

Guide to Texas Legislative Council Services



Texas Legislative Council
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Guide to Texas Legislative Council Services

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of the
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Speaker Joe Straus, Joint Chair
Milton Rister, Executive Director

for the 81st Legislature

The mission of the Texas Legislative Council is to provide professional, nonpartisan service and support to the Texas Legislature and legislative agencies. In every area of responsibility, we strive for quality and efficiency.

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Preface

The Texas Legislative Council is a nonpartisan service agency for the state legislature and legislative agencies. The council also serves as an information source for state agencies, the citizens of Texas, and others as time and resources allow. We have assembled an experienced, professional staff to provide quality and efficient service.

This guide is intended to assist legislators, their staffs, and others in understanding and making the best use of council services.

Throughout the guide, the reader will find names and telephone numbers of council personnel to contact for council products and services and for additional information. Staff offices of the council are located in the Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building at 1501 N. Congress Avenue. Please feel free to contact Milton Rister, Executive Director, with suggestions as to how we can better serve you.

Chapter 1
Legislative Drafting
A. Services

Amendments and Substitutes

for Bills and Resolutions

Amendments and substitutes are used to change a bill or resolution after it has been filed, either in committee (committee amendment or substitute) or during floor debate (floor amendment or substitute). An amendment is used to change only part of the bill or resolution. A substitute is a complete alternative version of the whole bill or resolution.

Legal division attorneys prepare amendments to and substitutes for bills, joint resolutions proposing Texas constitutional amendments, and resolutions relating to legislative rules. Research division staff prepare amendments to and substitutes for legislative policy or U.S. constitutional amendment resolutions. Congratulatory and memorial resolutions generally are not amended or substituted. See **Congratulatory and Memorial Resolutions** to find out why.

Amendment or Substitute Request. Request an amendment or substitute by one of these methods:

- **Online:** submit through LDR (Legislative Draft Request system: <http://ldr/>)
- **Hard copy:** fill out a paper draft request form and deliver to a legal division receptionist on the 2nd floor, Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building, 1501 N. Congress Avenue; or mail to P.O. Box 12128, Austin, TX 78711-2128
- **Phone:** contact the appropriate attorney or researcher, or describe general subject matter to a receptionist, (512) 463-1155; see the attorney subject area assignment list (<http://capweb/gtcl/drafting/subjectarea.html>) to determine the appropriate attorney

Requesting drafts by letter or e-mail is strongly discouraged.
See **Request Procedures** to find out why.

Information to Provide. Please provide the following supporting information with your request:

- Type of document desired (committee amendment, committee substitute, floor amendment, floor substitute)
- Number of bill or resolution to be amended (or instruction to draft “blind”)
- Statement of problem or issue
- Statement of goal

- References to relevant court cases, constitutional provisions, statutes, attorney general opinions, similar laws in other states, or previous bills (if known)
- Related newspaper or periodical articles
- Time and date bill or resolution will be heard in committee or on the floor (if known)
- Persons or agencies to contact for more information
- Delivery instructions if the request is to be delivered to a person or to a place other than the Capitol office of the requestor

Obtaining Information About Drafts. See Sections B and C of this chapter for information about drafts, including:

- Inquiring about the status of a draft
- Obtaining an explanation or interpretation of a legislative document that has been made public

Analyses of Legislation

Bill Analysis. A bill analysis describes the purpose, background, and content of a bill. A bill analysis is required for a bill to be considered in a committee hearing and for the committee report. Research division staff members prepare bill analyses at the request of the chair or staff of the committee to which the bill was referred.

Senate or House Amendments Analysis. A senate or house amendments analysis (SAA or HAA) compares the differences between the senate and house versions of a bill. An SAA is required for a house bill to be taken up for a motion to concur in senate amendments or a motion to request a conference committee. In accordance with house rules, research division staff members prepare a full-text two-column (senate version and house version) side-by-side analysis of each house bill amended by the senate. On request, they prepare HAAs for senate bills amended by the house.

Conference Committee Report Side-by-Side Analysis. A side-by-side analysis of the differences in the senate, house, and conference committee versions of a bill is required by the rules of both chambers. The purpose of the analysis is to enable legislators to compare the bill sections that are in disagreement in the senate and house versions and to see how the conference committee resolved the disagreements.

Research staff will begin preparing the first and second columns for a conference committee report side-by-side analysis, if one has not already been prepared, as soon as a conference committee is requested on a bill. The third column of the analysis cannot be completed *until the final conference committee report text is available to verify the analysis*. If the conference committee report text is not council-drafted, an editable electronic copy of the text should be provided to the drafter, as this will significantly speed preparation of the third column.

Analysis Request. Request a side-by-side analysis by one of these methods:

- **Online:** submit through LDR (Legislative Draft Request system: <http://ldr/>)
- **Hard copy:** fill out a paper draft request form and deliver to a council receptionist on the 2nd floor, Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building, 1501 N. Congress Avenue; or mail to P.O. Box 12128, Austin, TX 78711-2128

- **Phone:** contact the appropriate researcher or Debbie Irvine, (512) 463-1143

Requesting drafts by letter or e-mail is strongly discouraged.
See **Request Procedures** to find out why.

Note: It is not necessary to request a two-column side-by-side analysis for a house bill amended by the senate.

Information to Provide. Please provide the following information with your request:

- Type of analysis desired (bill analysis, house amendment analysis, conference committee report analysis)

Note: Only committee staff may request a bill analysis.

- Number of bill or resolution for which analysis is needed
- Time and date bill or resolution will be heard in committee, if applicable (if known)
- Delivery instructions if the request is to be delivered to a person or to a place other than the Capitol office of the requestor

Bills

Bills are used to enact, amend, or repeal state law. Bills are drafted by legal division attorneys, each of whom is assigned responsibility for one or more areas of law.

Bill Draft Request. Request a bill draft by one of these methods:

- **Online:** submit through LDR (Legislative Draft Request system: <http://ldr/>)
- **Hard copy:** fill out a paper draft request form and deliver to a legal division receptionist on the 2nd floor, Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building, 1501 N. Congress Avenue; or mail to P.O. Box 12128, Austin, TX 78711-2128
- **Phone:** contact the appropriate attorney or describe general subject matter to a receptionist, (512) 463-1155; see the attorney subject area assignment list (<http://capweb/gtlc/drafting/subjectarea.html>) to determine the appropriate attorney

Requesting drafts by letter or e-mail is strongly discouraged.
See **Request Procedures** to find out why.

Information to Provide. Please provide the following supporting information with your request:

- Statement of problem or issue
- Statement of goal
- References to relevant court cases, constitutional provisions, statutes, attorney general opinions, similar laws in other states, or previous bills (if known)
- Related newspaper or periodical articles
- Persons or agencies to contact for more information
- Delivery instructions if the request is to be delivered to a person or to a place other than the Capitol office of the requestor

Obtaining Information About Drafts. See Sections B and C of this chapter for information about drafts, including:

- Inquiring about the status of a draft
- Obtaining an explanation or interpretation of a legislative document that has been made public

Conference Committee Reports

Text and Analyses

Text. When a bill that has been amended by the opposite chamber is returned to the originating chamber, if the originating chamber does not concur with some or all of the opposite chamber's amendments, a conference committee may be appointed by the lieutenant governor and speaker of the house to resolve the differences between the two versions of the bill or resolution and issue a conference committee report. Like an ordinary committee substitute, conference committee report text consists of a complete version of the bill or resolution. Legal division attorneys prepare conference committee report text.

