



MASSACHUSETTS
MEDICAL SOCIETY

Every physician matters, each patient counts.

Physician Grassroots Advocacy

Massachusetts State Legislative & Regulatory Overview, 2023-24



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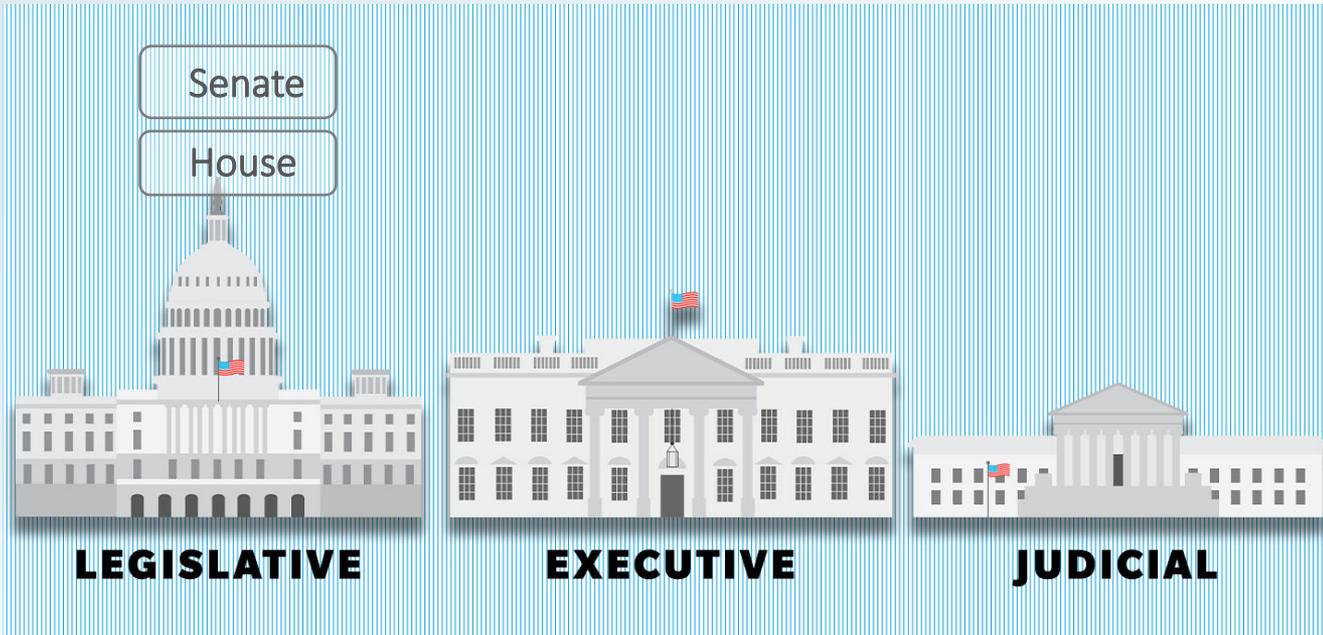
Massachusetts State Government 101



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Three Branches of Government





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The Massachusetts Legislature



Structure of the Legislature

Senate

Upper House
40 Senators

Senate Leadership:

Senate President: Karen Spilka (D- Ashland)

Majority Leader: Cynthia Stone Creem (D-
Newton)

Senate Ways & Means Chair: Michael R.
Rodrigues (D-Somerset)

Minority Leader: Bruce Tarr (R- Gloucester)

House of Representatives

Lower House
160 Representatives

House Leadership:

Speaker: Ronald Mariano (D-Quincy)

Majority Leader: Mike Moran (D- Boston)

House Ways & Means Chair: Aaron Michlewitz (D-
Boston)

Minority Leader: Brad Jones (R-North Reading)

MA Legislative Cycle

Length of session: 2 Years

Elections take place in November of even-numbered years

Important Dates (2023-2024 Session)

- January 4, 2023 - Formal session began
- January 20, 2023 - Deadline to file bills
- November 15, 2023 - Last day of formal session year 1
- February 7, 2024 - Deadline to move bills out of first committee (Joint Rule 10)
- July 31, 2024 - Last day of formal session year 2

GET TO KNOW YOUR LEGISLATORS

FIND YOUR LEGISLATOR:

Knowing who represents you in the Legislature is an important first step in becoming an effective Physician Advocate.

