

**Legislative
Support Services'**

Legislative Process Class

Presentation by

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Structure of Washington Government

The First Among Equals

Legislative

Executive

Judicial



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Biennium

- Bills not passed into law in the first session are carried over to the next session(s) within the biennium.

Regular Sessions

- Convenes second Monday in January
- Long -105 days (odd numbered years) –budget year
- Short -60 days (even numbered years) –supplemental budgets

Special Sessions

- Called by Governor
- Up to 30 days long
- Can have multiple special sessions



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Elected Legislature

- 49 Districts equal in population
- Independent Redistricting Commission

Bicameral

- **Senate**
 - Each district has 1 Senator
 - Serve four-year terms
- **House of Representatives**
 - Each district has 2 Representatives
 - Serve two-year terms

Elections of Members

- Even numbered years
 - Half the Senate
 - All the House of Representatives

Chamber Structure

- **Caucuses**
- **Legislative Committees**
 - Policy
 - Fiscal
 - Rules



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The Constitution states:

- Laws will be made by an elected Legislature.
- Laws can be made directly by people through the initiative process

Initiatives

- The direct power of the voters to enact new or change existing laws

Referendums

- To give voters an opportunity to approve or reject laws either proposed or enacted by the Legislature

Advisory Votes

- Non binding measures that let the People say whether the Legislature should repeal or maintain revenue-generating bills that passed the Legislature (RCW 43.135.041 from Initiative 960)

Bills

- Proposed legislation by members.



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How a Bill Becomes a Law

Code Reviser's Office

- Official bill drafting arm of the legislature.
- Draft Bill
- Sponsors
- Draft → Bill
 - HB 1000-3999
 - SB 5000-7999
- Companion Bills
- Prefile Bills
 - First Monday in December

First Reading

- Introduction of Bill
- Read in Pro Forma Floor Session
- Assigned to a Standing Committee

Committee Meetings

- Public Hearing
 - Testimony Taken
- Work Session
 - No Testimony Taken
- Executive Session
 - Committee Action on a Bill
 - Offer Substitute Bill
 - Refer to another Committee
 - Take no action
 - Refer to Rules Committee



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Rules Committee

- Process by which bills are made eligible to be placed on the Floor Calendar for a Second Reading

Senate

- Rules White
- Rules Green
- Rules X File

House

- Rules Review
- Rules Consideration
- Rules X File

Second Reading

- Committee Substitutes may be offered
- Floor Amendments may be offered
 - Page and Line
 - Striker
 - Engrossed Bills
 - A Bill becomes Engrossed if floor amendments are adopted in the house of origin



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Third Reading

- Bill moves to Opposite House
- Goes through the same Legislative Process as it did in House of Origin
 - Opposite House can propose changes

Back to House of Origin

- House of Origin must agree with proposed changes from Opposite House

Placed on Calendar

- Suspension (House) / Consent (Senate)
- Concurrence*
- Dispute*
- Conference

*Concur/Do Not Concur/Recede from Position



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Governor's Action & Effective Dates

Governor's Actions

- Sign the Bill
- Veto
 - Full Bill
 - Full Sections
 - Line items (budget Bills only)
- Do nothing
 - Bill becomes a law with or without the Governor's Signature

Timeline

- Monday-Saturday including state holidays (Sundays are not counted)
- 5 days to sign
 - If delivered to the Governor prior to the last 5 days of session
- 20 days to sign
 - If delivered to the Governor within the last 5 days of session

Effective Dates

- 90 days after the last day of session
- Unless specified in the bill
- Bills can have multiple effect dates
- Emergency Clause Bill – takes effect immediately
 - Not subject to Referendum or Advisory Vote



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Legislative Cutoff Calendar

Cutoff Calendar

- Related calendar dates to legislative days and notes session deadlines for committee and floor action.
- Bills necessary to implement the budget (NTIB) are not subject to cutoff dates

Order of Cutoff

- Out of Policy Committee
- Out of Fiscal Committee
- Out of House of Origin
 - Out of Opposite House Policy Committee
 - Out of Opposite House Fiscal Committee
- Back to House of Origin
- Last day of session (Sine Die)



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