



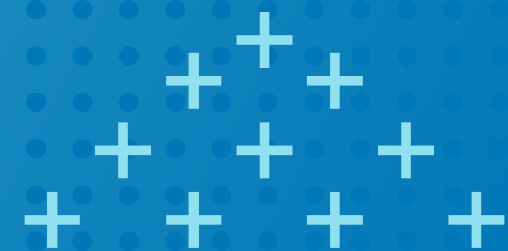
MASSACHUSETTS LEGISLATIVE

TIMELINE AND TOOLKIT

2023 – 2024



T4MA.org





MASSACHUSETTS LEGISLATIVE TIMELINE AND TOOLKIT

PURPOSE

Welcome to the Transportation for Massachusetts (T4MA) Legislative Timeline and Toolkit.

This interactive calendar is of the 2-year legislative session and highlights important dates for the budget, legislative, and ballot initiative processes. In addition to the calendar there is a Glossary of commonly used terms throughout, an Appendix to further explain events on highlighted dates, and an advocacy Toolkit with suggested tactics on how to influence decision makers.

The calendar is meant to help identify when to best target and communicate with legislators before important decisions are made on the state level to influence legislation and policies. We hope that you will find this useful for your work in your community.

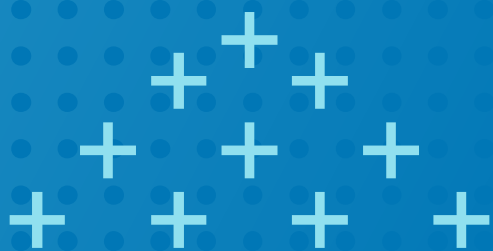


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HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

2023

JANUARY – FEBRUARY

MARCH – APRIL

MAY – JUNE

JULY – AUGUST

SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER

NOVEMBER – DECEMBER

2024

JANUARY – FEBRUARY

MARCH – APRIL

MAY – JUNE

JULY – AUGUST

SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER

NOVEMBER – DECEMBER

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MENU

Navigate to specific months at any time using the top menu buttons.

ACTION!

Ask your legislator

ACTION!

Clicking an underlined ACTION! will bring you to a helpful Toolkit page.

JANUARY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	<u>18</u>	19	<u>20</u>	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

WHAT'S GOING ON IN JANUARY:

<u>4</u>	Swearing in
<u>5</u>	Swearing in
<u>18</u>	Swearing in
<u>20</u>	Bill filing

02/
2023

ACTION!

Click on any underlined date or month in the calendar to find more info on the event in the Appendix.
The Appendix features all calendar information in a compact list format.

FEBRUARY

S	M	T	W
			1
5	6	7	8
12	13	14	15
19	20	21	22
26	27	28	

WHAT'S GOING ON IN FEBRUARY:

<u>Feb.</u>	Rulemaking and Joint Rules debate continue
<u>Feb.</u>	Committee assignments

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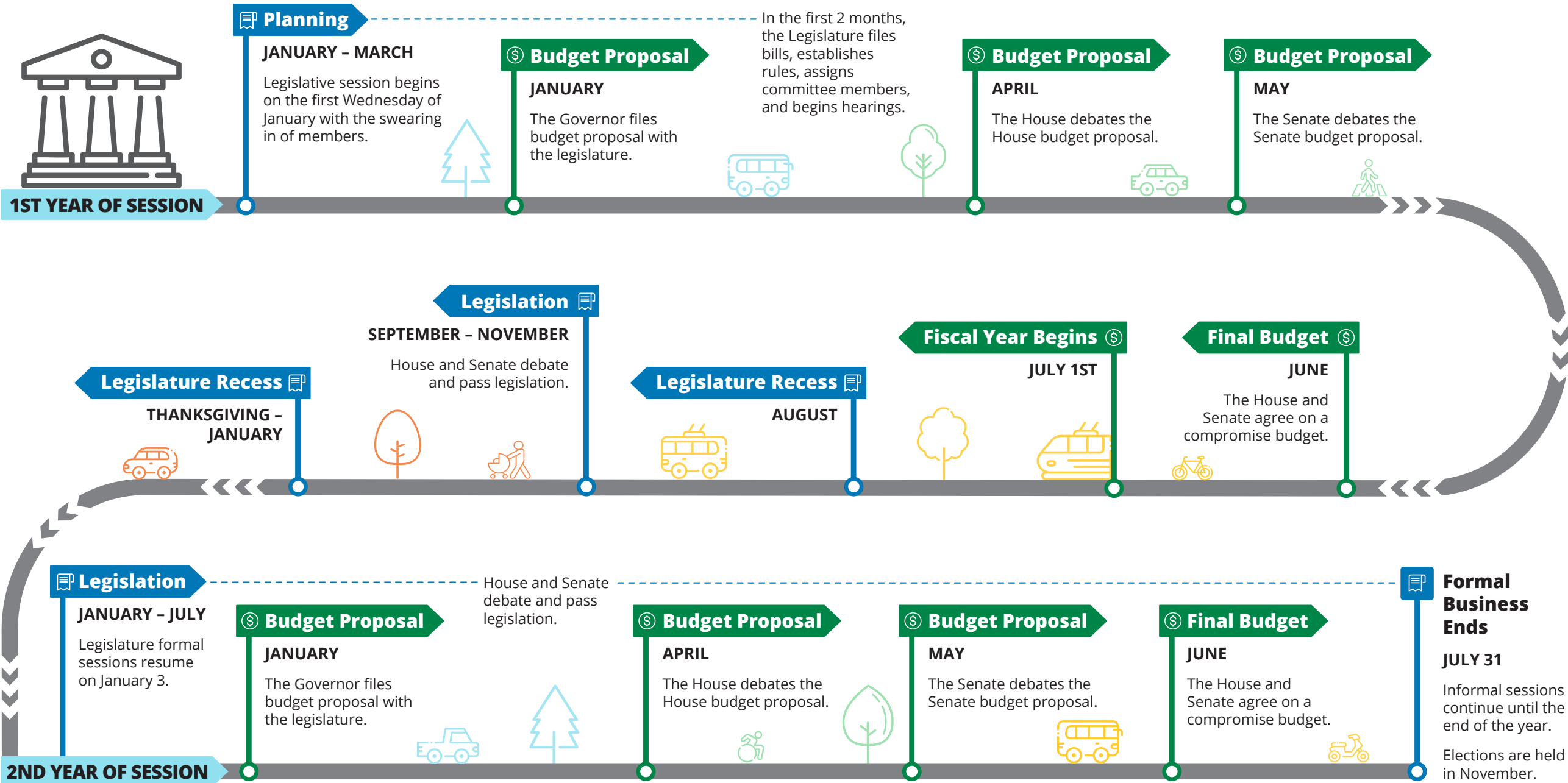
Click on any black underlined text to find the definition in the Glossary.

