

HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW

Each bill passed by the General Assembly and signed by the governor goes through a detailed process to become law. Hundreds of bills are filed each session; however few bills actually make it through the entire legislative process to become law. Many times, bills not making it all the way to the governor's desk may be revisited in the next legislative session.

The journey a bill takes to become law follows a time-honored process that creates the rules we live by; rules designed to benefit citizens across the state of Missouri. Follow the bill below on its journey from introduction to receiving the governor's signature. To see major session dates, click on: <http://www.senate.mo.gov/schedule-2011.htm>



A bill is introduced in the Senate or in the House of Representatives. No law is passed except by bill. Bills may originate in either house and are designated as Senate Bills or House Bills, depending on the house in which they originate.



After the bill is read for the second time, it is referred to a committee for evaluation. Often, public hearings are held about the bill.



The committee can approve the bill as it is, make changes to the measure, offer a substitute to the bill, or reject the legislation. If the bill is approved, it is placed on the calendar so senators and representatives can debate the bill in their designated chamber.



After approval in one body (House or Senate) of the Legislature, the bill goes to the other chamber and repeats the same process.



If amendments (changes or additions to the bill) are made in either the Senate or the House of Representatives, these changes must be approved by the other legislative body.



When the bill is accepted and signed by both the leaders in the Senate and House of Representatives, it is sent to the governor to become law. The governor can sign the bill, veto the legislation, or take no action at all — in which case the bill would become law without the governor's signature.

For more detailed information about bills becoming law, please visit:
<http://www.mo.gov/my-government/learn-about-missouris-government/>