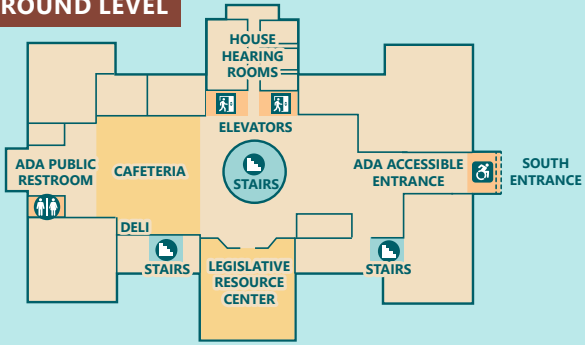


State Capitol of Colorado

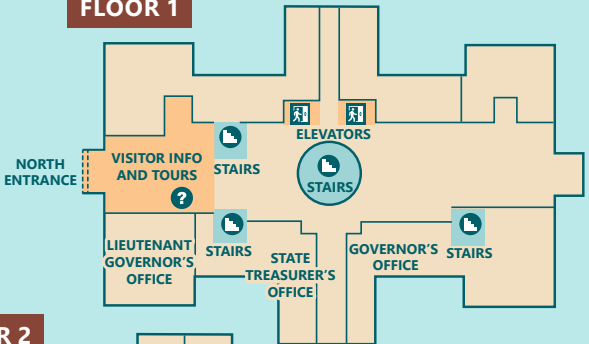


VISITOR GUIDE

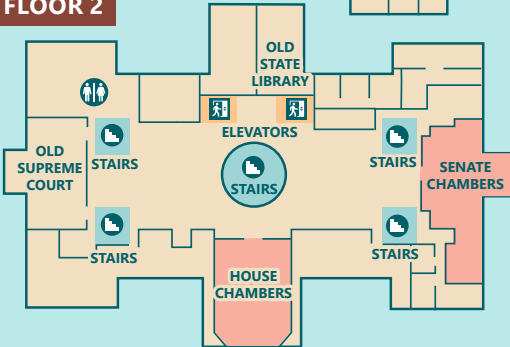
GROUND LEVEL



FLOOR 1



FLOOR 2



FLOOR 3



-  STAIRS
-  ELEVATOR
-  RESTROOMS
-  WHEELCHAIR ACCESS
-  VISITOR INFO



Historical Overview

First Peoples

The Ute People have inhabited what is now Colorado since time immemorial and hold a unique historical and cultural significance in the state. Other Indigenous Tribes, such as the Apache, Arapaho, Cheyenne, Crow, Kiowa, Hopi, and Navajo, among others, have called Colorado home at various points in history. Colorado acknowledges the contributions and enduring presence of its First Peoples and is honored to have residents from more than 200 federally recognized Tribes living in the state today.

Centennial State

Capital City

When Colorado was a territory, three cities served as its capital at different times: Colorado City (briefly in 1861), Golden (from 1862 to 1867), and finally Denver. In 1881, Denver was chosen as Colorado's permanent capital by public referendum, five years after Colorado became a state in 1876.

Architecture

Famed Architect Elijah E. Myers designed the Michigan State Capitol Building (commissioned in 1872) and the Texas State Capitol Building (commissioned in 1881) before being commissioned to design the Colorado State Capitol Building in 1885. Myers' plans were largely followed, though after a disagreement over Myers' fees, prolific Denver architect Frank E. Edbrooke was brought in to handle the completion of the building, specifically detailing and the design of the interior.

The building's layout follows a Greek cross, with North-South and East-West axes, and is Neoclassical in design. Construction on the main part of the building spanned nine years, beginning in 1886 and finishing in 1894. The dome was not completed until 1908.

Mile High Marker

Denver is not the highest capital in the United States. Cheyenne, Wyoming sits at 6,097 feet and Santa Fe, New Mexico at 7,000. It's not even close to the highest city in Colorado. The city of Leadville is almost two miles above sea level at 10,152 feet. But Denver is exactly one mile high, a fact that is commemorated on the West Steps of the Capitol Building.



