

GLOSSARY

access - entry to, admittance

accredited - having official approval

ad hoc commission - a group of people appointed to perform a certain job, usually to study a problem and make a recommendation.

adjourn - put off or end a meeting to another time or place

adjudicate - to decide or settle

adopted - approved or made the law

affidavit - legal statement

agenda - list of things to be done

allocate - to distribute

amenability - ease, agreeableness

appellate - appeals

applicable - applies or pertaining to

appropriation - money set aside for a specific use

arraignment - act of being called before a court to answer a charge

assess - to estimate the value of

at large - representative of a whole area rather than a subdivision

auctioneer - agent who sells goods at a public sale

audit - to check the accounting of money or figures or in elections to check the proper registration of voters

authorization - act of official approval

autonomous, autonomy - self-governing

ballot - vote

bicameral - having two law-making bodies

bids – offers to perform work at specific price

biennial - lasting for two years or happening every two years

bonded indebtedness - amount of money owed by the state to purchasers of bonds

bond issues, general obligation bonds - loans to the state on which the state pays interest to the owner of the bond

breach of the peace - breaking a law

bribe - money or favor given to official or person in position of trust in return for dishonest gain

budget - plan for spending money

capital crime - punishable by death

capital program - money to be spent for buildings or facilities

capitation tax - a direct tax imposed on each person

caucus - meeting of members of General Assembly by party to determine strategy and gain party solidarity in voting on certain bills

censure - official blame, chastisement

census - a count of the population

certiorari - a superior court order calling for records of an inferior court

chamber – a hall used by a legislative or judicial body—also, the body itself

civil jurisdiction - has to do with relations between individuals or organizations

compact – an agreement or covenant between two or more parties, e.g. states
compensation - payment
comprehensive - inclusive, large in scope
comprise - to be made up of
concurrence - agreement
consecutive - following one after another
constituent - voter in an electoral district
contested election - challenged
contiguous - sharing an edge, bordering, adjacent
continuity of office - provides for government to function or work in case of disaster
convening - to assemble or call to order
court of record - written records are kept of proceedings
criminal code - laws regarding crime
curriculum - courses offered by an educational system
custody - to be under control of another person or official authority
debt service - the amount of interest which must be paid for money borrowed
Delaware Code - Delaware laws
document - an official piece of writing
dual office holding - having more than one job in government
electorate - voting citizens
enacted - to make a bill into a law
envision - to clearly picturing a thought or idea
equity - fair justice, money value of property
ethics - moral values
ex officio - because of an office
expel - to force out
extensive – widely extended in scope or application
facilitate - to make easier or less difficult
federal revenue sharing - federally collected money (taxes) which is given to a state or local government to spend
felonies - serious crimes
first leg vote - when legislation must be passed by two successive legislatures to become law, this term refers to the first of the two legislatures to pass the legislation
fiscal year - an accounting period of 12 months
floor debate - discussion by members in either the House or Senate
floor of the House - House meeting hall
franchise - right to vote, right to establish a corporation
franchise tax - payment of a tax for the right to establish a corporation
freehold estate - a lifetime inheritance of real property
full faith and credit - state guarantees payment of a loan
function - operate, an official duty
grand jury indictment – the formal decision of a jury which decides whether there is sufficient evidence to bring an accused person to trial
grants and donations - gifts, contributions

guaranteed - a promise with the force of law

house - if not capitalized, refers to either chamber of a legislative body

impact - effect of some action

impeachment - charge of misconduct in office against a public official

incorporate - to form into a body or organization

incorporation law - has to do with how companies may be formed and operate

indict - to accuse or charge with an offense

intervening - coming between two things, act as a third party in legal proceedings

inventory - itemized list of property or goods or abilities

invest idle money - loaning money not needed for immediate spending in return for payment of interest

issuance of bonds - offer of bonds for sale to the public

joint committee - members of both houses of the General Assembly appointed to work together on particular kinds of legislation

jurisdiction - authority to rule and make laws, to control limitations for incurring indebtedness - setting a maximum amount of debt which a government may incur

line item veto - power of the governor to veto part of a bill or an appropriation while approving the rest

