Any legislator from either the House or Senate can sponsor a bill to amend Vermont law. The bill is assigned a number and then introduced on the floor of the sponsor’s chamber during first reading.

Upon first reading, the bill is referred to a standing committee of the chamber based on the bill’s subject matter. The bill may be subsequently committed to other committees based on its subject matter.

If the committee decides to pursue the bill, the committee may take testimony on and recommend amendments to it. Committee votes on any amendments and whether to pass the bill out of committee are taken by majority vote.

Third reading happens the legislative day after second reading and it is another chance for members of the chamber to propose amendments and debate the bill. After voting on any amendments and then reading the bill a third time, the chamber votes by majority vote on whether the bill should pass.

If both chambers agree on a final version of the bill, the bill passes and it is sent to the Governor who normally will sign it into law, allow it to become law without his or her signature, or veto it. If the bill is vetoed, the House and Senate may override the veto by a two-thirds vote in each chamber.

Once the Governor signs the bill into law or allows it to become law without his or her signature, or if the chambers successfully override the Governor’s veto, the bill becomes an official law of Vermont and is assigned an act number.

For more information on Vermont’s legislative process, see “Vermont’s Legislative Process” by the Clerk of the House, http://www.leg.state.vt.us/HouseClerk/Vermont%20Legislative%20Process.htm