LSC and the Services It Provides

New Legislative Staff Training

Ohio Legislative Service Commission

About this Course

- In this course, you will learn about the Legislative Service Commission and its role in the legislative process. Additionally, you will learn how to access LSC services.

- If your employer is tracking your course completion, be sure to click on the course completion link at the end of the course.

- For additional information about LSC, see *A Guidebook for Ohio Legislators* – Chapter 9: Staff Services Available to the General Assembly (page 6) (PDF).

Our Agency



- LSC is a centralized nonpartisan agency that provides legislative services to all 132 members of the state legislature and their staff, regardless of party or chamber.
- LSC's mission: To provide high quality, timely, confidential, nonpartisan services to all the members of the General Assembly.

Commission Membership



- The Legislative Service Commission is made up of 14 members, all of whom are legislators—usually legislative leaders.
- The chair of the Commission alternates between the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate each General Assembly.
- The Speaker and President each appoint six members, no more than four of whom may belong to the same political party.

An Important Distinction

- The Commission members hire a Director who is responsible for hiring LSC's staff.
- When people on Capitol Square refer to "LSC," they usually mean the LSC staff and not the legislators who serve as members of the Commission.

Who works at LSC?

LSC's staff includes a professional and support staff of about 150 employees.

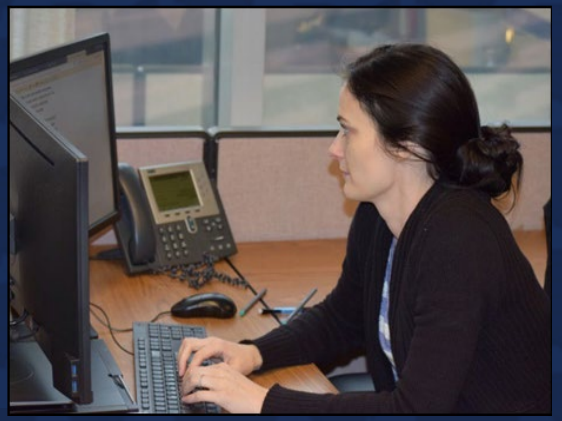




Professional Staff Qualifications

- LSC's experienced professional staff provides information and technical resources to legislators and staff.
- Approximately one-third of LSC's professional staff are attorneys and most of the remaining professional staff have master's degrees. Several have Ph.D.s.
- Most supervisors have at least 10 years of experience with LSC.





Importance of Legislative Services

- LSC services help the General Assembly maintain its independence from the other two branches of government by providing legislators with an independent source of information.

- Legislators do not have to rely solely on the executive and judicial branches for information as they pursue their legislative work.

Primary LSC Services

- LSC's primary services to the members and staff of the General Assembly include:
  - Drafting legislation (bills and amendments);
  - Providing legal and fiscal analysis on any subject, but particularly on pending legislation; and
  - Assisting standing committees.





Committee Staffing

- Each House and Senate standing committee has assigned LSC staff who serve the committee members.
- For each committee, LSC staff:
  - Prepare an analysis of each bill for its first hearing;
  - Prepare a fiscal note for each bill for its second hearing;
  - Monitor hearings and answer questions from members and their staff;
  - Upon request, draft amendments to bills being heard;
  - Upon request, conduct research.

Confidentiality



- If a legislator or legislative staffer asks LSC to conduct research or to draft a bill or amendment, LSC keeps that work confidential. LSC cannot reveal what work is being done for a member no matter who inquires, even if it is a member of the same political party.
- LSC may speak to interested parties or lobbyists about a confidential document, but only if the legislator requesting the document grants permission for LSC to do so.
- A document created by LSC for an individual member only becomes a public record when the legislator makes the document public.

Restrictions on LSC Work

- Because LSC is a nonpartisan agency, LSC employees are prohibited from:
  - Providing legal advice;
  - Urging defeat or passage of legislation;
  - Advocating on any issue before the General Assembly;
  - Conducting political research, such as examining legislators' voting records;
  - Writing speeches, news columns, press releases, or letters to constituents;
  - Preparing committee testimony or soliciting cosponsors.

