

## 4-4.2 What is the structure and function of each branch of the Federal government?

### The Three Branches of Government

The **powers** of the **government** found in the **Constitution** are separated into **three branches** of government: the **legislative**, the **executive**, and the **judicial** branches. Each of these three branches has specific **powers** and are **checked** and **balanced** by the other branches to ensure that they follow with the Constitution.

### The Legislative Branch

The **legislative** branch is responsible for writing, debating, and passing **bills** that can eventually become **laws**. The legislative branch is **Congress**, which is divided into the **House of Representatives** and **Senate**. The legislative branch is housed at the **Capitol building**. The power of the legislative branch (Congress) is **checked**



because the **President** must **sign bills** in order for them to become law. The President may also **veto** a bill. If the President vetoes a bill he will it back to Congress with his reasons why he rejected it. Congress then has the power to **check** the power of the President by **overriding** his **veto** with a **2/3 vote**. Congress also **checks** the **executive** branch by **approving judges** whom the President has appointed for the Supreme Court. Congress can also check the power of the President or judges through **impeachment**. Congress can **impeach** a President or a judge if their actions do not align with what it says in the Constitution.

### The Executive Branch

The **President** is the leader the **executive branch**. The President resides in the **White House**. One of his many jobs is to **enforce** or **carry out (execute)** the **laws**. The President may also **suggest laws** to the legislative branch. The President can **check** the legislative branch by **vetoing** any laws with which he does not agree. The President **checks** the judicial branch by **appointing justices** to the Supreme Court and the lesser federal courts. But, Congress **checks** the President by **confirming** the judges that the President appoints. The President is also the **Commander in Chief** of the **United States armed forces**. Only **Congress**, however, has the power to **declare war**.





### The Judicial Branch

The **judicial branch** is responsible for to deciding whether or not the **laws** passed by Congress or the states are in **agreement** with the **Constitution** and are being **carried out fairly**. The judicial branch is housed in the **Supreme Court** which has its own building in Washington, DC. The judicial branch includes a **system of courts** including the federal district courts, courts of appeal, and the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court judges are called **justices**. The **Supreme Court** is composed of **nine justices** who **serve for life** as long as they are not impeached.



**Impeachment** is a check on the power of any government branch, through which Congress can remove any governmental official from office. The Supreme Courts **checks** the legislative branch by making sure that the **laws** that are passed are in **agreement** with the **Constitution**. Likewise, the judicial branch can **check** the power of the executive branch by ruling the Presidents actions **unconstitutional**.

**4-4.2 What is the structure and function of each branch of the Federal government?**

	<b>Where are they housed? What is their job?</b>	<b>How is their power checked?</b>	<b>How do they balance the power of other branches?</b>
<p><b>The Legislative Branch</b></p> 			
<p><b>The Executive Branch</b></p> 			
<p><b>The Judicial Branch</b></p> 