

N.C. LEGISLATIVE BIENNIAL BUDGET PROCESS

2025 — “Long session” of General Assembly

(odd-numbered years)

By law, this process should be **completed by July 1**, which marks the beginning of the next fiscal year.

When the General Assembly fails to meet this deadline, in the absence of a budget, current spending levels and authority continue in order to avoid a State government shutdown.

START

Governor releases budget plan - mid-to-late spring 2025

PRESENT TO LEGISLATURE

Office of State and Budget Management and other state agencies detail Governor's budget plan

Typically includes goals for state employee compensation

HOUSE DEVELOPS AND RATIFIES ITS OWN BUDGET, SENDING IT TO THE SENATE

Can take several weeks due to more members in the House (120 vs 50 in the Senate)

SENATE REVIEWS HOUSE BUDGET AND RATIFIES ITS OWN VERSION, SENDING IT BACK TO THE HOUSE

CHAMBERS VOTE TO “GO TO CONFERENCE” & WORK OUT DIFFERENCES

Speaker of the NC House of Representatives and President Pro Tempore of the NC Senate appoint members from each chamber

CONFERENCE REPORT ISSUED

Agreement on the budget that cannot be amended, which receives an “up or down” vote from both chambers

GOVERNOR'S OPTION

NO

YES

SEND BACK TO THE LEGISLATURE WITH VETO

Legislature can elect to ratify smaller budget bills in hopes of avoiding some of the pitfalls of the greater budget that was already vetoed. These mini-bills can be defeated in the legislative session and vetoed by the Governor

SIGNS CONFERENCE REPORT BUDGET INTO LAW

Governor can allow bill to become law by not signing it within 10 days

2026 — “Short session” of General Assembly

(even-numbered years)

START

Both chambers return - late spring 2026

Both chambers tweak budget based on new revenues and other factors

END SHORT SESSION