



## CRS Report for Congress

# House Rules Manual: Summary of Contents

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The House Rules and Manual, officially titled *Constitution, Jefferson's Manual and Rules of the House of Representatives*, contains the fundamental source material describing procedures in the House of Representatives. Included are the Constitution of the United States, selected provisions of *Jefferson's Manual*, rules of the House, provisions of law and resolutions enacted or adopted under the rule-making authority of the House, and pertinent decisions of the Speaker and chairmen of the Committee of the Whole interpreting the rules and procedural authority used in the House, often referred to as parliamentarian's notes or annotations.

Printed as a "House Document," the Manual is usually authorized by House resolution at the end of a Congress for printing at the beginning of the following Congress. As such, the House document number reflects the Congress that authorized the printing although the cover page identifies the applicable Congress for the contents.

**Preface.** This first section of the House Manual identifies the more substantive rules changes made by the House resolution adopting the rules of the current Congress. Also identified are citations to volumes of precedents referenced in the parliamentarian's annotations.

**Contents.** The next section is the table of contents. Unlike the index, which references section citations, the contents identifies page citations.

**Order of Business.** Following the contents is a one-page description, with rule citation, of the General Order of Business and Special Order of Business in the House.

**Constitution.** The Constitution and the 27 amendments to it are printed in their entirety in the Manual, along with appropriate annotations, especially to Article I.

**Jefferson's Manual.** Jefferson's Manual was prepared by Thomas Jefferson for his use as President of the Senate from 1797-1801. In 1837, the House provided by rule that the provisions of the Manual "should govern the House in all cases in which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the standing rules and orders of the House and joint rules of the Senate and House of Representatives." Sections 283-620 of the House Manual are from Jefferson's Manual. The portions of the Manual that refer

exclusively to Senate procedures are omitted in the House Manual, as are paragraphs from the Constitution.

**Rules of the House.** This section includes the 28 rules of the House as well as extensive notes and annotations, and comprise sections 621-1105. Reprinted at the end of the section are provisions of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 and Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 that are applicable to both houses.

**Joint and Select Committees.** Sections 1108-1112b identify existing authority for the joint and select committees.

**House and Congressional Offices.** Sections 1113-1125f address the House Commission on Congressional Mailing Standards, House Office Building Commission, Government Accountability Office, Office of Compliance, Congressional Research Service, Legislative Counsel, Congressional Budget Office, Law Revision Counsel, Technology Assessment, Office of the Parliamentarian, Office of Floor Assistants, Office of Interparliamentary Affairs, House Recording Studio, United States Capitol Preservation Commission, Office of General Counsel, Office of Emergency Planning, Preparedness, and Operations, Office of Attending Physician, Office of the Architect of the Capitol, and House Democracy Assistance Commission..

**Early Organization of the House.** This section includes provisions from the Committee Reform Amendments of 1974 addressing the early organization meetings of the House to be held in December of an election year.

**Congressional Budget Legislation.** Reprinted in this section are excerpts from the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (but not the Impoundment Control Act), the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act, and the Budget Enforcement Act that relate to legislative procedure, with annotations, but only a single section number for each of the three laws. For example, provided are provisions relating to the floor procedures for considering the concurrent budget resolution, the budget timetable, reconciliation, and the authority of the Budget Committee.

**Congressional Disapproval Provisions.** Included in this section are provisions in congressional disapproval statutes that prescribe special procedures in the House for reviewing executive actions. These procedures are technically rules of the House and are customarily reincorporated by reference in the resolution adopting the rules for a Congress.

**Index.** An extensive index contains references to sections in the Manual, whereas the contents refers to page numbers.