Analyses. A side-by-side analysis of the differences in the senate, house, and conference committee versions of a bill is **required** by the rules of both chambers. The purpose of the analysis is to enable legislators to compare the bill or joint resolution sections that are in disagreement in the senate and house versions and to see how the conference committee resolved the disagreements. Research division staff prepare two- and three-column side-by-side analyses for conference committee reports.

- **Two-Column Analyses.** In accordance with house rules, research division staff members prepare two-column side-by-side analyses for all house bills and resolutions amended by the senate; these are posted on TLIS in Word and PDF format. On request, the staff members will prepare two-column side-by-side analyses of senate bills and resolutions amended by the house; these are delivered electronically to the requestor. A drafter cannot begin to prepare a two-column (senate version and house version) side-by-side analysis of a bill or joint resolution *until the bill or resolution has been passed by both chambers.*
- **Three-Column Analyses.** Research division staff members will begin preparing the first and second columns for a conference committee report side-by-side analysis, if one has not already been prepared, as soon as a conference committee is requested. If the conference committee report text is not council-drafted, an editable electronic copy of the text should be provided to the drafter, as this will significantly speed preparation of the third column. The third column of the analysis cannot be completed *until the final conference committee report text is available to verify the analysis.*

Text or Analysis Request. Request conference committee report text or an analysis by one of these methods:

- **Online:** submit through LDR (Legislative Draft Request system: <http://ldr/>)
- **Hard copy:** fill out a paper draft request form and deliver to a legal division receptionist on the 2nd floor, Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building, 1501 N. Congress Avenue; or mail to P.O. Box 12128, Austin, TX 78711-2128
- **Phone:** contact the appropriate attorney or describe general subject matter to a receptionist, (512) 463-1155; see the attorney subject area assignment list (<http://capweb/gtlc/drafting/subjectarea.html>) to determine the appropriate attorney

Requesting drafts by letter or e-mail is strongly discouraged.
See **Request Procedures** to find out why.

Information to Provide. Please provide the following information with your request:

- Number of bill or resolution that is in conference
- Drafting services desired (text, side-by-side analysis, or both)
- For text, clear instructions about manner in which differences are to be reconciled
- For side-by-side analysis, type of analysis desired (two-column or three-column)
- For side-by-side analysis, conference committee version of the text or clear instructions about manner in which differences have been reconciled
- Persons or agencies to contact for more information
- Delivery instructions if the request is to be delivered to a person or to a place other than the Capitol office of the requestor

Obtaining Information About Drafts. See Sections B and C of this chapter for information about drafts, including:

- Inquiring about the status of a draft
- Obtaining an explanation or interpretation of a legislative document that has been made public

Congratulatory and Memorial Resolutions

(Simple, Concurrent, or Member Resolutions)

Congratulatory resolutions typically honor individuals, institutions, or organizations for accomplishments; commemorate or acknowledge events; or designate a day, week, or month for observance. Memorial resolutions pay tribute to the life of a deceased individual.

A resolution whose sole intent is to congratulate or memorialize is not referred to a substantive committee before being considered by the full chamber. If a congratulatory or memorial resolution also expresses or endorses a view or position on a policy issue, it is considered a legislative policy resolution and is referred to a substantive committee.

Congratulatory and memorial resolutions generally are not amended or substituted because they are not referred to a substantive committee and are not debated on the chamber floor. An author who wants to change a congratulatory or memorial resolution should have a new resolution prepared for filing and notify the secretary of the senate or the chief clerk that the author does not intend to pursue passage of the original resolution.

A congratulatory or memorial resolution can be drafted as a concurrent, simple, or member resolution. A **concurrent resolution** may originate in either chamber but must be adopted by both. It does not require a third reading but is submitted to the governor for approval. A **house or senate simple resolution** is adopted by the chamber of origin alone and is not submitted to the governor for approval. A **member resolution** is not introduced or acted on by the legislature and cannot effect legislative action. It is prepared with a signature line for the requesting legislator and expresses the sentiments of that individual legislator, rather than those of the house or senate. Because it is not acted on by the legislature, a member resolution cannot “proclaim” or “designate,” but it can “recognize” or “honor.”

Research division writers draft congratulatory and memorial resolutions.

Resolution Request. Request a congratulatory or memorial resolution by one of these methods:

- **Online:** submit through LDR (Legislative Draft Request system: <http://ldr/>) with background information attached

- **Hard copy:** fill out a paper draft request form and deliver to a council receptionist on the 2nd floor, Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building, 1501 N. Congress Avenue; or mail to P.O. Box 12128, Austin, TX 78711-2128; or fax to (512) 936-1020, Attn. Patty McLeod
- **Phone:** contact Patty McLeod, (512) 463-1143

Requesting drafts by letter or e-mail is strongly discouraged.
See **Request Procedures** to find out why.

Information to Provide. Please provide the necessary background information with your request. Resolution drafters do not gather background information for a resolution request. The information required will depend on the subject of the resolution:

- **Individuals**—General biographical information, including education, career, civic activities; specific information as appropriate (date of marriage and family information for wedding anniversaries, date of death and survivors for memorial resolutions, etc.)
- **Institutions**—Information about the purpose, history, or accomplishments of the institution or organization; names and positions of significant individuals (clergy for churches, officers for civic organizations, sponsors or coaches and individual award winners for school organizations and teams)
- **Events**—Date, place, and history of event; highlights of activities; organizations benefiting from or sponsoring event
- **Special observance**—Name of individual, organization, place, or activity being recognized; day, week, or month for observance; background information justifying the observance
- **State symbols or place designations**—Information related to the historical or cultural significance of the symbol, event, or location to be designated. See **Restrictions on State Symbols and Place Designations** below that apply to the adoption of state symbols or place designations.
- Delivery instructions if the request is to be delivered to a person or to a place other than the Capitol office of the requestor

Parchment Copies. Unless different instructions are provided, final legislative resolution drafts are prepared on plain paper, ready for introduction. (See *Contents of Delivery Folder* in **Draft Deliveries** section.) Parchment copies of legislative resolutions must be requested through the appropriate chamber office (chief clerk or secretary of the

senate) and cannot be processed until the resolution has been passed and enrolled. Member resolutions are prepared on parchment, suitable for presentation.

Restrictions on State Symbols and Place Designations. In 2001 the legislature placed restrictions on the future adoption of state symbols and place designations by requiring passage of a concurrent resolution that specifies the item's historical or cultural significance to the state. Such a resolution must be referred to and reported by the appropriate committee in each house in the same manner provided for bills.

Individuals, events, places, and commercial products or items that promote or advocate the use of commercial products are prohibited from being designated as state symbols. For place designations, in addition to information related to the historical or cultural significance of the location seeking the designation, the legislature requires documentation that a local chamber of commerce or a locally elected governmental body representing the location to be designated supports the designation.

A place designation expires on the 10th anniversary of the designation but may be redesignated during or after the 10-year period. Place designations made by the legislature before passage of the special restrictions in 2001 remain in effect. A place may not have more than one designation at a time, and the legislature may not assign the same place designation to more than one event or location.

Legislative Policy Resolutions

(Simple or Concurrent Resolutions)

Legislative policy resolutions are used to request action by a governmental entity or to express the sentiment of the legislature or one of its chambers regarding public policy issues. These resolutions are advisory and have no legal effect.

A legislative policy resolution can be drafted as a concurrent or simple resolution. A **concurrent resolution** may originate in either chamber but must be adopted by both. It does not require a third reading but is submitted to the governor for approval. A **house or senate simple resolution** is adopted by the chamber of origin alone and is not submitted to the governor for approval.

Research division writers draft legislative policy resolutions.