KEY: LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BALLOT INITIATIVE

T4MA.org | 4

MASSACHUSETTS LEGISLATIVE TIMELINE

The MA Legislative session lasts for 19 months. Follow the timeline below for an overview of session milestones.








MASSACHUSETTS
LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR

2023



01/
2023

JANUARY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				




WHAT'S GOING ON IN JANUARY:		
	4	Swearing in for members of the legislature
	5	Swearing in day for Governor and Lt. Governor
	18	Swearing in day for Constitutional Officers
	20	Bill filing deadline
	Late Jan.	Rulemaking and Joint Rules debate

ACTION!

Ask your legislator to file your priority bills before the filing deadline.

02/
2023

FEBRUARY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				


WHAT'S GOING ON IN FEBRUARY:		
	Feb.	Rulemaking and Joint Rules debate continue
	Feb.	Committee assignments
	Feb.	Bills are sent to committees

ACTION!

Meet with your community members to discuss strategy on campaign planning, goals, and tactics.

03/
2023

MARCH						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	





WHAT'S GOING ON IN MARCH:	
 March Committee hearings start	
 1 Governor files budget proposal	

ACTION!

Ask your community members to sign on or collaboratively draft & send letters of support for priorities to be included in budget proposal.

04/
2023

APRIL						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						





WHAT'S GOING ON IN APRIL:	
 April Committee hearings	
 10 House budget proposal released	
 14 House budget amendment deadline	
 24 House budget debate week	

ACTION!

Communicate, discuss, and strategize with community members about possible budget amendments to file and support in the House budget.

05/
2023

MAY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

WHAT'S GOING ON IN MAY:		
	May	Committee hearings
	10	Senate budget released
	12	Senate budget amendment deadline
	22	Senate budget debate

ACTION!

Communicate, discuss, and strategize with community members about possible budget amendments to file and support in the Senate budget.

06/
2023




JUNE						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
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11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

WHAT'S GOING ON IN JUNE:		
	June	Committee hearings
	June	Budget conference committee

ACTION!

Coordinate with organizational allies to hold rallies to support priorities in the final budget.

07/
2023

JULY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					
WHAT'S GOING ON IN JULY:						
	July	Committee hearings				
	1	Start of FY24 fiscal year				
	31	Recess — no formal session				



ACTION!

Be prepared to respond to potential Governor’s vetoes and celebrate your budget wins!

08/
2023

ACTION!

Rest and spend time with your peeps!

AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		2
WHAT'S GOING ON IN AUGUST:						
	Aug.	Recess — no formal session				
	4	Submission of ballot initiative petition with signers to Attorney General’s office				


09/
2023

SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

WHAT'S GOING ON IN SEPTEMBER:	
	Sept. Hearings, formal sessions, direct advocacy
	Sept. Filing of petition with Secretary of the Commonwealth
	Sept. Secretary prepares forms for signature collection

10/
2023

OCTOBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

WHAT'S GOING ON IN OCTOBER:	
	Oct. Hearings, formal sessions, direct advocacy

ACTION!




Strategize for the rest of the calendar year with your community members and allied organizations.

ACTION!

Submit written testimony or sign up for oral testimony at hearings.

11/
2023

NOVEMBER						
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
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WHAT'S GOING ON IN NOVEMBER:		
	Nov.	Hearings, formal sessions, direct advocacy
	Nov.	Filing of signed peitions with local registrars for certification
	19	<u>Recess</u> — no <u>formal session</u>

ACTION!

Get creative and make your voice heard on your issues in the public square. Talk to the media, draft op-eds, and build relationships within your community to support your issues.

12/
2023

DECEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

WHAT'S GOING ON IN DECEMBER:		
	Dec.	<u>Recess</u> — no <u>formal session</u>
	1	Filing of certified petitions with Secretary of State

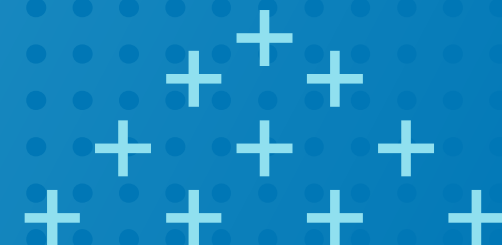
ACTION!

Enjoy the holidays and time for rest and reflection.






MASSACHUSETTS
LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR

2024



01/
2024

JANUARY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

WHAT'S GOING ON IN JANUARY:		
	Jan.	Initiative positions transmitted to House <u>Clerk</u>
	3	Legislature formal sessions resume
	24	House 2 (Governor's budget proposal) due

ACTION!

Here we go again!
The budget process starts for the next fiscal year! Another chance to push your priorties!

02/
2024

FEBRUARY						
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18	19	20	21	22	23	24
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WHAT'S GOING ON IN FEBRUARY:		
	Feb.	Hearings, formal sessions, direct advocacy
	7	<u>Joint Rule 10</u> Day

ACTION!

Continue to broaden your base to build power and show how legislation could improve your community.


03/
2024

MARCH						
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

ACTION!

Rally community members on budget and legislative priorities. Hold a lobby day, build momentum.

