Governors of South Carolina
1670–2026

(Originally compiled by A. S. Salley, Jr., State Historian.)

Under Proprietary Government

William Sayle, Mar. 15, 1670–Mar. 4, 1671—(Named by Sir John Yeamans in a Commission from the Lords Proprietors.)

Joseph West, Mar. 4, 1671–Apr. 19, 1672—(Elected by the Council to succeed William Sayle, deceased.)

Sir John Yeamans, Apr. 19, 1672–Aug. 1674—(Appointed by the Palatine. Died in Aug. 1674.)

Joseph West, Aug. 13, 1674–Oct. 1682—(Elected by the Council upon the death of John Yeamans, a Commission from the Palatine being on its way to him at the time. Between Apr. 27 and June 12, 1675, during the absence of Governor West, John Godfrey, by choice of the Council, acted as Governor.)

Joseph Morton, Oct. 1682–Aug. 1684—(Appointed by the Palatine.)

Sir Richard Kyrle, Aug. 1684—(Appointed by the Palatine. Died in less than a month after assuming office.)

Joseph West, Aug. 30, 1684–Jul. 1, 1685—(Elected by the Council to succeed Richard Kyrle, and was later appointed by the Palatine. Resigned in June 1685.)

Robert Quary, Jul.–Oct. 1685—(Elected by the Council to succeed Joseph West.)

Joseph Morton, Oct. 1685–Nov. 1686—(Appointed by the Palatine.)

James Colleton, Nov. 1686–1690—(Appointed by the Palatine.)

Seth Sothell, 1690–1692—(Assumed the governorship by right of being a Proprietor.)

Philip Ludwell, Apr. 11, 1692–May 1693—(Appointed by the Palatine.)

Thomas Smith, May 1693–Nov. 16, 1694—(Elected by the Council. Later commissioned by the Palatine. Died Nov. 16, 1694.)

Joseph Blake, Nov. 1694–Aug. 17, 1695—(Elected by the Council upon the death of Thomas Smith.)

John Archdale, Aug. 17, 1695–Oct. 29, 1696—(Assumed the governorship by right of being a Proprietor. Retired Oct. 29, 1696. Appointed Joseph Blake Deputy Governor in his stead.)

Joseph Blake, Oct. 29, 1696–Sept. 7, 1700—(Appointed Deputy Governor by John Archdale and subsequently assumed the governorship in right of being a Proprietor. Died Sept. 7, 1700.)

James Moore, Sept. 11, 1700–Mar. 1703—(Elected by the Council Sept. 11, 1700, upon the death of Joseph Blake.)

Sir Nathaniel Johnson, Mar. 1703–Nov. 26, 1709—(Appointed by the Palatine.)

Edward Tynte, Nov. 26, 1709–June 20, 1710—(Appointed by the Palatine. Died June 20, 1710.)

Robert Gibbes, June 1710–1711—(Elected by the Council upon the death of Edward Tynte.)

Charles Craven, 1711–1717—(Appointed by the Palatine. During his absence, 1716–1717, Robert Daniell served as Deputy Governor by appointment of the Governor.)

Robert Johnson, 1717–1719—(Son of Sir Nathaniel Johnson. Appointed by the Palatine.)

Under Royal Government

James Moore, Dec. 1719–May 29, 1721—(Son of James Moore. Elected by a convention of the people who had overthrown the government of the Proprietors.)

Francis Nicholson, May 29, 1721–1729—(Provisional Governor appointed by the Crown. During his absence, from 1724 to 1729, Arthur Middleton, President of the Council, administered the government.)

Robert Johnson, 1729–1735

Thomas Broughton, 1735–1737—(Lieutenant Governor acting as Governor with full powers of Governor.)

William Bull, 1737–1738—(President of the Council and later Lieutenant Governor acting as Governor.)

James Glen, 1738–1756—(From 1738 to 1743 Lieutenant Governor William Bull acted as Governor.)

William Henry Lyttleton, 1756–1760

William Bull, 1760–1761—(Son of William Bull, Lieutenant Governor acting as Governor.)

