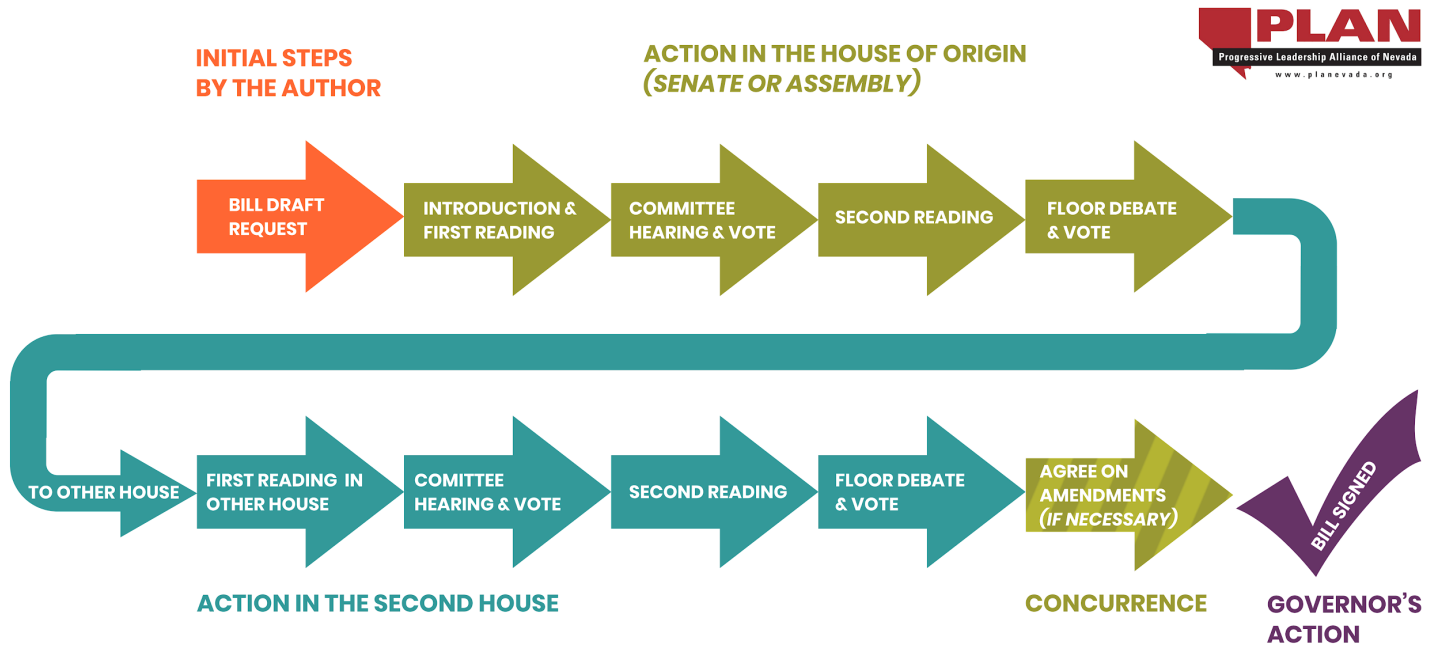


HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW

Adapted from [2019 Nevada Legislative Manual: Appendix C—Nevada's Legislative Process](#)



DEADLINES

- **April 9:** Unless given an exemption, a bill must pass out of committee in the house of origin on or before this date. If not, no further action on the bill is allowed.
- **April 20:** Unless given an exemption, a bill must pass the house of origin on or before this date. If not, no further action is allowed.
- **May 14:** Unless given an exemption, a bill must pass out of committee in the second house on or before this date. If not, no further action on the bill is allowed.
- **May 21:** Unless given an exemption, a bill must pass the second house on or before this date. If not, no further action is allowed.

INITIAL STEPS BY THE AUTHOR

- **Bill Draft Request:** A bill draft request (BDR) is submitted on a specific topic to the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) (the staff attorneys at the legislature) who then prepares a formal draft of a bill. Requests for drafting may be made by legislators, legislative committees, the Governor, state agencies, and local governments.

