

How Legislation Works

- 1 Identify a need for change:** Legislator sees need for a new law or changes in existing law and decides to introduce a bill.
- 2 Office of Legislative Council Legislator:** There, attorney advises legislator on legal issues and drafts bill.
- 3 Legislator Files Bill:** Legislator files bill with the Clerk of the House or Secretary of the Senate.
- 4 Bill is formally introduced, 1st reading:** On legislative day after filing, bill is formally introduced. In chamber, bill's title is read during period of 1st readings.
- 5 Bill is assigned to committee:** Immediately after 1st reading, presiding officer assigns bill to a standing committee.
- 6 Second reading (In House only):** In the House only, on next legislative day, Clerk reads bill's title (2nd reading) in chamber, although actual bill is now in committee. In Senate, 2nd reading comes after bill is reported favorably from committee.
- 7 Bill considered in Committee, testimony heard:** Bill considered by committee. Author and other legislators may testify. If controversial, public hearings may be held.
- 8 Bill reported favorably by committee:** Bill is reported favorably by committee and returned to Clerk or Secretary.
- 9 Calendar of Bills developed:** Clerk or Secretary prepares a General Calendar of bills favorably reported from committee. For first 10 days of session, presiding officer calls up bills from this calendar for floor action



- 10** **Rules Committee:** Starting with 10th day of session, the Rules Committee meets and from bills on General Calendar prepares a Rules Calendar for the next day's floor consideration.
- 11** **Rules Calendar.** For the last 30 days of session, presiding officer calls up bills from the Rules Calendar for floor consideration.
- 12** **Bill ready for the floor vote.** Once presiding officer calls bill up from Rules Calendar, Clerk reads bill's title (3d reading). Bill is now ready for floor debate, amendments, and voting.
- 13** **Bill voted on.** After debate, main question is called and members vote. If bill is approved by majority of total membership of that house, it is sent to the other house.
- 14** **The other chamber.** If second house passes bill, it is returned to house where bill was introduced. If changes are accepted. If first house rejects changes and second house insists, a conference committee may be appointed. If committee report is accepted by both houses...
- 15** **Sent to the governor.** Bill is enrolled and sent to the Governor (if requested). Otherwise, all enrolled bills sent to Governor following adjournment sine die.
- 16** **Governor Acts.** Governor may sign bill or do nothing, and bill becomes law. Governor may veto bill, which requires two-thirds of members of each house to override.
- 17** **Act becomes effective:** Act and other laws enacted at the session are printed in the Georgia Laws series. Also, act is incorporated into the Official Code of Georgia Annotated. Act becomes effective the following July 1, unless a different effective date is provided in act.

To follow along with MHAG's Legislative Tracking and get updates for the upcoming 2022 session, sign up for our Champions of Mental Health Newsletter.