WHAT'S GOING ON IN MARCH:

 [March](#)

Hearings, formal sessions, direct advocacy


04/
2024


APRIL						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	<u>8</u>	9	10	11	<u>12</u>	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	<u>22</u>	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				


ACTION!


Communicate, discuss, and strategize with community members about possible budget amendments to file and support in the House budget.

WHAT'S GOING ON IN APRIL:

-  [April](#)

Hearings, formal sessions, direct advocacy
-  8

House budget proposal release
-  12







House budget amendment deadline
-  22

House budget debate week

05/
2024

MAY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

WHAT'S GOING ON IN MAY:

	May	Hearings, formal sessions, direct advocacy
	1	Deadline for legislative action on initiative petitions
	2	Filing with Secretary of request for additional petition forms
	6	Senate budget released
	10	Senate budget amendment deadline
	20	Senate budget debate




ACTION!

Communicate, discuss, and strategize with community members about possible budget amendments to file and support in the Senate budget

06/
2024

JUNE						
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
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WHAT'S GOING ON IN JUNE:


	June	Hearings, formal sessions, direct advocacy
	5	Deadline for filing with Secretary of amended petition
	19	Deadline for collection and filing of additional signatures with local registrars for certification

ACTION!

Coordinate with organizational allies to hold rallies to support priorities in the final budget.

07/
2024

JULY						
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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			


WHAT'S GOING ON IN JULY:	
	July Hearings, formal sessions, direct advocacy
	1 Start of FY25 fiscal year
	31 End of formal sessions

ACTION!

Be prepared to respond to potential Governor’s vetoes and celebrate your budget and legislative wins.

08/
2024

AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31



WHAT'S GOING ON IN AUGUST:	
	Aug. Informal sessions

ACTION!

Rest and reflect on your work!

09/
2024

SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
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22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					


WHAT'S GOING ON IN SEPTEMBER:	
	Sept. Informal sessions
	Sept. Statewide primary elections

ACTION!

Prepare for next session! Discuss priorities with your community members for the next legislative session with organizational members.

10/
2024

OCTOBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

WHAT'S GOING ON IN SEPTEMBER:	
	Oct. Informal sessions

ACTION!

Continue to communicate with your members! Evaluate your strategy and gather feedback from community members to finalize legislative priorities.

11/
2024

NOVEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30


WHAT'S GOING ON IN NOVEMBER:	
	Nov. Informal sessions
	5 Statewide elections

ACTION!

Meet with legislators to ask to file bills for the next session.

12/
2024





DECEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

WHAT'S GOING ON IN DECEMBER:	
	Dec. Informal sessions

ACTION!




Reflect, relax, and enjoy the holidays with friends and family.

APPENDIX

DATE	EVENT	ACTION
<div>  <div> <div>JAN. 4</div> <div>2023</div> </div> </div>	<div>Swearing in for the legislature</div> <div> <p>This is the first <u>formal session</u>. Legislature appoints a temporary <u>rules</u> committee to draft rules for the session. The rules dictate the internal operations of the legislature including establishing committees, legislative deadlines, transparency for publishing votes and establishing a <u>bill</u> filing deadline.</p> </div>	
<div>  <div> <div>JAN. 5</div> <div>2023</div> </div> </div>	<div>Swearing in for Governor and Lt. Governor</div> <div> <p>The Governor and Lt. Governor are sworn into their positions to begin their 4 year terms.</p> </div>	
<div>  <div> <div>JAN. 18</div> <div>2023</div> </div> </div>	<div>Swearing in for Constitutional Officers</div> <div> <p>The remaining constitutional officers who hold statewide office (Secretary of State, Auditor, Attorney General, State Treasurer) are sworn into their positions to begin their 4 year terms.</p> </div>	
<div>  <div> <div>JAN. 20</div> <div>2023</div> </div> </div>	<div>Bill filing deadline</div> <div> <p>This is the deadline for members of the legislature to submit their bills for the legislative session. The bills will be sorted and assigned a bill number by the clerks of the House and Senate and sent to the committee of jurisdiction. Bills can be filed after this deadline but late filed bills must be voted on by the <u>House and Senate Rules</u> committees before they can be accepted by either branch of the legislature.</p> </div>	<div> <p>Ask your <u>legislator</u> and legislative allies to file <u>legislation</u> before the deadline.</p> <p>→ <u>Make it happen.</u> Click here for tips on meeting with your legislator.</p> </div>




2023	JAN – FEB	MARCH – APRIL	MAY – JUNE	JULY – AUG	SEPT – OCT	NOV – DEC
2024	JAN – FEB	MARCH – APRIL	MAY – JUNE	JULY – AUG	SEPT – OCT	NOV – DEC

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DATE	EVENT	ACTION
 JAN. 2023	3 weeks after swearing in Governor submits annual budget proposal The annual budget process begins each year when the Governor files “funding and policy” recommendations as a <u>bill</u> with the House of Representatives. Under the state Constitution, the Governor must submit a proposal by the 4th Wednesday of January or, in the event of a new term, within five weeks later. This bill is called “House 1” or “House 2” depending on the year.	Send a letter or meet with members of the Administration to ask for priorities to be included in the budget proposal. → <u>Make it happen. Click here for tips on writing to your legislator.</u>
 LATE JAN. – FEB. 2023	Rulemaking and Joint Rules debate Rules for setting up committees and processes for the legislative session are debated in both the House and Senate. Each branch of the legislature will debate their internal <u>rules</u> that govern the legislative session. Up until new rules are adopted, each branch operates under the rules of the previous session. Joint Rules, which govern the operation of the House and Senate for things such as conference committees, reporting deadlines, and the legislative schedule and processes are also debated. For the Joint Rules, both chambers will debate this rules package and agree on a compromise set of joint rules..	
 FEB. 2023	Committee assignments Senate and House leadership will announce committee assignments for the members for the legislative session. This also includes announcements on leadership positions within each branch of the legislature.	Organize internal bill tracking spreadsheet. → <u>Make it happen. Click here for tips on organizing a tracker.</u>