Identify your State Representative and State Senator here:

<https://malegislature.gov/Search/FindMyLegislator>

Info you can find:

- Contact info
- Bills sponsored & cosponsored
- Committee appointments
- District information
- Biographical info

Find My Legislator

Find your legislator by entering your street address, city/town, and ZIP code. Please note that you can only search addresses within Massachusetts, and that not entering the complete street address, city/town, and ZIP code may result in an inaccurate response.

Street Address

City/Town

ZIP Code

Committees

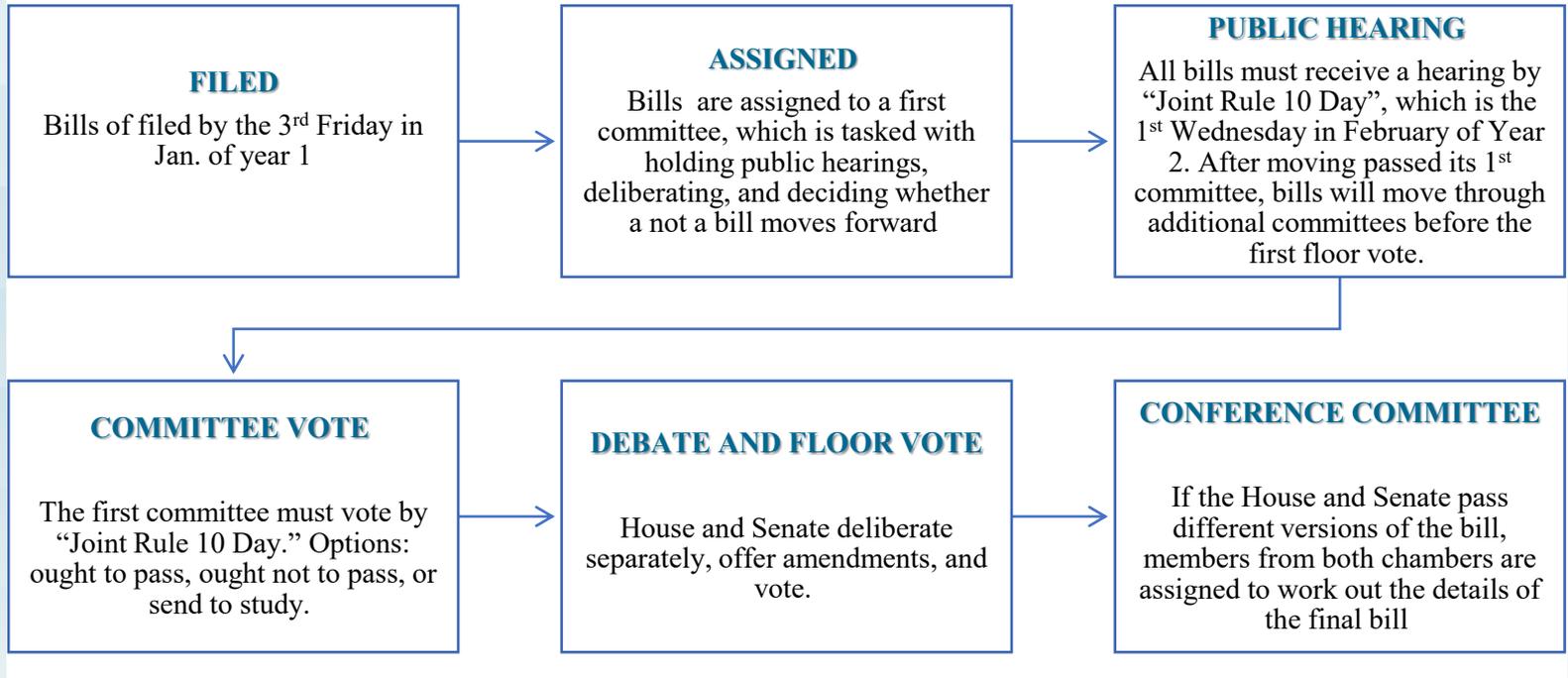
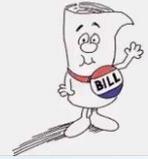
2 Types: Standing Committees (members of only one branch) and **Joint Committees** (members of both branches)

Committees are assigned members at the beginning of each session by the Speaker and Senate President. This is an important step in the legislative session because it allows us as advocates to better understand who holds positions of power on Beacon Hill.

