

CRS Report for Congress

Congressional Research Service · The Library of Congress

House Committees: Categories and Rules for Committee Assignments

Judy Schneider
Specialist on the Congress
Government Division

Both House and party rules detail procedures for committee assignments. House rules address the election and membership of committees, especially limitations on membership. The Democratic Caucus and Republican Conference rules designate categories of committees (shown below) and specify service limitations in addition to those in the House rules.

Number of Assignments

- In general, no Member, Delegate or Resident Commissioner can serve on more than two standing committees and four subcommittees of those standing committees (House Rule X, clause 5(b)(2)(A)).
- Democrats and Republicans designate *exclusive* committees and generally limit service to one such panel. Democratic Members of exclusive committees cannot also serve on nonexclusive committees, but they can serve on the Budget or House Administration Committee. Republican Members assigned to the Rules Committee can take “leave with seniority” from one standing committee to serve on Rules.
- Democrats and Republicans designate *nonexclusive* committees and limit Members to service on two such panels, unless the House rules contain other requirements.

Limitations on Assignments

- Service on the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct is exempt from the two-committee limitation. Service is also limited to three Congresses during any five successive Congresses. (House Rule X, clause 5) Democratic Caucus rules, however, limit service to no more than three Congresses in any five.
- Budget Committee members are limited to no more than four Congresses in any six successive Congresses: (House Rule X, clause 5(a)(2)(B)); however, this provision is waived for the 106th Congress. Democratic Caucus rules limit members to no more than three Congresses in any five.
- Intelligence Committee members are limited to no more than four Congresses in any period of six Congresses. (House Rule X, clause 11). In addition, Democratic Caucus rules say Members may not serve on more than one standing committee, although they may take a leave of absence from service from another standing committee to serve on the Intelligence Committee.



- "Any other exception to these limitations must be approved by the House upon the recommendation of the respective party caucus or conference." (House Rule X, clause 5).

Table Categories of Committees

Category	Democrats	Republicans
Exclusive	Appropriations Rules Ways and Means Commerce (for Members first serving on the panel in the 104 th Congress and subsequent Congresses)	Appropriations Rules Ways and Means Commerce
Non-Exclusive	Agriculture Armed Services Banking and Financial Services Budget Education and the Workforce Government Reform House Administration International Relations Judiciary Resources Science Small Business Transportation and Infrastructure Veterans' Affairs Commerce (for members who served on the panel before the 104 th Congress)	Agriculture Armed Services Banking and Financial Services Budget Education and the Workforce Government Reform International Relations Judiciary Resources Science Small Business Transportation and Infrastructure Veterans' Affairs
Exempt	Standards of Official Conduct; Select Intelligence (not listed as such but treated as exempt)	House Administration; Select Intelligence; Standards of Official Conduct