2023	JAN – FEB	MARCH – APRIL	MAY – JUNE	JULY – AUG	SEPT – OCT	NOV – DEC
2024	JAN – FEB	MARCH – APRIL	MAY – JUNE	JULY – AUG	SEPT – OCT	NOV – DEC

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DATE	EVENT	ACTION
 FEB. 2023	Bills sent to committees After sorting bills by topic areas and assigning bills numbers, the House and Senate clerks will send bills to the committee of jurisdiction. For example, all bills related to revenue will be sent to the Joint Committee on Revenue and so forth.	Organize internal <u>bill tracking spreadsheet</u> . → <u>Make it happen.</u> <u>Click here for tips on organizing a tracker.</u>
 MARCH, 2023 – JULY 31, 2024	<u>Committee</u> hearings Once committees are organized, they will begin to hold hearings on each bill in committee. Under the <u>rules</u> , each bill in committee must have a hearing. Hearings are advertised 48 hours beforehand and most operate under a hybrid mode. Oral testimony is usually capped at 3 minutes per person and all committees will accept written testimony.	Prepare oral or written testimony for each bill that is being tracked. → <u>Make it happen.</u> <u>Click here for tips on testifying.</u>
 MARCH 1 2023	Governor files state budget Governor Healey, it being the first year of her term, has until March 1st to submit her first budget to the legislature for consideration. The Governor’s budget will shape her priorities for funding programs and services, and usually also include policy proposals for the legislature to consider.	Send a letter or meet with members of the Administration to ask for priorities to be included in the budget proposal. → <u>Make it happen.</u> <u>Click here for tips on writing to your legislator.</u>

2023	JAN – FEB	MARCH – APRIL	MAY – JUNE	JULY – AUG	SEPT – OCT	NOV – DEC
2024	JAN – FEB	MARCH – APRIL	MAY – JUNE	JULY – AUG	SEPT – OCT	NOV – DEC

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DATE	EVENT	ACTION
\$ APRIL 10 2023	House budget proposal released The House Committee on Ways and Means (HWM) examines the Governor’s budget proposal and releases its own recommendations for the annual budget for deliberation by the House of Representatives. Prior to release of the House Ways and Means Budget, Joint Ways and Means Committee budget hearings are held across the state.	Send a letter or meet with legislators to outline budgetary/ policy priorities to be included in the HWM budget. → <u>Make it happen.</u> <u>Click here for tips on meeting with your legislator.</u>
\$ APRIL 14 2023	House budget amendment deadline The House Ways and Means Committee normally releases their budget proposal mid April for consideration by the House members. The House will set a deadline for House members to submit amendments to the budget for deliberation. House members usually file over 1000 amendments to the budget. Advocates can work with House members to draft and submit amendments to the budget during this time.	Draft potential amendments working with Representatives and ask Reps to file amendments. Ask other members to sign on to amendments and talk to the media about amendment priorities. Send action alerts to members and allies. → <u>Make it happen.</u> <u>Click here for tips on writing an op-ed.</u>

2023	JAN – FEB	MARCH – APRIL	MAY – JUNE	JULY – AUG	SEPT – OCT	NOV – DEC
2024	JAN – FEB	MARCH – APRIL	MAY – JUNE	JULY – AUG	SEPT – OCT	NOV – DEC

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<p>⑤ APRIL 24 2023</p>	<p>House budget debate week</p> <p>After debate on amendments to the House Ways and Means recommendations, the House of Representatives then approves a final, amended version of the <u>bill</u> which is then sent to the Senate for consideration. The House does not have to adhere to any funding levels proposed by the Governor or include any of policy proposals.</p>	
<p>⑤ MAY 10 2023</p>	<p>Senate budget released</p> <p>The Senate <u>Committee</u> on Ways and Means (SWM) examines both the Governor’s proposal and the House proposal and releases its own recommendations for the annual budget for deliberation by the Senate.</p>	<p>Send a letter or meet with legislators to outline budgetary/ policy priorities to be included in the SWM budget.</p> <p>➔ <u>Make it happen. Click here for tips on meeting with your legislator.</u></p>

2023	JAN – FEB	MARCH – APRIL	MAY – JUNE	JULY – AUG	SEPT – OCT	NOV – DEC
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DATE	EVENT	ACTION
<p>⑤ MAY 12 2023</p>	<p>Senate budget amendment deadline</p> <p>The Senate usually releases the SWM proposal mid May and sets an amendment deadline for amendments to the budget. Senators usually file between 700-900 amendments for consideration. Advocates can work with Senate members to draft and submit amendments to the budget during this time.</p>	<p>Draft potential amendments working with Senators and ask them to file amendments. Ask other members to sign on to amendments and talk to the media about amendment priorities. Send action alerts to T4MA members and allies.</p> <p>➔ <u>Make it happen. Click here for tips on writing an op-ed.</u></p>
<p>⑤ MAY 22 2023</p>	<p>Senate budget debate</p> <p>The last week of May the full body of the Senate considers amendments to the Senate Ways and Means recommendations, and debates their inclusion in the <u>bill</u>.</p> <p>After debate on amendments to SWM recommendations, the Senate then approves a final, amended version of the bill which is then sent to a Conference Committee for review.</p>	






2023	JAN – FEB	MARCH – APRIL	MAY – JUNE	JULY – AUG	SEPT – OCT	NOV – DEC
2024	JAN – FEB	MARCH – APRIL	MAY – JUNE	JULY – AUG	SEPT – OCT	NOV – DEC