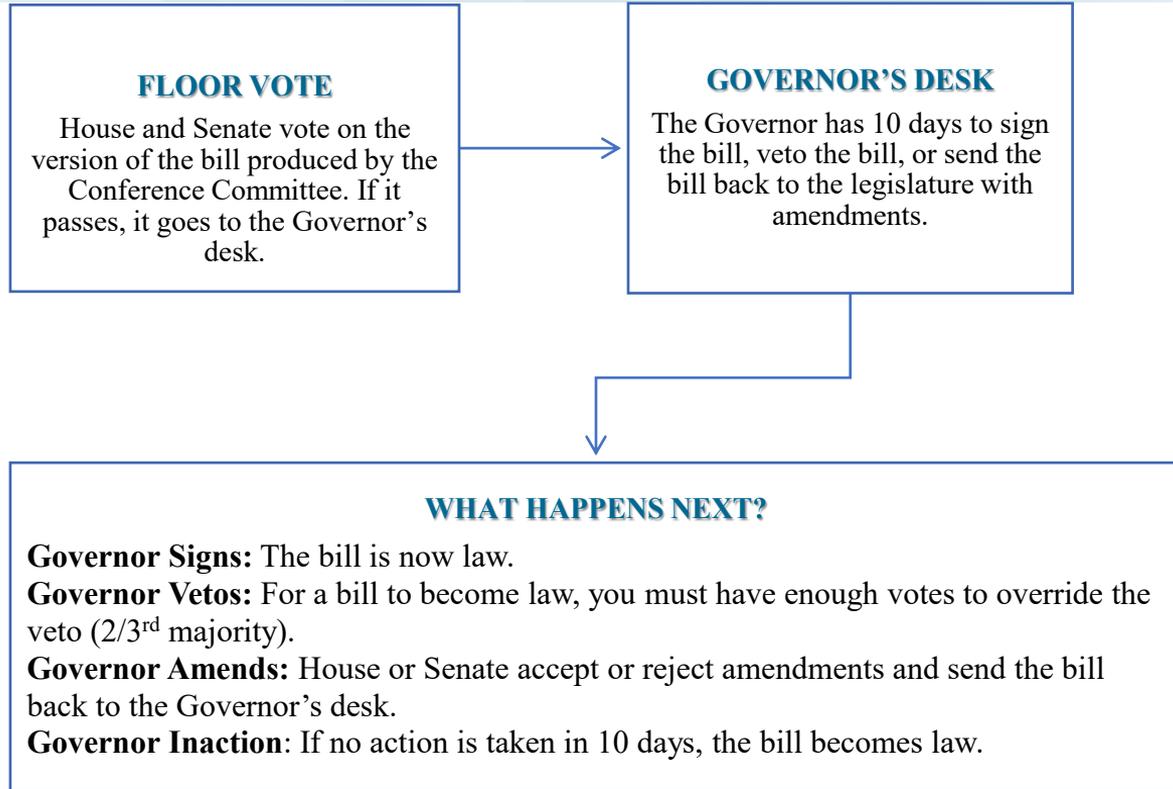
Some committees tasked with MMS priority bills:

- Joint Committee on Health Care Financing
- Joint Committee on Public Health
- Joint Committee on Financial Services
- Joint Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use and Recovery