Resolution Request. Request a legislative policy resolution by one of these methods:

- **Online:** submit through LDR (Legislative Draft Request system: <http://ldr/>)
- **Hard copy:** fill out a paper draft request form and deliver to a council receptionist on the 2nd floor, Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building, 1501 N. Congress Avenue; or mail to P.O. Box 12128, Austin, TX 78711-2128; or fax to (512) 936-1020, Attn. Patty McLeod
- **Phone:** contact Patty McLeod, (512) 463-1143

Requesting drafts by letter or e-mail is strongly discouraged.
See **Request Procedures** to find out why.

Information to Provide. Please provide the following supporting information with your request:

- Statement of problem or issue
- Statement of goal
- References to relevant court cases, constitutional provisions, statutes, attorney general opinions, similar laws in other states, or previous bills (if known)
- Related newspaper or periodical articles
- Delivery instructions if the request is to be delivered to a person or to a place other than the Capitol office of the requestor

Permission to Sue the State Resolutions

(Concurrent Resolutions)

The usual legislative vehicle for grants of permission to sue the state is a concurrent resolution (although permission also may be given by special law). A concurrent resolution is preferred because it can take effect immediately on the governor's signature without the two-thirds vote required for a bill to take immediate effect.

Legal division paralegals or attorneys draft concurrent resolutions authorizing suits against the state.

Resolution Request. Request a permission to sue the state resolution by one of these methods:

- **Online:** submit through LDR (Legislative Draft Request system: <http://ldr/>)
- **Hard copy:** fill out a paper draft request form and deliver to a legal division receptionist on the 2nd floor, Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building, 1501 N. Congress Avenue; or mail to P.O. Box 12128, Austin, TX 78711-2128
- **Phone:** contact the appropriate attorney or describe general subject matter to a receptionist, (512) 463-1155; see the attorney subject area assignment list (<http://capweb/gtlc/drafting/subjectarea.html>) to determine the appropriate attorney

Requesting drafts by letter or e-mail is strongly discouraged.
See **Request Procedures** to find out why.

Information to Provide. Please provide the following supporting information with your request:

- Full names of plaintiffs
- Statement of cause of action or injury
- Name of defendant agency
- Special conditions of permission, such as limited venue
- If suit is already filed, copy of pleadings
- Related newspaper or periodical articles
- Persons (such as plaintiff's attorney) to contact for more information

- Delivery instructions if the request is to be delivered to a person or to a place other than the Capitol office of the requestor

Obtaining Information About Drafts. See Sections B and C of this chapter for information about drafts, including:

- Inquiring about the status of a draft
- Obtaining an explanation or interpretation of a legislative document that has been made public

Rules Resolutions

(Simple or Concurrent Resolutions)

Legislative rules are amended or suspended by resolution. The subject matter will determine whether a simple or concurrent resolution is required. For example, a resolution suspending the limitations on a conference committee must be a concurrent resolution, and a resolution amending the rules of procedure of one chamber would be a simple resolution.

Legal division attorneys draft rules resolutions.

Resolution Request. Request a rules resolution by one of these methods:

- **Online:** submit through LDR (Legislative Draft Request system: <http://ldr/>)
- **Hard copy:** fill out a paper draft request form and deliver to a legal division receptionist on the 2nd floor, Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building, 1501 N. Congress Avenue; or mail to P.O. Box 12128, Austin, TX 78711-2128
- **Phone:** contact the appropriate attorney or describe general subject matter to a receptionist, (512) 463-1155; see the attorney subject area assignment list (<http://capweb/gtlc/drafting/subjectarea.html>) to determine the appropriate attorney

Requesting drafts by letter or e-mail is strongly discouraged.
See **Request Procedures** to find out why.

Information to Provide. Please provide the following supporting information with your request:

- Statement of problem or issue
- Statement of goal
- References to relevant court cases, constitutional provisions, statutes, attorney general opinions, similar laws in other states, or previous bills (if known)
- Related newspaper or periodical articles
- Persons to contact for more information
- Delivery instructions if the request is to be delivered to a person or to a place other than the Capitol office of the requestor

Obtaining Information About Drafts. See Sections B and C of this chapter for information about drafts, including:

- Inquiring about the status of a draft
- Obtaining an explanation or interpretation of a legislative document that has been made public

Parliamentary Questions. Legal division attorneys do not make advisory rulings on parliamentary questions; direct those inquiries to the parliamentarians of the respective houses.

Texas Constitutional Amendments

(Joint Resolutions)

Amendments to the Texas Constitution are proposed and adopted by joint resolution, then submitted to the voters for approval. Joint resolutions for this purpose are drafted by legal division attorneys, each of whom is assigned responsibility for one or more areas of law.

Constitutional Amendment Request. Request an amendment to the Texas Constitution by one of these methods:

- **Online:** submit through LDR (Legislative Draft Request system: <http://ldr/>)
- **Hard copy:** fill out a paper draft request form and deliver to a legal division receptionist on the 2nd floor, Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building, 1501 N. Congress Avenue; or mail to P.O. Box 12128, Austin, TX 78711-2128
- **Phone:** contact the appropriate attorney or describe general subject matter to a receptionist, (512) 463-1155; see the attorney subject area assignment list (<http://capweb/gtlc/drafting/subjectarea.html>) to determine the appropriate attorney

Requesting drafts by letter or e-mail is strongly discouraged.
See **Request Procedures** to find out why.

Information to Provide. Please provide the following supporting information with your request:

- Statement of problem or issue
- Statement of goal
- References to relevant court cases, constitutional provisions, statutes, attorney general opinions, similar laws in other states, or previous bills (if known)
- Related newspaper or periodical articles
- Persons or agencies to contact for more information
- Delivery instructions if the request is to be delivered to a person or to a place other than the Capitol office of the requestor

Obtaining Information About Drafts. See Sections B and C of this chapter for information about drafts, including:

- Inquiring about the status of a draft
- Obtaining an explanation or interpretation of a legislative document that has been made public

U.S. Constitutional Amendments

(Joint, Simple, or Concurrent Resolutions)

A **joint resolution** is used to request a convention to propose an amendment to the U.S. Constitution or to ratify an amendment to the U.S. Constitution. A **simple or concurrent resolution** is used to petition the U.S. Congress to propose an amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Research division writers draft resolutions relating to amending the U.S. Constitution.

Resolution Request. Request a resolution relating to amending the U.S. Constitution by one of these methods:

- **Online:** submit through LDR (Legislative Draft Request system: <http://ldr/>)
- **Hard copy:** fill out a paper draft request form and deliver to a council receptionist on the 2nd floor, Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building, 1501 N. Congress Avenue; or mail to P.O. Box 12128, Austin, TX 78711-2128; or fax to (512) 936-1020, Attn. Patty McLeod
- **Phone:** contact Patty McLeod, (512) 463-1143

Requesting drafts by letter or e-mail is strongly discouraged.
See **Request Procedures** to find out why.

Information to Provide. Please provide the following supporting information with your request:

- Statement of problem or issue
- Statement of goal
- References to relevant court cases, constitutional provisions, statutes, attorney general opinions, similar laws in other states, or previous bills (if known)
- Related newspaper or periodical articles
- Delivery instructions if the request is to be delivered to a person or to a place other than the Capitol office of the requestor

Draft Deliveries

Electronic Delivery. Completed drafts are delivered electronically to the requesting legislator's LDR account, where they may be accessed from the Office Drafts Report page. A PDF version with the council footer and an editable Word version without the footer are provided.

If the requestor has asked that a copy be provided to another office with an LDR account, a PDF version with the council footer and an editable Word version without the footer are posted to that office's LDR account, and any hard copies requested for that office are delivered to that office. The requestor is responsible for delivery of any electronic or hard copies to recipients outside the legislative community.

