

Hi, this is Chris Micheli with the Sacramento governmental relations firm of Aprea and Micheli and an adjunct professor at McGeorge School of Law in its capital lawyering program. Today's podcast is on the legislative calendar.

The calendar for the California legislative session is certainly important for those who work in and around the state capital. Our California Constitution provides the date for convening and adjourning the legislative session. Other than that, the Legislature has the freedom to set its own calendar for meetings and recesses.

The legislative calendar establishes a schedule for the two-year legislative session and provides numerous deadlines throughout the legislative process.

While there is a general outline for the legislative session, check the Senate and Assembly daily files, which contain the scheduled events for each day the Legislature is in session, including such things as committee hearings and floor sessions, along with holidays and other important dates of note.

Article IV of our State Constitution establishes when the Legislature is to be in session. Section Three of Article IV provides that the Legislature is to convene the regular session on the first Monday of December in each even-numbered year in order to convene its organizing session. Thereafter, the Legislature must adjourn by November 30th of the following even-numbered year.

Now in general, the Legislature begins meeting the first week in January of each year and concludes work for the year either in mid-September in the odd-numbered years or by August 31st in the even-numbered years.

During the calendar year, the Legislature traditionally schedules two recesses -- a one-week spring recess which is generally the week before [the] Easter holiday, and a summer recess that typically lasts four weeks, either the entire month of July or roughly mid-July through mid-August in the odd-numbered years.

In addition, several one-day holidays are recognized by the Legislature. While the Legislature eliminated the Columbus Day holiday and one of the President's Day holidays in February a number of years ago, legislators are still permitted to provide one floating holiday for their personal staff.

In addition to the regular session, the Governor may, by proclamation, require the Legislature to meet in special session. Now, a special session may run concurrently with the Legislature's normally scheduled meeting times and/or during its recesses. During these special sessions, the Legislature may act only on subjects specified in those proclamations.

Aside from the fact that a special session is limited to the subject matter for which it was called, there are no significant differences in process during a regular versus special session. The legislative calendar for the Legislature contains rules and guidelines that shape the day-to-day business being conducted in the Assembly and Senate.

Some of the rules found in the calendar are from the California Constitution. Others come from laws passed by the Assembly and Senate, while others come from the Joint Rules of the Assembly and the Senate. Thanks for joining this podcast on the legislative calendar.