



KEY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE LEGISLATIVE & REGULATORY PROCESSES

While different, both the legislative and regulatory processes are essential to effective governance. Understanding their differences will help you become a more effective advocate for purebred dogs.

The legislative process and the regulatory process, while interconnected, serve distinct roles in government.

Legislatures are vested with the power to create laws. The legislative process involves multiple steps, including the introduction of a bill, committee debates and approvals, and votes of the chamber where the bill originated (i.e., the House or Senate). The process repeats in the second chamber (except for Nebraska, which has only one legislative body). Once approved by both chambers, a bill is sent the President/Governor for approval or veto. This process is highly transparent and often lengthy, involving substantial public and media scrutiny to ensure democratic participation and accountability. The primary actors in this process are legislators and the executive, with the outcome being the creation of new laws or amendments to existing ones.

In contrast, the regulatory process focuses on the implementation and enforcement of laws through detailed rules created by executive agencies, which report to the President/Governor. After a law is enacted, agencies draft a rule, publish them for public notice and comment, review feedback, and then finalize the rule (i.e., regulations). This process, while involving public participation through comments, is less publicly visible than the legislative process and typically involves experts within the agencies who apply specialized knowledge to ensure effective enforcement of the law. The regulatory process may be quicker than the legislative process, and allows for greater flexibility for the agency to update or modify regulations as needed, as long as the changes do not go beyond the scope of the legislation that allowed for their creation.

Thus, while the legislative process establishes the broad legal framework, the regulatory process provides the necessary details to enforce and operationalize the laws effectively.

Below is a side-by-side comparison of important aspects of each process on the Federal level. Generally, a similar process is used by the states.

Stage	Legislative Process	Regulatory Process
Who Initiates?	Member of Congress/State Legislator	Executive agencies
Purpose	Create or amend laws	Implement and enforce laws
Public Involvement	Public hearings, debates	Public notice and comment periods
Transparency	High, with significant public and media scrutiny	Moderate, mainly through Federal Register/state register and comments
Duration	Typically longer	Shorter or longer, varies by rule
Final Authority	President/Governor (approval or veto)	Agencies (with possible judicial review)

