

LIMITED GOVERNMENT

FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

Limited government controls the people who rule a community so that no person or group can get too much power. In the United States, government is divided into three branches. Power is also spread out between the local, state, and national governments.



Power is shared between local, state, and federal governments. A great example of this is roads. Some roads are maintained by your town or city, others by the state, and others (like the interstate highways) by the federal government. That means that when it snows, there are three different agencies plowing roads in New Hampshire!

Government responsibilities are split up between the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. The



legislative branch is in charge of making the laws. The executive branch is in charge of putting the laws into action and making sure that people follow the laws. The judicial branch is in charge of giving punishments to people who break the laws. All the levels of government – local, state, and federal – are split up into these three branches.

The government can't control our personal choices. Want to dye your hair (or antlers) pink? Go ahead – as long as your parents say you can! The government doesn't get a say in who our



friends are, what we do for a job, where we live or travel, or how we spend our time. As long as we aren't hurting someone else or taking away their rights, we can do what we want.

Nobody can force you to belong to a religion or stop you from following your religious beliefs.



The government is also not allowed to make decisions based on any one religion's beliefs.

As long as your religion doesn't violate the Constitution, you have the freedom to practice whatever religion you want. And, if you don't want to belong to a religion, that's fine too!

HOW DOES THIS GET COMPLICATED?

Sometimes local, state, and federal governments can make laws that contradict one another or that people think go against the Constitution. In these cases, the judicial system steps in and the courts decide which laws will stay and which must change.