Hard Copy Delivery. Completed drafts are delivered in hard copy format to the requesting legislator's Capitol office unless the council has received other instructions. The delivery folder must be signed for by the requesting legislator, a legislator's staff member, or another authorized person specified in the delivery instructions. If the council receives instructions to deliver only to a specific person, that person must be present to receive and sign for the folder. These same procedures apply to delivery of hard copies to another legislative office.

Reschedule Hard Copy Delivery. A notice will be left under the office door by a council delivery assistant who has attempted delivery and found the office locked or without an authorized person present to receive the folder. To reschedule delivery, call (512) 463-1127.

Contents of Delivery Folder

- **Most final drafts.** Unless different instructions are provided, final legislative drafts are prepared to be ready for introduction. The requesting legislator receives 25 copies. If the draft is original legislation, rather than an amendment or substitute, the packet also includes one single-sided copy in a preprinted back and, for house drafts, one double-sided copy in a plain back. If something other than the standard packet is needed, indicate what is needed at the time of the request.
- **Member resolutions.** Member resolutions are printed on parchment, suitable for presentation. Unless otherwise specified, the delivery folder will contain two parchments for presentation and one copy on plain paper.

Parchment Copies of Legislative Resolutions. Parchment copies of legislative resolutions are not prepared by the council. They must be requested through the appropriate chamber office (chief clerk/secretary of the senate) and cannot be processed until the resolution has been passed and enrolled.

Additional Copies After Delivery

Legislators and their staffs may request additional copies after delivery of a document when:

- additional draft copies are needed
- a set is needed for introduction in the other house (**Note:** For a simple resolution, a new resolution will have to be drafted because a simple resolution includes language specifying the chamber.)
- the folder has been misplaced

Copy Request. To request additional copies, contact a legal division administrative assistant, (512) 463-1155.

Type of Request. Please specify the type of copy request:

- Filing packet (a standard set of 25 copies, with backs as appropriate, suitable for filing)
- A specified number of additional copies

Chapter 1
Legislative Drafting
B. Procedures

Levels of Drafting Service

Legal Division. The council’s legal division offers four levels of service in regard to the drafting of legislative documents:

- **Original drafting** (denoted by a “D” in the request’s unique number). The requestor has described a policy goal, perhaps also suggesting a means to the end, and the drafter prepares a new document to accomplish that goal. The drafter is responsible for all aspects of the draft.
- **Form drafting** (denoted by an “F” in the request’s unique number). The requestor has supplied the drafter with a draft of a bill or resolution prepared by the requestor, a constituent, or another source that the requestor wishes the council to use as the basis for the council draft. The drafter is responsible for:
(a) as necessary, advising the requestor as to whether the document amends appropriate law and complies with the rules of the constitution and respective chambers and as to whether the document achieves the policy goal of the requestor; and
(b) preparing the document in a manner consistent with council style and with other law, including the state and federal constitutions, unless the requestor indicates another preference.
- **Edit only** (denoted by an “E” in the request’s unique number). The legal editing staff edits a document supplied by the requestor to ensure that citations are correct, that the version of the statute being amended is the current text of the statute, and that the document complies with constitutional and procedural rules of form. The editing staff also corrects grammatical and spelling errors. Such a document is not reviewed by an attorney. The director of the legal division determines whether a document is suitable for this service. Because of the limited size of the editing staff and the desirability of attorney review of legal documents, this service is not widely available.
- **Type only** (denoted by a “T” in the request’s unique number). The requestor submits a document and requests that it only be typed. The document production division types the document exactly as is, correcting only unambiguous misspellings. Each request for this service is briefly reviewed by the director of the legal division, who determines whether the document is suitable for this service. The document is not otherwise reviewed by

an attorney or legal editor. A request that does not include at least a rough, complete document is not appropriate for this service. Council staff makes no representation that the printed “T” document is correct as to form or substance.

Research Division. The council’s research division generally offers two levels of service for the drafting of congratulatory, memorial, and legislative policy resolutions. Requests for “type only” service are reviewed by the research division director and, if approved, processed as described above.

- **Original drafting** (denoted by a “D” in the request’s unique number). The requestor has described the purpose of the measure, and the drafter prepares a new document to accomplish that purpose. The drafter is responsible for all aspects of the draft.
- **Form drafting** (denoted by an “F” in the request’s unique number). The requestor has supplied the drafter with a draft of a resolution prepared by the requestor, a constituent, or another source that the requestor wishes the council to use as the basis for the council draft. The drafter is responsible for: (a) ensuring that the document complies with legislative format requirements; (b) ensuring that the document is prepared in a manner consistent with rules of style, grammar, and spelling; and (c) advising the requestor about whether the document complies with state law and legislative rules of procedure and whether it contains factual errors or other problems.

Draft Unique Numbers

Each request for a legislative draft is assigned a unique number for identification and tracking, such as “81R0100 XYZ-D.”

- The first two digits designate the session.
- The letter R designates a regular session request (the letter S followed by a number, such as “S1,” designates a special session request and the number of that session).
- The next series of digits is the document’s unique number.
- The letters following the unique number are the initials of the drafter.
- The letter following the hyphen indicates the level of service provided by the council—original drafting (D), ensuring proper form and style (F), edit only (E), or type only (T).

Request Procedures

Legislative Draft Request System. The Legislative Draft Request (LDR) system allows legislators and committees to request legislative drafts and member resolutions, access information about their requests, and view completed draft text. A link to LDR is provided on the Capweb home page. Use of this system to submit legislative draft requests is encouraged by the council because it is fast, confidential, and convenient and helps ensure that you will get the document you requested in the most efficient manner possible. If you need immediate assistance with a draft request, use LDR and contact the appropriate council division directly to advise the division that you have made a time-sensitive request through LDR.

Submitting Requests by Letter or E-mail. Letters and e-mail are not recommended methods for submitting requests because they may delay processing of the request.

- Letter and e-mail communications do not normally contain sufficient information to open a request file. Processing of the request will be delayed until the recipient has time to contact the requestor to obtain additional information. The online and hard copy blue request forms include prompts for the essential information so that processing of the request can be expedited and the drafter can focus on drafting and other duties.
- Processing of a letter or e-mail request will be delayed until the recipient has time to transfer the contents of the letter or e-mail to a draft request form and forward it to the request processing team to complete processing.

E-mail is **strongly** discouraged for further reasons.

- E-mail communications to an individual's e-mail address are not accessible by other staff in the event the intended recipient is out of the office. In the event of an illness lasting several days or in the case of an urgent request, this delay can become a major problem for the requestor.
- E-mail communications are easily overlooked when the volume of e-mails received is high. Online request forms are sent to a central queue to be processed by the first available member of a team dedicated to that task; hard copy request forms delivered to a drafter's desk are not easily overlooked.
- Busy staffers may not remember, or be able, to check their e-mail inboxes regularly.

Request Acknowledgment. After the unique number is assigned to a request for a draft of legislation other than a congratulatory, memorial, or legislative policy resolution or a side-by-side analysis, the legislator's office is notified by e-mail that the request has been received and assigned. The electronic acknowledgment includes the document's unique number, a brief description of the request, and the name of the person to whom the request has been assigned.

If such an acknowledgment has not been received within a few days after a request has been mailed or delivered to the council office, the legislator's staff should call a council receptionist, (512) 463-1155, state that the caller seeks to confirm that the request has been received, and describe the type of request. The receptionist will direct the call to the appropriate person.

