

**Table 3.2**  
**LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS: LEGAL PROVISIONS**

| State or other jurisdiction | Regular sessions |   |  | Special sessions                             |   |                                   |                                 |
|-----------------------------|------------------|---|--|--|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
|                             | Year             | Month   | Legislature convenes<br>Day                                  | Limitation on length of session (a)          | Legislature may call  | Legislature may determine subject | Limitation on length of session |
| Alabama.....                | Annual           | Jan.<br>Mar.<br>Feb.                              | 2nd Tues. (b)<br>1st Tues. (c)<br>1st Tues. (d)(e)           | 30 L in 105 C                                | No  | Yes (f)                           | 12 L in 30 C                    |
| Alaska.....                 | Annual           | Jan.  | 3rd Tues. (g)  | 121 C; 90 Statutory (g)                      | By petition, 2/3 members, each house  | Yes                               | 30 C                            |
| Arizona.....                | Annual           | Jan.  | 2nd Mon.   | (h)  | By petition, 2/3 members, each house  | Yes                               | None                            |
| Arkansas.....               | Annual           | Jan.<br>Feb.                                      | 2nd Mon.<br>2nd Mon.   | 60 C (i)<br>30 C (i)                         | No  | No                                | None (j)                        |
| California.....             | Biennium (k)     | Jan.  | 1st Mon. (d)   | None   | No  | No                                | None                            |
| Colorado.....               | Annual           | Jan.  | No later than 2nd Wed.                                       | 120 C  | By petition, 2/3 members, each house  | Yes (l)                           | None                            |
| Connecticut.....            | Annual           | Jan.  | Wed. after 1st Mon.  | (m)  | By petition, majority, each house (n)   | Yes                               | None                            |
| Delaware.....               | Biennium         | Jan.  | 2nd Tues.  | June 30                                      | Joint call, presiding officers, both houses   | Yes                               | None                            |
| Florida.....                | Annual           | Mar.  | 1st Tues. after 1st Mon. (c)                                 | 60 C (i)                                     | Joint call, presiding officers, both houses or by petition  | Yes                               | 20 C (zz)                       |
| Georgia.....                | Annual           | Jan.  | 2nd Mon.   | 40 L   | By petition, 3/5 members, each house  | No (p)                            | 40 L                            |
| Hawaii.....                 | Annual           | Jan.  | 3rd Wed.   | 60 L (i)                                     | By petition, 2/3 members, each house (uu)   | Yes                               | 30 L (i)                        |
| Idaho.....                  | Annual           | Jan.  | Mon. on or nearest 9th day                                   | None   | No  | No                                | 20 C                            |
| Illinois.....               | Biennium         | Jan.  | 2nd Wed.   | None (q)                                     | Joint call, presiding officers, both houses; Governor also may call   | Yes                               | None                            |
| Indiana.....                | Annual           | Jan.  | 2nd Mon. (r)   | odd-61 C or Apr. 29;<br>even-30 C or Mar. 14 | No  | Yes                               | 30 L or 40 C                    |
| Iowa.....                   | Annual           | Jan.  | 2nd Mon.   | None (bbb)                                   | By petition, 2/3 members, each house  | Yes                               | None                            |
| Kansas.....                 | Annual           | Jan.  | 2nd Mon.   | odd-None; even-90 C (i)                      | Petition to governor of 2/3 members, each house   | Yes                               | None                            |
| Kentucky.....               | Annual           | Jan.  | 1st Tues. after 1st Mon.                                     | even-60 L; odd-30 L (s)                      | No  | No                                | None                            |
| Louisiana.....              | Annual           | Mar. (even-years)<br>Apr. (odd-years)             | second Mon. (even and odd-years)                             | even-60 L in 85 C;<br>odd-45 L in 60 C       | By petition, majority, each house   | Yes                               | 30 C                            |
| Maine.....                  | (t)              | Dec. (even-years);<br>Jan. (subsequent even-year) | 1st Wed. (quadrennial election year)<br>Wed. after 1st Tues. | Calendar days set by statute (u)             | Joint call, presiding officers of both houses with the consent of a majority of the members of each political party | Yes                               | None                            |
| Maryland.....               | Annual           | Jan.  | 2nd Wed.   | 90 C   | By petition, majority, each house   | Yes                               | 30 C                            |
| Massachusetts.....          | Biennium         | Jan.  | 1st Wed.   | (v)  | By petition (w)   | Yes                               | None                            |
| Michigan.....               | Annual           | Jan.  | 2nd Wed.   | None   | No  | No                                | None                            |
| Minnesota.....              | Biennium         | Jan.  | 1st Tues. after 1st Mon. (odd-years)                         | 120 L  | No (x)  | Yes                               | None                            |
| Mississippi.....            | Annual           | Jan.  | Tues. after 1st Mon.   | 125 C (y); 90 C (y)                          | No  | No                                | None                            |

