

Arizona State Legislative Process

Maricopa County Government Relations

Arizona State Legislature

- Arizona is divided into 30 legislative districts, each with 2 representatives and 1 senator.
- Legislators must run for election every two years, and are subject to 8 year term limits.
- The legislative session begins the second Monday in January of each year and is set to go 100 days, although it is typically extended for longer than 100 days.

How is a Bill Created?

- Ideas for bills can come from many places including: government agencies, local governments, the public, businesses, or interest groups.
- Legislators meet with stakeholders to discuss ideas and find consensus on what is the appropriate legislative fix.
- The Legislative Council will then draft language for the piece of legislation.
- A legislator can then submit the legislation (commonly referred to as “dropping it in the hopper”).

First Read, Second Read & Assignment

- The bill is “dropped” and will be first and second read on the House or Senate Floor and is assigned to committee(s).
- If the committee chairmen so choose, they place the bill on an agenda for a hearing.
- During committee the bill is open to amendments.

Rules Committee & Caucus

- Once the bill is passed out of the assigned committee(s), it must also pass through the Rules Committee to ensure the proposal meets constitutional requirements.
- The bill is then heard in party caucuses, no vote is held in a caucus, it is simply the opportunity to inform the party on the bills.

Committee of the Whole

- If the bill was amended in a committee it must go to the Committee of the Whole (COW).
- In COW the whole chamber has the opportunity to discuss and adopt the bill amendments.
- Substitute amendments can also be offered during COW.

Third Read & Roll Call Vote

- If a bill was not amended in committee(s) or has passed through COW, it is placed on a Third Read calendar.
- Third Read is a vote by the entire body on the bill.
- Each bill normally needs a simple majority vote to pass it out of the body (16 votes in the Senate, 31 in the House).

Third Read & Roll Call Vote

- There are two scenarios in which a 2/3 vote (20 in the senate, 40 in the house) is required:
 - A bill that contain a Prop. 108 clause, meaning it would bring additional revenue to the state.
 - A bill that have an emergency clause, meaning it will be effective immediately once signed by the Governor.
- A bill that contains a Prop. 105 clause, meaning it would amend a voter-approved initiative or referendum, requires a 3/4 vote.

Referral to Opposite Chamber & Repeat Process

- Once a bill passes out of the originating chamber on Third Read, it is then referred to the other chamber.
- That chamber will then start the process all over again.
 - For example: Once HB 2000 is passed out of the house on third read, it is sent to the senate where it will be first read, second read, and assigned to committee(s), receive a hearing in assigned committee(s), rules committee, caucus, be placed on either a COW or consent calendar, and finally third read and roll call vote.

Conference Committee (if needed)

If the bill is amended in the second body two things can happen.

1. The bill Sponsor agrees to the amendments and accepts them as part of the bill.
 - Then the originating body must Final Read the bill with the new language.
2. If the Sponsor does not agree to the changes made in the second body, they can request a Conference Committee to try and compromise on final language.
 - After a successful Conference Committee, the bill goes to Final Read in both bodies.

Governor's Signature

- The final step of the legislative process is for the Governor to sign (or in some cases veto) the bill.
- If the bill passes through the second body unamended, it can be sent directly to the Governor for review and possible signature.
- If the bill passes through the second body with amendments, it must be final read in both chambers before being sent to the Governor for review and possible signature.



Strike Everything Amendments

- A striker amendment proposes to delete the entire text of the existing bill and substitute new language, essentially making it a completely different bill, possibly on an entirely different subject.
- These amendments are sometimes used to allow legislators to circumvent the deadlines on introduction of new legislation, deal with an issue that arises after the deadline, or revive a bill that has previously been defeated.

If You Ever Have Questions

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