

UNDERSTANDING HOUSE AND SENATE CALENDARS

As bills are introduced and pass through the legislative process they are assigned to various “calendars”. Aside from the Cutoff Calendar and the various committee hearing calendars, these documents aren’t calendars in the familiar sense. They are generally lists of bills with brief descriptions that have been cleared through one of the legislative steps like bill introduction or coming out of committee. These “calendars” are issued as these events occur (usually daily) and may have different names in the House and the Senate.

The Cutoff Calendar

At the beginning of each session, the House and the Senate jointly agree on a timetable for considering bills. Bills that haven’t moved forward through the various steps by the dates listed on the cutoff calendar will most likely receive no further consideration. Typical cutoff dates are last day to be voted out of committee, the last day to consider bills in the house of origin, the last day for bills from the opposite house to be voted out of committee, and the last day for bills from the opposite house to be considered on the floor. (Available on-line)

The Introduction Calendars

The House and the Senate both have an Introduction Calendar (the Senate’s is sometimes call the Short Titles). The respective Introduction Calendars list all the bills introduced for the day on the floor of the House or Senate and provide a short description of each. (Available on-line)

The Standing Committee Reports

The House and Senate both produce a Standing Committee Report which lists all the bills that have been passed out of committees for the day. The report lists the bill number, a brief description, the committee and its recommendation and the place to which the bill was referred next (usually the Rules Committee). (Available on-line)

The Rules Review Calendar (House) or Rules White Calendar (Senate)

Bills generally go through a two-step review process in the rules committee where members can select a limited number of bills on the calendar to receive further consideration. These calendars list the bills which are in the initial review stage in the rules committee. (Available on-line-“Text of a Legislative Document”)

The Rules Consideration Calendar (House) or Rules Green Calendar (Senate)

These calendars list the bills which have been selected from the Review or White calendars in the calendar above and are eligible to be pulled from this calendar to the floor of the House or Senate. (Available on-line-“Text of a Legislative Document”)

The Rules Flash Calendar (Senate Only)

This calendar lists the bills that have been pulled from the Green or White Calendars at the most recent Senate Rules meeting and sent to the floor. The House produces no comparable calendar. (Available on-line-“Text of a Legislative Document”)

The X-Files Calendars

The House and Senate both produce an X-Files calendar. This is a list of bills which the Rules Committee members agree will not be sent to the floor of the House or the Senate for further consideration.

The Suspension Calendar (House) and Consent Calendar (Senate)

These calendars are published after a Rules Committee meeting and contain a list of non-controversial bills all the rules members agree can be sent to the floor without the usual two-step process. These calendars have been used rarely in the past few years.

The 2nd and 3rd Reading Calendar (Senate) and the Green Book (House)

This is a list and description of all bills currently under consideration on the floor of the House or Senate. (Available on-line as part of the House and Senate Floor Activities Reports)

The Concurrence Calendar

This is a list of bills from the opposite house which have been amended and are seeking concurrence (agreement on the amendments by the house of origin). (Available on-line as part of the House and Senate Floor Activities Reports)

The Dispute Calendar

This is a list of bills with amendments that have come back from the opposite house without concurrence (the opposite house didn't agree with the amendments and asks the house making the amendments to just pass the original version of the bill). (Available on-line as part of the House and Senate Floor Activities Reports).

The Conference Calendar

This is a list of bills in dispute which have been referred to the Conference Committee. (Available on-line as part of the House and Senate Floor Activities Reports).

The Confirmation Calendar (Senate Only)

This is a list of Gubernatorial appointments that are currently on the floor of the Senate awaiting confirmation.

All of these calendars are available in paper form in the Legislative Information Center as they are published, and most are available electronically on the Legislative Website (www.leg.wa.gov).