

The Florida Legislature - FAQs

1. When does the regular legislative session begin and end?

Normally, the regular legislative session starts on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March for a period not to exceed 60 calendar days. To provide time for enactment and judicial review of redistricting plans before elections in 2022, the regular legislative session that year starts in January.

2. How often do the houses elect officers?

In November of each even-numbered year, the legislature convenes for the sole purpose of organizing each house. At this organization session, held fourteen days after the general election, members are sworn in, officers are elected, rules are adopted, and the committee appointment process is begun.

3. What are the different types and versions of bills?

Different types of bills include: Appropriations, Claim, General, Local, Memorial, Resolution, Reviser, and Trust Fund. Different versions of bills include: Committee Substitute, Engrossed, Enrolled, Proposed Committee Bill, and Proposed Committee Substitute. For more information see the [Glossary of Legislative Terms](#).

4. How can I tell the difference between a House and a Senate bill?

House and Senate bills are numbered in serial order as they are filed. House bills receive odd numbers (1, 3, 5, ...) and are prefixed by "H" or "HB"; Senate bills receive even numbers (2, 4, 6, ...) and are prefixed by "S" or "SB."

5. What does the C1, C2, C3, etc., mean on the end of a bill number in bill history?

"C1" denotes a committee substitute, which is a substitute bill proposed by committee for a bill considered and amended by that committee. Each committee to which a bill is referred may adopt a committee substitute for that bill. If the previous committee of reference adopted a committee substitute for the bill, the next committee may adopt a committee substitute for that committee substitute. Occasionally, there will be a committee substitute for a committee substitute for a committee substitute for a bill (C4). A committee substitute may also combine multiple Senate bills.

6. What is the difference between an engrossed bill and an enrolled bill?

An engrossed bill is a bill which has been amended. A bill may be engrossed many times. An enrolled bill, which may or may not have been engrossed, is a bill that has passed both houses of the legislature in identical form and has been converted into an act for presentation to the Governor or Secretary of State.

7. What is a linked bill?

A bill that is contingent upon passage of another bill within that chamber is a linked bill. A trust fund bill, a bill providing a public records exemption, or an implementing bill may be a linked bill.

8. What are the meanings of "identical," "similar," and "compare" as they relate to the companion checking of bills?

A companion is a bill introduced in one house that is identical or similar to a bill introduced in the other house. Use of companion bills permits their concurrent analysis and deliberation by both houses. Companion bills which are identical word-for-word, including titles, are marked "identical" in bill history. However, Resolutions and Concurrent Resolutions are considered identical when the only difference is the word "House" or "Senate." Companion bills are marked "similar" in bill history if they are substantially similar in text or have substantial portions of text that are identical or largely the same. If one word is different, the bills are "similar." Companion bills with selected provisions that are similar in text are marked "compare" in bill history.

9. What does the bill action "in messages" mean?

"In messages" refers to the location of a bill passed by a chamber en route to or residing in the other chamber for consideration.

10. How often is bill information updated on Flsenate.gov?

Bill information is continually updated on flsenate.gov.

11. How do I track a bill?

Flsenate.gov makes it easy to track a bill as it progresses through the legislative process. Every filed bill has a web page that offers current information about the bill and provides links to official documents associated with the bill. With a Senate Tracker account you can track items throughout the website, view the latest updates on the Tracker tab, and receive email notifications when those items are updated. For more information, go to the [Tracker Help page](#).

12. How do I find all bills sponsored or co-sponsored by a Senator?

There are two ways to find the bills sponsored by a particular Senator:

- Go to the [Bill list page](#) and select the Senator's name from the "Filed By" dropdown.
- Go to the Senator list and click on the Senator's name to bring up the Senator's page. Click on the Sponsored Bills tab to display a list of bills for which the senator is a prime or co-sponsor.
- Go to the [Cimator Sponsor Report](#). The report lists all bills for which the senator is recorded as being a prime sponsor or co-sponsor.

13. How can I identify my Senator or Representative?

Flsenate.gov has a page to help you [find your legislator](#).

14. How can I contact my state Senator?

The address, phone number, and email for each Senator's district and Tallahassee offices are listed on a senator's page. Go to the [Senate member](#) page on Flsenate.gov to begin your search.

15. How do I find how a legislator voted on a bill?

Floor votes for a particular bill are available as part of a bill information page on flsenate.gov. Be advised that the information presented is provisional. For an official copy of a legislator's vote on a bill, consult the [Senate or House Journal](#). For more information, call the Secretary of the Senate at (850) 487-5270 or the Clerk of the House at (850) 488-1157.

16. How can I search for a bill on Flsenate.gov?

- If you know the number of the bill you seek, simply type it in the "Go to Bill" box at the top of your screen and click the "go" button.
- Go to the [Bill List page](#) and enter any information you know about the bill. There are many search filters to help you find the bill by type, sponsor, filed date, effective date, etc.
- To search the current Flsenate.gov and the archive site, simply type your query in the search box at the top of your screen. For information on refining your search, go to [Search Tips](#).

17. Where can I find amendments that are taken up?

- If you know the number of the bill being amended, simply type it in the "Go to Bill" box at the top of your screen and click the "Go" button. The bill page contains a list of all amendments with links to the amendment text.
- To search amendment text, go to the [Bill List page](#) and enter a word or phrase that would be contained in the amendment. After selecting the Current Bill Version or All Bill Versions, be sure to select "Include Amendments".
- To search the current site and the archive site to find the amendment you seek, simply type your query in the search box at the top of your screen. For information on refining your search, go to [Search Tips](#).

18. What does the underlining and overstriking in bill and amendment text mean?

Required by the rules of both houses of the legislature, underlining and overstriking indicate changes being made to the text of existing law or an existing constitutional provision. Underlined text is new language; and overstriking indicates text being removed from existing law.

19. What is the deadline for the Governor to sign a bill?

While the legislature is in session, the constitution allows a 7-day period following presentation of a bill to the Governor within which to sign or veto the bill. If the legislature adjourns sine die before an act is presented to the Governor or while an act is in the Governor's possession, the Governor has 15 days from the date of presentation in which to take action. For more information, go to [Article III, section 8 of the Florida Constitution](#).

20. What happens when the Governor vetoes a bill?

By vetoing a bill, the Governor prevents it from becoming a law and sends it back to its house of origin. It is available for consideration until the end of the current session or, if the legislature is not in session when the bill is received, until the end of the next regular session. If two-thirds of the members of each house vote to override (set aside) the Governor's veto, the bill becomes a law.