

1. WHAT IS THE LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURE FOR AN ORDINARY BILL? BRIEFLY REVIEW THE STAGES THROUGH WHICH IT BECOMES AN ACT?

A bill other than Money Bill or financial bills may be introduced in either House of Parliament (107 (1)) and requires passage in both Houses before it can be presented for the President's assent. A Bill may be introduced either by a minister or by a private member.

After a Bill has been introduced or on some subsequent occasion, the member in charge of the Bill may make one of the following motions in regard to the Bill, viz.

That it can be taken into consideration,

That it can be referred to a Select Committee

That it can be referred to a Joint Committee of the House with the concurrence of the other House

That it can be circulated for the purpose of eliciting public opinion thereon.

On the day which any of the aforesaid motions is made or on any subsequent date to which the discussion is postponed, the principles of the Bill and its general provisions may be discussed. Amendments to the Bill and clause by clause consideration of the provisions of the Bill take place when the motion that the Bill be taken into consideration is carried.

A Select Committee of the House considers the Provisions of the Bill. After the Select Committee has considered the Bill, it submits its report to the House and after the Report is received, a motion that the Bill as returned by the Select Committee be taken into consideration lies. When such a motion is carried, the clauses of the Bill are open to consideration and amendments are admissible.

When motion that the Bill be taken into consideration has been carried and no amendment of the Bill has been made or after the amendments are over, the Member in charge may move that the Bill be passed.

When a Bill is passed in one House, it is transmitted to the other House. When the Bill is received in the other House it undergoes all the stages as in the originating House subsequent to its introduction. The House which receives the Bill from another House can, therefore, take either of the following courses.

It may reject the bill altogether. In such a case as per the provisions of Article 108 (1) a joint sitting may be summoned by the President. It may pass the Bill with amendments. In this case, the Bill will be returned to the originating House. If the House which originated the Bill accepts the Bill as amended by the other House, it will be presented to the President for his assent. If however the originating House does not agree to the amendments made by the other House and there is final disagreement as to the amendments between the two Houses, the President may summon a joint sitting to remove the deadlock.

It may take no action on the Bill, i.e. keep it lying on the table. In such a case if more than six months elapse from the date of reception of the Bill, the President may summon a joint sitting.

When a bill has been passed by both Houses of Parliament either singly or at joint sitting the bill is presented to the President for his assent. If the President withholds his assent, there is an end to the Bill. If the President gives his assent, the Bill becomes an Act from the date of his assent. Instead of either refusing assent or giving assent, the President may return the bill for reconsideration of the Houses with a message requesting them to reconsider it. If, however, the Houses pass the Bill again with or without amendments and the Bill is transmitted to the President for his assent after such reconsideration, the President is bound to give his assent to the bill.



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