Requesting LSC Services

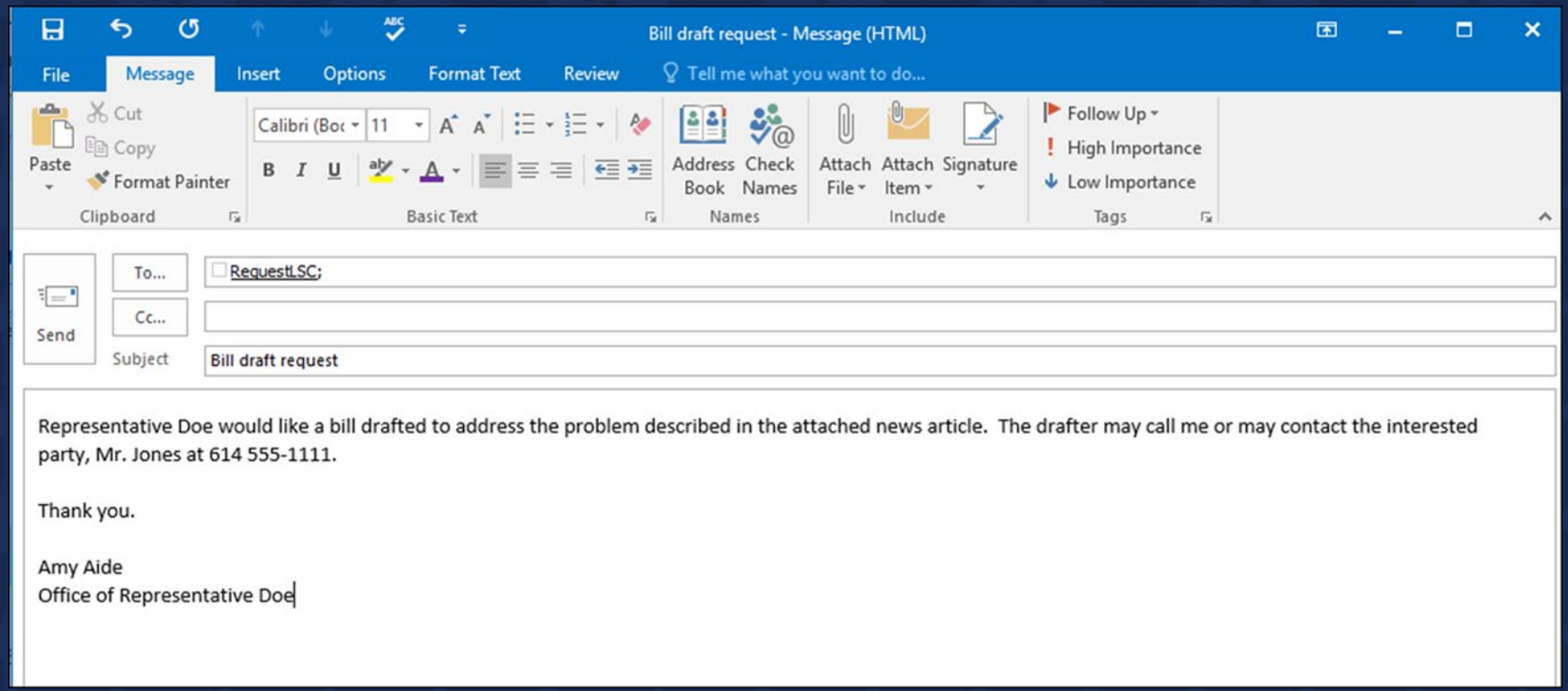
- Who may request assignments from LSC?
  - Members of the General Assembly
  - Legislative staff, with the member's authorization
  - Caucus staff, such as policy advisors and legal counsel

- LSC does not accept requests directly from executive agencies, lobbyists, interested parties, or other members of the public.
  - However, legislators and legislative staff may ask LSC to work with outside parties on an assignment.

How to Submit a Request

- Send an email to RequestLSC@lsc.ohio.gov
- Describe your request.
  - For example, "Rep. Doe would like a bill that changes the law to …" OR "Sen. Smith would like LSC to research what Indiana and Michigan are doing to address …"
- Attach any relevant information, such as constituent correspondence or a news article.
- Tell LSC whom to contact if the drafter has any questions.
- If the assignment is needed by a specific time, include the requested due date.

