

Budget Process Overview

The Governor's Budget is the result of a process that begins more than one year before the Budget becomes law. When presented to the Legislature on or before January 10 each year, the Governor's Budget incorporates revenue and expenditure estimates based upon the most current information available through early to mid-December. In the event the Governor would like to change the Budget presented to the Legislature, including adjustments resulting from changes in population, caseload, or enrollment estimates, the Department of Finance proposes adjustments to the Legislature during budget hearings through Finance Letters in the spring. In May, Finance submits revised revenue and expenditure estimates for both the current and budget years to the Legislature. This update process is referred to as the May Revision. Finance also prepares monthly economic and cash revenue updates during the fiscal year. The list below describes the key documents used in the budget process.

Title	Purpose	Prepared/Issued by	When
Budget Letters	Convey the Administration's guidelines for budget preparation to agencies and departments.	Governor/Finance	January through December
Budget Change Proposals	Documents that propose to modify or change the existing level of service, propose new programs, or remove existing programs.	Agencies and departments submit to Finance analysts for review.	August and September
Governor's Budget	Governor's proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year.	Governor/Finance	January 10
Governor's Budget Summary	A narrative summary of the Governor's proposed budget.	Governor/Finance	January 10
Budget Bill	Requests spending authorization to carry out the Governor's expenditure plan (serves as a legislative budget decision document).	Finance/Legislature	January 10
Multi-Year Projection	Estimated General Fund revenues and expenditures for the ensuing fiscal year and the three fiscal years thereafter, as required by Section 12.5 of Article IV of the California Constitution.	Finance	January, May, and Budget Enactment
Analysis of the Budget	Analysis of the Budget, including recommendations for changes to the Governor's Budget.	Legislative Analyst's Office	February
May Revision	Update of General Fund revenues, expenditures, and reserve estimates based on the latest economic forecast, and changes in population, caseload, or enrollment estimates.	Finance	Mid-May
Budget Act	The primary annual expenditure authorization, as approved by the Governor and Legislature, including a listing of the Governor's vetoes, if any.	Legislature/Governor	Late June or upon enactment of the Budget
Final Budget Summary	Update of the individual Budget Act items of appropriation, with changes by the Governor's vetoes, and includes certain budget summary schedules.	Finance	Summer/Fall
Final Change Book	Update of changes to the detailed fiscal information in the Governor's Budget.	Finance	Summer/Fall