

HOW A BILL BECOMES LAW

The Virginia Legislative Process

1. An Idea

A legislator, organization, or member of the public proposes an idea for a new law or a change to an existing law.

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2. Bill Introduction

A member of the Virginia House or Senate introduces the bill, becoming its patron or sponsor. The bill is then assigned a number.

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3. Committee Review

The bill is referred to a committee, where members hear testimony, consider amendments, and vote.



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4. Debate & Vote

If the bill advances from committee, it goes to the full chamber of origin (House or Senate Floor) for debate, possible amendments, and a vote.

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5. Second Chamber Review

If passed, the bill moves to the other chamber for the same committee and floor process.

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6. Both Chambers Agree

The House and Senate must pass the same version of the bill before it can move forward. If the bills are different they go into something called a conference committee



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7. Governor Signs

Once both chamber agree, the bill is sent to the Governor, who may sign it, veto it, recommend amendments, or take no action.

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8. Law

If approved, the bill becomes law and usually takes effect on July 1 unless another date is specified.



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SETTING THE VIRGINIA BUDGET

Understanding Virginia's Budget Process

VA's Biennial Budget Cycle

Virginia operates on a two-year (biennial) budget cycle.

On even years, a new two-year budget is enacted.

On off years, amendments are made to the existing budget

2. Governor Proposes

The Governor reviews agency needs and develops a proposed state budget reflecting the administration's priorities.

4. Governor Reviews

The Governor can sign, veto, or recommend changes to the budget passed by the General Assembly.

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1. Agencies Prepare

State agencies assess their needs and priorities and submit budget requests to the Department of Planning and Budget.

3. General Assembly Acts

The House and Senate review, amend, and vote on the proposed budget before resolving differences and approving a final version.

5. Budget Takes Effect

Once enacted, the budget directs state funding for agencies, programs, and services across Virginia.



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