**Government**

A government is an institution through which leaders exercise power to makeand enforce laws. A government's basic functions are providing leadership, maintaining order, providing public services, provide in national security, providing economic security and providing economic assistance.

**What is the difference between a nation, state, and country?**

A nation is a sizable group of people united by common bonds of race, language, custom, or religion

The terms state and country denote a political community that occupies a definite territory and has an organized government. Identify and describe the theories of the origin of the state.

**Evolutionary theory:** says the state evolved from the family.

Force theory: says that states formed to survive cooperatively with more than one person running the government.

**Divine right:** states that certain people were chosen by a god or gods to rule.

**Social contract theory:** says that states exist to protect and serve the people.

How is a federal system of government different from a unitary or confederate one? A federal system of government divides the powers between the national and state governments.

* A unitary government gives all key powers to the central government.
* A confederate government is one in which each state is independent with a weak central government overseeing them

How is a constitutional government different than a country without a constitution?

Constitutional governments are limited. They have a constitution and operate according to its principles and rules.

Governments without constitutions (or with constitutions they do not adhere to) are often authoritarian and deny its citizens basic rights and freedoms. What are the differences between authoritarian and democratic governments?

In an authoritarian government, the leadership controls all aspects of the economic and social lives of its citizens.

A democratic government derives its power from the consent and trust of the people. Identify and describe the principles that are central to a democracy. Citizen participation: Essential to a democracy, it is the duty of all eligible citizens.

**Regular free and fair elections:** Elections held regularly and all votes counted. All eligible citizens have right to vote and run for office. Accepting results of the elections: Democracy depends on a peaceful transfer of power.

**Rule of law:** No one is above the law. Everyone must obey the law and is held accountable when they break the law.

**Majority rule with minority rights:** Decisions are based on what the majority wants while respecting the opinions of the minority.

**Accountability:** Elected and appointed officials are responsible for their actions.

**Transparency:** The people must be aware of the actions of their government.

Limit power of govt. while guaranteeing rights of citizens. Control of the abuse of power: Power of government officials is limited. Checks and balances. Economic freedom: Government allows for some private ownership of property and business.

Equality: All individuals should be valued equally and should be free from unreasonable discrimination.

Individual and human rights: All people have rights because they are human beings. An independent judiciary: Courts and judiciary should be fair and impartial. Competing political parties: Rival parties are needed to give voters choices.

**Functions of government**

Every government has specific roles and duties that it carries on a daily basis. But do you know the explicit functions of government? Well, if you don’t know, you’re about to find out.

Every day, state and federal government work to ensure peace and stability in their jurisdictions. Here are the primary functions of government.

**1. Protect the Natural Rights**

The primary functions of government are to protect the basic human rights which include right to life, liberty and to possess property. The idea of natural rights is because every person deserves to enjoy these rights. It is assumed that people are born with these rights and that they shouldn’t be taken away from them without their agreement.

If the government takes any of these rights, you have the liberty to take your complaints to court. Hire an attorney to improve your chances of winning the case.

**2. Defend Against External Enemies**

War across nations has been a constant condition since the beginning of civilization.

According to the federal laws and constitution, the government has a responsibility to ensure peace within its borders. It should also keep external aggressors at bay.

**3. Managing Economic Conditions**

The modern government has a duty to fight poverty and improve the quality of life of its citizens. In order to achieve this, the government must create a conducive environment for material prosperity and economic growth.

**4. Redistribution of Income and Resources**

Governments should ensure economic pie grows larger to redistribute fruits of prosperity. The government does this by taxing wealthier people and transferring the income to different categories of people who are in need of these services.

Therefore, the modern government can be characterized as welfare states. Therefore, the functions of government are to not only resources from wealthier to poorer individuals. They also redistribute resources from the young to disabled, socially challenged and the aged. Further, the wealthier governments subsidize food, housing, pension, and healthcare to the poor.

**5. Provide Public or Utility Goods**

Among the many functions of government is to provide public goods. In most cases, these are services that the private sector cannot provide or they can provide in an unfair or inefficient manner. National security is one of these services. For example, can the private market offer security services? Yes, the government can outsource military security. The government and wealthy individuals can hire private mercenaries to protect them.

According to historic data, relying on mercenaries to protect populations is a risky affair. Without federal statutes to govern their operations, the mercenaries can turn on the governments that hired them. In the end, the mercenaries can injure or harm the very people they are supposed to protect. Because of this, responsible governments develop state legislation to monopolize national security. The same applies for interstate highways, postal services and clean air. As you’ll note, certain goods are best offered by the federal or state governments.