Thomas Boone, 1761–1764

William Bull, 1764–1766—(Lieutenant Governor acting as Governor.)
Lord Charles Greville Montagu, 1766–1773—(During the absences of Governor Montagu in 1768 and from 1769 to 1771 Lieutenant Governor William Bull acted as Governor.)
William Bull, 1773–1775—(Lieutenant Governor acting as Governor.)
Lord William Campbell, 1775
Henry Laurens, 1775–1776—(President of the Council of Safety, an executive body organized from a congress of the people, administering the government.)

Under State Government

Presidents

John Rutledge, Mar. 26, 1776–Mar. 6, 1778
Rawlins Lowndes, Mar. 6, 1778–Jan. 9, 1779

Governors

John Rutledge, Jan. 9, 1779–Jan. 31, 1782—(Governor Rutledge's successor should have been chosen at the session of 1781, but the State being in the hands of the British no general election could be held in 1780 nor any election by the General Assembly in 1781.)
John Mathews, Jan. 31, 1782–1783
Benjamin Guerard, 1783–1785
William Moultrie, 1785–1787
Thomas Pinckney, 1787–1789
Charles Pinckney, Jan. 26, 1789–1792
William Moultrie, 1792–1794
Arnoldus Vander Horst, 1794–1796
Charles Pinckney, 1796–1798
Edward Rutledge, Dec. 18, 1798–1800—(Died Jan. 23, 1800; succeeded by John Drayton, Lieutenant Governor.)
John Drayton, 1800–1802—(Lieutenant Governor, succeeded Edward Rutledge, deceased; re-elected in Dec. 1800 for a full term.)
James Burchill Richardson, 1802–1804
Paul Hamilton, 1804–1806
Charles Pinckney, 1806–1808
John Drayton, 1808–1810
Henry Middleton, 1810–1812

Joseph Alston, 1812–1814
David R. Williams, 1814–1816
Andrew Pickens, 1816–1818
John Geddes, 1818–1820
Thomas Bennett, 1820–1822
John Lyde Wilson, 1822–1824
Richard Irvine Manning, 1824–1826
John Taylor, 1826–1828
Stephen D. Miller, 1828–1830
James Hamilton, Jr., 1830–1832
Robert Y. Hayne, 1832–1834
George McDuffie, 1834–1836
Pierce Mason Butler, 1836–1838
Patrick Noble, 1838–1840—(Died Apr. 7, 1840; succeeded by B. K. Henagan, Lieutenant Governor.)
B. K. Henagan, 1840—(Lieutenant Governor, succeeded Patrick Noble, deceased.)
John Peter Richardson, 1840–1842—(Nephew of James Burchill Richardson.)
James H. Hammond, 1842–1844
William Aiken, 1844–1846
David Johnson, 1846–1848
Whitemarsh B. Seabrook, 1848–1850
John Hugh Means, 1850–1852
John Laurence Manning, 1852–1854
James Hopkins Adams, 1854–1856
Robert F. W. Allston, 1856–1858
William H. Gist, 1858–1860
Francis Wilkinson Pickens, 1860–1862
Milledge Luke Bonham, 1862–1864
Andrew Gordon Magrath, 1864–1865—(Arrested by the Federal Government, sent to prison, and deposed as Governor.)
Benjamin Franklin Perry, June–Nov. 1865—(Provisional Governor appointed by President David Johnson.)
James Lawrence Orr, 1865–1868—(Deposed by Act of Federal Congress reconstructing the Southern States, General Edward R. S. Canby acting as military Governor until a new government could be established.)
Robert K. Scott, 1868–1872—(Elected under the new constitution; inaugurated in July; re-elected in Nov. 1870.)
Franklin J. Moses, Jr., 1872–1874

