

Legislative Affairs

The Legislative Affairs Section represents the Auditor of State (AOS) before the Ohio General Assembly, executive agencies, and various stakeholders on matters of policy relevant to the Office. This section tracks bills that could affect AOS operations, advocates for legislative proposals developed in coordination with the Auditor and administrative leadership, and communicates the Office's position on legislation to all interested parties. It also handles budget submissions and appropriation requests during the biennial state budget process. Additionally, Legislative Affairs is responsible for filing administrative rules through JCARR and completing the required five-year rule review process. The section conducts policy research, works with stakeholders to draft and refine bills, supports the bills through the legislative process, and oversees implementation after enactment.

Reporting Structure and Organization

Legislative Affairs is part of the Administrative Division and is staffed by a Policy Director, Legislative Director, and Legislative Liaison. The Legislative Director and Liaison report to the Director of Policy & Legislative Affairs, who reports directly to the Auditor of State, Chief of Staff and the Deputy Chief of Staff for External Affairs. The Director also communicates with the Chief Legal Counsel, Chief Deputy Auditor, Directors of Special Investigations Unit, Communications Director, Director of Performance Audit, Deputy Chief of Staff for Internal Affairs and both Assistant Chief Deputy Auditors. The section receives limited administrative support from the Administrative Division, including the AOS scheduler and the Chief of Staff's executive assistant.

Section Responsibilities

Constituent Correspondence

Legislative Affairs handles inquiries from legislative offices or correspondence sent in to the ContactUs email inbox. The legislative staff checks with the appropriate AOS staff to resolve the constituent issue. If it is not an AOS-related item, refer them to the appropriate agency.

Bill Tracking

The section monitors all legislation that may impact AOS. The Deputy Director or Legislative Liaison prepares a legislative update, which is shared each week. The Legislative team also continuously update a Legislative Tracker spreadsheet. Legislative staff highlight impactful bills and respond to questions from senior leadership. When there is a particular bill that may have an impact on AOS, a memo

may be prepared that includes the information about the bill and testimony given throughout the legislative process.

Working with Interested Parties

The section regularly works with stakeholder groups, including the Ohio Township Association, Ohio Municipal League, County Commissioners Association, Ohio Auditor's Association, and education organizations. Legislative Affairs communicates the Office's position on legislative initiatives—whether proposed by AOS or by external parties—and answers stakeholder questions on audit practices and compliance issues.

Lobbying the General Assembly

When the Office initiates policy proposals, Legislative Affairs manages the full legislative process: identifying bill sponsors, coordinating with stakeholders, working with LSC on bill drafting, arranging meetings with committee members and leadership, preparing testimony, and tracking the bill through hearings and amendments. The Office also engages with non-AOS legislation that may affect its operations by advocating for changes or opposing problematic provisions. Legislative Affairs informs the relevant AOS sections of legislative developments and may involve audit staff in meetings with legislators or stakeholders.

Legislative Agent Registration

All Legislative Affairs staff are registered with the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee (JLEC) as Legislative Agents. The staff will compile the list of bills and items to be included in the JLEC filing and circulate it to all appropriate staff ahead of the filing deadline.

Controlling Board

The section serves as the liaison between AOS and members of the Controlling Board, which approves expenditures over \$50,000. Though the Fiscal Section submits requests, Legislative staff ensure that Board members are informed and supportive. This typically involves outreach to members' offices and, if needed, meetings in advance of Board sessions. The Director acts as an "Approver" in the Controlling Board process and routes requests to the Chief of Staff.

Administrative Rules and JCARR

Legislative Affairs oversees the AOS rulemaking process, often initiated by new legislation or changes in auditing standards. The Deputy Director manages the drafting and submission of new, amended, or rescinded rules via the JCARR process, coordinating with relevant internal sections. Two staff members are trained in the JCARR systems used for electronic rule filing and Register of Ohio updates.

Legislative Affairs also arranges required public hearings and notifies impacted stakeholders. Because rulemaking can take several months, Legislative Affairs must plan rule implementation well in advance, especially when tied to recent legislation. The five-year rule review—last completed in 2026 and due again in 2031—is a statutory obligation. Eventually, rule drafting responsibilities may transition to the Legal Section, with Legislative Affairs serving as the General Assembly liaison.

Legislative Staff Duties

Director of Policy & Legislative Affairs

- Oversees AOS policy initiatives: researching, drafting, negotiating, and revising bill language
- Coordinates with LSC, prepares testimony and press statements, and works directly with state legislators
- Partners with the Communications Director on press events and releases
- Supervises legislative staff, manages stakeholder meetings, and monitors legislation
- Oversees JCARR rule submission and edits proposed rule changes
- Collaborates with senior staff on legal and audit-related policy issues
- Presents at conferences on legislative updates and AOS initiatives
- Works with the Finance Director on budget development and advocacy
- Acts as first router for Controlling Board requests and attends hearings as needed
- Drafts policy memos, stakeholder letters, and constituent responses

Deputy Director of Policy & Legislative Affairs

- Advocates for AOS legislation before the General Assembly
- Prepares briefing materials and drafts legislation in collaboration with audit and legal staff
- Attends relevant legislative committee hearings (e.g., State and Local Government, Finance, Education)
- Develops and delivers testimony for the Auditor and Legislative Affairs
- Maintains relationships with external stakeholders and tracks changes in legislative membership and leadership
- Schedules and attends legislator meetings to promote or oppose legislation
- Presents annually at the Local Government Officials Conference
- Acts as Rules Administrator and JCARR point of contact
- Performs additional duties as assigned

Legislative Liaison

- Maintains the legislative tracking system for bills affecting AOS
- Attends committee hearings and assists with lobbying
- Prepares legislative correspondence and manages constituent communications
- Conducts policy research and supports stakeholder engagement
- Distributes a weekly legislative update
- Manages legislative activity on assigned bills and prepares supporting materials
- Performs additional duties as needed

Weekly Legislative Update

Each Friday, the Deputy Director or Legislative Liaison prepares the Legislative Update to share with staff within the agency. This includes a narrative of what has happened that week in the legislature and updates on our legislative priorities. It also includes a list of the bills and resolutions introduced that week. If a bill has AOS implications, we'll note that in the narrative. If any bills were signed by the Governor that week, we also include that along with the effective date and a copy of the bill.