

# Mayor of Chicago

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The **Mayor of Chicago** is the chief executive of Chicago, Illinois, the third-largest city in the United States. He or she is charged with directing city departments and agencies, and with the advice and consent of the Chicago City Council, appoints department and agency leaders.

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## Appointment powers

The mayor appoints the Commissioner of the Chicago Fire Department and Superintendent of the Chicago Police Department. He or she also appoints the heads of city departments, the largest of which are the Water Management Department (formed by the consolidation of the former Water Department and Sewer Department under Richard M. Daley) and the Streets & Sanitation Department. He or she also appoints members to the boards of several special-purpose governmental bodies including the Chicago Park District, Chicago Public Library, Chicago Housing Authority, Chicago Transit Authority, and the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority. Under Richard M. Daley, the Illinois legislature granted the mayor power to appoint the governing board and chief executive officer of the Chicago Public Schools and subordinated the district to the mayor; the district had long been an independent unit of government.

The Chicago City Clerk and City Treasurer are elected separately, as are the 50 aldermen who form the City Council. The mayor is empowered, however, to fill vacancies in any of these 52 elected offices by appointment. In turn, the City Council elects one of its own to fill a mayoral vacancy.

## Mayor of Chicago



Seal of City of Chicago



**Incumbent**  
**Rahm Emanuel**  
since May 16, 2011

<b>Style</b>	The Honorable
<b>Term length</b>	4 years, no term limits
<b>Inaugural holder</b>	William Butler Ogden
<b>Formation</b>	1837

## Election

The Mayor of Chicago is elected by popular vote every four years, on the last Tuesday in February. A run-off election, in the event that no candidate garners more than fifty percent of the vote, is held on the first Tuesday in April. The election is held on a non-partisan basis. Chicago is the largest city in the United States not to limit the term of service for its mayor.

<b>Succession</b>	President Pro-tempore of the Chicago City Council
<b>Website</b>	Office of the Mayor ( <a href="http://mayor.cityofchicago.org/mayor/en/about_the_mayor.html">http://mayor.cityofchicago.org/mayor/en/about_the_mayor.html</a> )

## History










The first mayor was William Butler Ogden. Two sets of father and son have been elected Mayor of Chicago: Carter Harrison, Sr. and Carter Harrison, Jr. as well as Richard J. Daley and Richard M. Daley. Carter Harrison, Jr. was the first mayor to have been born within city limits. The first and only woman to hold the office was Jane Byrne. The first black mayor was Harold Washington. As an interim mayor, David Duvall Orr had the shortest mayoral term. Richard M. Daley was originally elected in 1989 and re-elected for the sixth time in 2007. In September 2010, Daley announced that he would not seek reelection for a seventh term as mayor. On December 26, 2010, Daley became Chicago's longest-serving mayor, surpassing his father's record.<sup>[1]</sup> Rahm Emanuel is the current mayor, having won the 2011 election with 55% of the vote to 25% for his closest opponent, Gery Chico. Emanuel was sworn in on May 16, 2011. In an April 7, 2015 run-off election Emanuel won re-election with 55.7 percent to challenger Jesus "Chuy" Garcia's 44.3 percent.<sup>[2]</sup>










By charter, Chicago has a "weak-mayor" system, in which most of the power is vested in the city council. In practice, however, the mayor of Chicago has long been one of the most powerful municipal chief executives in the nation. Unlike mayors in most other weak-mayor systems, he has the power to draw up the budget. Before the mayor's office became officially nonpartisan, he was the de facto leader of the city's Democratic Party, and had great influence over the ward organizations.<sup>[3]</sup>










## List of mayors

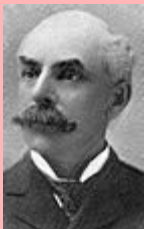








The mayoral term in Chicago was one year from 1837 through 1863, when it was increased to two years. In 1907, it was lengthened to four years, the present duration. Until 1861, municipal elections were held in March. In that year, legislation moved them to April. In 1869, however, election day was changed to November, and terms expiring in April of that year were lengthened. In 1875, election day was moved back to April by the city's vote to operate under the Cities and Villages Act of 1872.




#	Portrait	Name	Term	Party	Notes
1		William Butler Ogden	1837–1838	Democratic	
2		Buckner Stith Morris	1838–1839	Whig	
3		Benjamin Wright Raymond	1839–1840	Whig	
4		Alexander Loyd	1840–1841	Democratic	
5		Francis Cornwall Sherman	1841–1842	Democratic	
6		Benjamin Wright Raymond (2nd)	1842–1843	Whig	
7		Augustus Garrett	1843–1844	Democratic	
8		Alson Sherman	1844–1845	Independent Democrat	
9		Augustus Garrett (2nd)	1845–1846	Democratic	
10		John Putnam Chapin	1846–1847	Whig	

11		James Curtiss	1847–1848	Democratic	
12		James Hutchinson Woodworth	1848–1850	Independent Democrat	
13		James Curtiss (2nd)	1850–1851	Democratic	
14		Walter S. Gurnee	1851–1853	Democratic	
15		Charles McNeill Gray	1853–1854	Democratic	
16		Isaac Lawrence Milliken	1854–1855	Democratic	
17		Levi Day Boone	1855–1856	American Party	
18		Thomas Dyer	1856–1857	Democratic	
19	 <i>John Wentworth Chicago</i>	John Wentworth	1857–1858	Republican	

