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**FUNCTION AND COMPOSITION****§ 7.1. General Assembly vested with legislative power.**

The legislative power of the Commonwealth is vested in the General Assembly.

**§ 7.2. Composition of General Assembly.**

The General Assembly consists of a:

- (1) Senate, composed of 50 Senators elected for terms of four years beginning on the first day of December next after their election. One-half of the Senators are elected every two years.

(2) House of Representatives, composed of 203 Representatives elected for terms of two years beginning on the first day of December next after their election.

### § 7.3. Qualification of members.

Senators must be at least 25 years of age and Representatives at least 21 years of age. They must have been citizens and inhabitants of this Commonwealth four years, and inhabitants of their respective districts one year, next before their election (unless absent on the public business of the Commonwealth or the United States), and must reside in their respective districts during their terms of service.

### § 7.4. Presiding officers.

(a) *Senate.*—The Lieutenant Governor is the President of the Senate and presides while the Senate is in session. He may vote in case of a tie on any question except the final passage of a bill or joint resolution, the adoption of a conference report or the concurrence in amendments made by the House. The President pro tempore performs the duties of the Lieutenant Governor in case of his absence or disability.

(b) *House.*—The House elects one of its members as Speaker who presides while the House is in session and may vote on any matter. The Speaker of the House may appoint a Speaker pro tempore to perform the duties of the Speaker in case of his absence.

## COMMITTEES

### § 7.11. Standing committees.

There are standing committees in both the Senate and the House with subcommittees within most standing committees. These committees are the workshops of the General Assembly. It is their duty to study carefully the bills and resolutions referred to them and to prepare bills and resolutions which are to be reported with favorable recommendation to their respective houses. Infrequently, bills and resolutions are reported with unfavorable recommendations.

### § 7.12. Special or select committees.

Special or select committees and joint committees are established from time to time to conduct studies and investigations and to perform other duties and functions assigned to them by either house or both houses. The President pro tempore appoints the members of special or select committees in the Senate when authorized by the Senate and the Speaker of the House appoints the members of special or select committees in the House.

**§ 7.13. Conference committees.**

Conference committees, consisting of members of both houses, are established to resolve differences existing between the houses concerning bills. The President pro tempore appoints three members to comprise a committee of conference on the part of the Senate, two from the majority party and one from the minority party. The Speaker of the House appoints three members to comprise a committee of conference on the part of the House, two from the majority party and one from the minority party.

**SESSIONS****§ 7.21. Regular sessions.**

(a) *When held.*—The General Assembly is a continuing body during the term for which its Representatives are elected which begins on December 1 of each even-numbered year and ends at the expiration of November 30 of the next even-numbered year. Regular sessions are held annually and begin at 12 noon on the first Tuesday of January of each year. The regular session held in odd-numbered years is referred to as the first regular session and the regular session held in even-numbered years is referred to as the second regular session.

(b) *Matters considered.*—There is no limitation as to the matters which may be considered during a regular session. All matters pending before the General Assembly upon the adjournment sine die or expiration of a first regular session maintain their status and are pending before the second regular session.

**§ 7.22. Special and extraordinary sessions.**

(a) *When held.*—Special sessions must be called by the Governor on petition of a majority of the members elected to each house or may be called by the Governor whenever in his opinion the public interest requires. The Governor also may convene the Senate in extraordinary session by proclamation for the transaction of executive business.

(b) *Matters considered.*—No legislation may be considered during a special session upon subjects other than those designated in the proclamation of the Governor calling such session. However, the General Assembly may consider matters relating to such subjects and may propose amendments to the Constitution.

**§ 7.23. Weekly sessions.**

(a) *Senate.*—The Senate convenes its weekly sessions on Monday unless the Senate directs otherwise. Where a motion to adjourn which does not contain a reconvening time is adopted, the Senate meets the next day at 10 a.m.

(b) *House.*—The House convenes on the first legislative day of the week at 1 p.m. and on other days at the discretion of the House, and adjourns not later than 11 p.m., unless otherwise ordered by a majority of members elected to the House.

**§ 7.24. Adjournments and recesses.**

(a) *Exceeding three days.*—Neither house may, without the consent of the other house, adjourn for more than 3 days. Such an adjournment is accomplished by the adoption of a concurrent resolution. Where the time for reconvening is subsequent to the beginning of the following week, the adjournment is generally referred to as a recess and sometimes made subject to reconvening at an earlier date at the call of the presiding officer of each house.

(b) *Sine die.*—When the General Assembly finally adjourns any regular or special session, such adjournment is referred to as an adjournment sine die and is accomplished by a concurrent resolution.

(c) *Disagreement in special sessions.*—In case of disagreement between the two houses with respect to the time of adjournment of a special session, the Governor may adjourn them to such time, not exceeding four months, as he thinks proper.

**RULES AND RECORDS OF PROCEEDINGS**

**§ 7.31. Rules of procedure.**

Each house has the power to determine the rules of its proceedings and adopts such rules at the beginning of each regular and special session.

**§ 7.32. Parliamentary authority.**

Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure is the parliamentary authority of the Senate and Jefferson's Manual, supplemented by Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure, is the parliamentary authority of the House if applicable and not inconsistent with the Constitution or laws of Pennsylvania or the rules and rulings of the respective house.

**§ 7.33. Journals.**

Each house must keep a journal of its proceedings and from time to time publish the same except such parts as require secrecy. When printed, the journal is placed upon the desks of the members and is approved with any corrections which may be required.

**§ 7.34. Histories.**

A history of Senate and House bills, usually updated weekly, listing bills and resolutions and actions thereon in each house, is compiled, indexed, printed and placed upon the desks of the members.

**§ 7.35. Calendars.**

Bills and resolutions reported from committees and certain other matters for consideration are listed on a daily calendar in each house and placed upon the desks of the members. Occasionally, supplemental calendars are prepared for consideration of matters not listed on the daily calendar.

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