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DATE	EVENT	ACTION
<p>⑤ JUNE 2023</p>	<p>Budget conference committee</p> <p>The House and Senate appoint three members each to a “Conference Committee” to reconcile the differences between the House and Senate proposals. One member of the minority party must be appointed by each branch. The Conference Committee reports a final compromise <u>bill</u> to the House and Senate for a final vote of acceptance in each branch.</p>	<p>Advocates can submit letters of support or opposition to the conference committee for provisions in the budget to be included in the final version of the budget. RALLY TIME!</p> <p>→ <u>Make it happen. Click here for tips on writing to your legislator.</u></p>
<p>⑤ JULY 1 2023</p>	<p>Start of FY24 fiscal year</p> <p>The fiscal year for the Commonwealth runs from July 1-June 30 of the following year. The Governor has 10 days to review the budget and take action to either approve or <u>veto</u> the budget. The Governor may approve or veto the entire budget, veto or reduce specific line items, veto outside sections (non-budgetary policies) or submit changes as an <u>amendment</u> to the budget for further consideration by the Legislature.</p> <p>The Legislature must vote on the Governor’s vetoes or amendments with a recorded two-thirds majority vote. The Legislature has until the end of the calendar year to take any actions on the Governor’s changes. Without action by the legislature, these sections do not become law.</p> <p>Following any legislative overrides to the Governor’s actions, the budget is finalized and is commonly referred to as the “General Appropriations Act” for the upcoming fiscal year.</p>	<p>Advocates can submit letters of support for the Governor’s actions or <u>override</u> the Governor’s actions to the members of the legislature during this time.</p> <p>→ <u>Make it happen. Click here for tips on writing to your legislator.</u></p>







2023	JAN – FEB	MARCH – APRIL	MAY – JUNE	JULY – AUG	SEPT – OCT	NOV – DEC
2024	JAN – FEB	MARCH – APRIL	MAY – JUNE	JULY – AUG	SEPT – OCT	NOV – DEC

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DATE	EVENT	ACTION
 JULY 31 2023	<u>Recess — no formal session</u> The Legislature holds only informal sessions, where there are no recorded votes and only non controversial matters are voted on, for the month of August during the first year of the term.	
 AUG. 4 2023	<u>Submission of ballot initiative petition with signers to Attorney General's office</u>	
 SEPT. – NOV. 2023	Hearings, formal sessions, direct advocacy When the Legislature returns from the August recess, committees will hold hearings and take testimony on bills while both the House and Senate hold formal sessions once a week to debate larger matters and pass bills by the entire House or Senate.	Track bills, submit written testimony or sign up for oral testimony at hearings, contact members to ask their allies to support or oppose bills. Offer amendments to bills that are being debated in either chamber. Talk to the media about bills that you support or oppose. → <u>Make it happen. Click here for tips on writing an op-ed.</u>
 SEPT. 2023	Filing of petition with Secretary of the Commonwealth	
 SEPT. 2023	Secretary prepares forms for signature collection	



2023	JAN – FEB	MARCH – APRIL	MAY – JUNE	JULY – AUG	SEPT – OCT	NOV – DEC
2024	JAN – FEB	MARCH – APRIL	MAY – JUNE	JULY – AUG	SEPT – OCT	NOV – DEC

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DATE	EVENT	ACTION
 NOV. 2023	Filing of signed petitions with local registrars for certification	
 DEC. 2023	<u>Recess</u> — no formal session Starting the week of Thanksgiving until the end of the calendar year the Legislature will only hold informal sessions to address smaller local matters and non-controversial bills.	
 DEC. 1 2023	Filing of certified petitions with Secretary of State	
 JAN. 3 2024	Initiative positions transmitted to House Clerk	
 JAN. 3 2024	Legislature formal sessions resume	
 JAN. 24 2024	House 2 (Governor’s budget proposal) due The annual budget process begins each year when the Governor files recommendations as a <u>bill</u> with the House of Representatives. Under the state Constitution, the Governor must submit a proposal by the 4th Wednesday of January. This bill is called “House 2.”	Send a letter or meet with members of the Administration to ask for priorities to be included in the budget proposal. → <u>Make it happen. Click here for tips on meeting with your legislator.</u>

2023	JAN – FEB	MARCH – APRIL	MAY – JUNE	JULY – AUG	SEPT – OCT	NOV – DEC
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DATE	EVENT	ACTION
 FEB. 7 2024	<u>Joint Rule 10 Day</u> Joint Rule 10 (JR10) Day is the day that bills must be reported out by the <u>joint committees</u> , except the Committee on Health Care Financing, for consideration. Bills can receive a favorable, unfavorable, ought not to pass, or study order. If a bill receives an unfavorable, an ought not to pass or study order, it is no longer under active consideration by the legislature for the remainder of the session. Most bills that receive a favorable report are sent to the House or Senate Committees on Ways and Means as a next step.	Advocates can send letters or advocate directly with committee chairs and members about bills that they support and would like the committee to report out favorably. → <u>Make it happen. Click here for tips on meeting with your legislator.</u>
 APRIL 8 2024	<u>House budget proposal release</u> The House <u>Committee</u> on Ways and Means examines the Governor’s budget proposal and releases its own recommendations for the annual budget for deliberation by the House of Representatives. Prior to release of the House Ways and Means Budget, Joint Ways and Means Committee budget hearings are held across the state.	Communicate, discuss, and strategize with community members about possible budget amendments to file and support in the House budget.

DATE	EVENT	ACTION
<div> <div> <div>\$</div> <div> <div>APRIL 12</div> <div>2024</div> </div> </div> </div>	<div> <div>House budget <u>amendment</u> deadline</div> <div> <p>The House Ways and Means Committee normally releases their budget proposal mid April for consideration by the House members. The House will set a deadline for House members to submit amendments to the budget for deliberation. House members usually file over 1000 amendments to the budget. Advocates can work with House members to draft and submit amendments to the budget during this time.</p> </div> </div>	<div> <p>Draft potential amendments working with Representatives and ask Reps to file amendments. Ask other members to sign on to amendments and talk to the media about amendment priorities. Send action alerts to T4MA members and allies.</p> </div>
<div> <div> <div>\$</div> <div> <div>APRIL 22</div> <div>2024</div> </div> </div> </div>	<div> <div>House budget debate week</div> <div> <p>After debate on amendments to the House Ways and Means recommendations, the House of Representatives then approves a final, amended version of the bill which is then sent to the Senate for consideration. The House does not have to adhere to any funding levels proposed by the Governor or include any of their policy proposals.</p> </div> </div>	
<div> <div> <div> <div></div> <div></div> </div> <div> <div>MAY 1</div> <div>2024</div> </div> </div> </div>	<div> <div>Deadline for legislative action on initiative petitions</div> </div>	
<div> <div> <div> <div></div> <div></div> </div> <div> <div>MAY 2</div> <div>2024</div> </div> </div> </div>	<div> <div>Filing with Secretary of request for additional petition forms</div> </div>	