See footnotes at end of table.

LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS: LEGAL PROVISIONS — Continued

| State or other jurisdiction | Regular sessions  |                                     |  | Special sessions                      |   |                                   |                                 |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
|                             | Year              | Month                               | Day  | Limitation on length of session (a)   | Legislature may call                        | Legislature may determine subject | Limitation on length of session |
| Missouri.....               | Annual            | Jan.                                | Wed. after 1st Mon.                            | May-30                                | By petition, 3/4 members, each house        | Yes (l)                           | 30 C (z)                        |
| Montana.....                | Biennial-odd year | Jan.                                | 1st Mon. (vv)                                  | 90 L                                  | By petition, majority, each house (ww)      | Yes                               | None                            |
| Nebraska.....               | Annual            | Jan.                                | Wed. after 1st Mon.                            | odd-90 L; even-60 L                   | By petition, 2/3 members, each house        | Yes                               | None                            |
| Nevada.....                 | Biennial-odd year | Feb.                                | 1st Mon.                                       | 120 C                                 | By petition, 2/3 members, each house        | Yes (aa)                          | 20 C (aa)                       |
| New Hampshire....           | Annual            | Jan.                                | Wed. after 1st Tues.                           | 45 L                                  | By petition, (xx)                           | Yes                               | 15 L (bb)                       |
| New Jersey.....             | Biennium          | Jan.                                | 2nd Tues. of even year                         | None                                  | By petition, majority, each house (cc)      | Yes                               | None                            |
| New Mexico.....             | Annual            | Jan.                                | 3rd Tues.                                      | odd-60 C; even-30 C                   | By petition, 3/5 members, each house (l)    | Yes (l)                           | 30 C                            |
| New York.....               | Annual            | Jan. (dd)                           | Wed. after 1st Mon.                            | None                                  | By petition, 2/3 members, each house        | Yes (l)                           | None                            |
| North Carolina.....         | (ee)              | Jan.                                | 3rd Wed. after 2nd Mon. (odd-years)            | None                                  | By petition, 3/5 members, each house        | Yes                               | None                            |
| North Dakota.....           | Biennial-odd year | Jan.                                | First Tues. after the third day in Jan.        | 80 L in the biennium                  | No  | Yes                               | None                            |
| Ohio.....                   | Biennium          | Jan.                                | 1st Mon. (gg)                                  | None                                  | Joint call, presiding officers, both houses | Yes                               | None                            |
| Oklahoma.....               | Annual            | Feb.                                | 1st Mon.                                       | last Fri. in May                      | By petition, 2/3 members, each house        | Yes                               | None                            |
| Oregon.....                 | Annual            | Feb.                                | 1st Mon.                                       | (ff)                                  | By petition, majority, each house           | Yes                               | None                            |
