




MONTANA STATE GOVERNMENT

The Montana State Government is modeled after the federal government. It has three branches with specific powers to ensure one branch does not gain too much power. The three branches of the Montana State Government are legislative, executive, and judicial.

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH	EXECUTIVE BRANCH	JUDICIAL BRANCH
<p>State Legislature</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Makes laws• 100 Representatives serving 2 years• 50 Senators serving 4 years• Elected within their district	<p>Headed by the Governor</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enforces and carries out laws• Governor signs laws and can veto laws• Elected every 4 years with a maximum of two terms (8 years).	<p>Montana Court System</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decides if laws are constitutional• Interprets laws and settles differences• Elected or appointed• Supreme Court has 1 Chief of Justice and 6 Associate Justices
<p><i>A tribal government operates on each of Montana's seven Indian reservations; it reflects the tribe's sovereignty.</i></p>		

MONTANA LEGISLATURE

The 150 members in the Montana State Legislature are elected by residents of Montana (also known as constituents), within their district. Each constituent is represented by one Senator and one Representative.

DISTRICTS

There are 100 House districts and 50 Senate districts. District boundaries are based upon population, not area. The districts are determined every 10 years after the new U.S. Census report is released. Each district must have about the same population.

TERM LIMITS

Senate and House members may serve no more than 8 years in a 16-year period.

ELECTIONS

Senators serve four-year terms. Every two years half of the Senate members face re-election. Representatives serve two-year terms, and all vie for re-election before every new session.

SESSION

The Montana Legislature, which includes the House and Senate, meets in regular session for 90 working days in every odd-numbered year. Each session begins, or convenes, on the first Monday in January, unless it's New Year's Day, and typically ends, or adjourns, in late April.

MONTANA GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE

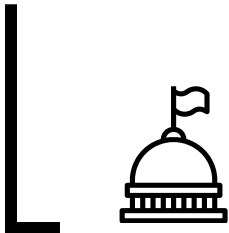


THE MONTANA CONSTITUTION



LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

makes laws



STATE LEGISLATURE

50 members
4 year term

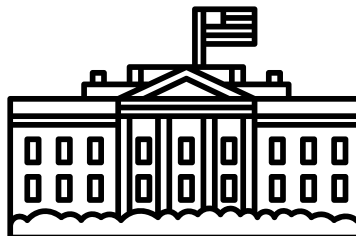


SENATE

100 members
2 year term



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



EXECUTIVE BRANCH

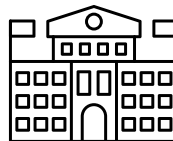
enforces & carries laws



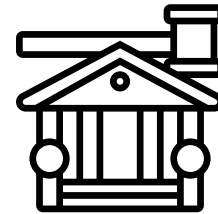
GOVERNOR



LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



STATE AGENCIES



JUDICIAL BRANCH

interprets laws; settles differences



MONTANA SUPREME COURT



STATE DISTRICT COURT



COURTS OF LIMITED JURISDICTION

HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW IN MONTANA

STEP 1:

Any legislator introduces a draft bill to their respective chamber (senate or house).

STEP 2:

The introduced bill is assigned a number.

STEP 3:

The bill is read to the chamber for its "first reading".

STEP 4:

The bill is assigned to a relevant committee based on its subject matter

STEP 5:

A public hearing is scheduled by the assigned committee.

STEP 6:

The committee may amend the bill.

STEP 7:

The committee takes executive action on the bill.

- Pass: majority of the committee members vote in favor of the bill.
- Fails or Does Not Pass: the bill fails to get a majority of votes and will not receive further consideration. The bill has "died in committee".
- Tabled: it has been set aside for consideration at a later date. The committee must consider the bill again within 45 days or it "dies in committee".

STEP 8:

If passes, the bill is placed on the second-reading calendar for the whole chamber, or "Committee of the Whole".

STEP 9:

The second reading is scheduled and debate and amendments are conducted.

STEP 10:

After debate and amendments, the chamber votes to pass or not to pass. If passed a third-reading is scheduled.

STEP 11:

During the third reading the chamber votes to pass or not to pass. (no debates or amendments).

STEP 12:

If the bill passes, it is transmitted to the other chamber and that chamber repeats steps 1-11.


STEP 13:

Once the Legislature passes a bill through both chambers in the same form, it is sent to the "Governor's desk" for final approval.

STEP 14:

The Governor has four options:

- Sign the bill, passing it into law.
- Take no action, and the bill will become law in 10 days. Recommend amendments to the bill.
- Veto the bill.

 =where a proposed bill can "die".

HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW IN MONTANA VISUAL



If both the House and Senate pass identical bills it is sent to the Governor. If the bill passes both chambers but in different forms, the original chamber can approve the other chamber's amendments or request a CONFERENCE COMMITTEE to settle differences.

Governor signs bill

Governor takes no action

Governor vetos bill

Bill becomes law

Bill becomes law after 10 days

Bill does not become law, unless both the House and Senate override veto by 2/3 majority.