

## The Missouri Budget Cycle

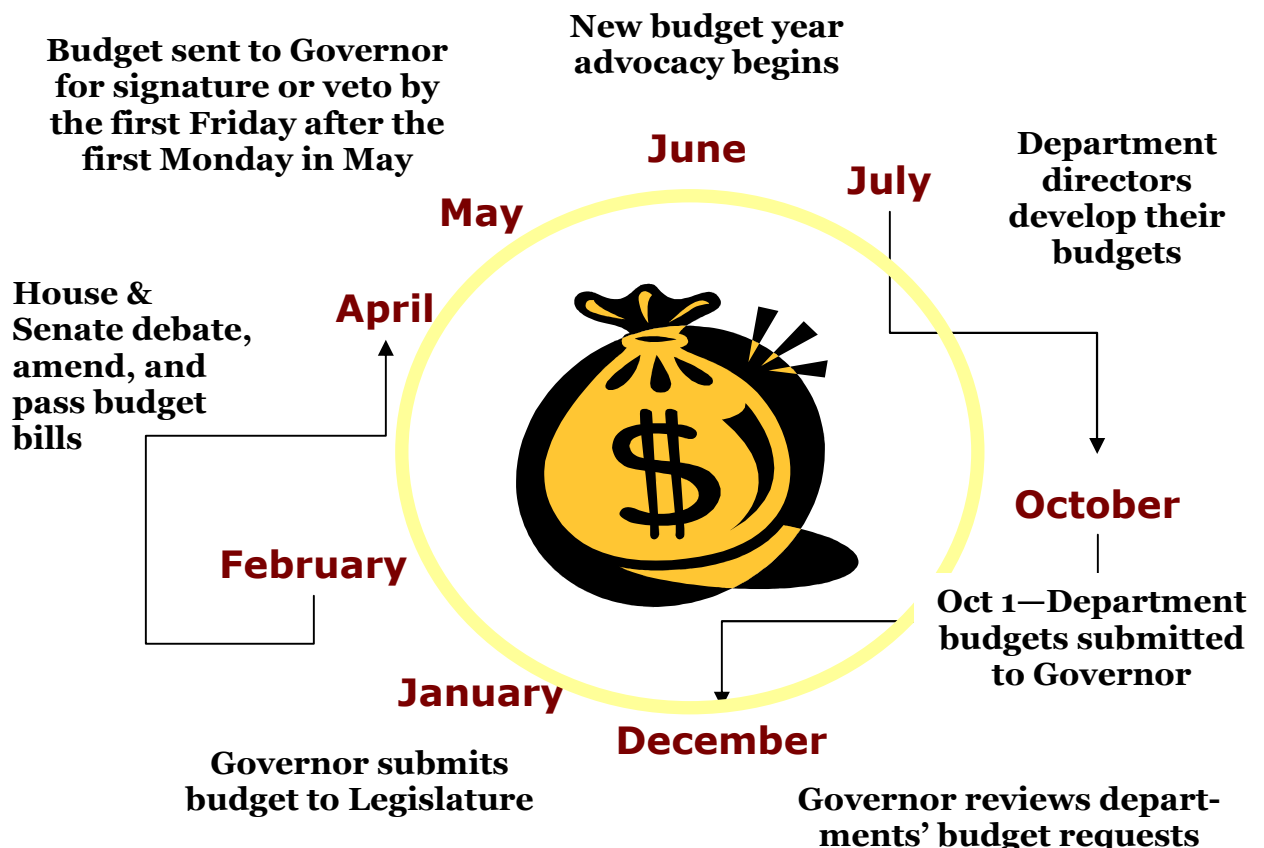
The need for advocacy does not stop once a bill is signed into law. Even if a law is passed to establish a program, advocates must ensure that funding is allocated, maintained, and increased over the years.

The budget process is the single most important process of the legislative session. This is where decisions are made about whether programs and services receive funding. State, federal and local funding for after school programs, child protection, education—it all comes through this process, **and legislators' priorities get the most funds.** As child advocates, it is our responsibility to make sure that our issues become a top priority!

The Missouri budget cycle begins in June. At this time, state departments are already beginning to think about the next year's budget. The departments submit their budgets to the Governor in October and the Governor then begins to prepare his or her own budget which will be released to the public and to the state legislature in January at the annual State of the State address.

During Legislative Session, the House of Representatives debates and amends a series of budget bills (one for each state department) and then sends the budget to the Senate to repeat the process. Budget bills are similar to regular bills in that they have to be approved by both chambers and then sent to the Governor for final approval. The Missouri constitution requires that the General Assembly finalize the budget by the first Friday after the first Monday in May.

The budget debated each year in the General Assembly appropriates funds for the following fiscal year. In Missouri, the fiscal year begins on July 1st and ends on June 30th.



For information about the Kansas budget cycle, go to:

[http://www.kac.org/ftp/File/AdvocacyToolkit/adv\\_appropriations.pdf](http://www.kac.org/ftp/File/AdvocacyToolkit/adv_appropriations.pdf)