



**FACT SHEET**  
**WYOMING LEGISLATIVE SERVICE OFFICE**

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04FS016 prepared for Senator Jayne Mockler

## **HISTORY OF SPECIAL SESSIONS IN WYOMING**

- Twenty special sessions have been called since statehood. (See Table 1)
  - The first special session was held in 1920.
  - Three special sessions have been held in conjunction with regularly scheduled budget sessions to address non-budget issues.
  - In 1992 and 2002, the focus of the combined special and budget sessions was to address reapportionment of legislative districts.
  - Sessions in 1997, 1998, and 2002 focused on education reform and school finance issues.
- The Wyoming Constitution was amended in 1971 to allow the Legislature to hold annual sessions, not to exceed 60 legislative working days in a biennium. Before 1973, the Legislature only met in odd-numbered years for a combined general and budget session.
- Wyoming voters amended the Wyoming Constitution in November 2002 to allow the Wyoming Legislature to convene special sessions. Before the passage of the constitutional amendment, only the Governor could call the Legislature into a special session.
- The Legislature invoked its authority to call itself into a special session for the first time in June of 2004. The Wyoming Legislature may convene a special session pursuant to Article 3 Section 7 of the Wyoming Constitution.
  - The Legislature may convene special session not to last longer than 20 working days upon written request to the presiding officer of each house by a majority of the elected members of each house.
- Article 3, Section 6 of the Wyoming Constitution specifies that the Legislature cannot meet for more than 60 legislative working days excluding Sundays during the biennium, except when called into special session.
  - The section specifies that the Legislature shall meet in odd-number years for a general and budget session and may meet in even-numbers years for a budget session.
  - This section also stipulates that the Legislature shall meet for no more than 40 legislative working days excluding Sundays in any one calendar year, except when called into special session.
  - This section states that the Legislature will meet at other times when convened by the Governor or upon call of the Legislature.

**TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF SPECIAL SESSIONS IN WYOMING**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Session Dates<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Subject/Purpose of Session<sup>2</sup></b>
1920	01/26 – 01/28	Creation of irrigation districts Ratification of the 19 <sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution ( <i>women's suffrage</i> ) Assistance to disabled veterans of the world war
1923	07/16 – 07/18	Farm Loan Act Interstate streams
1929	12/12 – 12/17	Appropriation for penitentiary Appropriation for Girl's Industrial Institute Parks for cities and towns Funds for extension work Special election for highway bonds Distribution and payment of gasoline tax Various election issues Federal public land natural resource issues
1933	12/4 – 12/23	State bank compliance with National Banking Act of 1933 Liquor sales regulation Consideration of report of the Special Legislative Tax Committee Emergency relief in conjunction with National Recovery Administration Emergencies in the offices of the State Examiner and Attorney General Changes to motor vehicle laws Charitable and penal institution reforms
1944	04/17	Consideration of legislation to enable Wyoming residents serving in the armed forces to vote at general elections.
1946	04/15 – 04/22	University of Wyoming funding ( <i>associated with the anticipated increased need for housing and instructors to meet the education needs of returning veterans under the G.I. Bill of Rights and to address salary scale issues for instructors</i> ). Funding requests from other state departments
1948	06/28 – 06/30	University of Wyoming funding Funding requests from other state departments
1950	02/14 – 02/23	Control measures for grasshopper infestation
1971	07/07 – 07/08	Ratification of the 26 <sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution ( <i>voting age</i> )
1978	05/01 – 05/06	Special Budget Session: Adoption of a budget <i>(The Legislature, upon the adjournment of the budget session had not taken final action on the budget bill and failed to adopt a completed budget.)</i>

Source: State of Wyoming Legislature Journal records (see attachments)

<sup>1</sup> Sessions held in 1992, 1998, and 2002 were combined special and budget sessions.

<sup>2</sup> No journals were available to review the Governor's proclamations for special sessions held in 1920, 1923, and 1929. Instead, the Wyoming Session Laws for those years were reviewed to determine the types of legislation passed by the Legislature.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Session Dates</b>	<b>Subject/Purpose of Session</b>
1981	03/02 – 03/03	Special session called after the Legislature adjourned upon the expiration of the 40 legislative working days before legislation was enrolled or signed by the presiding officers of the Senate and House as required by the Wyoming Constitution.
1983	08/04 – 08/05	Unemployment Compensation Program
1986	06/16 – 06/19	Workers' Compensation Program
1987	05/19 – 05/22	Maximum speed limit on interstate highways Amendment No. 4 Program
1992	02/10 – 03/17	Combined Special and Budget Session: Reapportionment of legislative districts
1992	05/11 – 05/13	Reconvened Budget Session: Department of Corrections and Department of Health funding request
1997	05/30 – 06/06	Education reform and school finance
1998	02/09 – 03/12	Combined Special and Budget Session: Education reform and school finance
2002	02/11 – 03/13	Combined Special and Budget Session: Reapportionment of legislative districts Education reform and school finance
2004	07/12 –	Medical malpractice, malpractice insurance availability