



## **SMALL CENTRE TOOLKIT**

# **COLLABORATIVE SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT**

## **PROCESS OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

**MARCH 2019**



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As we collectively strive to understand the historic and ongoing relationship between settlement and the land on which we are located, AAISA respectfully acknowledges that the province of Alberta is comprised of Treaty 6, Treaty 7, and Treaty 8 territories, and is the traditional lands of First Nations and Métis peoples.

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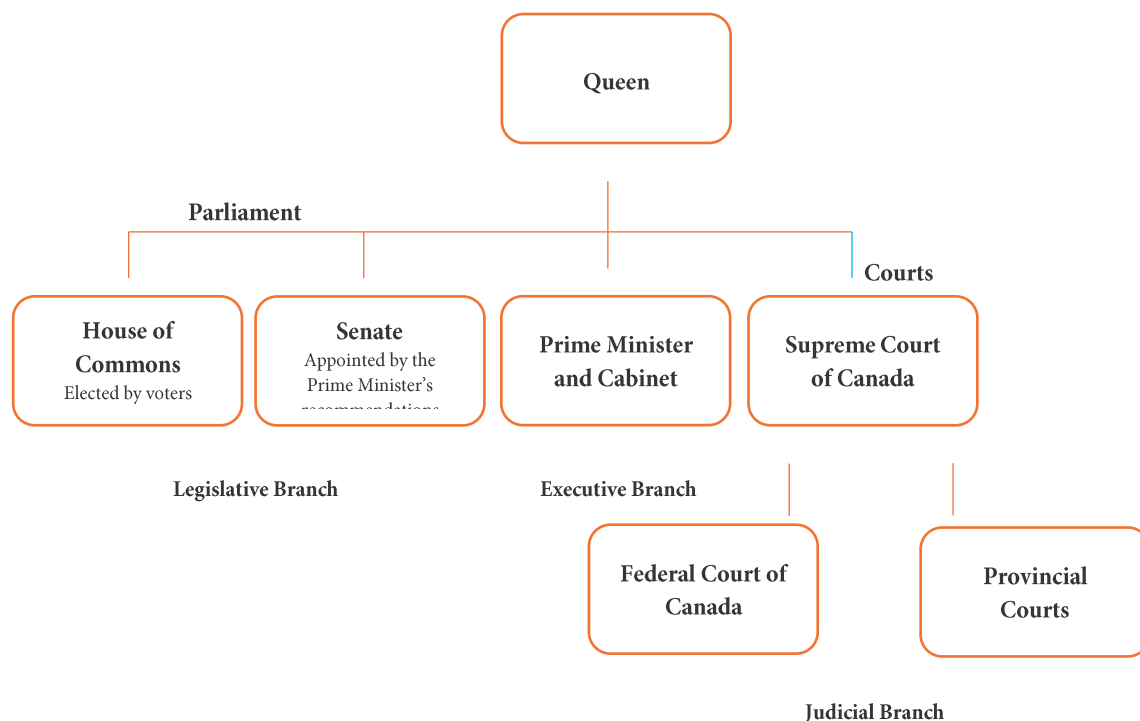
**Note:** Throughout this document, clicking on underlined text will direct to various websites and resources.

# GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

In Canada, there are **three levels of government**: federal government, provincial and territorial governments, and municipal (local) governments.

The Canadian Parliament is an open and democratic system. It is made up of three parts: The Queen (formal head of state, represented by the **Governor General**), the Senate, and the House of Commons. These three branches work together to make laws in Canada.

The executive branch consists of the Queen, the Prime Minister and Cabinet, and the departments of government. The legislative branch (House of Commons and the Senate) makes the laws, and the judicial branch (Federal Court of Canada and Provincial Courts) who are not part of Parliament, interprets them.



## FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

The Federal Government of Canada is in the capital city of Canada, Ottawa. The federal government is responsible for issues that affect the whole country. This includes issues such as international relations, immigration, criminal law, taxes, national defence, and foreign policy. The

House of Commons makes Canada's laws. Members of Parliament (MPs) are representatives to the House.

## MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT (MPS)

The federal government is made up of 338 elected representatives called Members of Parliament (MPs) from every province and territory in Canada that belong to a political party. The political party that has the largest number of MPs forms the government, and its leader become the prime minister.

## PRIME MINISTER

The prime minister is the head of government in Canada. The prime minister chooses MPs to serve as ministers in the cabinet that make important decisions about government policy in the executive branch. Some examples of federal ministries include: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada; Health; Foreign Affairs; and Crown-Indigenous Relations.

