



WASHINGTON STATE YOUTH & GOVERNMENT

BILL DRAFTING GUIDE

How a Bill Becomes a Law

1. **Introduction:** A bill may be introduced in either the Senate or House of Representatives by a member.
2. **Committee Hearing:** It is referred to a committee for a hearing. The committee studies the bill and may hold public hearings on it. It can then pass, reject or take no action on the bill.
3. **First Reading:** The committee report on the passed bill is read in open session of the House or Senate, and the bill is then referred to the Rules Committee.
4. **Rules Committee:** The Rules Committee can either place the bill on the second reading of the calendar for debate before the entire body, or take no action.
5. **Second Reading:** At the second reading, a bill is subject to debate and amendment before being placed on the third reading calendar for final passage.
6. **Opposite Chamber:** After passing one house, the bill goes through the same procedure in the other house. If amendments are made, the other house must approve the changes.
7. **Official Signatures:** When the bill is accepted in both houses, it is signed by the respective leaders and sent to the governor.
8. **The Governor:** The governor signs the bill into law or may veto all or part of it. If the governor fails to act on the bill, it may become law without a signature.