Filing an Altered Council Draft

Drafts of legislative documents prepared by council staff are stored in a computer database, which expedites the processing of a document after it becomes filed legislation. The staffs of both chambers rely on that computer text in entering text into TLIS and in preparing official printings of legislation. Changes made to a draft by persons other than council personnel before introduction of the legislation are often difficult to detect and invite error at different stages of consideration. For that reason, the council requests that legislators and their staffs take the following steps when making a change to a council document before introduction:

- Draw a line through, but do not obliterate, the council unique number in the footer of the document.
- If possible, please notify the director or deputy director of the document production division of the changes.

A notice of this policy is included in each delivery packet of a legislative document, along with a form that legislators and staff may use to notify the document production division staff of the changes made.

Drafting Process

The Most Visible Role. Aside from providing and maintaining the computer and other information systems equipment and applications that have come to be an integral part of the legislative process, the most visible role of the council during a legislative session is that of preparing drafts of bills, resolutions, and other legislative documents. Each session, the council will prepare more than 20,000 documents for consideration and use by legislators. Although what follows describes in some detail the process for a bill drafted by the legal division, the same process—with appropriate adjustments—is followed in the production of other legislative documents such as memorial and congratulatory resolutions drafted by the research division.

Speed and Quality. Consistent with the quality goal described in the preface to this guide, the council staff operates with the goal of each document being as near perfect as humanly possible, given the reality that mistakes can jeopardize the passage of a legislative document and, if enacted into law, can affect the lives of more than 22 million Texans. The council process is designed to foster precision. To a client, the number of steps in the council process may seem burdensome and inefficient, particularly given the speed of computer word-processing. Yet while technology has empowered the council staff to provide more efficiently an ever-increasing number of drafts, that technology can lull one into believing that there are magic doors through which a request can enter and exit in mere moments. The high quality demanded of all drafts, and the creativity required of most drafts, are time-consuming aspects of the work.

Production Steps. There are a number of persons and steps involved in council preparation of legislative documents. Almost every document, from the simplest to the most complex, must go through each of the steps. The time spent at each step varies, of course, depending on the complexity of the draft.

The typical request for a draft of a bill, for example, is handled by at least 15 to 20 people, not counting messengers and clerical handlers, including:

- telephone receptionist or administrative assistant receiving request
- attorney or administrative assistant who completes council request form, initiating assignment and tracking of request
- supervising attorney who assigns request to drafting attorney

- drafting attorney
- attorney who performs first review of draft
- attorney who performs second or final review of draft
- legal editor who edits draft
- typist who enters draft into computer system
- proofreaders who perform first proofing
- proofreaders who perform second proofing
- proofreader-reviewer of final product
- print shop personnel who print copies
- processing personnel who assemble delivery packets
- delivery personnel

The council staff routinely evaluates each step in this process to eliminate duplicative or unnecessary steps or steps that add no value to the final product. Balancing on the horns of quality and speed, the process is as efficient as possible.

Technical and Creative Work. Despite the number of steps and handlers involved, the bulk of the time a request for a legislative document spends in the hands of the council is not in administrative handling or document production. The most time-consuming process is the technical and creative work of the drafter. The task is complex and requires a degree of precision and internal coherence that exceeds that of other types of writing. Although many persons—lobbyists, interest groups, agencies—undertake to prepare legislation, to have the task performed properly generally requires the expertise of professionals such as those employed by the council.

A professional legislative drafter is skilled in the use of tools that enable the legislature to begin the legislative process with a bill or joint resolution that to the greatest extent possible clearly and effectively establishes legislative policy. Those tools, acquired through training and experience, include:

- sound arrangement of ideas
- avoidance of ambiguity, vagueness, and redundancy while also avoiding over-precision
- awareness of the substantive and organizational context of state and federal laws on the subject at issue
- awareness of the canons of statutory interpretation

- awareness of the mechanics of the legislative process as dictated by the constitution and the rules of the respective houses
- usage of terms in their normal meaning
- consistency in manner of expression

The drafting of legislation is more than mere writing. Rather, the skills of drafting operate on both a conceptual and a verbal level. On the conceptual level, the drafter must first ascertain and perfect the substantive policies desired. The drafter must understand the idea behind the policy and think it through. The drafter must employ constructive imagination and consider whether the policy will or will not work practically and administratively. Often, in thinking through the policy goal of the legislation, the drafter will have to return to the client for discussion and exploration of issues and to bring to the policy maker options for resolution of issues.

It is only after engaging in the conceptual work of a draft that the drafter may begin the verbal work, the process of composing the draft and selecting the appropriate words to put into effect the concept of the draft. Often, the time involved in composition is a fraction of the time involved in thinking through the idea.

- 1. Finding out what the client wants.** The most frequent cause for delay in the preparation of a draft is the lack of information. Many drafts begin with a request based on a statement of the core idea, but the core idea is rarely enough to enable the drafter to fully develop what the client wants. Although the drafter will make many subsidiary policy choices in preparing the draft, often the drafter will need the legislator or an aide to supply additional information or make significant policy decisions that dictate the form the draft will take.
- 2. Exploring the legal framework.** It is critical to every bill or joint resolution that the drafter explore the constitutional and statutory framework governing the subject of the legislation. This often requires reference to the state and federal constitutions, state and federal statutes, and relevant court cases and attorney general opinions. (What statutes need to be amended or repealed? What administrative practices will be affected? What unintended consequences might result?)
- 3. Developing a plan of organization.** Arrangement of a statute is a key ingredient to the statute's receiving the interpretation and application intended by the legislature. As an architect draws

plans for construction, the drafter must select the appropriate concepts and fit them together to avoid gaps, duplication, overlap, and contradiction.

- 4. Preparing a first draft.** Using the tools and skills of a professional and the knowledge gained in the first three steps, the drafter prepares a first draft, paying as much attention as possible to the details and technical matters involved. Many issues come to light for the first time during this composition stage, and the drafter will need to get answers or information from the client before proceeding to completion.
- 5. Revising the draft.** The drafter will reread and revise the draft as many times as necessary to produce a satisfactory result.
- 6. Checking the draft.** The drafter will check the details of the draft for form and citation as well as for the elements of consistency, coherence, and clarity.
- 7. Submitting the draft for review.** Every draft is submitted to other attorneys for review, first by a staff attorney who usually will have substantive expertise in the area that is the subject of the draft, and then by a senior attorney. At the first review stage, the reviewer re-creates the drafting process, checking the form and thinking through the substance of the draft. The final review is directed primarily at thinking through the substance of the draft and detecting issues that have escaped the drafter and first reviewer.
- 8. Polishing.** Following review, if necessary, the draft is resubmitted to the drafter for final polish or for the drafter's review of changes made by the reviewers.

Professional Editing. Because a bill or similar legislative document is a highly detailed, technical document, and must accurately cite and amend the existing body of Texas statutes and comply with strictly enforced parliamentary rules (such as the underlining and bracketing rule), the council employs a staff of full-time legal editors who edit each document for form, style, internal consistency, and grammar. Although the drafting and reviewing attorneys are responsible for creating a document that is technically proper, the legal editors are the fail-safe that ensures that documents prepared by the council will ultimately pass legislative muster as to form. The editors also serve as an important bridge between the drafters and the document production personnel.

Text Entry, Proofreading, and Printing. Each legislative document is professionally typed, proofread, and printed. The years of experience and expertise of the staff, plus the ongoing research and development of state-of-the-art equipment, make this a faster part of the handling of each document even though it involves a large number of people. As a standard, the document production division usually operates around the clock during a legislative session in order to finish each legislative document within an acceptable time frame after its receipt. (In addition to typing, proofreading, printing, processing, and delivering drafts of legislative documents, the document production division types, proofreads, prints, and transmits all official printings, engrossments, and enrollments of house documents.)