Sample Request

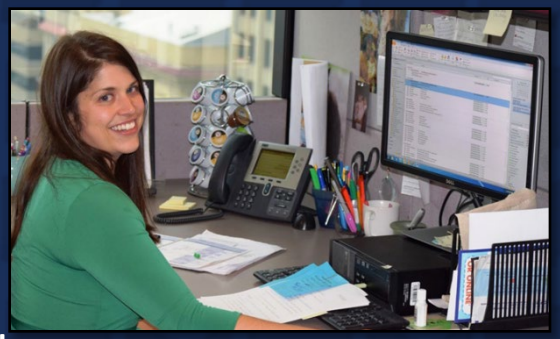


Other Methods of Contacting LSC

- You also may submit a request to any LSC staff person by email, by phone, in person, or on paper. All LSC staff have access to enter requests into our system.
- If your request is time-sensitive, please use caution when submitting it to an individual LSC staff person. An urgent email or voicemail might go unnoticed while a staff member is at a meeting, out sick, or on vacation.
- The RequestLSC@lsc.ohio.gov inbox is monitored at all times during business hours.

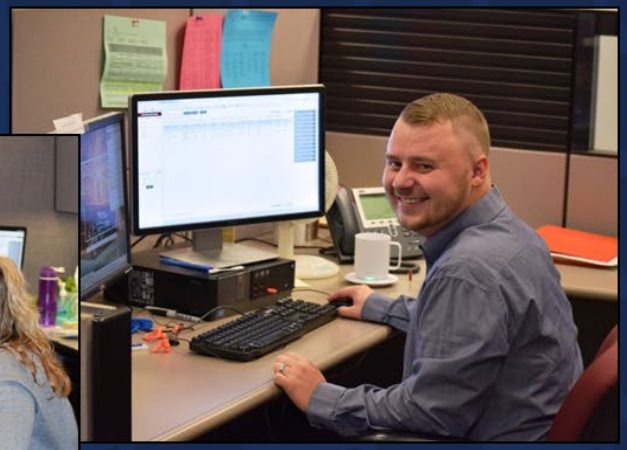
Assignment Turnover Goal

- LSC works to have bill draft requests completed in **two weeks** and short-term research requests completed in **ten days**. Assignments may take longer if they are complex or if LSC must wait to receive information.
- Each bill or amendment draft undergoes a legal and technical review, and all documents are proofread.









Requests with a Specific Due Date

- A member may request that LSC complete an assignment by a specific date and time.
- For example, the member might need the bill or amendment in time to introduce a bill on a certain day or for a scheduled committee hearing.
- It is helpful if the person submitting a request to LSC:
  - Communicates the due date when the assignment is first submitted; and
  - Lets the drafter know as soon as possible if that deadline changes.

Requests with a Specific Due Date (cont'd)