FIRST FLOOR

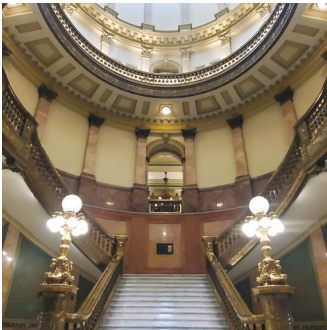
The Executive Branch

Colorado's executive branch consists of the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, and the Treasurer. The offices of the Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Treasurer reside on the first floor of the Capitol. The Attorney General is located in the Ralph Carr Judicial Center, at 1300 Broadway. The Secretary of State is located at 1700 Broadway. Each executive branch position is elected to four-year terms and limited to two consecutive terms.



More about the Executive Branch

Scan this code for the Executive Branch's webpage.



Rotunda

At the center of the Colorado Capitol is the stunning Rotunda and Grand Staircase. Many Colorado luminaries have lain in state here, and it is also a popular spot for both impromptu and professional photo sessions.

North Foyer

Ute Flags

Three flags hang in distinction in the North Foyer of the Capitol, representing the three sister Ute Tribes: the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, and the Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation. These Tribes are the longest continuous residents of Colorado, having lived in the region since time immemorial. More information about these nations is available at the Visitor Services Desk.



Great Seal of the Southern Ute Indian Tribe



Great Seal of the Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation



Great Seal of the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe

The Visitor Services Desk is also in the North Foyer on the first floor. Here you can find additional resources, information, and tours of the building.

SECOND FLOOR

Judicial Branch

The Capitol was originally designed to house all three branches of government. However, the Colorado Supreme Court eventually outgrew its courtroom and Capitol offices and relocated to its own building in the 1970s. Today, the Colorado Supreme and Court of Appeals are located at the Ralph Carr Judicial Center directly southwest of the Capitol.



Old Supreme Court

Fully restored to its original grandeur, the **Old Supreme Court Chambers** now serve as a legislative committee hearing room.

You will also find the **Heritage Windows** here, representing some of the ethnic groups that contributed to the creation of Colorado. They were added to the building as part of the 1976 celebration of the U.S. Bicentennial, recognizing Colorado's diverse population and history.

TAKE NOTE

Materials Used in the Colorado State Capitol

The floors throughout the Colorado State Capitol are made of Yule marble from Marble, Colorado, the same materials used for the Lincoln Memorial and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Washington, D.C. The stunning pink stone that acts as the wainscoting throughout the building is known as Beulah Red or Colorado Rose Onyx, though it is technically a form of limestone tinged with iron oxide. The capitol's construction exhausted the world's only known supply. The woodwork throughout the building is crafted from oak imported from the Ozarks. While the dome is famously clad in 24-carat gold leaf, the railings throughout the building are brass and must be polished weekly to maintain their brilliant shine.



Colorado Rose Onyx

SECOND FLOOR

TAKE NOTE



Emily Griffith Portrait

Emily Griffith Portrait

Beginning her career as an educator at the age of 16, Emily Griffith dedicated her life to teaching. In 1916, she opened the Opportunity School, focusing on adult and vocational education. Expecting a few hundred students the first week, more than 2,000 people enrolled, making the school an instant success. In 1933, the school was renamed in her honor and it remains in operation today.

Legislative Branch

House and Senate Chambers and Lobbies

Colorado's **General Assembly** is made up of two chambers: the **House of Representatives** and the **Senate**. Members of both chambers are elected based on population, with each Coloradan represented by one state senator and one state representative. House members can serve up to four two-year terms (eight years), while senators can serve up to two four-year terms (eight years). The Colorado General Assembly is responsible for making, amending, and sometimes repealing Colorado laws.

Senators and representatives enter their respective chambers on the second floor through designated lobbies (the Senate on the south side and House on the west side).

For more information about the current leadership and membership of the House and Senate, please scan the QR code below.



More about the Legislative Branch

Scan this code for the General Assembly webpage.

THIRD FLOOR



House Chambers



Senate Chambers

House and Senate Galleries

The public can view legislative proceedings from the House and Senate Galleries, which are accessed from the third floor. You will notice several similarities between the chambers, such as the nearly one-ton twin brass chandeliers. Differences, such as the color (brick red for the Senate and sage green for the House), the size, and the stained glass make the chambers distinctive. Over the years, these chambers underwent various modifications, but in 2015, both were meticulously restored to their original appearance.

Barney Ford Stained Glass

The Senate Chambers are adorned with nine stunning stained glass windows which have been added over time to commemorate notable Coloradans.

In contrast, the House Chambers, which face west, have kept almost all of their windows clear, to highlight the stunning view. But above the dais is a stained glass portrait of Barney L. Ford. Born into slavery, Ford became a highly successful businessman in Colorado and an advocate for voting rights. He played a key role in ensuring that the Colorado Constitution granted voting rights to all men, not just white men.

