

The Legislative Process

- **Senate:** 40 members
- **Assembly:** 80 members
- **Regular Session:** Convenes on the first Monday in December of each even-numbered year and continues until November 30 of the next even-numbered year.
- **Special Session:** May be called by the Governor and is limited to a specific subject. Length is not limited and may be held concurrently with the regular session.
- **Effective Date of Laws:** January 1 of the year after enactment.

Procedure

- **Introduction:** The bill is introduced by a member of the Senate or Assembly, read for the first time, then assigned to a committee by either the Senate Rules Committee or the Assembly Speaker.
- **Committee:** Hearing(s) are held in committee and testimony is taken from proponents and opponents. Generally, the committee will then amend, pass or fail to pass the bill.
- **Second Reading:** Bills that are passed by committee are read a second time and sent to the full floor for debate.
- **Floor Debate (in house of origin):** The bill is read a third time, debated and voted on. Most bills need a majority to pass (21 for the Senate, 41 for the Assembly). Bills with urgency clauses, appropriation measures and some tax-related bills need a two-thirds majority (27 for the Senate, 54 for the Assembly). If the bill is passed, it is sent to the second house.
- **Second House:** Procedures for a bill to pass the second house are similar to consideration and passage in the house of origin.
- **Amendments:** If the second house passes a bill with amendments, then the bill must be passed a second time by the house of origin for concurrence. If the amendments are rejected, a conference committee is formed to iron out the differences between the two houses.
- **Governor:** The Governor must act on (sign or veto) any bill that passes the Legislature within 12 days during the legislative session. However, the Governor has 30 days in which to act at the end of each year of the legislative session. Bills not acted on by the Governor automatically become law. A two-thirds vote of the Legislature is required to override a Governor's veto.

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