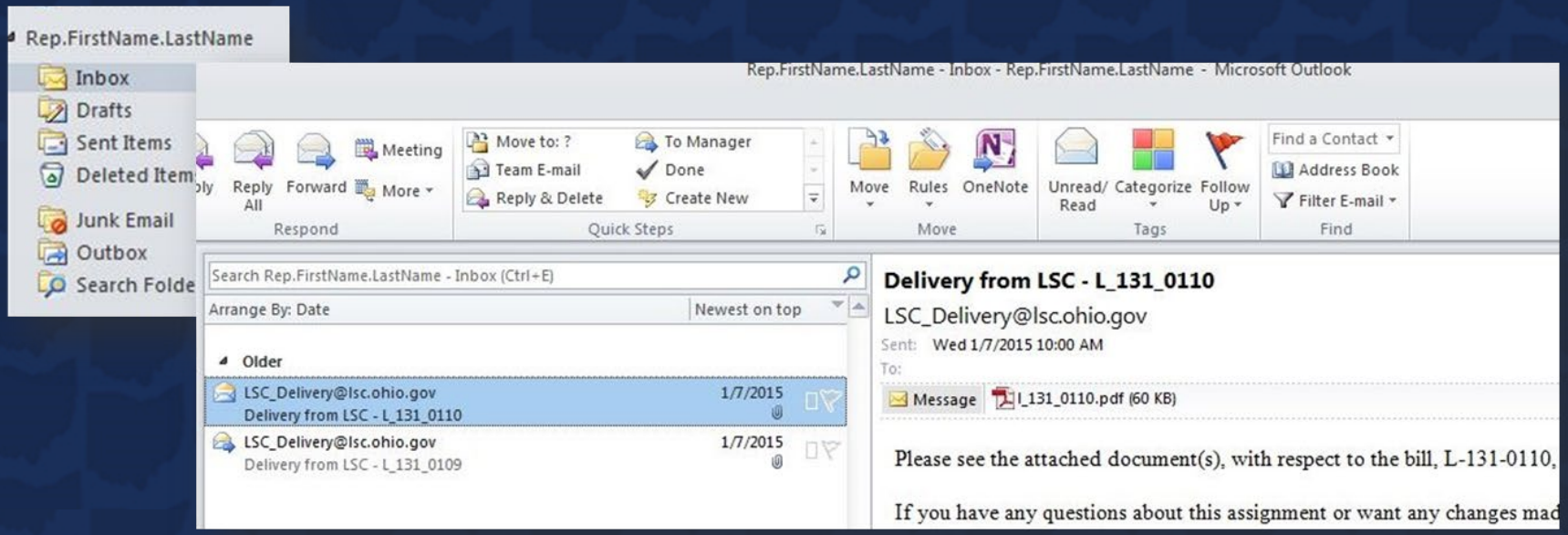
- LSC makes every effort to accommodate special due date requests, subject to the complexity of the request and the agency's overall number of pending requests.
- LSC staff will work with the member to determine what is needed and what LSC is able to prepare in time to meet the deadline.
- If necessary, LSC staff will consult the LSC Director for guidance in prioritizing these requests with other time-sensitive work.

Receiving Assignments from LSC

- LSC delivers completed assignments to requestors through SOLAR, which is the electronic system LSC uses to track and draft assignments.
- Each legislator has an email inbox especially for the purpose of receiving completed assignments from LSC through SOLAR.
  - Senate format: sen.firstname.lastname@solar.ohiosenate.gov
  - House format: rep.firstname.lastname@solar.ohiohouse.gov
- Caucus staff receive assignments in their regular inboxes (firstname.lastname).

Receiving Assignments from LSC (cont'd)

- A legislator's SOLAR email inbox is available through Outlook.
- If you need assistance in accessing this inbox, please contact the House or Senate IT Help Desk.