ACTIONS IN THE HOUSE OF ORIGIN

- **Introduction and First Reading:** A bill is submitted for introduction by an individual legislator or committee chair. It is then numbered, read for the first time, referred to a committee based on the topic, printed, and delivered to the committee.

- **Committee Hearing and Vote:** The committee schedules a hearing where the bill is presented by its sponsor, and people can testify in support, opposition, and neutral on the bill. The committee can decide to pass a bill as is, make amendments to change the bill, or can choose to not take any additional action. When the committee votes on a bill in a work session they are voting to make a recommendation to the larger body, a vote in favor is often considered a vote to recommend the bill "Do Pass."
- **Second Reading:** Bills given a "Do Pass" recommendation are read a second time and placed on General File for debate and final vote. Bills that are given an "Amend and Do Pass" recommendation are read a second time, and if the amendment is adopted, it is reprinted before being placed on the General File for action.
- **Floor Debate and Vote:** Bills are read a third time and debated. A roll call vote follows. For passage of measures that require a constitutional majority, 11 votes are needed in the Senate and 22 in the Assembly. Bills with tax or fee increases require a two-thirds majority (14 votes in the Senate and 28 in the Assembly).

ACTION IN THE SECOND HOUSE

- **First Reading:** All bills that are passed by the first legislative house are then forwarded to the second legislative house where the process begins again. The bill is read for the first time and referred to a committee.
- **Committee Hearing and Vote:** The committee schedules a hearing where the bill is presented by its sponsor, and people can testify in support, opposition, and neutral on the bill. The committee can decide to pass a bill as is, make amendments to change the bill, or can choose to not take any additional action. When the committee votes on a bill in a work session they are voting to make a recommendation to the larger body, a vote in favor is often considered a vote to recommend the bill "Do Pass."
- **Second Reading:** Bills given a "Do Pass" recommendation are read a second time and placed on General File for debate and final vote. Bills that are given an "Amend and Do Pass" recommendation are read a second time, and if the amendment is adopted, it is reprinted before being placed on the General File for action.
- **Floor Debate and Vote:** Bills are read a third time and debated. A roll call vote follows. For passage of measures that require a constitutional majority, 11 votes are needed in the Senate and 22 in the Assembly. Bills with tax or fee increases require a two-thirds majority (14 votes in the Senate and 28 in the Assembly).
- **If Need to Agree on Amendments:** *If the second legislative house changes the bill, the first house must either concur with the changes before it goes to the Governor. If they do not concur a conference committee can be set up for both chambers to reconcile the changes which is then brought back for an additional vote.*

- **Action by the Governor:** The Governor has the option to sign, veto, or do nothing on a bill. The governor must act on a bill within five days after it is received (Sundays excepted) if the legislature is still in session. However, if there are fewer than five days remaining in session, or if the bill is delivered after the adjournment sine die, the governor has ten days after adjournment (Sundays excepted) to act. The governor may sign the bill into law, allow it to become law without a signature, or veto it. A vetoed bill is returned to the house of origin to consider overriding the veto. An override of the veto requires a two-thirds majority vote of each legislative house. If the governor vetoes a bill after the session adjourns sine die, the bill is returned to the next regular legislative session.

KEY TERMS

- LCB - Legislative Counsel Bureau: These are the lawyers at the legislature who draft bills and do research for legislators.
- BDR - Bill Draft Request: This is when an elected official submits a request to the Legislative Counsel bureau to write a bill on a specific idea.
- AB - Assembly Bill / SB - Senate Bill: A legislative policy change that needs to pass both houses and be signed into law by the Governor.
- ACR - Assembly Concurrent Resolution / SCR - Senate Concurrent Resolution: Used to deal with issues of both chambers or create interim committees, needs pass both chambers, but doesn't need signature of Governor, isn't "law"
- AJR - Assembly Joint Resolution / SJR - Senate Joint Resolution: Constitutional changes that need to pass both chambers, and then go to the ballot or a statement of the legislature urging another body to take action.
- General File: The part of the meeting agenda where bills on their third reading are listed.
- "Floor": The session when the entire house comes together to debate bills for passage.

More key terms can be found in the [2019 Nevada Legislative Manual: Appendix F—Legislative Terminology](#)