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 January 10 of each year, the Governor's Budget incorporates revenue and expenditure estimates based upon the most current information available through mid December. In the event that the Governor wants to change the Budget presented to the Legislature, including adjustments resulting from changes in population, caseload, or enrollment estimates, the Department of Finance (Finance) proposes adjustments to the Legislature during budget hearings through Finance Letters. During late spring, usually 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. Listed below are the key documents used in the budget process.

Title	Purpose	Prepared/Issued by	When
Budget Letters and Management Memos	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 delete existing programs.	Agencies and departments submit to Finance analysts	July through September
Governor's Budget	Governor's proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year.	Governor/Finance	January 10
Governor's Budget Summary	A summary of the Governor's Budget.	Governor/Finance	January 10
Budget Bill	Requests spending authorization to carry out the Governor's expenditure plan (legislative budget decision document).	Finance/Legislature	January 10
Analysis of the Budget	Analysis of the Budget, including recommendations for changes to the Governor's Budget.	Legislative Analyst	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.	Legislature/Governor	Late June or enactment of the Budget
Final Budget Summary	Update of the individual Budget Act items with changes by the Governor's vetoes, including certain budget summary schedules.	Finance	Late July - August or 1-2 months after Budget enactment
Final Change Book	Update of changes to the detailed fiscal information in the Governor's Budget.	Finance	Late July - August or 1-2 months after Budget enactment