Other LSC Services

Honorary Resolutions and Letters

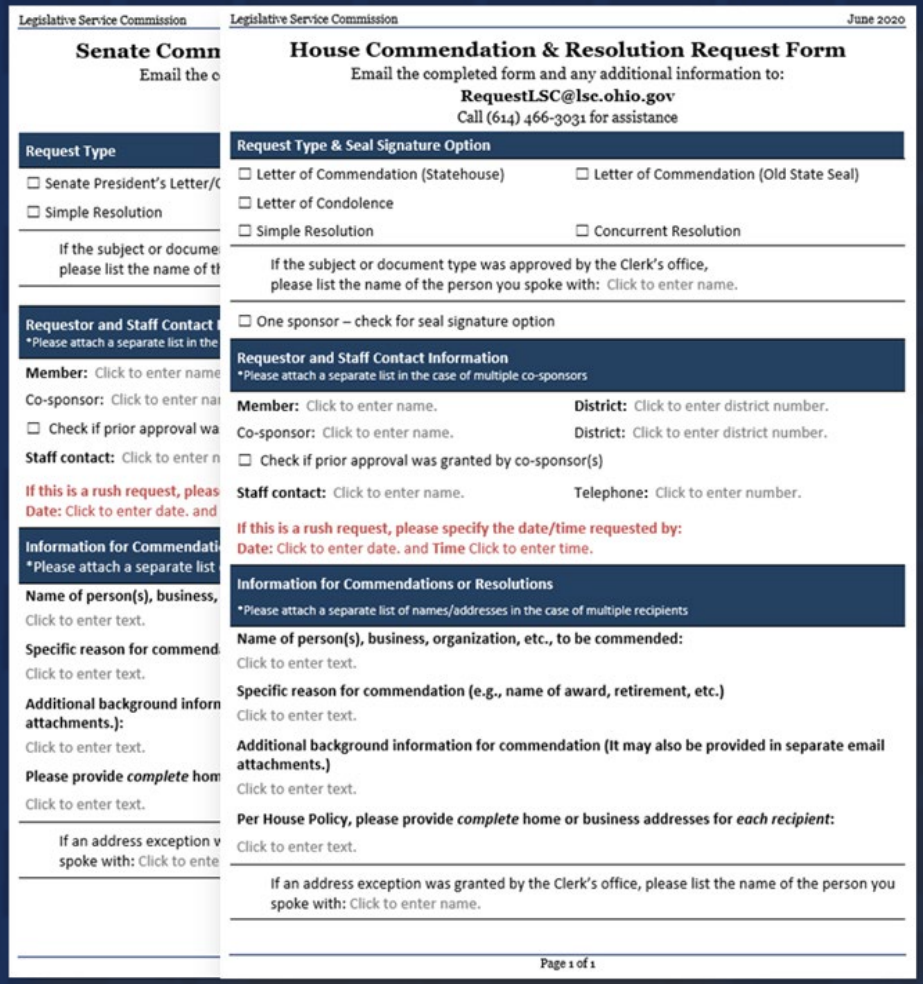
- LSC produces honorary resolutions, commendation letters, and condolence letters for legislators to recognize their constituents.
- House and Senate leadership set specific guidelines – for questions, check with the appropriate Clerk.
- Honorary resolutions may recognize, for example:
  - Athletic or academic championships;
  - Awards of statewide significance;
  - Military and first responder deaths in the line of duty.
- Letters may recognize, for example:
  - Local civic, scout, FFA, 4-H, or other awards;
  - Births, anniversaries, retirements, and milestone birthdays;
  - Constituents who have died.





How to Request Letters & Resolutions

- Email your request to RequestLSC@lsc.ohio.gov
- Be sure to fill out and attach the appropriate House or Senate request form and any supporting materials.
- Most letter and resolution requests are fulfilled in about 10 days.
- If your request is a rush, be sure to indicate that in the email subject line and include your requested due date and time on the form.



Legislative Service Commission

Senate Comm
Email the c

Request Type

☐ Senate President's Letter/C
☐ Simple Resolution

If the subject or docume
please list the name of th

Requestor and Staff Contact
*Please attach a separate list in the

Member: Click to enter name
Co-sponsor: Click to enter na
☐ Check if prior approval wa
Staff contact: Click to enter n

If this is a rush request, pleas
Date: Click to enter date. and

Information for Commendati
*Please attach a separate list

Name of person(s), business,
Click to enter text.
Specific reason for commend
Click to enter text.
Additional background inforn
attachments.):
Click to enter text.
Please provide *complete* hom
Click to enter text.

If an address exception v
spoke with: Click to ente

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House Commendation & Resolution Request Form

Email the completed form and any additional information to:
RequestLSC@lsc.ohio.gov
Call (614) 466-3031 for assistance

Request Type & Seal Signature Option

☐ Letter of Commendation (Statehouse) ☐ Letter of Commendation (Old State Seal)
☐ Letter of Condolence
☐ Simple Resolution ☐ Concurrent Resolution

If the subject or document type was approved by the Clerk's office, please list the name of the person you spoke with: Click to enter name.

☐ One sponsor – check for seal signature option

Requestor and Staff Contact Information
*Please attach a separate list in the case of multiple co-sponsors

Member: Click to enter name. **District:** Click to enter district number.
Co-sponsor: Click to enter name. **District:** Click to enter district number.
☐ Check if prior approval was granted by co-sponsor(s)
Staff contact: Click to enter name. **Telephone:** Click to enter number.

If this is a rush request, please specify the date/time requested by:
Date: Click to enter date. and **Time** Click to enter time.