For some documents, data transcribers (typists) enter the complete text into the council computer system; for other documents, they must correct the format and make changes that reflect the drafter's markup of text already in the system.

After text entry, each legislative document drafted by the council is professionally proofread. Proofreading requires a large number of people—at least three people for each proofing step on most documents. Professional proofreading is a major contributor to the very low rate of errors in council documents. No computer program currently available can fully duplicate the functions served by professional proofreading.

Once proofreading has verified that the correct, final text of a document has been achieved, copies of the draft are printed for the use of the legislature and council staff. Although modern computer printers and copiers are capable of producing copies of large documents fairly quickly, the volume of work involved in the preparation of legislative documents dictates the use of printing equipment. During the 80th Legislature, the council printing section printed almost 38 million pages of text. Neither computer printers nor high-speed copiers can currently compete for speed and cost-efficiency in the production of so many copies.

How Long Does It Take? How long it takes from the time the request is received by the council until the finished product is delivered into the hands of the legislator depends on many variables, from the complexity of the draft to the number of other documents being drafted, edited, typed, proofread, or printed on a given day at a given hour. From the staff's perspective, a satisfactory draft always takes more time than the drafter and production staff have; from the legislator's perspective, a draft always takes more time than the legislator desires. Given the time

limitations inherent in a legislative session, the council consistently strives to balance the need for a quality work product with the need for prompt delivery of the finished product.

Chapter 1
Legislative Drafting
C. Policies

Duplicate Draft Requests

Frequently, a legislator asks the council to prepare a draft that is identical to a request previously made by another legislator. Treatment of duplicate requests is guided by three basic principles:

- Each legislator is entitled to have the council prepare a draft on any subject.
- Each legislator is entitled to have requests kept confidential.
- The legislature is best served by avoiding duplication of work to the extent practicable.

The following procedures will be followed when the council receives duplicate requests for a draft:

- **Bill, Texas Constitutional Amendment, Permission to Sue the State, or Rules Resolution.** If a legislator makes a request for a draft of a bill or constitutional amendment that is identical to a request previously made by another legislator, the council will send to the designated e-mail contact for each requestor's office an e-mail indicating that identical requests have been made by more than one legislator and explaining that each legislator will receive identical drafts with the same council unique number in the lower left corner of the document. (However, if a legislator asks for the legislator's draft to be prepared with its own council unique number, the draft will be prepared accordingly.) To preserve confidentiality, the identity of each legislator will not be revealed to the other legislator. If one of the legislators asks the drafting attorney to see if the other legislator would like to work cooperatively on the document, the attorney will do so to the extent it can be done in accordance with the council's confidentiality policies.
- **Congratulatory, Memorial, Legislative Policy, or U.S. Constitutional Amendment Resolution.** If a legislator makes a request for a draft of a resolution that is the same as a request previously made by another legislator, the council will send to the designated e-mail contact for each requestor's office an e-mail indicating that duplicate requests have been made by more than one legislator and inviting the legislators to contact the council about working cooperatively. However, if a legislator declines to work cooperatively, the council's ability to individualize each legislator's resolution draft will be constrained by the background information each legislator provided and

the council's volume of work. To preserve confidentiality, the identity of each legislator will not be revealed to the other legislator. If one of the legislators asks the section manager to see if the other legislator would like to work cooperatively on the document, the section manager will do so to the extent it can be done in accordance with the council's confidentiality policies.

Draft Status Inquiries

Legislators and their staffs should check the status of a request in the Office Drafts Report in LDR (<http://ldr/>) first. If further information is needed, they should direct questions about the status of a draft to the attorney or research staff member assigned to prepare the draft.

Document production staff members do not respond to telephone inquiries about the status of drafts in their possession. Documents reported to be at that stage of preparation will generally be delivered within 24 hours after receipt. Document production staff members are not empowered to honor a request for expedited preparation of a draft.

Attorney Draft. To check the status of a request being drafted by an attorney in the legal division, call the assigned attorney, (512) 463-1155; if the attorney is unknown, call a legal division administrative assistant, (512) 463-1155. Please have the request number ready.

Congratulatory, Memorial, or Legislative Policy Resolution Draft. To check the status of a request for a congratulatory, memorial, or legislative policy resolution, call Patty McLeod, (512) 463-1143. Please have the request number ready.

Other Research Request. To check the status of any other request being prepared by the research division, call the assigned researcher, (512) 463-1143; if the researcher is unknown, call Debbie Irvine, (512) 463-1143. Please have the request number ready.

Order of Draft Preparation

Council policy is for each division to prepare requests in the general order in which they are received by the division. That order is generally reflected in the council unique number assigned to each request. Requests are not completed and delivered strictly in compliance with numeric order, however, for reasons such as:

- Requests are assigned by subject matter among a large number of drafters whose relative workloads will vary from one time to another.
- Drafts differ greatly in size and complexity; drafters will often complete work on several “easy” requests while working on a long and difficult request.
- Completion of drafting is often delayed while the drafter awaits information or decisions from the legislator or staff.

Drafters have limited authority to prepare drafts out of order based on a request for expedited preparation. If it is determined that a legitimate, stated need makes the honoring of the request appropriate and that the expedited preparation will not significantly delay other drafts, then the drafter may prepare a draft out of order. However, since drafts are handled by many other personnel—reviewers, editors, typists, proofreaders, printing personnel—a draft prepared out of order will still require adequate time to allow for the involvement of those other personnel.

Requests for expedited preparation are openly discouraged. Preparation of one document out of order delays the preparation of documents for all other legislators.

Assignment of Draft Requests

Work is assigned to employees of the legal and research divisions of the legislative council based on subject matter expertise and workload demands. For example, a request to draft legislation will be assigned to one or more of the drafting attorneys who have subject matter expertise relevant to the proposed legislation, such as expertise in criminal law, primary and secondary education, state finance, state taxation, property law, insurance law, and the like. The drafter's work generally will be reviewed by at least one experienced attorney who has subject matter expertise in the relevant legal area.

In accordance with long-standing legislative council practice, the same attorney or group of attorneys will draft proposed legislation in a particular legal subject area for different legislators who may wish to take different approaches to solving the same or similar legislative problems. This practice explains why the initials of the same drafting attorney may often appear in the council's document unique number in various council-produced legislative drafts that relate to the same legal subject but that were produced for different legislators.

When possible, any proposed amendment to a bill requested by a legislator will be drafted by the attorney who drafted the bill. This is because legislative council services are provided impartially on a nonpartisan basis based on relevant expertise and because the council endeavors to provide the highest quality legislative document possible under prevailing time constraints. However, unless the legislator for whom a draft is prepared or an authorized member of that legislator's staff expressly directs otherwise, an employee of the legislative council will follow the council's confidentiality policy with regard to any draft. See section on **Discussion or Analysis of Public Legislative Documents**.

Discussion or Analysis of Public Legislative Documents

Discussion of Public Legislative Documents. Employees of the legal and research divisions of the legislative council may discuss a public legislative document, such as a filed bill, with legislators and their staffs or with others in light of the publicly available text of the document and the council employee's relevant technical knowledge of Texas constitutional and statutory law and house and senate rules. However, with regard to any confidential information that pertains to the public document, legislative council employees will follow the council's confidentiality policy in discussing the document with anyone other than the legislator who requested the document or a member of that person's staff.

Parliamentary Matters. With regard to parliamentary matters, legislative council employees may discuss how house or senate rules might affect a filed bill but may not give definitive advice regarding parliamentary matters. For more definitive guidance regarding parliamentary matters, a legislator is advised to consult with the house or senate parliamentarian.