How a Bill Becomes Law



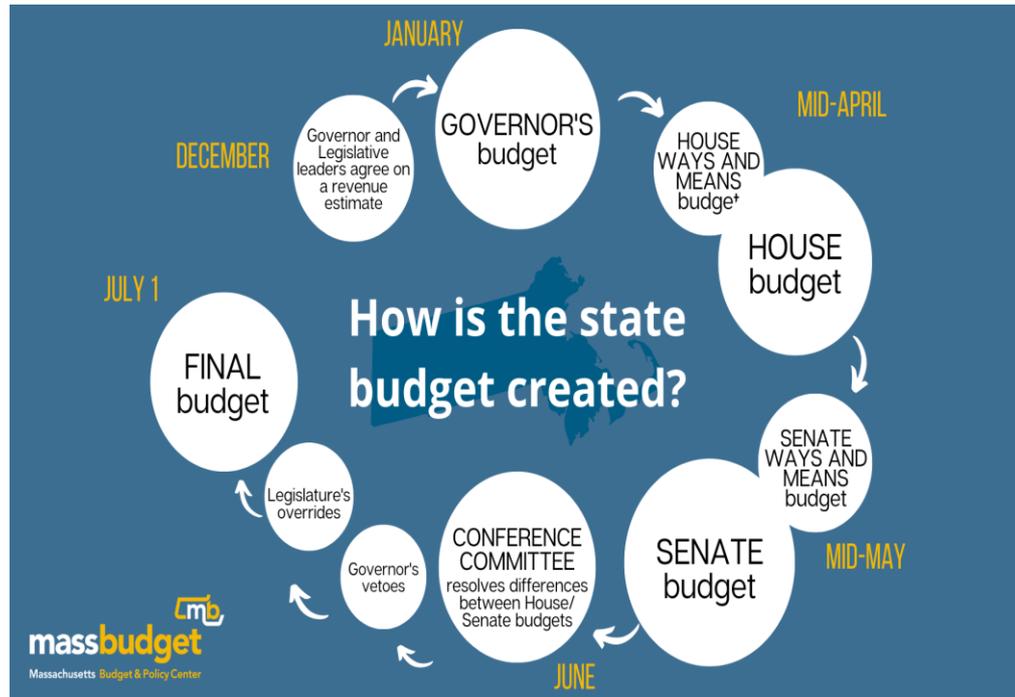
How a Bill Becomes Law



STATE BUDGET BASICS

BUDGET ADVOCACY

- The state budget is single largest piece of legislation passed each year. The budget allocates funding on a wide variety of programs, services, and initiatives and often includes policy initiatives as "outside sections".
- The budget process begins in January with the Governor's budget proposal and concludes on July 1 when the House and Senate craft a "final budget."
- Each stage of the budget process is an opportunity to engage in advocacy on public health/health care spending and policy.
- The MMS submits letters outlining our budget priorities to the Governor, House, and Senate each year.



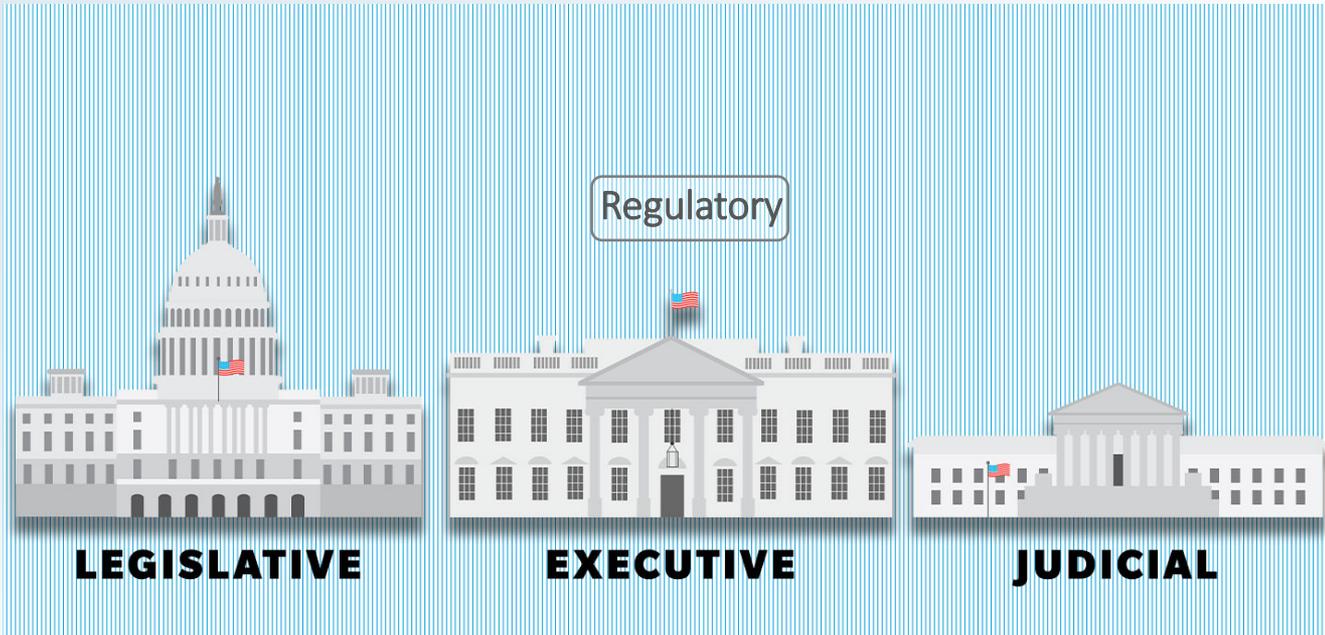
[Learn more about the state budget process here.](#)



