

Connecticut General Assembly

Frequently Asked Questions

About the Connecticut General Assembly (CGA)

What is the Connecticut General Assembly?

The Connecticut General Assembly is the legislative branch of State Government. The General Assembly, which is made up of the House of Representatives (151 members) and the Senate (36 members), enacts laws dealing with the collection and allocation of funds, public welfare, the environment, education, public works, civil and criminal law and other matters.

How are members of the General Assembly chosen?

Members are elected in November of even-numbered years from the districts in which they reside. Members of the Connecticut House of Representatives and the Connecticut Senate serve for a two-year term.

When does the General Assembly meet?

Our legislature is considered to be part-time. Regular sessions of the General Assembly are held from January to June in odd-numbered years, and from February to May in even-numbered years.

How does the General Assembly work?

The General Assembly meets in the State Capitol in Hartford. General Assembly committees usually meet and hold most public hearings in the adjoining Legislative Office Building, which also houses Legislators' offices. Committees, which may operate year-round, meet to review proposed legislation and make recommendations to the full House and Senate. A more detailed description is available at

http://www.cga.ct.gov/olm/PandDs/This_is_Your_General_Assembly.pdf.

The Lawmaking Process

How do I find out when a proposal for new legislation (bill) will be voted on in the House and Senate?

Once a bill has been voted favorably out of committee, it is listed on the Calendar. After it has been on the Calendar for three days it can be voted on by the General Assembly. The Speaker of the House controls the agenda for the

House of Representatives and the President Pro Tempore controls the agenda for the Senate. The House publishes a GO LIST just prior to a House session. This list of bills and/or resolutions on the Calendar reflects the legislation the House intends to take up on a particular session day. To find the GO LIST, click the House link (located on the left side of the home page or at the top of a secondary page), and click Go List. Each time a new Go List is published, you will see a link to the document on the home page under CGA Today.

Who can testify at a public hearing? What are the rules? How long should testimony be? Who speaks first? Should I bring copies of testimony?

Anyone may testify at a public hearing. The rules vary by committee. The notice of the Public Hearing in the Bulletin provides basic rule information. Testimony should be no longer than three to five minutes. The first hour of a hearing is normally reserved for legislators and agency heads or invited guests. Then testimony is taken in the order people signed up. Written testimony is not required but is recommended. If you bring written testimony, you must bring a copy for every committee member.

Click the **Citizen Guide** link (located on the left side of the home page or at the top of a secondary page) for a *Guide to Testifying at a Public Hearing* and a video, *Joining the Debate*.

What is the deadline for proposing new legislation/bills?

Legislators must propose bills within approximately one week of the opening day of the session. Actual dates are listed in the Joint Rules of the General Assembly.

What is the deadline for each legislative committee to report bills favorably to the General Assembly?

To find a table of committee deadlines, click Session Information (located on the left side of the home page or at the top of a secondary page), and click Committee Deadlines.

Where can I find current laws?

The Legislative Commissioners' Office is responsible for compiling the General Statutes of Connecticut and releases an edition every other year. In a nonpublishing year, the Public and Special Acts for that year represent new legislation not currently incorporated into the statutes. The Public and Special Acts, as well as the Statutes, are all available in the Search system. Click the Search link (located on the left side of the home page or at the top of a secondary page),

Bill Information and Status

How can I search for a particular bill to find its status?

At the top of the page is a Quick Search by bill number. Enter a bill number and click the Go button. In addition, many options for searching bill information are provided from the Search link (located on the left side of the home page or at the top of a secondary page).

How can I find bills proposed for a particular area of interest?

Click the Search link (located on the left side of the home page or at the top of a secondary page). From the options, click Subject Index to Bills A-Z. Click on the letter that represents the first character of the topic you wish to review (i.e., "E" for Environment Permits). Click on the topic link from the list to see the bills categorized under that particular topic by the Connecticut State Library.

How can I find how my Legislator has voted on a particular issue?

At the top of the page is a Quick Search by bill number. Enter a bill number and click the Go button. You can click the links under the Votes section. The Connecticut State Library (<http://www.cslib.org/>) can also provide voting information.

How can I receive periodic information regarding legislative action?

At the top of the page is a link for Bill Tracking. This application allows you to track legislative activity on bills.

Connecticut Statutes

Where do I find the Connecticut Statutes?

Click the Statutes link at the top of the page. Click Search Statutes to execute a text search of the latest published statutes. Click Browse Statutes to view the statutes by chapter.

Contact your Legislators

Who are my Representative and Senator and how do I contact them?

Click the House or Senate links (located on the left side of the home page or at the top of a secondary page), and click "Find Your Legislator". Enter your address in the respective fields to bring up a list of your house, senate and congressional representatives. Alternatively, you can go to the "View District Town Maps" link (located at the bottom of the Find Your Legislator page) to locate your representative by town. Click the district number for your town and you will get to their individual web page, which contains contact information. If your town has more than one legislative district (more than one representative or senator) you will be directed to a map of your area to determine in which district you live.

How can I determine which Legislators are on a particular committee?

From the top of the page click Committees A-H & I-Z. From the list, click the appropriate committee, and then click Committee Membership.

Where can I get a list of all Legislators?

Click the House or Senate links (located on the left side of the home page or at the top of a secondary page). From the options, click Members. The alphabetical list includes district number, a link to email and website, political party, and a link to bills introduced.

Schedule of Events

How can I find a schedule of events?

You may either click a particular day on the calendar in the middle of the home page, or click the Bulletin link under CGA Today. The Bulletin provides a listing of events scheduled in the next two weeks – including days the House or Senate will be in session in their chambers (Session Days), committee meetings, public hearings and other events. Printed copies are available in the Bill Room in the Legislative Office Building (first floor).

Visitor Resources

What is the address and phone number of the Capitol?

State Capitol, 210 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106
(860) 240-0100 Office of Legislative Management.

Where can I find information on visiting and touring the Capitol including directions and parking information?

The Capitol and Legislative Office Building are open Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. See Capitol Tours under the link **Citizen Guide** or call (860) 240-0222.

Which entrances are open to the public?

At the Capitol, the Southwest/Capitol Avenue and west entrances (facing the Legislative Office Building) are open to the public. The west entrance is handicapped accessible with a ramp and automatic door.

At the Legislative Office Building, there are public entrances, at the west side of the first floor facing Broad Street, from the parking garage (leading to the third floor) and on the third floor facing the Capitol. All are handicapped accessible.

Where are the public galleries to view legislative session and public hearing events?

Legislative sessions are held at the Capitol Building in Hartford. The public gallery of the House may be reached by stairways from the 3rd floor; the Senate galleries open onto the 4th floor.

Committee meeting and public hearing rooms are located in the adjoining Legislative Office Building.

Limited parking is available in the LOB garage off Broad St. and Capitol Avenue. Additional parking information can be found on the website www.cga.ct.gov.

Are there services for the physically challenged?

The Capitol and Legislative Office Building are administered in compliance with the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act. Requests for accommodations should be directed to the Office of Legislative Management (860) 240-0100.

Where can I purchase something to eat?

There is a cafeteria in the Legislative Office Building that is open from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Soda, candy and snack machines are located in the Legislative Office Building and Capitol.