Analyses of Public Legislative Documents. The Texas Legislative Council Bill Analysis Unit, an extension of the council's research division, provides bill analysis services. Research division staff members also draft certain side-by-side analyses of the differences between versions of a bill. Because of the drafting workload, the council generally limits its analysis of legislative documents to the following types of analyses:

- a bill analysis requested by the chair or staff of a committee for a bill that has been scheduled for a hearing in that committee
- a bill analysis requested by the chair or staff of a committee for a committee report adopted by that committee
- a side-by-side comparison of the differences between the final senate and house versions of a bill or resolution
- a side-by-side comparison of the differences in the final senate, house, and conference committee versions of a bill or resolution

Chapter 2

Computer Services

Computer Training

The Computer Support Center (CSC) training center offers comprehensive instruction in all custom legislative computer applications and personal computer software supported by the council. Classes are designed to meet the needs of legislative staff members based on experience and job duties. The CSC staff also produces online help and training and procedure manuals.

Class Schedule. Legislators and their staffs are notified about the computer training schedule each month via Outlook, and a calendar of upcoming classes is posted on the CSC website at http://cscweb/Training_Center/calendar.htm.

Class Registration. To register for computer training classes:

- Call (512) 475-1111
- E-mail the training center using the Outlook address resource “Classes”
- Register online at http://cscweb/Training_Center/class_reginfo.htm#register_online. Click “Training Center.” Click “Class Registration.” On the Class Registration page, click “Register Online.”

Online Training. For online training, visit the online training page of the CSC website at http://cscweb/csc_online_training/online_training.htm.

Computer Manuals. For computer manuals:

- Contact your office computer consultant, (512) 463-1160
- Visit the CSC website (<http://cscweb>) for online manuals, help, and FAQs

TLIS Data Questions. For information or questions about TLIS data, call Mary Camp, Legislative Reference Library administrative services coordinator, (512) 463-5911.

Office Computer Consulting

The Computer Support Center (CSC) has computer consultants to provide office consulting and software support for leadership and legislators' offices (both Capitol and district), committees, and central staff.

Consulting Services. The following services are available:

- Adding or deleting user IDs: An office consultant should be the first point of contact when user IDs are needed for new staff or user IDs that are no longer in use must be deleted.
- Organizing office work: An office consultant can provide information on the best use of computer software for office projects and routine tasks.
- Analyzing training needs and providing software support: To help increase efficiency, an office consultant can help select computer classes that will make staff more productive in their tasks and follow up with one-on-one support.
- Answering "How Do I" questions and helping with computer-related issues

Assigned Consultants. Use the following links to access information about the consulting teams for each of the following groups:

- lieutenant governor's office (http://cscweb/Consultants_Corner/ltgov_support.htm)
- speaker's office (http://cscweb/Consultants_Corner/speaker_support.htm)
- senate offices (both Capitol and district), committees, and central staff (http://cscweb/Consultants_Corner/senate_support.htm)
- house offices (both Capitol and district), committees, and central staff (http://cscweb/Consultants_Corner/house_support.htm)

PCs and Printers

Personal computers (PCs) and printers are included on the list of standard equipment available to the offices of all legislators. The information systems division of the council employs a highly skilled staff of computer technicians to install PCs and printers in the Capitol Complex and throughout the state in legislators' district offices.

Hardware Information. For more information about PCs and printers, call your office consultant, (512) 463-1160.

Hardware Request. To request a PC or printer:

- House members—Contact the Committee on House Administration, (512) 463-0784.
- Senate members—Contact the secretary of the senate, (512) 463-0100.

Hardware Problem. To report PC or printer problems, call the Help Desk support line, (512) 463-1158, or send an e-mail to helpdesk@tlc.state.tx.us or via Outlook to **HelpDesk**.

Hardware Move. If a PC or printer needs to be moved within the office for any reason, call the Help Desk move line, (512) 463-1616, or send an e-mail to helpdesk@tlc.state.tx.us or via Outlook to **HelpDesk**. Only a computer technician from the council should move the hardware in order to ensure that inventory is updated and that proper connections are made.

Software

The information systems division develops custom legislative applications and provides and supports certain PC software. The division also develops or supports development of websites and provides web access for the senate, the house, and legislative agencies and offices.

Legislative Intranet Applications

- Texas Legislative Information System (TLIS): legislation and related information
- Texas Appointment System (TAS): governor and legislative leadership appointments

Internet Applications

- Texas Legislature Online (TLO): legislature's website; legislation and related information
- Texas Constitution and Statutes: with download options and keyword search
- Who Represents Me?: information about members and districts for any address, zip code, county, or city in Texas
- RedViewer: interactive maps and reports for redistricting proposals and current districts

Network Applications

- ABB (Automated Bill Book) enables senators in the senate chamber to access notice of intent, regular order of business, local and uncontested calendar, and other information in electronic format.
- CMS (Correspondence Management System) logs and tracks different types of correspondence and casework, enabling legislators' offices to produce letters and reports with that information.
- FAS (Floor Amendment System) enables legislators in the house chamber to display amendments and other documents used in floor debate.
- LMS (Legislative Management System) enables legislative clients to track legislation by combining legislative information available in TLIS with specific comments and recommendations entered by legislative staff.

- RedAppl (Redistricting Application) enables clients to create redistricting plans.

Standard PC Software

- Microsoft Windows, Word, Excel, and Outlook
- Microsoft Internet Explorer
- Premise
- Adobe Acrobat Reader

PC Software Request

- House members—Contact the Committee on House Administration, (512) 463-0784.
- Senate members—Contact the secretary of the senate, (512) 463-0100.

Software Information. For more information about software, call your office consultant, (512) 463-1160.

Software Problems. To report software problems, call the Help Desk support line, (512) 463-1158, or send an e-mail to helpdesk@tlc.state.tx.us or via Outlook to **HelpDesk**.

Help Desk and Online Support

The council provides comprehensive Help Desk (telephone and e-mail) and online support to thousands of legislative clients in the Capitol Complex and throughout the state in legislators' district offices.

HELP DESK SUPPORT

Telephone Support. Telephone support is available Monday through Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. These hours are extended during the legislative session to accommodate the needs of the legislature.

- **Help Desk Support Line—(512) 463-1158.** For computer hardware and software problems and other urgent computer questions. Please do not call the Help Desk for phone system problems, copier machine problems, computer training information, office consultants, or computer moves.
- **Help Desk Move Line—(512) 463-1616.** For computer equipment moves only.

E-mail Support. Nonurgent questions and comments also may be sent by e-mail to helpdesk@tlc.state.tx.us or by Outlook to **HelpDesk**. Allow at least one hour for a response.

Information to Provide. Be prepared to provide the following information when you contact the Help Desk:

- User ID of the person reporting the problem
- Phone number and location of office
- Serial number of the equipment (on blue card attached to equipment)
- Nature of the problem, including error message (if applicable)

Also note the following:

- Is anyone else in the office experiencing the problem?
- When was the last time the equipment or application functioned correctly?
- When will someone be available to meet a dispatched technician?
- Is there an alternate method to complete the work?

ONLINE SUPPORT

Computer Support Center Website (CSCweb). This technical support intranet site contains web-based tutorials, online reference materials, software tips and tricks, downloadable fonts, and other valuable resources. Go to <http://cscweb/>.

How Do I...? This online help resource provides answers to procedural questions about Texas 2009, Outlook, Word, TLIS, and many other legislative computer applications. Go to <http://cscweb/Images/Robohelp/WebHelp/HowDoI.htm>.

Chapter 3

Research and Special Services

Interim Committee Support

The council staff provides a variety of services and support to committees of the legislature relating to their interim charges.