Information for Commendations or Resolutions
*Please attach a separate list of names/addresses in the case of multiple recipients

Name of person(s), business, organization, etc., to be commended:
Click to enter text.
Specific reason for commendation (e.g., name of award, retirement, etc.)
Click to enter text.
Additional background information for commendation (It may also be provided in separate email attachments.)
Click to enter text.
Per House Policy, please provide *complete* home or business addresses for *each recipient*:
Click to enter text.

If an address exception was granted by the Clerk's office, please list the name of the person you spoke with: Click to enter name.

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Behind the Scenes Work

- **Code revision**—Under R.C. 103.131, LSC is required to maintain the laws of Ohio in an orderly and uniform manner and to ensure that bills' section numbering conforms with the Ohio Revised Code.
- **Rules codification**—LSC's Rules Unit receives state agencies' filings of administrative rules and maintains the Ohio Administrative Code and the Register of Ohio.



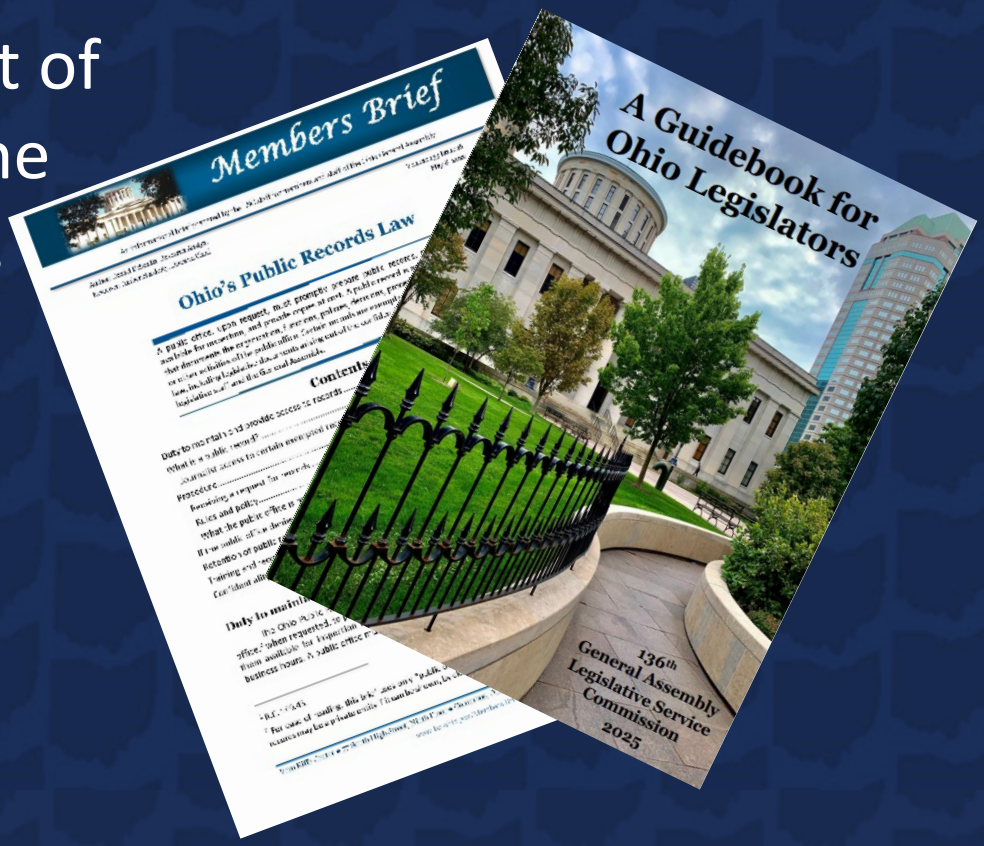
Ohio Laws & Administrative Rules
Legislative Service Commission



The Register of Ohio
Public Notice of State Agency Rule Making

Key LSC Publications

- LSC prepares a number of publications to assist the General Assembly. Most of these are available to the public on LSC's website.
  - Budget Footnotes
  - Members Briefs
  - Ohio Facts
  - A Guidebook for Ohio Legislators



