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Impeachment process

# How federal impeachment works

Impeachment is the process of bringing charges against a government official for wrongdoing. A trial may be held, and the official may be removed from office.

## The impeachment process

The Constitution gives Congress the power to impeach federal officials. An official can be impeached for treason, bribery, and “other high crimes and misdemeanors.”

- 1 The House of Representatives brings articles (charges) of impeachment against an official. [Learn more about the House's role in impeachment.](#)
- 2 If the House adopts the articles by a simple majority vote, the official has been impeached.
- 3 The Senate holds an impeachment trial. In the case of a president, the U.S. Supreme Court chief justice presides. Learn more about the [Senate's role in the impeachment process.](#)
- 4 If found guilty, the official is removed from office. They may never be able to hold elected office again.
- 5 If they are not found guilty, they may continue to serve in office.

[Learn more about impeachment](#), including its history and how the U.S. Constitution grants impeachment powers to Congress.

## Past impeachments of federal officials

The House has initiated impeachment proceedings more than 60 times. But there have been only 21 impeachments. This includes three presidents, one cabinet secretary, and one senator. Of those who were impeached, only eight officials were found guilty by the Senate and removed from office. All eight were federal judges.

The presidents impeached by the House were:

- [Andrew Johnson](#) in 1868
- [William Jefferson \(Bill\) Clinton](#) in 1998
- [Donald John Trump in 2019](#) and [2021](#)

Presidents Johnson, Clinton, and Trump remained in office following acquittals by the Senate on all charges.

Former President Richard Nixon was not impeached. He resigned after Congress started the impeachment process against him in 1974.

## Impeachment of state and local officials

A state legislature can impeach its governor and other state officials. Many local governments also have impeachment procedures. [Find your state legislature's website](#) to learn more.

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