DATE	EVENT	ACTION
<div> <div>\$</div> <div> MAY 6 2024 </div> </div>	<div> <div>Senate budget released</div> <div> The Senate <u>Committee</u> on Ways and Means examines both the Governor’s proposal and the House proposal and releases its own recommendations for the annual budget for deliberation by the Senate. </div> </div>	<div> Communicate, discuss, and strategize with community members about possible budget amendments to file and support in the Senate budget. </div>
<div> <div>\$</div> <div> MAY 10 2024 </div> </div>	<div> <div>Senate budget <u>amendment</u> deadline</div> <div> The Senate usually releases the SWM proposal mid May and sets an amendment deadline for amendments to the budget. Senators usually file between 700-900 amendments for consideration. Advocates can work with Senate members to draft and submit amendments to the budget during this time. </div> </div>	<div> Draft potential amendments working with Senators and ask them to file amendments. Ask other members to sign on to amendments and talk to the media about amendment priorities. Send action alerts to T4MA members and allies. </div> <div> → <u>Make it happen. Click here for tips on writing an op-ed.</u> </div>
<div> <div>\$</div> <div> MAY 20 2024 </div> </div>	<div> <div>Senate budget debate</div> <div> The last week of May the full body of the Senate considers amendments to the Senate Ways and Means recommendations, and debates their inclusion in the <u>bill</u>. After debate on amendments to SWM recommendations, the Senate then approves a final, amended version of the bill which is then sent to a Conference Committee for review. </div> </div>	

2023	JAN – FEB	MARCH – APRIL	MAY – JUNE	JULY – AUG	SEPT – OCT	NOV – DEC
2024	JAN – FEB	MARCH – APRIL	MAY – JUNE	JULY – AUG	SEPT – OCT	NOV – DEC



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DATE	EVENT	ACTION
 JUNE 2024	Budget <u>conference committee</u> The House and Senate appoint three members each to a “Conference Committee” to reconcile the differences between the House and Senate proposals. One member of the minority party must be appointed by each branch. The Conference Committee reports a final compromise bill to the House and Senate for a final vote of acceptance in each branch.	Coordinate with organizational allies to hold rallies to support priorities in the final budget
 JUNE 5 2024	Deadline for filing amended petition with the Secretary of State, with certificate from the AG that the amendment does not materially change the substance of the measure	
 JUNE 19 2024	Deadline for collection and filing of additional signatures with local registrars for certification	

DATE	EVENT	ACTION
<div> <div>\$</div> <div> <div>JULY 1</div> <div>2024</div> </div> </div>	<div> <div>Start of FY25 fiscal year</div> <div> <p>The Fiscal Year for the Commonwealth runs from July 1-June 30 of the following year. The Governor has 10 days to review the budget and take action to either approve or <u>veto</u> the budget. The Governor may approve or veto the entire budget, veto or reduce specific line items, veto outside sections (non-budgetary policies) or submit changes as an <u>amendment</u> to the budget for further consideration by the Legislature.</p> <p>The Legislature must vote on the Governor’s vetoes or amendments with a recorded two-thirds majority vote. The Legislature has until the end of the calendar year to take any actions on the Governor’s changes. Without action by the legislature, these sections do not become law.</p> <p>Following any legislative overrides to the Governor’s actions, the budget is finalized and is commonly referred to as the “General Appropriations Act” for the upcoming fiscal year.</p> </div> </div>	<div>Be prepared to respond to potential Governor’s vetoes and celebrate your budget and legislative wins</div>
<div> <div>📅</div> <div> <div>JULY 31</div> <div>2024</div> </div> </div>	<div> <div>End of formal sessions</div> <div> <p>The Legislature ends the legislative session on July 31st, 2024 and will hold only informal sessions addressing only local matters and non-controversial bills until the end of the calendar year. All members of the legislature must run for office again if they would like to remain a member of the legislature. The primary election is held in September and the General Election is held in November.</p> </div> </div>	

2023	JAN – FEB	MARCH – APRIL	MAY – JUNE	JULY – AUG	SEPT – OCT	NOV – DEC
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DATE	EVENT	ACTION
<div>  <div> SEPT. 2024 </div> </div>	Statewide primary	Prepare for next session! Discuss priorities with your community members for the next legislative session with organizational members.
<div>  <div> NOV. 5 2024 </div> </div>	Statewide elections	Meet with legislators to ask to file bills for the next session. → <u>Make it happen. Click here for tips on meeting with your legislator.</u>

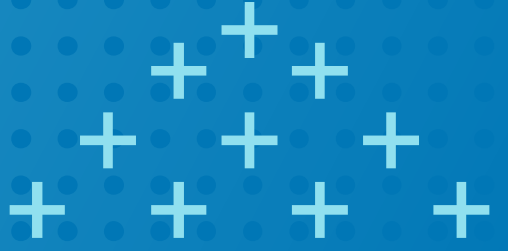



T4MA LEGISLATIVE TOOLKIT

PURPOSE OF THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit is designed to provide supplemental information to the Massachusetts Legislative Timeline to assist in organizing to make change.

It provides instructions and examples of how to find who represents you, how to write legislative testimony and navigate the Statehouse website, how to meet with your legislator, and how to draft an op-ed.



LEGISLATIVE LANDSCAPE



WHY SHOULD I KNOW WHO MY LEGISLATORS ARE?

Legislators pass legislation that includes funding of transportation agencies, which programs receive funding, and other transportation policies.

Knowing who represents your community allows you to advocate directly for your priorities.