| Pennsylvania.....           | Biennium (hh)     | Jan.                                | 1st Tues.                                      | None                                  | Governor may call                           | No                                | None                            |
| Rhode Island.....           | Annual            | Jan.                                | 1st Tues.                                      | None                                  | Joint call, presiding officers, both houses | Yes                               | None                            |
| South Carolina.....         | Biennium          | Jan.                                | 2nd Tues.                                      | (ii)                                  | By petition, 2/3 members, each house        | Yes                               | None                            |
| South Dakota.....           | Annual            | Jan.                                | 2nd Tues.                                      | odd-40 L; even-40 L                   | By petition, 2/3 members, each house        | Yes (jj)                          | None                            |
| Tennessee.....              | Biennium (kk)     | Jan.                                | 2nd Tues.                                      | 90 L (ll)                             | By petition, 2/3 members, each house        | Yes                               | 30 L (ll)                       |
| Texas.....                  | Biennial-odd year | Jan.                                | 2nd Tues.                                      | 140 C                                 | No  | No                                | 30 C                            |
| Utah.....                   | Annual            | Jan.                                | 4th Mon.                                       | 45 C                                  | No  | No                                | 30 C                            |
| Vermont.....                | Annual (yy)       | Jan.                                | Wed. after 1st Mon. (yy)                       | None                                  | No  | Yes                               | None                            |
| Virginia.....               | Annual            | Jan.                                | 2nd Wed.                                       | odd-30 C (i); even-60 C (i)           | (tt)  | Yes                               | None (mm)                       |
| Washington.....             | Annual            | Jan.                                | 2nd Mon.                                       | odd-105 C; even-60 C                  | By vote, 2/3 members, each house            | Yes                               | 30 C                            |
| West Virginia.....          | Annual            | Jan.                                | 2nd Wed.                                       | 60 C (i)                              | By petition, 3/5 members, each house        | Yes (l)                           | None                            |
| Wisconsin.....              | Biennium          | Jan.                                | 1st Mon.                                       | None                                  | (nn)  | No                                | None                            |
| Wyoming.....                | Biennium          | Jan. (odd yrs.)<br>Feb. (even yrs.) | 2nd Tues. (odd-years)<br>2nd Mon. (even-years) | odd-40 L; even-20 L;<br>biennium-60 L | By petition, majority members, each house   | Yes                               | 20 L (aaa)                      |
| Dist. of Columbia..         | (oo)              | Jan.                                | 2nd day  | None                                  | ...   | ...                               | ...                             |
| American Samoa...           | Annual            | Jan.                                | 2nd Mon.                                       | 45 L                                  | No  | No                                | None                            |
| Guam.....                   | (pp)              | Jan.                                | 2nd Mon.                                       | None (pp)                             | Only the governor may call                  | No                                | None (pp)                       |