Legislative Information Office

- The Legislative Information Office (LIO) is a division within LSC that provides information to the public by:
  - Providing information about the status of bills
  - Providing information about session and committee schedules
  - Assisting with navigating the legislature's website
  - Leaving messages for legislators

Ohio's toll-free number for current legislative session information
1-800-282-0253
614-466-8842

LSC Training Services

- New Member Orientation
  - Offered to newly elected legislators in November before each new General Assembly begins in January
- Legislative staff training for the House and Senate
- Legislative Fellowship Program
  - 13-month paid fellowship designed to give college graduates practical legislative experience and to encourage them to pursue careers in public service
- Continuing Legal Education (CLE) programs
  - Free continuing education for public sector attorneys and other professionals on topics of legislative interest

Other Legislative Agencies

In addition to LSC, the legislative branch includes a few other legislative agencies:

- Legislative Information Systems Office (LIS)
- Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review (JCARR)
- Joint Legislative Ethics Committee (JLEC)
- Capitol Square Review and Advisory Board (CSRAB)

Legislative Information Systems

- The Legislative Information Systems Office (LIS) serves the General Assembly and legislative agencies by providing:
  - Computer network services
  - Help desk support
  - Telephone system support
  - Computer application development assistance
- LIS operates the General Assembly website and is responsible for the design and maintenance of key legislative applications.
- LIS works cooperatively with the information technology organizations of the House, the Senate, and LSC.

Time for a pop quiz!

Question 1

True or false?

LSC is responsible for maintaining the laws of Ohio in proper order in conformity with the Ohio Revised Code.

Question 1 – Answer

True.

Ohio law requires the LSC Director to be the "codifier of the laws of the state." LSC is responsible for making sure that laws that the General Assembly enacts are numbered in conformity with the Revised Code.

Question 2

True or false?

LSC may provide legal opinions and advice to members of the Ohio General Assembly.

Question 2 – Answer

False.

LSC staff members may research what the law states, but may not provide legal opinions or any legal advice to members of the General Assembly or to legislative staff.

Question 3

True or false?

The 14-member Legislative Service Commission is appointed by the Governor.

Question 3 – Answer

False.

The Legislative Service Commission is a legislative body appointed by the leaders of the General Assembly. House members are appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and Senate members are appointed by the President of the Senate.

Question 4

True or false?

Anyone who is interested in legislation may ask LSC to draft a bill.

Question 4 – Answer

False.

Because LSC is the research and drafting agency for the General Assembly, LSC staff may accept assignment requests only from members of the General Assembly or their staff.

Question 5

True or false?

LSC drafts honorary resolutions and commendation letters on behalf of legislators.

Question 5 – Answer

True.

The Resolutions and Commendations Division of LSC drafts honorary resolutions and commendation letters upon request of legislators. These are drafted in accordance with guidelines that are set by the House and the Senate.

Question 6

True or false?

LSC may forward research done for a member to a legislator or staff person in the same political caucus.

Question 6 – Answer

False.

LSC may not forward any research done for a member to anyone, not even a member of the same political party caucus or to a staff person. Legislation drafted and research done for legislators are confidential unless the legislator for whom the work was done makes it public.

Question 7

True or false?

Since amendment requests are not bills or general research, they are not confidential.

Question 7 – Answer

False.

Amendments that LSC prepares, like bills and research requests, are confidential until the legislator for whom the work was done makes them public.

Question 8

True or false?

LSC provides bill analyses and fiscal analyses of pending legislation.

Question 8 – Answer

True.

LSC prepares an analysis of each bill heard in committee in time for its first hearing.

A fiscal note of each bill heard in committee is prepared by LSC in time for the second hearing.

Both documents are updated to reflect any changes as the bill progresses through the legislative process.

Question 9

True or false?

If requested, LSC responds directly to constituents.

Question 9 – Answer

False.

LSC does not respond to legislators' constituents directly. If a legislator needs information to address a constituent's question and asks LSC for help, LSC will provide research to the legislator. The legislator can then respond to the constituent.

Thank you for completing this course.

- Report your completion of this course
- Email Training@lsc.ohio.gov if you have any questions or comments about this course