HOW CAN I FIND MY LEGISLATORS?

To find your local, state, and federal elected officials you can visit www.wheredol votema.com.

Enter your:

1. Street number
2. Your street name
3. Street suffix (street, avenue, court, etc.)
4. City/town or your zip code



WHAT INFORMATION WILL I FIND?

- Voting location
- Town Clerk information
- Statewide office holders for the Commonwealth
- Current district representatives

BILL TESTIMONY

 **Providing bill testimony allows you to give direct feedback to your legislators on a bill.**

HOW DO I TESTIFY ON A BILL?



You can provide written or oral testimony on any bill that you are following.



Sign up for oral testimony or submit written testimony when your bill is being heard in a committee hearing.



You can find hearing information before the hearing by checking the “Hearings and Events” page at malegislature.gov.

- Click on the appropriate committee for the hearing information.
- See the left hand side of the hearing information on how to sign up to testify or submit written testimony.
- Click [here](#) for more information on how to navigate malegislature.gov.



Example of [oral testimony](#)



Example of [written testimony](#)

TIPS FOR PROVIDING TESTIMONY

- Introduce yourself.
 - Make sure you provide your name, title, and organization (if applicable)
 - Example: I am XX, and I am XX for organization XX
- Identify the bill and your whether you support or oppose the bill.
 - Example: T4MA supports Senate bill H.3373, An act relative to low income transit fares...
- Provide back up information on why you support or oppose the bill.
 - Example: Low income fares have been shown to increase ridership on transit by XXX and save residents XX per month to expand opportunities for riders...
- Oral testimony is usually limited to 3 minutes per person.
 - Be prepared to answer questions about your testimony.
- Coordinate with allies to provide testimony from multiple organizations.

TRACKING LEGISLATION



WHY TRACK LEGISLATION?

It can help to have a legislative tracking spreadsheet to **keep track of the many bills during the 2 year legislative session.**



WHAT TO INCLUDE IN YOUR TRACKER

To build a spreadsheet you should include the following:

- Bill number
- Bill Title
- Sponsor
- A short summary
- Committee the bill has been assigned to
- Current bill status



NEED MORE HELP?

You can find a [sample spreadsheet here](#).
You can also pay for services like [Instatrac](#).

WRITING AN OP-ED

 **Op-eds provide public spaces to state your position on an issue.**

HOW DO I WRITE AN OP-ED?

- 1


Introduction

 - Get right to identifying the issue you are focused on.
 - Present the issue using a narrative or a short newsflash on a recent event.
- 2

Presenting evidence

 - Elevate the stakes on why this issue is important and your solution to address the problem.
 - Use statistics and make sure you cover the basic of who, what, when, where, and why/how.
- 3

Dispel counter arguments and look forward

 - Mention counter arguments to your position and dispel them with facts to support your solution
 - Look forward to the future on how your solution will solve the problem that you have presented and what action steps need to be taken.
- 

Submit your op-ed, with your contact information, to the opinion page editor at print publications or the online submission page.

TIPS FOR SUBMITTING AN OP-ED

- For statewide policy issues submit your op-ed to a larger news outlet like the Boston Globe, Commonwealth Magazine, or WBUR.org.
- For local issues for city or town submit your op-ed to your local newspaper.
- If you can't figure out how to submit an op-ed, call the publication and ask how to submit an op-ed.
- Examples of op-eds can be found [here](#).

HOW TO MEET WITH YOUR LEGISLATOR



Building a relationship with your elected officials helps you communicate how your work improves the lives of the constituents in their district.

HOW CAN I BUILD A RELATIONSHIP?



Know who your legislators are, not only for the district you live in but also the district you work in.
→ This information can be found on the [State House website](#).



Build relationships with your representative or senator’s staff.
→ This will ease the process of making appointments and can also help you get more information to your legislator.



Book a meeting with your legislators. Most legislators hold in-district office hours.
→ Ideally, a request to meet one-on-one in the district will allow for fewer distractions.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- The Massachusetts Public Health Association has more tips for meeting with your legislator [here](#).

SEND A LETTER TO YOUR ELECTED OFFICIAL



MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

Send a letter to your elected official to let them know your priorities to **help the people that your organization serves.**



HOW DO I SEND A LETTER?

- To send a letter:
- Find your legislator at www.wheredoivotema.com.
 - Click on who you want to send a letter to get their contact information.
 - Draft your letter and send by both email and regular mail.



NEED MORE HELP?

- Follow up if you don't get a response
- Sample letters can be found [here](#).**

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Below is a glossary defining some of the terms used in the policy calendar. For a more in depth guide to legislative language please visit the [State House Glossary](#).

A

Adjournment

Termination of a daily session, which is when legislators meet to vote on bills, or the termination of the 2 year session.

Amendment

A proposed change, such as adding or removing certain provisions, or decreasing or increasing funding for programs, to a legislative bill that is recommended by a committee or legislator. Amendments are usually published on the [MA Legislature website](#) prior to a bill being voted on.

→ (pgs [7](#), [8](#), [14](#), [15](#), [22](#), [23](#), [24](#), [27](#), [28](#), [29](#), [30](#))

B

Biennial Session

The two-year period between the beginning of the legislative session and the end.

Bill

Document filed by a legislator to be considered for a vote to become law.

→ (pgs [19](#), [20](#), [21](#), [22](#), [23](#), [24](#), [26](#), [27](#), [29](#), [39](#), [40](#), [42](#))

Bill Number

A number assigned by the clerk to a legislative document for identification purposes.

C

Clerk

A staff person in either the [House](#) or [Senate Clerks'](#) offices whose job is to organize bills filed by legislators.

→ (pgs [13](#), [26](#), [39](#))

Committee

A group of legislators organized under one of the following:

- 27 joint standing subject matter committees (such as housing, transportation, labor, etc),
- 9 House standing committees
- 7 Senate standing committees.

[Joint Committees](#) are made up of members of both the House and Senate. [House committees](#) are made up of only House members. [Senate committees](#) are made up only of Senate members. Committee membership sizes and appointment procedures may be changed periodically.