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The Massachusetts Executive



Executive Term & Function

Length of Term: 4 Years

Elections take place in November of every other even-numbered year (2022, 2026)

Executive Powers

Enforcement – The Administration and its various agencies implement and enforce the laws passed by the legislature.

Budget – Governor must propose a budget for the next fiscal year within 3 weeks after the Legislature convenes, which generally translates into the *4th Wednesday of January*.

Veto – Once a bill has reached his or her desk, the governor has 10 days to sign the bill or veto it.

Executive Offices, Constitutionals & Independents

All Three are Considered Part of the Executive Branch

Executive Offices

Governor exercises direct oversight and control.

Governor appoints:

- Secretaries of the executive offices,
- heads of departments
- Heads of agencies.

Constitutional Offices

Elected independently by the voters and are not subject to the Governor's oversight.

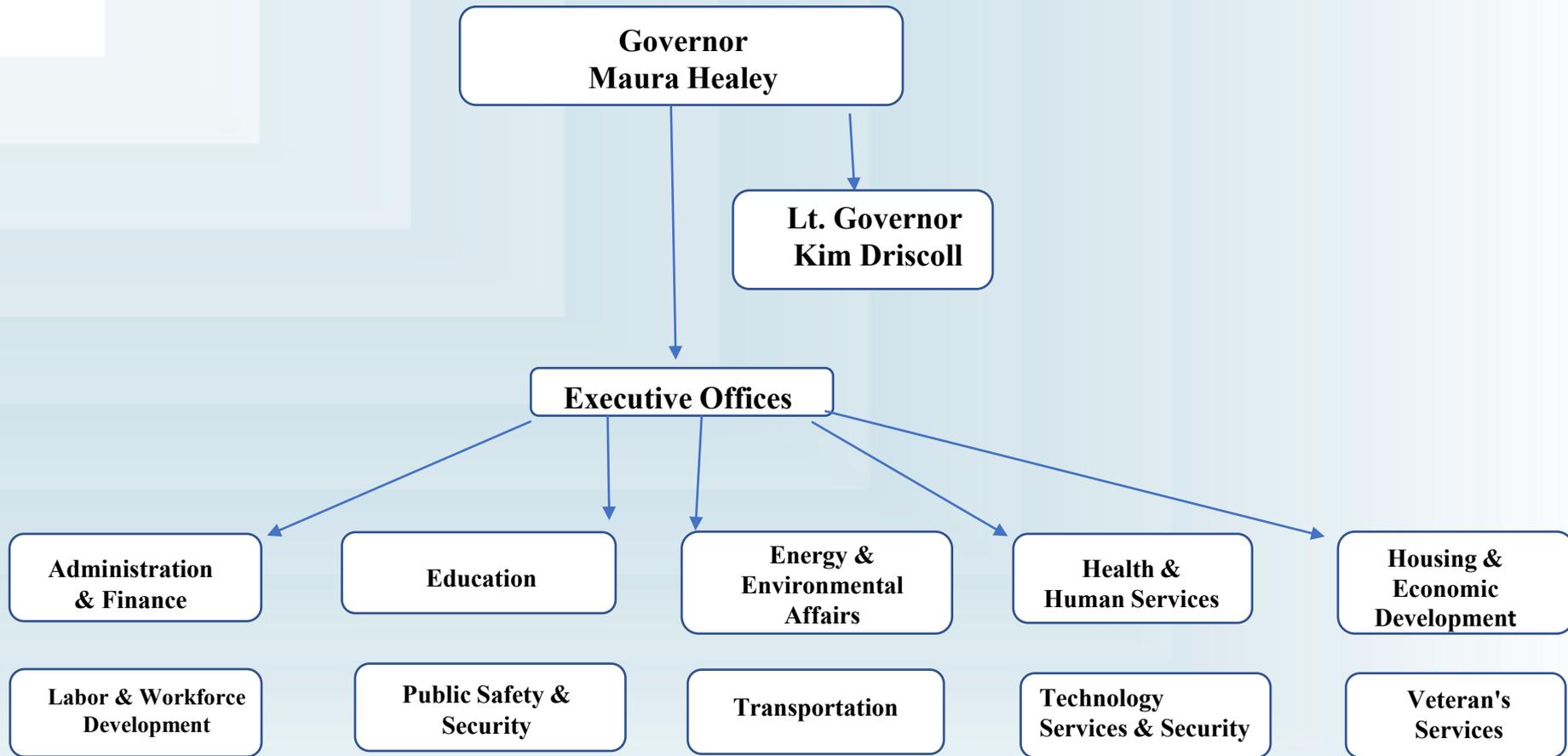
Examples:

