

CHAPTER
15

Government at Work: The Bureaucracy

SECTION 1 *THE FEDERAL BUREAUCRACY*

TEXT SUMMARY

A **bureaucracy** is a large, complex structure that handles the everyday business of an organization. It is founded on three principles. First, a bureaucracy has a hierarchical structure—a few top officials and units have authority over a large group of managers, who, in turn, supervise many more workers. Second, each **bureaucrat**, or person who works for the organization, has a specific job. Third, a bureaucracy operates under a set of formalized rules.

The federal bureaucracy is all the agencies, people, and procedures through which the Federal Government operates. The President is its chief administrator. His **administration** consists of the government's many agencies and administrators. The executive

branch is composed of three groups of agencies: the Executive Office of the President, the 14 Cabinet departments, and many independent agencies.

The units of the bureaucracy go by multiple names. Departments are units of Cabinet rank. Agencies and administrations have near-Cabinet status and are each overseen by an administrator. Commissions regulate business activities and may advise on or investigate other concerns. Authorities and corporations conduct business-like activities under a board and a manager.

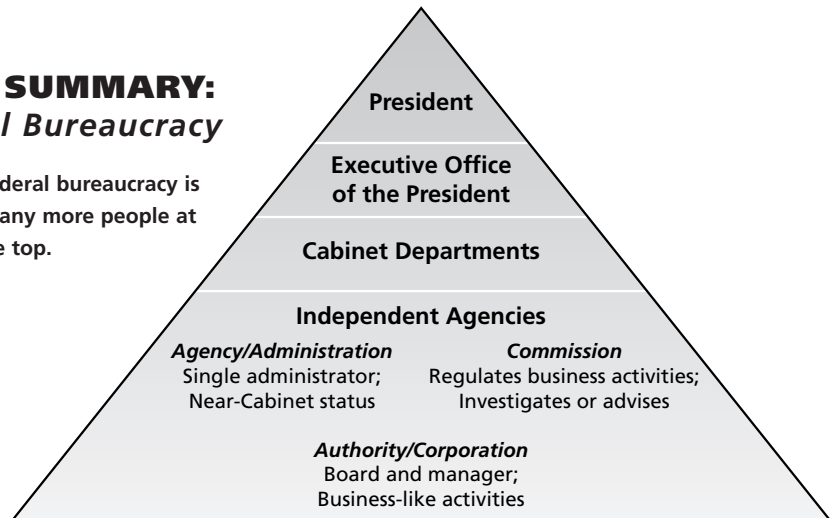
Each administrative organization is made up of one of two types of units. **Staff agencies** provide support for other workers, while **line agencies** perform an organization's tasks.

THE BIG IDEA

The federal bureaucracy, part of the executive branch, carries out most of the day-to-day work of the Federal Government.

GRAPHIC SUMMARY: *The Federal Bureaucracy*

The structure of the federal bureaucracy is like a pyramid, with many more people at the bottom than at the top.



REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What makes up the federal bureaucracy?

2. **Diagram Skills** What unit of the federal bureaucracy is just below the President in rank?