## THE OPPOSITION

The second-largest political party in the House of Commons is appointed as the Official Opposition. The leader of this party is known as the Leader of the Opposition and appoints a shadow cabinet of politicians, known as critics, to criticize the leading government.

## THE SENATE

The Senate consists of 105 senators appointed by the Prime Minister from across Canada. The Senate reviews laws that are proposed by the House of Commons. Senators scrutinize legislation, suggest improvements, and fix mistakes. A bill must pass the Senate before it can become law.

## PASSING CANADIAN LAWS

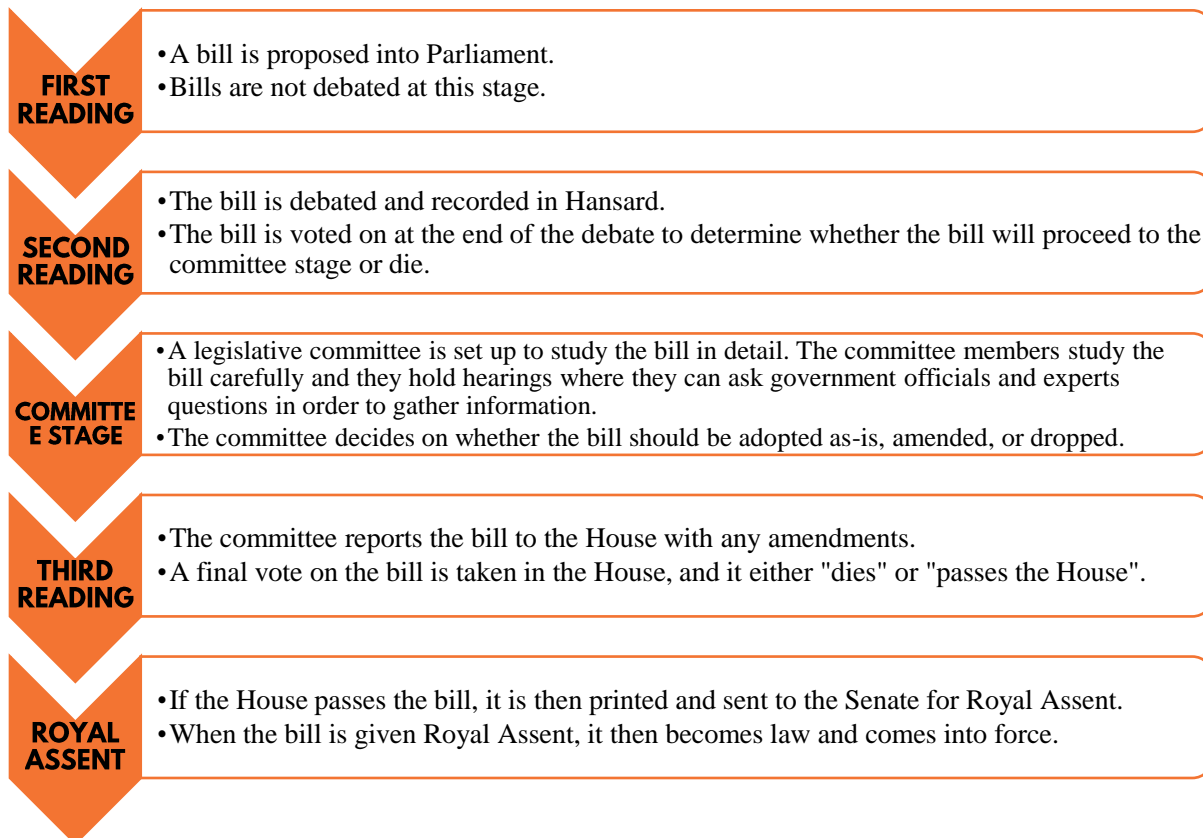
Before a law is formed, it is first introduced as a bill which must go through a series of stages in both the House of Commons and the Senate.

There are different types of bills, known as government bills, private member bills, or private senator's bills.

- Government bills originate in the House of Commons and are numbered consecutively from C-1 to C-200.
- Private member bills are bills introduced in the House of Commons by a member of parliament who is not a cabinet minister. They are numbered consecutively from C-201 to C-1000.

- Private senator's bills are proposed in the Senate by a senator who is not a member of the ministry. They are numbered consecutively from S-201 to S-1000.

## HOW A BILL BECOMES LAW



The Hansard, or Official Report of Debates, is a record of Senate and House of Commons proceedings. The Hansard includes speeches and debates of Senators and Members in the Chamber, recorded votes, written answers to some questions, and the Speech from the Throne.

Hansard debates can be found [here](#).