q) One Oregon amendment on the 2000 ballot was not counted as approved because canvassing was enjoined by the courts.

(r) Certain sections of the constitution were revised by the limited convention of 1967–68. Amendments proposed and adopted are since 1968.

(s) Following approval of the eight amendments and a “rewrite” of the Rhode Island Constitution in 1986, the constitution has been called the 1986 Constitution.

(t) In 1981 approximately two-thirds of the proposed and four-fifths of the adopted amendments were local. Since then the amendments have been statewide propositions.

(u) The Constitution of the Republic of Texas preceded five state constitutions.

(v) The number of proposed amendments to the Texas Constitution excludes three proposed by the legislature but not placed on the ballot.

(w) The total excludes one amendment ruled void by a federal district court.

(x) The total excludes one amendment approved by voters in November 2008 but later declared invalid on single subject grounds by the state supreme court.

(y) These totals for territorial constitutions are in some cases taken from 2011 data.