Presidential Portrait Gallery

The majority of the Presidential Portrait Gallery was donated to the State of Colorado with the condition that it remain on public display for free, in perpetuity. The original collection was painted by noted portrait artist Lawrence Williams who continued painting presidential portraits for the collection until his death in 2003. Since then, carefully selected Colorado artists have continued the tradition, and the gallery will continue to expand with future presidential portraits.

FOURTH FLOOR

Mr. Brown's Attic

Henry Cordes Brown, like many others, came to Colorado, seeking fortune. Instead of gold, he built his wealth through real estate. After buying up much of what is now called the Capitol Hill neighborhood with the help of the Homestead Act, Brown donated the site for the Colorado State Capitol to the State of Colorado in 1868.

The Capitol's museum, **Mr. Brown's Attic**, is named in his honor and features exhibits on Colorado's history and the Capitol itself. This unique space, located above the third floor, is open to the public but is accessible by stairs only. A video tour of Mr. Brown's attic and the dome is located on the third floor near the elevators.

Dome Observation Area Dome View



From the Dome Observation Area, visitors can enjoy 360-degree views of Denver and the surrounding region. Access to the dome is **ONLY** available through guided tour. Join a tour at the Visitor Services Desk, located in the North Foyer on the first floor.

Colorado's Ring of Fame

The first artwork added to the Capitol, a collection of stained glass windows in the dome structure, above the attic and below the observation area, is known as Colorado's Ring of Fame. Installed in the early 1900's, the collection honors individuals who contributed to the initial growth and development of the state.



Ring of Fame

GROUND FLOOR

Rotating Art Exhibit

The Ground Floor Rotunda is home to a rotating art exhibit that changes several times a year. Featuring artists from across the state, each exhibit explores a different theme. Every visit to the Capitol is likely to showcase new and different artwork.

Legislative Resource Center

Located off the Ground Level Rotunda stairs, the Legislative Resource Center is open to the public and provides nonpartisan library services and resources to members of the General Assembly and their staff, the other legislative services agencies, other government agencies, and members of the public. The room was refurbished in 2020.



Legislative Resource Center

Cafe and Public Seating

Located in the north side of the ground level, this area offers a small market, vending machines, and tables. It is a popular spot for people to meet, socialize, eat lunch, or get work done.

FUN FACTS

- **The colors of the Colorado House of Representatives and Senate, which are green and red, respectively, are modeled after the English House of Commons and House of Lords**
- **The city of Denver was named after James W. Denver, the Territorial Governor of Kansas, to curry favor. Governor Denver did not learn the city was named after him until well after Colorado became a state, and when he finally visited, was unimpressed.**
- **Colorado was the second state to grant women the right to vote, and the first to do so by popular referendum, in 1893, more than 25 years before women gained the right to vote nationally.**

COLORADO SYMBOLS



Colorado Flag



State Seal



**Colorado Day:
August 1**



**Flower:
Columbine**



**Folk Dance:
Square Dance**



**Animal:
Rocky Mountain
Bighorn Sheep**



**Fish:
Green Cutthroat**



**Songs:
"Where the
Columbines Grow"**



**Fossil:
Stegosaurus**



**Insect: Colorado
Hairstreak Butterfly**



**Tree: Colorado
Blue Spruce**



**Grass:
Blue Grama Grass**



Bird: Lark Bunting



**Mineral:
Rhodochrosite**



Tartan



**Reptile: Western
Painted Turtle**



**Winter Sports:
Skiing and Snowboarding**



**Gemstone:
Aquamarine**

Resources for Coloradans and Beyond

Colorado House of Representatives

200 E. Colfax Ave., Rm. 307

Denver, CO 80203

United States

303-866-2904



Colorado Senate

200 E. Colfax Ave., Rm. 346

Denver, CO 80203

United States

303-866-2316



Governor of Colorado

200 E. Colfax Ave., Rm. 136

Denver, CO 80203

Constituent Services Help Line: (303) 866-2885

Governor's Office, Front Desk: (303) 866-2471



Ralph Carr Judicial Center

(Colorado Supreme and Appellate Court)

2 E. 14th Ave.

Denver, CO 80203

(720) 625-5150



Who is my legislator?

Scan here to find your legislator.



Prepared by Legislative Council Staff

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