

Why do we have local budget laws?

Local budget law is designed to:

- Establish standard procedures for preparing, presenting, and administering the budgets of Oregon's local governments.
- Encourage citizen involvement in the preparation of the budget before its final adoption.
- Provide a method of estimating revenues, expenditures, and proposed taxes.
- Institute a method for control of revenues and expenditures that promotes efficiency and economy when using public funds.
- Encourage citizen involvement. Public policy decisions are to be made openly in public meetings because the people have the right to be there and know what their local government intends to do.

Do all local governments have to comply?

Schools, counties, cities, rural fire protection districts, urban renewal agencies, and most special districts are subject to the same budgeting provisions. Some special districts are not. Contact us, or your county assessor, if you are unsure if the law applies to your local government.

What can citizens expect from the process?

- Notification of all budget meetings. These generally occur between January and June, and notice is often posted in the newspaper. Check with your local district for more information.
- You can ask questions and make comments at the budget committee meeting designated for public input.
- You can submit written or verbal testimony at the budget hearing.
- You can review the budget document. You can request a copy from your local government. There may be associated with your request.
- You can vote on any temporary property tax measures.
- You can challenge the tax levy of the district in tax court if you think it violates the law.

What are local governments required to do?

There are many steps in the development and final adoption of the annual budget:

1. The budget officer prepares a proposed budget.
2. Notice of the budget committee meeting is published.
3. The budget document is made available at or before the meeting.
4. The budget committee conducts at least one public meeting for questions or comments.
5. The budget committee approves the budget.
6. Notice of the public hearing and a summary of the approved budget are published.
7. The governing body conducts a public hearing on the approved budget.

8. The governing body, after public comment and deliberations, adopts the budget and enacts resolutions or ordinances by June 30.
9. The government body certifies the district's tax, if any, to the county assessor y July 15.

How can I participate in the process?

- Volunteer to become a budget committee member.
- Attend the budget committee and governing body budget meetings and the public hearing.
- Review a copy of the budget when it's available.
- Vote on ballot measures for when the government proposes additional funding.
- Provide written or oral testimony to the budget committee or the governing body.
- Respectfully challenge irregularities observed in the budget process.