

2. The governor shall be chosen annually: and no person shall be eligible to this office, unless at the time of his election he shall have been an inhabitant of this commonwealth for seven years next preceding; and unless he shall, at the same time, be seized, in his own right, of a freehold within the commonwealth of the value of one thousand pounds; and unless he shall declare himself to be of the Christian religion.

3. Those persons who shall be qualified to vote for senators and representatives, within the several towns of this commonwealth, shall, at a meeting to be called for that purpose, on the first Monday of April, annually, give in their votes for a governor to the selectmen, who shall preside at such meetings; and the town clerk, in the presence, and with the assistance of the selectmen, shall, in open town meeting, sort and count the votes, and form a list of the persons voted for, with the number of votes for each person, against his name: and shall make a fair record of the same in the town books, and a public declaration thereof in the said meeting; and shall, in the presence of the inhabitants, seal up copies of the said list, attested by him and the selectmen, and transmit the same to the sheriff of the county, thirty days at least before the last Wednesday in May: and the sheriff shall transmit the same to the secretary's office seventeen days at least before the said last Wednesday in May; or the selectmen may cause returns of the same to be made to the office of the secretary of the commonwealth, seventeen days at least before the said day; and the secretary shall lay the same before the senate and house of representatives on the last Wednesday in May, to be by them examined: and in case of an election by a majority of all the votes returned, the choice shall be by them declared and published. But if no person shall have a majority of votes, the house of representatives shall, by ballot, elect two out of four persons, who had the highest number of votes, if so many shall have been voted for: but, if otherwise, out of the number voted for; and make return to the senate of the two persons so elected; on which the senate shall proceed, by ballot, to elect one who shall be declared governor.

4. The governor shall have authority from time to time, at his discretion, to assemble and call together the counsellors of this commonwealth, for the time being; and the governor, with the said counsellors, or five of them at least, shall, and may from time to time, hold and keep a council, for the ordering and directing the affairs of the commonwealth, agreeably to the constitution and the laws of the land.

5. The governor, with advice of council, shall have full power and authority, during the session of the general court, to adjourn or prorogue the same, to any time the two houses shall desire; and to dissolve the same on the day next preceding the last Wednesday in May, and in the recess of the said court to prorogue the same, from time to time, not exceeding ninety days in any one recess; and to call it together sooner than the time to which it may be adjourned or prorogued, if the welfare of the commonwealth shall require the same. And in case of any infectious distemper prevailing in the place where the said court is next, at any time, to convene, or any cause happening, whereby danger may arise to the health or lives of the members from their attendance, he may direct the session to be held at some other the most convenient place within the state.