



State of Florida Legislative Process

*Ms. Iraida R. Mendez-Cartaya
Assistant Superintendent*

*Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Grants Administration,
and Community Engagement*

The Florida Legislature



Florida's Legislature is a bicameral body composed of 160 members.



Florida Legislature

Florida House of Representatives

– 120 Members

- **Serve 2-year terms.**
- **Each House member is given six bill slots.**
- **Current composition of the House is 81 Republicans and 39 Democrats.**

Florida Legislature

The Florida Senate

– 40 Members

- **Serve 4-year terms.**
- **No limit on number of bills that can be filed.**
- **Current composition of the Senate is 28 Republicans and 12 Democrats.**

Legislature Leadership- Florida House of Representatives



Dean Cannon
Speaker



John Legg
Speaker pro tempore



Carlos Lopez-Cantera
Majority Leader



Ron Saunders
Democratic Leader



Joe Gibbons
Democratic Leader pro tempore

Legislature Leadership- Florida Senate



Mike Haridopolos
President



Mike Bennett
President Pro
Tempore



Andy Gardiner
Majority
Republican
Leader



Nan H. Rich
Minority (Democratic)
Leader



Arthenia L. Joyner
Minority
(Democratic)
Leader
Pro Tempore


THE ROLE OF THE LEGISLATURE

- **Makes “rules” or laws that govern our state.**
- **Represent the citizens from the area where they were elected. These areas are called districts.**
- **Must live in the district that he or she represents.**
- **Responsible for ensuring that the people who elected him or her have a voice in all matters concerning the state.**
- **Must pass an annual budget for the state.**

RULES OF THE LEGISLATURE



Each Chamber has rules by which they must operate, but by a 2/3 vote rules may be waived.



Florida's Legislative Timeline

- Typically, session begins the 1st Tuesday in March and runs for 60 consecutive calendar days.
- Interim committee meetings begin in November through February of the following year.
- Every ten years due to the U.S. Census the population is enumerated and the results require federal, state and local governments to redraw electoral district boundaries in response to population changes.
- The 2012 session is a redistricting year and interim committee meetings begin early.

2012 Legislative Session

Interim Committee Meetings

- **September 2011 - *Week of the 19th***
- **October 2011 - *Week of the 3rd***
- **October 2011 - *Week of the 17th***
- **October 2011 - *Week of the 31st***
- **November 2011 - *Week of the 14th***
- **December 2011 - *Week of the 5th***

2012 Legislative Session

Key Dates

- January 10, 2012: Regular Session convenes (Article III, Section 3(b), Constitution)
- January 10, 2012: 12:00 noon, deadline for filing bills for introduction (Rule 3.7(1))
- February 28, 2012: 50th day-last day for regularly scheduled committee meetings (Rule 4.5 (1))
- March 9, 2012: 60th day-last day of Regular Session (Article III, section 3(d), Constitution)

Legislative Committees

The number of committees and members change every biennial in the House and every two years in the Senate. The committee's name usually describes its policy jurisdiction. The name and number are part of the rules the House and Senate adopt during organization session.

- **Four types of Committees:**
 - **Standing Committees**
 - **Select Committees**
 - **Conference Committees**
 - **Joint Committees**

Introduction of Legislation

- **Senate Bills are designated “SB” and are even numbered.**
- **House bills are designated “HB” and are odd numbered.**
- **All bills contain: a title; an enacting clause; and an effective date.**

Introduction of Legislation

- **A Senator, Representative, citizen or group may have an idea for a new piece of legislation.**
- **Bills are filed in both chambers for introduction.**
- **Bills are assigned/referred to committees for discussion.**

Committee Process

- **Bills are heard at committees of reference.**
- **The Committee's role is to:**
 - **Analyze legislative bills;**
 - **Conduct hearings to obtain information about the subject that the bill addresses; and**
 - **Vote on legislative bills as presented at the committees of reference.**

Committee Process

- After bills are heard at all committees of reference, they are heard for final passage by the full body where the bill originated.
- Upon passage by the originating chamber, bills are transmitted to the other chamber to be heard with the respective chamber's companion bill.

Final Passage of Legislation

- Bills filed in one chamber must have a “companion bill” filed in the other chamber. These companion bills are either identical, similar, or comparable to one another. Bills must be identical for final passage.
- Bills must be “read” three times in the chamber before being voted upon by the full chamber.

Final Passage of Legislation

- **If a bill is amended it must return to the chamber of origin for approval, amendments require approval by both chambers of the Legislature.**
- **Approved bills are then sent to the Governor for final action.**

Final Passage of Legislation - Governor's Role

- If a bill is received during the Legislative Session, the Governor has (7) days to act.
- If received after the conclusion of Session, the Governor has (15) days to act.
- The Governor can:
 - Veto a bill
 - Sign a bill
 - Take no action
- After the bill is approved, it is codified into the Florida Statutes and becomes law.

Questions?

