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Today's podcast is looking at what happens during the final weeks of the California legislative session. The purpose is to highlight some of the major happenings at the end of the legislative process.

Pursuant to the California Constitution and relevant statutes, there are essentially three major parts of the legislative session -- the house of origin, the second house, and the final month or so of legislative action and gubernatorial action.

Obviously, there are key subparts in each of these three major parts of the legislative session, but I think that the California legislative session can be viewed in this way. This piece is on the final weeks of session followed by gubernatorial action.

In terms of a general overview, the final weeks of the legislative session are the proverbial sprint to the finish line. Policy committees have finished the bulk of their work, but many bills get significant amendments that require the policy committees to hear additional bills as the session winds down.

The main focus then becomes the fiscal committees and their votes on measures that are pending on the respective suspense files in the appropriations committees of the Senate and Assembly.

Then, the final two weeks of the legislative session are a whirlwind. Several hundred bills are considered on the floor of the second house with most bills having to return for a final vote on the floor of their house of origin.

Once the session adjourns, the work is not done. Instead, the focus turns to the Governor's office and the Governor's consideration of the hundreds of bills that reach the Governor's desk.

Some of the last month of session include a last day for policy committee hearings, a last day for fiscal committees, and then floor session with ultimately rules for amending bills on the floor, submitting conference reports to the desk, and amending measures on the floor to comply with the 72-hour in-print rule. What are some of constitutional and statutory requirements?

First, the bill cannot be passed or become a statute unless that bill and any amendments have been in print and published on the Internet for at least 72 hours before the final vote unless the Governor has submitted some sort of a statement that the bill is needed to address a state of emergency. Each bill passed by the legislature must be presented to the Governor.

The bill becomes a statute if it's signed by the Governor or if the Governor returns it without any objections. The governor may also veto a measure. That requires that a bill be returned to the house of origin with any objections. The Legislature can vote again to pass the bill. If a two-thirds majority vote does so, then the bill becomes a statute.

Any bill that's in the possession of the Governor after adjournment of the Legislature that's not returned within 30 days becomes a statute. Then any other bill presented to the governor prior to the end of session basically becomes a statute if it hasn't been returned with a veto message within 12 days.

At the close of each regular session, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the speaker of the Assembly, and the two minority party leaders must report on the progress that was made in meeting the goals and objectives outlined at the beginning of the legislative session.

Finally, at each session, the governor must report to the Legislature any reprieves, pardons, or commutations granted including the reasons for doing so. That's basically what transpires during the final weeks of the legislative session and the consideration, generally, of hundreds of bills. Thanks for joining today's podcast.