- Attorney General
- Secretary of State
- Treasurer

Independent Agencies & Authorities

Created by the legislature and placed outside the direct oversight and control of the Governor.

Often overseen by a board, where Governor may have power to appoint some members.



GET TO KNOW YOUR HEALTH AGENCIES

Executive Office of Health & Human Services **Secretary Kate Walsh**

- **Department of Public Health**
- **Department of Mental Health**
- **Department of Developmental Services**
- **Governor's Commission on Mental Retardation**
- **Massachusetts Commission for the Blind**
- **Massachusetts Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing**
- **Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission**
- **Office of Medicaid (MassHealth)**
- **Office of Elder Affairs**
 - **Division of Medical Assistance Long Term Care Services**
 - **Prescription Advantage Program**

Executive Office of Veteran's Services **Secretary Jon Santiago**

- **Department of Veteran's Services**
- **Chelsea & Holyoke Soldiers Homes**

Department of Public Health

Commissioner Dr. Robert Goldstein

(Under Executive Office of Health & Human Services)

- Board of Registration in Medicine
- Bureau of Community Health and Prevention
- Bureau of Environmental Health
- Bureau of Family Health & Nutrition
- Bureau of Health Care Safety & Quality
- Bureau of Health Professions Licensure
- Bureau of Public Health Hospitals
- Bureau of Infectious Disease & Laboratory Sciences
- Bureau of Substance Addiction Services
- Office of Data Management & Outcomes Assessment
- Office of Health Equity
- Office of Local and Regional Health
- Office of Population Health
- Office of Preparedness and Emergency Management
- Office of Problem Gambling Services
- Privacy and Data Compliance Office
- Public Health Council
- Purchase of Service Office
- Registry of Vital Records and Statistics

Health Policy Commission (HPC)

Executive Director David Seltz

Independent Agency

Mission: to advance a more transparent, accountable, and equitable health care system through its independent policy leadership and innovative investment programs.

Key Activities

- Set annual health care cost growth benchmark
- Study & report on specific areas (e.g. telehealth)
- Monitoring provider and payer performance relative to the health care cost growth benchmark;
- Analyzing the impact of health care market transactions on cost, quality, and access;

MMS Key Points of Contact

Dr. Ronald Dunlap – MMS representative on HPC Advisory Council

Center for Health Information & Analysis (CHIA)

Executive Director Lauren Peters

Independent Agency

Mission: be the agency of record for Massachusetts health care information, to responsibly steward sensitive and confidential data, and to objectively report reliable and meaningful information about the quality, affordability, utilization, access, and outcomes of the Massachusetts health care system.