20		John Charles Haines	1858–1860	Democratic	
21		John Wentworth (2nd)	1860–1861	Republican	
22		Julian Sidney Rumsey	1861–1862	Republican	
23		Francis Cornwall Sherman	1862–1865	Democratic	
24		John Blake Rice	1865–1869	Republican	
25		Roswell B. Mason	1869–1871	Citizens	Mayor during the Great Chicago Fire of 1871.
26		Joseph Medill	1871–1873	Fireproof	Born in New Brunswick
		Lester L. Bond	1873	Independent	4 months, Acting Mayor
27		Harvey Doolittle Colvin	1873–1875	People's	

		Thomas Hoyne	Never served	Independent	Election declared null and void.
28		Monroe Heath	1876–1879	Republican	
29		Carter Harrison, Sr.	1879–1887	Democratic	father of Carter Harrison, Jr.
30		John A. Roche	1887–1889	Republican	
31		DeWitt Clinton Cregier	1889–1891	Democratic	
32		Hempstead Washburne	1891–1893	Republican	
33		Carter Harrison, Sr. (2nd)	1893	Democratic	Assassinated in office; father of Carter Harrison, Jr.
34		George Bell Swift	1893	Republican	Mayor Pro Tem
35		John Patrick Hopkins	1893–1895	Democratic	First Irish American and first Catholic mayor

36		George Bell Swift (2nd)	1895–1897	Republican	
37		Carter Harrison, Jr.	1897–1905	Democratic	First Chicago-born mayor; son of Mayor Carter Harrison, Sr.
38		Edward Fitzsimmons Dunne	1905–1907	Democratic	
39		Fred A. Busse	1907–1911	Republican	
40		Carter Harrison, Jr. (2nd)	1911–1915	Democratic	
41		William Hale Thompson	1915–1923	Republican	
42		William Emmett Dever	1923–1927	Democratic	
43		William Hale Thompson (2nd)	1927–1931	Republican	
44		Anton Cermak	1931–1933	Democratic	Assassinated in office; second foreign-born (in Kladno, Austria-Hungary, now Czech Republic)

45		Frank J. Corr	1933	Democratic	32 days, Acting Mayor
46		Edward Joseph Kelly	1933–1947	Democratic	An act of the state legislature permitted the City Council to elect a non-alderman to fill the vacancy.
47		Martin H. Kennelly	1947–1955	Democratic	
48		Richard J. Daley	1955–1976	Democratic	Died in office; father of Richard M. Daley
49		Michael Anthony Bilandic	1976–1979	Democratic	
50		Jane Margaret Byrne	1979–1983	Democratic	The only female mayor
51		Harold Washington	1983–1987	Democratic	Died in office; first Black/African-American mayor
52		David Duvall Orr	1987	Democratic	8 days, Interim Mayor
53		Eugene Sawyer	1987–1989	Democratic	Elected by city council to complete Mayor Washington's term; second Black/African-American mayor
54		Richard M. Daley	1989–2011	Democratic <sup>1</sup>	Longest serving mayor; son of Richard J. Daley
55		Rahm Emanuel	2011–present	Democratic <sup>1</sup>	First Jewish mayor

<sup>1</sup> Since 1999, mayoral elections have officially been nonpartisan. A 1995 Illinois law stipulated that "candidates for mayor . . . no longer would run under party labels in Chicago." However, both Richard M. Daley and Rahm Emanuel are known to be Democrats.<sup>[4]</sup>



## Living former mayors

As of 2015, there are two living former mayors of Chicago, the older of whom is Richard M. Daley. The most recent mayor to die was Jane Byrne (1979–1983), on November 14, 2014. However, The most recently serving mayor to die was Eugene Sawyer (1987–1989), on January 19, 2008.

Name	Mayoral term	Date of birth
David Orr	1987	October 4, 1944
Richard M. Daley	1989–2011	April 24, 1942

## See also

- Law and government of Chicago
- Timeline of Chicago history

## References

- "Daley now Chicago mayor 1 day longer than father" ([http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5ilKvZ\\_-QeQYYesyxYOrMxEIWIJQcA?docId=a29f3a05d0b5405e8e446c86c6e89c3f](http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5ilKvZ_-QeQYYesyxYOrMxEIWIJQcA?docId=a29f3a05d0b5405e8e446c86c6e89c3f)) Associated Press December 26, 2010
  - Chicago Tribune, April 7, 2015
  - <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/532.html>
  - Hardy, Thomas (July 7, 1995). "Gov. Edgar To End City Partisan Votes" ([http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1995-07-07/news/9507070087\\_1\\_nonpartisan-election-election-commissioners-first-black-mayor](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1995-07-07/news/9507070087_1_nonpartisan-election-election-commissioners-first-black-mayor)). Chicago Tribune.
- "A Chronology of Chicago's Mayors" (<http://www.chipublib.org/cplbooksmovies/cplarchive/mayors/mayorlist.php>). Chicago Public Library. Retrieved May 26, 2010.

## External links

- Mayor's official webpage (<http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/mayor.html>)



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