

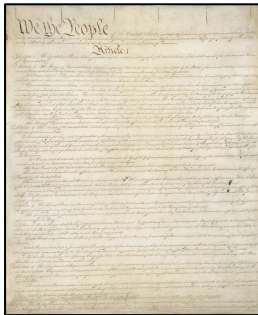
History

The United States has a system of federalism, or the separation of powers between national and state governments. This gives states the power to make important decisions about many issues for their citizens. Federalism also gives states the ability to form their own governments and write their own constitutions. These documents outline the powers of the state government, which can include any powers not belonging to the national government listed in the United States Constitution. Because many state constitutions were written after the U.S. Constitution, they used the national constitution as an outline for how to structure their own formal document.

Purpose

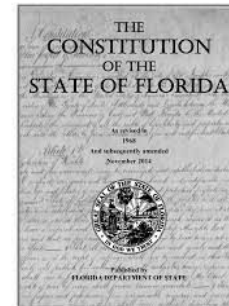
The United States Constitution

The United States Constitution was written to establish the structure, function, and powers of the national government. This document was written to protect individual rights and limit government power. It serves as the supreme law of the land.



The Florida Constitution

The Florida Constitution was written to establish the structure, function, and powers of the state government. This document was written to protect individual rights and limit government power. Having a constitution was required for statehood.



The Preambles

The United States Constitution

“We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.”

The Florida Constitution

“We, the people of the State of Florida, being grateful to Almighty God for our constitutional liberty, in order to secure its benefits, perfect our government, insure domestic tranquility, maintain public order, and guarantee equal civil and political rights to all, do ordain and establish this constitution.”

Articles

The United States Constitution

The structure, function, and powers of the national government are described in the *articles* of the U.S. Constitution. There are seven articles in this document. These articles help establish *separation of powers* and *checks and balances* to limit the national government's power.



The Florida Constitution

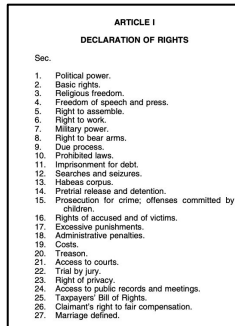
The structure, function, and powers of the state government are described in the *articles* of the Florida Constitution. There are twelve articles in this document. These articles help establish *separation of powers* and *checks and balances* to limit the state government's power.



Amendments and Protection of Rights

The United States Constitution

The first ten amendments are known as the Bill of Rights. These amendments protect citizens' rights. There have been a total of 27 amendments to the U.S. Constitution since 1787. Amendments are added to the end of the document.



The Florida Constitution

Since 1968, 144 amendments have been added to this document. These amendments are added to different articles and sections of the document. One section they may be added to is Florida's Declaration of Rights which includes specific protections of citizens' rights. This is similar to the Bill of Rights.



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9. "[Florida's Declaration of Rights](#)" from the Florida Senate