

Budget Amendment Process

Q: What happens to a budget amendment request after it has been submitted?

A: There are several stages that a budget amendment goes through after it is submitted to the House Appropriations Committee staff: Initial processing, Subcommittee action, Committee action, House action, Conference Committee action, and adoption.

Initial Processing

- Amendments are keyed into an electronic budget amendment system and returned to the patron once completed to check for accuracy. (Often, the electronic copies of amendments are not completed until after the budget amendment deadline for amendment requests). The budget amendment system assigns a number to each amendment, based on the area of government affected by the amendment. This is referred to as the "Item number." Within each item, the amendments are numbered in the order they were received and entered into the system. Each amendment will also carry the name of the House member who is the patron of the amendment and any members who are co-patrons.

All budget amendments are returned to patrons a few days following the budget amendment deadline for their final approval before the budget amendments are printed.

Once the amendments are public, they can be accessed on the [State Budget](#) website or a hard copy may be viewed at the Appropriations Committee staff offices.

Once the amendments are completed, they are compiled by area of government (e.g., Elementary and Secondary Education, Higher Education, Public Safety, Health and Human Resources, etc.) for consideration by the appropriate Subcommittee.

Subcommittee Action

- The Subcommittees make recommendations to adopt budget amendments to the full Appropriations Committee through a Subcommittee Report on the date specified in the Committee calendar (which is available the first week of the Session). Typically, the Subcommittees report to the full Committee on a Sunday in February.

Committee Action

- Once the full Committee receives the Subcommittee Reports, the Committee will act on each report to accept or reject the proposed budget amendments. Once adopted by the Committee, the amended budget is then sent to the House floor for action on the budget bill.

At this point, budget amendments will be available on the [State Budget](#) web site by noon on the Tuesday following the Committee's adoption of the amended budget.

House Action

- The budget bill is considered by the full House just like any other bill. It must go through first, second and third readings before final passage. Typically, the budget bill is considered by the House of Delegates on the Thursday following the Appropriations Committee adoption of the amended budget.

Conference Committee Action

- Once adopted, the House budget is sent to the Senate for consideration. At that time, the House also receives the Senate budget. Traditionally, the budget bill amended by the House becomes the vehicle for any changes to the Governor's introduced budget. The Conference Committee resolves any differences between the budget bill adopted by the House of Delegates and the Senate.

Adoption

- Once the Conference Committee has resolved differences between the House and Senate on the amended budget bill, the Conference Committee report is sent back to the House and Senate floors for final approval. The budget bill cannot be amended at this time and the vote on the amended budget is a yes or no vote.

Governor's Review Phase

- The Governor reviews the bill passed by the General Assembly. He may sign it, veto the entire bill or certain line items, or recommend amendments. If the Governor vetoes the bill or any items of the bill, it goes back to the General Assembly during a reconvened session in the spring. If he recommends amendments, the bill is returned to the reconvened session for consideration and action by the General Assembly on the Governor's proposed amendments.

Budget Execution Phase

- The budget passed by the General Assembly and enacted into law goes into effect on July 1 in even-numbered years and on the date of passage in odd-numbered years.

Source: Virginia House Appropriations Committee