



---

## Fact Sheet No. 4 HOW LAWS ARE MADE

---

### **LAWS, BILLS, ACTS AND STATUTES**

In order for the Legislative Assembly to enact a law, a Bill must be prepared. Bills are proposed laws. If passed by the Assembly and given Royal Assent, they become part of the law of the Province. Once part of provincial law, Bills are known as Acts or Statutes.

Government Bills can be **Specified** (meaning completion must be done by the time of the House rising in June) or **Designated** (completion by the end of the Fall sittings). To be Specified, a Bill must have First Reading moved within 20 sitting days after presentation of the Throne Speech, with Second Reading to be moved within an additional 14 sitting days after the First Reading deadline. If these criteria are satisfied, the Bills can proceed as Specified, provided they are not designated by the Opposition.

Each session the Opposition can indicate that up to five Government Bills are Designated, meaning that these Bills are to be held over to the Fall sittings for completion.

If a Bill falls into neither category, progress on the Bill must be negotiated between Government and Opposition.

#### **1. NOTICE**

Notice of a Bill's intended introduction must appear in the Notice Paper one day prior to the introduction day.

#### **2. INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING**

The Sponsor of a Bill (an MLA) moves that a Bill be read a first time and introduced in the House. The motion is not debatable, but the MLA may offer a brief explanation of the Bill's purpose.

#### **3. SECOND READING**

During this stage, the Bill is debated and either accepted or rejected. This is the most important stage, since adoption of a second reading motion means the Legislative Assembly approves the principle of the Bill. After the sponsor speaks, a question period is held on the bill. During Second Reading, motions can be moved to present a reasoned amendment or a six months hoist motion.

#### **4. COMMITTEE STAGE**

After a Bill has passed Second Reading it is referred to a Standing, or Special Committee (comprised of Members selected from both sides of the House) or to a Committee of the Whole House (comprised of all Members.) Usually after consultation with Opposition House Leaders, the Government House Leader decides which Committee will examine a Bill.

Since the public has the opportunity to have direct input into the law making process, the committee stage is important. Members of the public may present oral and written submissions concerning proposed Bills. There is a 10 minute time limit and then a 5 minute question period. Questions are asked of presenters in a rotation, and there is a 30 second time limit for questions. After the public has been heard from, the sponsor of the Bill and the Opposition Critics may make opening

statements. The Committee then proceeds to a clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill. At this time, amendments may be proposed and considered.

Persons wishing to make an oral presentation can register through the Clerk's Office at 945-3636. (Please see Fact Sheet No. 5 for details on Committee registration and presentations.)

## **5. REPORT STAGE**

At this stage, the House considers a Bill that has been considered by a committee, and reported - with or without amendments - to the House. At this time, Members may propose further amendments to specific Bill clauses. The sponsor moves concurrence and third reading after any amendments have been disposed of.

## **6. CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READING**

The sponsor of the Bill moves that the Bill "be now concurred in and read a third time and passed." At this point, the Bill is debatable and amendments may be proposed to apply a 6-month hoist, present a reasoned amendment, or refer the Bill back to Committee. At this stage, debates are usually brief, in part since most Concurrence and Third Reading motions are moved in the final days of session. Adoption of a Concurrence and Third Reading motion signals passage of a Bill.

## **7. ROYAL ASSENT**

To become law, a Bill that passes all stages in the House must receive Royal Assent from the Lieutenant Governor. In the Lieutenant Governor's absence, the Administrator of the Province (The Chief Justice of the Court of Appeal, or another Judge of that Court) performs this task.

### **Where is the Ceremony performed?**

This ceremony is brief, and takes place in the Assembly Chamber.

### **What happens during this ceremony?**

The Speaker reads the address to the Lieutenant Governor and a Table Officer reads the titles of the Bills in English and French. The Clerk then announces that the Lieutenant Governor has granted Royal Assent.

### **Is the Bill effective immediately?**

Although a Bill receives Royal Assent, it does not mean that it comes into effect immediately. It may come into effect on the date of Royal Assent, 60 days after the ceremony, on a specific date named in the Bill, or on a date to be set by order of the Lieutenant Governor in Council as set out in the coming into force provision of the Bill.

### **How many times a session does the Royal Assent ceremony occur?**

The ceremony may occur several times during a session, the last time being immediately before the end of session.

## **PRINTED COPIES OF BILLS**

Bills are available free of charge on the Legislative Assembly website at:  
<http://web2.gov.mb.ca/bills/40-5/index.php>.

Printed copies of Bills can also be purchased from [Statutory Publications](#). Please call ahead of time at 204-945-3103 or email [Kingsprinter@gov.mb.ca](mailto:Kingsprinter@gov.mb.ca) to arrange for printing of the required bill.