

## House Member Filed vs. Non-Member and Senate Filed Matters

### Scope and Application

House Rule 27 applies to House Member-filed matters referred to joint committees.

House Rule 27 does not apply to Senate filed legislation (subject to Senate rules and scheduling; see Joint Rule 1D) or non-member filings (Governor, constitutional officers, agencies, etc.).

- Senate and non-member filings (Governor, constitutional officers, agencies, etc.) joint committee deadlines are governed by Joint Rule 10.
- Extension orders are adopted by the branch in which the matter was filed under Joint Rule 30.
- Joint Rule 1D determines the voting process (branch only for member-filed; full committee for non-member-filed).
- Senate-filed money bills are not subject to House Rule 27; polling and procedures follow Joint Rule 1D and Senate practice.

Note: House filed money bills remain subject to House Rule 27.

### Joint Rule 1D: Authority and Voting

- Member-filed matters: House Chairs poll for House Member-filed matters; Senate Chairs poll for Senate Member-filed matters.
- Hearings: Scheduled by agreement of the co-chairs under the joint committee's adopted or existing rules.
- Non-member matters: After both co-chairs agree to schedule a vote, the full joint committee (members of both branches) votes.
- Post engrossment referral: If a bill is engrossed by one branch and later recommitted by the other branch to a joint committee, the members of the recommitting branch vote in committee.

### House Rule 27: Reporting deadlines for House Member filed matters

**Category 1:** Heard “prior to the third Wednesday in December” (Tuesday, December 16, 2025)

- Initial 60 days: Count starts the day following the hearing.
- Chair extension (30 days): The House Chair may extend 30 days by notifying the Clerk's Office on or before Day 60.
- Beyond 90 days requires unanimous consent of the House via an extension order submitted by House member(s) of the joint committee. File in LAWS by Day 90. No extension orders may be adopted after March 18, 2026.
- Final report due the third Wednesday in March of the second annual session (March 18, 2026).

**Category 2:** Heard between the third Wednesday in December and the date that is 60 days prior to the third Wednesday in March (December 18, 2025 through January 17, 2026).

- Final report due 60 days after the hearing or the third Wednesday in March (March 18, 2026), whichever is later. No Chair 30 day extension and no unanimous consent extensions.

**Category 3:** Heard on or after the date that is 60 days prior to the third Wednesday in March (January 18, 2026).

- Final report due 60 days after the hearing. No Chair 30-day extension and no unanimous consent extensions.

### **When a report is late (House-filed only)**

- House Rule 27: “When the time within which joint standing committees are required to report has expired, all matters upon which no report has then been made shall forthwith be reported by the House Chair with a recommendation to study the matter.”.
- Implementation: Once the applicable deadline (60, 90, or House adopted extension order) expires, the House Chair shall file a study order forthwith.
- Filing Study Orders: Where appropriate, group bills by hearing date and use one order listing all items.

### **Recommittal after a study order (House-filed only)**

- If the House wishes to resume committee work, it may discharge a specific item from a study order and recommit with instructions (Under the provisions of Joint Rule 5 this will require Senate concurrence).

### **Committee specific provisions**

- Ways and Means: The General Appropriation Bill shall be reported not later than May 13, 2026 (second Wednesday in May). Supporting budget data shall be made available to members.
- Health Care Financing: Subject to the House-filed reporting deadlines above, with the standing session deadline that House-filed matters which receive a secondary reference to Health Care Financing after the third Wednesday in March (March 18, 2026) shall be reported no later than the last Wednesday in May (May 27, 2026).

### **Non-member legislation (Governor / constitutional officers / agencies)**

- Process requires both co-chairs’ agreement to schedule hearings and votes; full-committee votes required. Either co-chair can prevent advancement (Joint Rule 1D).
- Constitutional Amendments are subject to Article XLVIII of the Amendments to the Constitution and Joint Rule 23.
- Executive Reorganization Plans are subject to Joint Rule 23A.
- Initiative Petitions are subject to Article XLVIII of the Amendments to the Constitution.

### **Deadlines (Joint Rule 10)**

- First Wednesday in December of the first year (December 3, 2025) for matters referred before October 1, 2025.
- 60-day rolling deadline for matters referred on or after October 1, 2025 (measured from the date of referral, not the hearing date).

### **Second-year session deadlines:**

- Joint Rule 10 Health Care Financing second-year deadline applies to referrals on or before the fourth Wednesday in December of the first annual session; otherwise, 60 days from referral.
- Health Care Financing: Last Wednesday in January (January 28, 2026) for referrals on/before December 24, 2025; otherwise, 60 days from referral.

### **Senate-filed legislation**

- Scheduling and polling administered by the Senate Chair under Joint Rule 1D; deadlines governed by Senate rules. House Rule 27 does not apply.
- Senate-filed money bills require bicameral cooperation under Joint Rule 1D and are not subject to House Rule 27.

### **Key session dates (194th: 2025–2026)**

- September 30, 2025: Last day before the Joint Rule 10 (for non-House-member filed matters) October 1 referral threshold.
- October 1, 2025: Joint Rule 10 (for non-House-member filed matters) 60 day rolling deadlines begin for on/after October 1 referrals.
- December 3, 2025: Joint Rule 10 (for non-House-member filed matters) default deadline for referrals made before October 1, 2025.
- December 16, 2025: The day “prior to the Third Wednesday in December” (House Rule 27 Category 1, first deadline).
- March 18, 2026: House Rule 27 end date for Category 1 (no House Rule 27 extensions beyond this date).
- Joint Rule 10 Health Care Financing second-year deadline applies to referrals on or before the fourth Wednesday in December of the first annual session; otherwise, 60 days from referral.
- Note: For Category 2 and Category 3 House-Rule-27 matters, the “whichever is later” clause authorizes deadlines after March 18 when the 60 day reporting deadline after the hearing concludes.
- May 13, 2026: House Ways and Means shall report the General Appropriation Bill.
- May 27, 2026: Health Care Financing deadline for referred House-filed matters.

### **Contacts**

- Procedural and filing questions: House Clerk’s Office.
- Committee operations: Coordinate with the House Chair and the Clerk’s Office for bill tracking and study order filings.

- This guidance reflects House Rule 27 and applicable Joint Rules for the 194th General Court (2025–2026).