

Washington State Legislative General Information and Process

Introduction – The Washington State legislature The Washington State Legislature is made up of two houses (or chambers), the **Senate** and the **House of Representatives**. Washington has 49 **legislative districts**, each of which elects a Senator and two Representatives. Senators serve four-year terms and Representatives serve two-year terms. The Senate and House of Representatives meet in session each year to create new laws, change existing laws, and enact budgets for the State.

The legislative cycle is two years long. Within that two-year cycle, there are two kinds of legislative sessions: regular sessions and extraordinary, or special, sessions. Regular sessions are mandated by the State Constitution and begin the second Monday in January each year. In the odd-numbered year, for example, 2005, the regular session is 105 days; in the even-numbered year, for example, 2006, it is 60 days. (from: <https://leg.wa.gov/legislature/Pages/Overview.aspx>)

General Information:

- Washington State Legislature website – <https://leg.wa.gov/>
- Washington State Elected Officials – <https://leg.wa.gov/legislature/Pages/ElectedOfficials.aspx>
- How to find your Representative and Senator – <https://app.leg.wa.gov/districtfinder/>
- A Citizen’s Guide to Effective Legislative Participation – <https://leg.wa.gov/legislature/Pages/EffectiveParticipation.aspx>
- House of Representatives (includes directory) – <https://leg.wa.gov/House/Pages/default.aspx>
- Senate (includes directory) – <https://leg.wa.gov/Senate/Pages/default.aspx>
- Coming to the Legislature (visitor guide) – <https://leg.wa.gov/legislature/Pages/ComingToTheLegislature.aspx>
- Glossary of Legislative Terms – <https://app.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/glossary.aspx>

Legislative Process:

- Overview of the legislative process – <https://leg.wa.gov/legislature/Pages/Overview.aspx>
- How a Bill becomes a law – <https://leg.wa.gov/legislature/Pages/Bill2Law.aspx>
- How to read a Bill – <https://leg.wa.gov/LIC/Documents/EducationAndInformation/Guide%20to%20Reading%20a%20Bill.pdf>
- Bill tracking – <https://app.leg.wa.gov/DLR/user/login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fDLR%2fbilltracking>

Other Important Links:

- Washington State Office of Financial Management – <https://ofm.wa.gov/>
- Washington State Government Agencies Index – <https://access.wa.gov/agency.html>
- Quaker Voice on Washington Public Policy (QV) – quakervoicewa.org
- Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) – <https://www.fcnl.org/>