See footnotes at end of table.

LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS: LEGAL PROVISIONS — Continued

| State or other jurisdiction | Regular sessions |           |                      | Special sessions                    |   |                                 |
|-----------------------------|------------------|-----------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
|                             | Year             | Month     | Legislature convenes | Limitation on length of session (a) | Legislature may call                            | Limitation on length of session |
| No. Mariana Islands         | Annual           | (rr)      | (d)(tr)              | 90 L (qq)                           | Upon request of presiding officers, both houses | Yes (l) 10 C                    |
| Puerto Rico                 | Annual (rr)      | Jan. Aug. | 2nd Mon. 3rd Mon.    | 5 mo. 4 mo.                         | No  | No 20 C                         |
| U.S. Virgin Islands         | Annual           | Jan. (ss) | 2nd Mon. (ss)        | None                                | No, governor calls                              | No None                         |

Source: The Council of State Governments survey January 2017.

Key:

- (a) Annual—holds legislative sessions every year.
- (b) Biennial-odd year—holds legislative sessions every other year.
- (c) Biennium—holds legislative sessions in a two-year term of activity.
- C—Calendar day
- L—Legislative day (in some states called a session day or workday; definition may vary slightly, however, generally refers to any day on which either house of legislature is in session).
- (a) Applies to each year unless otherwise indicated.
- (b) General election year (quadrennial election year).
- (c) In first year after quadrennial election.
- (d) Legal provision for organizational session prior to stated convening date. Alabama—in the year after quadrennial election, second Tuesday in January for 10 C. California—in the even-numbered general election year, first Monday in December for an organizational session, recess until the first Monday in January of the odd-numbered year. No. Mariana Islands—in year after general election, second Monday in January.
- (e) In second and third years of quadrennium.
- (f) By 2/3 vote each house.
- (g) Convening date is statutory. Length of session is 121 calendar days, 90 by statute.
- (h) No constitutional or statutory provision; however, by legislative rule regular sessions shall be adjourned sine die no later than Saturday of the week during which the 100th day from the beginning of each regular session falls. The Speaker/President may by declaration authorize the extension of the session for a period not to exceed seven additional days. Thereafter the session can be extended only by a majority vote of the House/Senate.
- (i) Session may be extended by vote of members in both houses. Arkansas—2/3 vote to extend up to 75 days; 3/4 vote to go beyond 75 days. Even year fiscal session may be extended one-time only by a 3/4 vote, with the extension no more than 15 C days. Florida—3/5 vote, session may be extended by vote of members in each house. Hawaii—petition of 2/3 membership for maximum 15-day extension. Kansas—2/3 vote. Virginia—2/3 vote for 30 C extension. West Virginia—may be extended by the governor.
- (j) After governor's business has been disposed of, members may remain in session up to 15C days by a 2/3 vote of both houses.
- (k) Regular sessions begin after general election, in December of even-numbered year. In California, in the even-numbered general election year, first Monday in December for an organizational session, recess until the first Monday in January of the odd-numbered year.
- (l) Only if legislature convenes itself. In New York, special sessions may also be called by the governor. Legislature may determine subject only if it has convened itself. In New Mexico, special sessions may only be called by the governor and subjects are limited to issues included in governor's proclamation; extraordinary session may only be called by the legislature and have no limitations on subject.
- (m) Odd-numbered years—not later than Wednesday after first Monday in June; even-numbered years not later than Wednesday after first Monday in May.

- (n) Adoption of a joint resolution by a majority of each house.
- (o) A regular session of the legislature shall convene on the first Tuesday after the first Monday of each odd-numbered year, and on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March, or such other date as may be fixed by law, of each even-numbered year.
- (p) If three-fifths of the General Assembly certifies to governor that an emergency exists, governor must convene a special session for all purposes.
- (q) Constitution encourages adjournment by May 31.
- (r) Legislators may reconvene at any time after organizational meeting; however, second Monday in January is the final date by which regular session must be in process.
- (s) During the odd-year session, the members convene for four days, then break until February.
- (t) Regular session begins after general election in even-numbered years. Session which begins in December of general election year runs into the following year (odd-numbered); second session begins in next even-numbered year. The second session is limited to budgetary matters; legislation in the governor's call; emergency legislation; legislation referred to committee for study.
- (u) Statutory adjournment for the First Regular Session (beginning in December of June; statutory years and continuing into the following odd-numbered year) is the third Wednesday of June; statutory adjournment for the Second Regular Session (beginning in January of the subsequent even-numbered year) is the third Wednesday in April. The statutes provide for up to two extensions of up to five legislative days each for each session.
- (v) Legislative rules say formal business must be concluded by Nov. 15th of the 1st session in the biennium, or by July 31st of the 2nd session for the biennium.
- (w) Joint rules provide for the submission of a written statement requesting special session by a specified number of members of each chamber.
- (x) Special session is called by the governor.
- (y) 90 C sessions every year, except the first year of a gubernatorial administration during which the legislative session runs for 125 C.
- (z) 30 C. If called by legislature; 60 C if called by governor.