local option - power of a political subdivision to determine by popular vote the local applicability of a law on a controversial issue

majority - more than half

mandatory - required by law, unavoidable

majority leader - head of the party with the most elected members in each chamber of a legislative body (i.e. the Senate majority leader, the House majority leader)

majority whip - assistant to the majority leader

megalopolis - area containing many cities close together

mercantile tax - trading tax, business tax

minority leader - head of the party with the fewest elected members in each chamber of a legislative body (i.e. the Senate minority leader, the House minority leader)

minority whip - assistant to minority leader

misdemeanors - minor offense or violation of law

mandamus - a court order

nominal fee - token payment

nonpartisan - without regard to party membership or loyalties

non-revenue and transfer receipts - money moved from one government area or level to another

on the record - official statement of facts entered in writing

ordinance - official law or order, usually at the local government level

over ride a veto - passage of a bill by the General Assembly by a 3/5 vote after the bill has been vetoed by the governor; the bill then becomes law

per capita - for each individual person

per diem - by the day

personnel - people, usually employees in an organization or office

piggy-back tax - state income tax figured on the same basis as the federal income tax

pocket veto - indirect stopping of a bill by the governor's refusal to sign a bill within a certain timeframe

preamble - an introduction or beginning

predominate - having an advantage because of numbers, a majority

prerequisite - required before something can be done

presiding officer - person in charge or in authority such as the chairman or president

privilege against self-incrimination - the right of an accused not to give evidence or testimony which might prove his or her guilt

privy council - a body of officials acting in an advisory role

progressive rate structure - taxation in which the rate of tax increases with the amount of income

prothonotary - a chief clerk of any of various courts of law.

provisional - temporary, not permanent

public hearing - a discussion or meeting open to the general public

purview - a major part of the law

quorum - the number of members legally required to be present when meeting to allow business to begin

quorum of a simple majority - one more than half of the members must be present to allow business to begin

quo warranto - legal proceeding

ratify - to formally approve or confirm

realty transfer - sale or transfer of real estate from one party to another

rebate - the return of part of a payment

receipts - written acknowledgements for something received (sales slip, deposit slip)

recess - temporary stopping of business

redevelopment - restoration of a rundown or destroyed area

referendum - submission of a proposed measure to a vote by the public

register - written record; to enroll or sign up as voting, school, etc.

rehabilitation - to restore to former capacity

revenue - money received or produced (such as taxes)

review - to inspect or examine

revision, revised edition - a corrected or improved document

rezoning - a change in zoning

royal borough charter - a charter granted by the King of England giving specific rights in government to an area during colonial times

signed into law - the acceptance signing of a bill by the governor after passage in the General Assembly, thereby making it a law

special session of the legislature - a meeting of the legislature held at times other than specified by the constitution

staggered terms - the appointment or election of members of a group in different years

statute - law or act

strategic - of great importance; overall plan

submitted - offered for consideration

subpoena power - power to issue an order commanding a person to appear in court

suburban - the area surrounding a city or town
supplement - to add to; in addition to
supplemental appropriation - an additional amount of money appropriated
terrain – a pile of earth; a geographical area
treason - betrayal of trust
trial - test, examination, presentation of evidence or information for a decision by judge or jury
trial by jury - information or evidence presented to a jury for a decision
true bill indictment - an indictment or accusation approved by a grand jury
unanimous - the agreement of all involved in a decision
uniform - always the same, unchanging
unincorporated - not joined together, not formal or officially recognized organization, especially localities
unique - rare, unequaled
urban - relating to a city or town
urban renewal - rebuilding, improving or restoring old parts of a city
user fee - a charge paid for use of services
utility - public service company which sells or distributes water, power, natural gas, telephone, etc.
variance – a license to do some act contrary to the usual rule (as used in zoning)
veto - refusal of the governor to sign a bill passed by the General Assembly; the bill then does not become law
violation - breaking the law
waiver - giving up a right, claim or privilege
warrants - written authorization, justification for some action
writs of prohibition - order issued by a court forbidding a certain action
zoning - division of a community into areas for certain uses
zoning code - the regulations which say what each area of a community may be used for