A Supreme Court vacancy is most often created when a justice retires or passes away.

The White House reviews records and interviews candidates.

The president publicly nominates someone for the vacancy.

Supreme Court nominees traditionally have “courtesy meetings” with individual senators, where senators can speak privately with the nominee.

Nominees complete a Senate Judiciary Questionnaire that summarizes their professional experience. The questionnaire is reviewed by senators and is publicly available.

Supreme Court nominations hearings are held by the Senate Judiciary Committee and usually last for several days. These hearings include introductions and opening statements from committee members and the nominee, multiple rounds of committee members questioning the nominee, and testimony from outside witnesses.

This is the public’s chance to hear directly from the nominee.

After the hearing, senators can ask the nominee further questions by submitting Questions for the Record that the nominee responds to in writing.

The Senate Judiciary Committee holds an executive business meeting, also known as a markup, where it votes on the nomination.

The committee can report a nominee favorably, unfavorably, or without recommendation.

Recently, most nominations first require a cloture vote by the Senate to end debate on a nomination. To end debate, a simple majority vote is required.

Finally, the full Senate votes on whether to confirm the nomination. Confirmation requires a simple majority vote.

If the cloture vote is successful, senators have up to 30 hours to debate the nomination before a final vote is held.