→ (pgs [6](#), [7](#), [8](#), [9](#), [20](#), [21](#), [22](#), [23](#), [24](#), [26](#), [27](#), [28](#), [29](#), [39](#), [40](#), [42](#))

Committee Member

A legislator assigned to a particular committee.

Conference Committee

Once a bill has passed both the House and Senate, this committee is composed of three members of the House and three members of the Senate and is appointed for the purpose of resolving differences between House and Senate versions of the same bill. This committee then files a report that must be voted up or down by both the House and Senate and may not be amended. After the conference committee report is voted on by both branches it is sent to the Governor for signature (approval) or veto.

→ (pgs 8, 24, 29, 40)

D

Drafting

The action of writing the text of a legislative document.

E

Extension Order

An order extending the amount of time a committee has to vote on a bill.

F

Formal Session

When the House or Senate meet to vote on bills and other items that may be controversial in nature and during which recorded votes may be taken. These sessions are normally attended by all members of the House or Senate.

→ (pgs 9, 11, 19, 25, 26, 42)

G

General Court

The formal name for the Massachusetts state legislature.

Governor’s Message

A legislative document submitted to the legislature by the governor that may include a veto of a bill, recommended legislation, or recommended amendments to bills that have been passed by the legislature.

H

House and Senate Rules

The Rules are adopted by each branch to establish how the House and Senate will operate at the beginning of each biennial session. This includes how committees are formed, and processes including how many days legislation must be released from committee before being voted on, publication of committee votes, and other matters.

→ (pg 19, 20, 40)

I

Informal Session

When the House or Senate meets to consider bills and various other matters that are of a non-controversial nature. These sessions are usually less attended by members of the legislature than Formal Sessions and a single member of the legislature can object to the proceedings and cause the session to be ended for the day.

J

Joint Committees

There are currently twenty-seven committees, consisting of senators and representatives, and they are responsible for holding public hearings and voting on all legislative documents referred to them. Joint committees address specific subject matter areas such as house, healthcare, transportation, etc.

→ (pg 26)

Joint Rule 10

An internal legislative rule ordering that all legislation be voted out of committees by the first Wednesday in February of the second year of the two year session.

→ (pgs 13, 26, 41)

Joint Rules

Rules for the governing of the House and Senate, voted on by both branches.

→ (pgs 6, 20, 41)

L

Legislation

A generic term used for a bill pending before the Legislature.

→ (pg 19, 40, 41, 43)

Legislative Document

Any document considered during the legislative process. This includes bills, reports from state agencies, resolutions, and other documents.

Legislator

A member of the House or Senate. There are 200 legislative districts (160 Representatives and 40 Senators).

→ (pgs 6, 19, 39, 40, 42)

M

Massachusetts General Laws

All of the laws of Massachusetts of a general and permanent nature. All of the General Laws of Massachusetts can be found [here](#).

O

Outside Section

A section of a budget bill (a bill that provides funding for state programs) that may amend an existing law or create a new law. Outside sections are usually policy related and non-budgetary in nature.

Override

To overturn the governor’s veto by a recorded 2/3 vote of the members present in both the House and Senate. Overrides only happen during a full formal session of the legislature when most members are required to be present. *See Veto.*

→ (pgs [24](#), [43](#))

P

Public Hearing

A committee meeting during which any individual of the public representing themselves or an organization may testify about particular legislative documents before the committee.

R

Recess

Temporary suspension of a session.

→ (pgs [9](#), [11](#), [25](#), [26](#), [42](#))

Report of Committee

A written recommendation by the committee to pass or not pass a legislative matter to which it was referred. *See Standing Committees*

Roll Call Vote

A voting process in which each legislator either casts their vote or abstains from voting on a bill. The vote is recorded for the record which is kept by the House or Senate clerk. Also referred to as the “yeahs and nays.”

Rules

Rules for operations such as establishing committees, legislative deadlines, and other procedural matters of the legislature are generally voted on at the beginning of a two year session. There are Senate rules, House rules and Joint rules.

→ (pgs [19](#), [20](#), [21](#), [42](#))

S

Standing Committees

Permanent committees in the Senate and House as well as joint committees. Members and chairpersons are appointed at the beginning of each two-year session. The chair of each committee is the leader of the committee and sets the schedule for the committee. Committees are established through the legislative rules passed by the House and Senate. They are broken down by subject matter (housing, transportation, energy, etc.) where bills covering those matters are discussed by the members of each committee before being voted on by the entire legislature.

T

Title

The title of a legislative document that explains the subject matter that the document addresses.

V

Veto

Governor’s objection in writing to legislation passed by the legislature. The legislation is returned to its branch of origin, either the House or Senate. It requires two-thirds affirmative vote in each branch to override a veto.

→ (pgs 24, 30, 40, 42, 43)

Voice Vote

Oral expression of the members of the legislature to vote on a legislative matter. Response is given by “ayes” and “nays” and the matter passes (if it gets more “ayes” than “nays”) or fails (more “nays” than “ayes”) based on the oral responses. This is not a recorded vote by individual members of the legislature.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



This resource is a collaboration between [T4MA](#) and our partner organizations, including:

→ The [Massachusetts Public Health Association](#), [New England United for Justice](#), [GreenRoots](#), [Livable Streets Alliance](#), and [Alternatives for Community & Environment](#).



→ A special thanks to [Shannon Magrane](#), who designed the document and [Anoop Sundararajan](#) at the [Institute for Human Centered Design](#) who helped make sure this resource works for everyone across the spectrum of ability and age.

LOOKING FOR MORE INFORMATION?

We've put together a list of additional resources:

- [Massachusetts Legislature website](#)
- [Who are my elected officials and where do I vote?](#)
- [Massachusetts Ballot Initiative Process](#)
- [Mass Budget's State Budget 101](#)
- [Transportation for Massachusetts website](#)
- [A Guide to Navigating MAlegislature.gov](#)