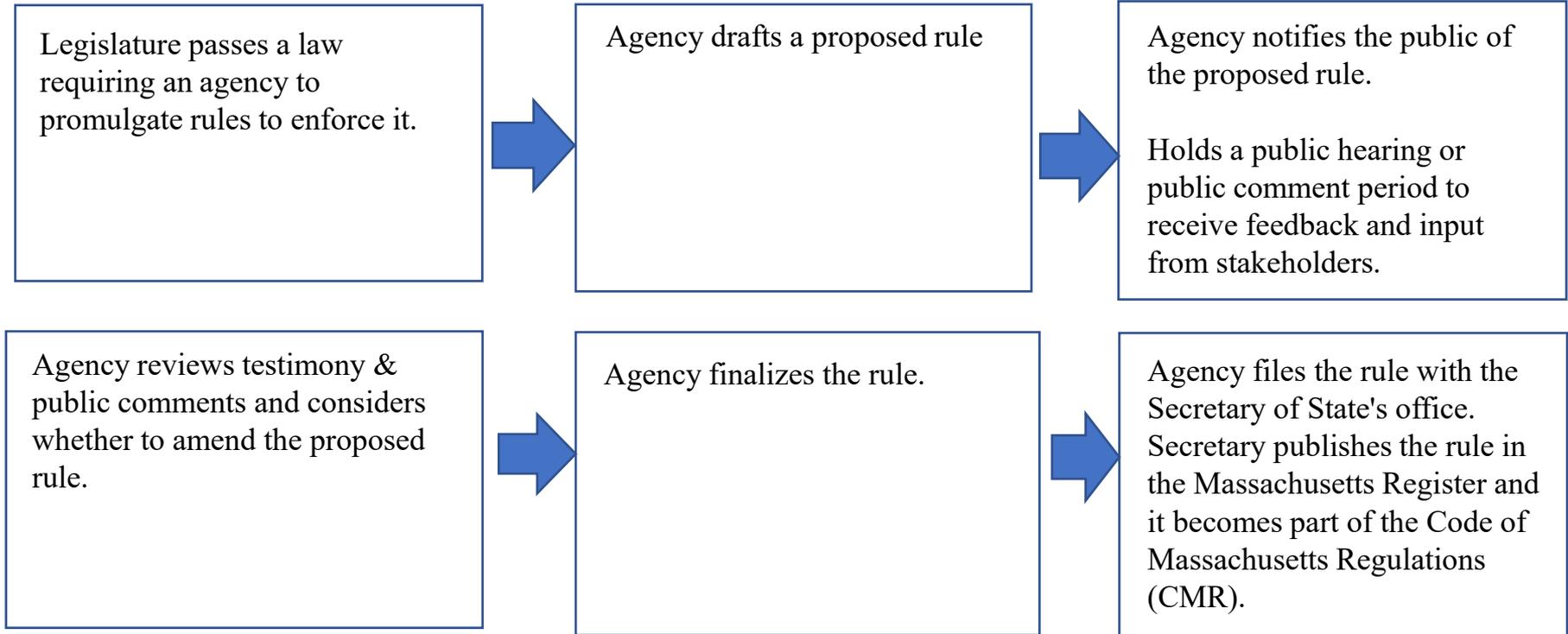
Key Activities

- Annual Report on the Performance of the Massachusetts Health Care System (informs HPC's cost growth benchmark).
- Targeted reports on specific issues
- Annual workforce survey – being developed with input from MMS

What are Regulations?

- Regulations set forth standards for public health and safety, licensing of professionals, consumer and environmental protection, and more.
- Regulations have the force and effect of law-like statutes.
- They are created and enforced by executive branch agencies, which are given the rulemaking authority by the legislature.

The Rulemaking Process



Any Questions?

Contact: advocacy@mms.org