- (aa) Legislature may determine the subject if it calls itself into special session. Special sessions are limited to 20 calendar days except in cases of impeachment of state and judicial officers or expulsion of a member of the Legislature.
- (bb) Limitation is on legislative pay and mileage.
- (cc) Or by joint call, presiding officers, both houses.
- (dd) Session officially begins on the first Wednesday following the first Monday of the new legislative term (commencing the first of the year), and lasts until the legislature completes its business and adjourns sine die. However, over the past several years, both houses have adopted the tactic of declaring a recess at the call of the leaders, in order to facilitate easy recall of the legislature to override vetoes, etc. Over time the custom has become to formally adjourn both houses just before the new session opens. This leads to the rather interesting convention that when the governor calls the legislature into session, it is considered "special" or "executive," even though the regular session is ongoing.

**LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS: LEGAL PROVISIONS — Continued**

- (ee) Legal provision for session in odd-numbered year; however, legislature may divide, and in practice has divided, to meet in even-numbered years as well.
- (ff) The Oregon Constitution establishes a maximum of 160 calendar days for an odd-year regular session and a maximum of 35 calendar days for an even-year regular session. Each regular session may be extended in five-day increments by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members of each house.
- (gg) Unless Monday is a legal holiday, in second year, the General Assembly convenes on the same date.
- (hh) Sessions are two years and begin on the 1st Tuesday of January of the odd-numbered year. Session ends on November 30 of the even-numbered year. Each calendar year receives its own legislative number.
- (ii) The regular session ends the first Thursday in June; it can be extended with a two-thirds majority vote.
- (jj) Legislators must address topic for which the special session was called.
- (kk) Each General Assembly convenes for a First and Second Regular Session over a two-year period.
- (ll) 90 legislative days over a two-year period. During special sessions members will be paid up to 30 legislative days; further days will be without pay or per diem.
- (mm) No limitation, but the convening of the new General Assembly following an election would by operation end the special session.
- (nn) The Legislature may call itself into Extraordinary Session on any subject by a majority vote of the organizing committees of each house, by joint resolution, or by a petition of a majority of each house. Only the governor may call a special session.
- (oo) Each Council period begins on January 2 of each odd-numbered year and ends on January 1 of the following odd-numbered year.
- (pp) Legislature meets on the first Monday of each month following its initial session in January. One legislative day or one special session day may become several calendar days. Special sessions may address only one subject.
- (qq) 60 L before April 1 and 30 L after July 31.

- (rr) Legislature meets twice a year. During general election years, the legislature only convenes on the January session.
- (ss) The legislature convenes in January on the second Monday, March, June and September, the third Wednesday.
- (tt) The Constitution provides that the governor must call a special session upon "application" of 2/3 of the members of each house.
- (uu) Governor may call both houses of the legislature or the Senate alone into special session. Also, upon a 2/3 affirmative vote, the Senate may call itself into special session to consider judicial nominations.
- (vv) If the first Monday falls on New Years Day, the Legislature convenes on the first Wednesday.
- (ww) Majority of the total Legislature; i.e., 76 members of the combined 100-member House and 50-member Senate.
- (xx) Petition filed with Secretary of State signed by not less than 50 members of House (not more than 10 from the same county) and not less than eight members of the Senate.
- (yy) Constitutionally the session are convened biennially in the odd year. Since the late 1960s a second year adjourned session has been held. A djourned session date is legislatively set ofr a date during the first 10 days of January.
- (zz) Session may be extended by 3/5 vote Per s. 11.01 1, Florida Statutes, if 20 percent of the members of the Legislature certify in writing that conditions warrant convening a special session, the Department of State shall, within seven days after receiving the required number of certificates, poll the members. Upon affirmative vote of 3/5 of the members of both houses, the Department of State shall fix the day and hour for convening the special session.
- (aaa) Twenty legislative days if Legislature calls themselves. Unlimited if governor calls special session.
- (bbb) No formal limitation, but legislator per diems are limited by statute to 110 calander days during odd-year sessions and 100 calendar days during even-year sessions.