Daniel H. Chamberlain, 1874–1876
Wade Hampton, 1876–1879—(Re-elected for a second term in 1878; elected United States Senator and resigned in Feb. 1879; succeeded by W. D. Simpson, Lieutenant Governor.)
William Dunlap Simpson, 1879–1880—(Lieutenant Governor, succeeded Wade Hampton in Feb.; resigned in Sept. 1880, having been elected Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.)
Thomas B. Jeter, 1880—(President of the Senate, succeeded W. D. Simpson, resigned.)
Johnson Hagood, 1880–1882
Hugh Smith Thompson, 1882–1886—(Re-elected for a second term in 1884; resigned in July 1886, having been appointed Assistant Secretary of the Treasury of the United States by President Cleveland.)
John C. Sheppard, July–Dec. 1886—(Lieutenant Governor, succeeded Hugh S. Thompson, resigned.)
John Peter Richardson, 1886–1890—(Son of John Peter Richardson, Two terms.)
Benjamin Ryan Tillman, 1890–1894—(Two terms)
John Gary Evans, 1894–1897—(The Constitution of 1895 changed the meeting time of the General Assembly and the inauguration of the Governor to Jan., thereby lengthening Governor Evans' term into 1897.)
William H. Ellerbe, 1897–1899—(Elected for a second term in 1898, but died in June 1899; succeeded by M. B. McSweeney, Lieutenant Governor.)
Miles B. McSweeney, 1899–1903—(Lieutenant Governor, succeeded W. H. Ellerbe, deceased; re-elected in 1900 for a full term.)
Duncan Clinch Heyward, 1903–1907—(Two terms)
Martin F. Ansel, 1907–1911—(Two terms)
Coleman Livingston Blease, 1911–1915—(Served almost two terms, resigning five days before the expiration of his second term; succeeded by Charles A. Smith, Lieutenant Governor.)
Charles A. Smith, Jan. 14–19, 1915—(Lieutenant Governor, succeeded C. L. Blease, resigned.)
Richard Irvine Manning, 1915–1919—(Two terms, grandson of Richard Irvine Manning.)

Robert A. Cooper, 1919–1922—(Re-elected in 1920 for a second term. Resigned in May 1922; succeeded by Wilson G. Harvey, Lieutenant Governor.)
Wilson G. Harvey, May 1922–Jan. 1923—(Lieutenant Governor, succeeded as Governor.)
Thomas G. McLeod, 1923–1927—(Two terms)
John G. Richards, 1927–1931
Ibra C. Blackwood, 1931–Jan. 1935
Olin D. Johnston, Jan. 1935–Jan. 1939
Burnet R. Maybank, Jan. 1939–Nov. 4, 1941—(Was elected U.S. Senator.)
J. E. Harley, Nov. 4, 1941–Feb. 27, 1942—(Lieutenant Governor, succeeded Burnet R. Maybank; died in office.)
R. M. Jefferies, Mar. 2, 1942–Jan. 1943—(President *Pro Tem.* of the Senate, succeeded J. E. Harley upon his death.)
Olin D. Johnston, Jan. 1943–Jan. 2, 1945—(Resigned as Governor upon election to U.S. Senate.)
Ransome J. Williams, Jan. 2, 1945–Jan. 1947—(Lieutenant Governor, succeeded Olin D. Johnston, resigned.)
J. Strom Thurmond, Jan. 21, 1947–Jan. 1951
James F. Byrnes, Jan. 16, 1951–Jan. 1955
George Bell Timmerman, Jr., Jan. 18, 1955–Jan. 1959
Ernest F. Hollings, Jan. 1959–Jan. 1963
Donald S. Russell, Jan. 1963–Apr. 1965
Robert E. McNair, Apr. 1965–Jan. 1971—(Lieutenant Governor, succeeded Governor Donald S. Russell who resigned Apr. 22, 1965.)
John C. West, Jan. 1971–Jan. 1975
James B. Edwards, Jan. 1975–1979
Richard W. Riley, Jan. 1979–1987—(Two terms)
Carroll A. Campbell, Jr., Jan. 1987–1995—(Two terms)
David M. Beasley, Jan. 1995–1999
James H. Hodges, Jan. 1999–2003
Marshall C. Sanford, Jr., Jan. 2003–Jan. 2011—(Two terms)
Nikki Randhawa Haley, Jan. 2011–Jan. 2017—(Resigned Jan. 24, 2017 upon being appointed U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations.)
Henry D. McMaster, Jan. 24, 2017– (Lieutenant Governor, succeeded Governor Nikki Randhawa Haley who resigned Jan. 24, 2017. Elected Governor Nov. 6, 2018.)