Research Services

- Research on issues raised by the committee, including statistical research, legislative history research, statute searches, surveys of other states' practices, and syntheses of government, academic, and other information
- Oral presentations at committee hearings on results of research
- Assistance in preparing materials for inclusion in the committee's report
- Drafting of legislative policy resolutions for inclusion in the committee's report
- Preparation of maps, data, tables, charts, and graphs to support committee analyses and presentations

Because staff resources are limited, the research division is unable to assign a researcher to work full-time for a committee.

To request services: Contact Debbie Irvine, Research Division Director; Clare Dyer, Mapping and Redistricting Section Manager; Pamela Lam-Yip, Statistical Research Section Manager; or Patty McLeod, Resolutions and Publications Section Manager, (512) 463-1143.

Legal Services

- Drafting of proposed legislation requested by the committee
- Legal research, drafting of memoranda, and legal advice on issues raised by the committee's investigation
- Oral presentations at committee hearings on legal issues connected with the committee's investigation
- Assistance in the preparation and service of legislative subpoenas
- Advice and assistance on compliance with state laws such as the open meetings law and open records law

The legal division will designate an attorney to attend committee hearings at which the presence of the attorney is necessary, but because resources are limited, the division generally does not assign an attorney to attend each committee hearing or to work full-time for a committee.

To request services: Contact Deborah Fulton, Legal Division Director, or the appropriate attorney, (512) 463-1155.

Printing and Distribution Services

- Printing and public distribution of interim committee reports

To request services: Contact Paul Mims, Document Production Division Director, or Janet Sullivan, Deputy Director, (512) 463-1155.

Administrative Services for Joint Committees

- Budgeting, accounting, and purchasing assistance
- Copies of *Procedures Manual for Joint Committees*

To request services: Contact Joanna Peavy, Assistant Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer, (512) 463-1151.

Legal Counseling and Special Projects

Legal Counseling. Legal counseling involves telephone and face-to-face consultation with legislators and legislative staff. Council attorneys are available to provide legal advice about current law and about changes necessary to implement policies proposed by a legislator. In addition, council attorneys are familiar with the details of the legislative process and can advise legislators and staff generally in regard to the process.

Note: Inquiries as to the interpretation and application of a parliamentary rule should be directed to the parliamentarians of the respective houses or their assistants. Legal division attorneys do not make advisory rulings on parliamentary questions.

Legal Counseling Request. To request legal counseling, contact the appropriate attorney or describe the general subject matter to a receptionist, (512) 463-1155. See the attorney subject area assignment list (<http://capweb/gtlc/drafting/subjectarea.html>) to determine the appropriate attorney.

Special Projects. Council attorneys provide necessary legal support work for special legislative projects such as removal proceedings and election contests. Attorneys work closely with committee chairs and masters appointed to conduct those proceedings and provide for that purpose legal research, analysis, and advice. Also, with specific approval of leadership, the council has on occasion produced amicus briefs for filing with the Texas Supreme Court on significant issues affecting the legislature.

Special Project Assistance Request. To request legal assistance for special legislative projects, contact Deborah Fulton, Legal Division Director, (512) 463-1155.

Legal Research and Writing

Legal research and writing services are largely reserved for the interim between sessions of the legislature. During and immediately before legislative sessions, the number of requests for drafts of legislative documents requires that written memoranda receive a lower priority treatment. As time permits, council attorneys provide confidential **legal memoranda** (see following page for more information) concerning issues of law affecting the official duties of legislators. Some restrictions apply to the preparation of **written legal opinions** (see following page for more information). Legislative committees are authorized by law to request official attorney general opinions. Council attorneys draft **attorney general opinion requests** (see following page for more information) for committees.

Legal Research or Writing Request. To request legal research, a legal memorandum, or an attorney general opinion request, contact the appropriate attorney or describe the general subject matter to a receptionist, (512) 463-1155. See the attorney subject area assignment list (<http://capweb/gtlc/drafting/subjectarea.html>) to determine the appropriate attorney.

Information to Provide. Please provide the following information with your request:

- Statement of problem or issue
- Statement of legal question to be answered
- References to relevant court cases, constitutional provisions, statutes, attorney general opinions (if known)
- Related newspaper or periodical articles
- Persons or agencies to contact for more information

Legal Memoranda

Legal division attorneys and paralegals prepare confidential written memoranda addressing legal issues. During legislative sessions, bill drafting receives a higher priority. Some restrictions apply; see written legal opinions section for details.

Legal Memorandum Request. Request a legal memorandum by one of these methods:

- **In writing:** deliver a written request to a legal division receptionist on the 2nd floor, Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building, 1501 N. Congress Avenue; or mail to P.O. Box 12128, Austin, TX 78711-2128
- **Phone:** contact the appropriate attorney or describe general subject matter to a receptionist, (512) 463-1155; see the attorney subject area assignment list (<http://capweb/gtllc/drafting/subjectarea.html>) to determine the appropriate attorney

Requesting legal memoranda by e-mail is strongly discouraged.
See **Request Procedures** to find out why.

Information to Provide. Please provide the following information with your request:

- Statement of problem or issue
- Statement of legal question to be answered
- References to relevant court cases, constitutional provisions, statutes, attorney general opinions (if known)
- Related newspaper or periodical articles
- Persons or agencies to contact for more information
- Delivery instructions if the request is to be delivered to a person or to a place other than the Capitol office of the requestor

Written Legal Opinions

On request of a legislator or the lieutenant governor, the legal staff prepares written legal opinions that relate to the requestor's official duties. All written opinions prepared by the staff are objective and impartial. While the staff will provide its best professional advice, the staff will avoid giving a definitive answer to a question that presents an unresolved legal issue.

During a legislative session, the drafting workload demands that written legal opinions receive a lower priority than drafting requests. A request for a written opinion can be honored only if the staff can do so without jeopardizing the ability to meet drafting deadlines.

A requestor may not require the staff, in preparing a written opinion, to:

- provide private legal advice to a constituent concerning the constituent's private matters
- state a particular conclusion

The staff may decline to provide a written legal opinion if:

- the request clearly involves providing private legal advice to a constituent concerning the constituent's private matters
- the requestor requires a particular conclusion that, in the professional judgment of the staff, is not supported by definitive authority
- the requestor requires a conclusion about the validity or legality of state or local governmental action
- the issue presented is likely to be resolved by pending litigation or by a pending request for an opinion of the attorney general or other officer legally authorized to interpret the law in question
- the issue to be addressed is of a magnitude customarily undertaken, after appropriate approval, as a council study

Written Legal Opinion Request. To request a written legal opinion, contact Deborah Fulton, Legal Division Director, (512) 463-1155.

Attorney General Opinion Requests

Legislative committees are authorized by law to request official attorney general opinions. Council attorneys draft opinion requests.

Asking for an Attorney General Opinion Request. Ask for an attorney general opinion request by one of these methods:

- **In writing:** deliver a written request to a legal division receptionist on the 2nd floor, Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building, 1501 N. Congress Avenue; or mail to P.O. Box 12128, Austin, TX 78711-2128
- **Phone:** contact the appropriate attorney or describe general subject matter to a receptionist, (512) 463-1155; see the attorney subject area assignment list (<http://capweb/gtlc/drafting/subjectarea.html>) to determine the appropriate attorney

Making requests by e-mail is strongly discouraged. See **Request Procedures** to find out why.

Information to Provide. Please provide the following information with your request:

- Statement of problem or issue
- Statement of legal question to be answered
- References to relevant court cases, constitutional provisions, statutes, attorney general opinions (if known)
- Related newspaper or periodical articles
- Persons or agencies to contact for more information
- Name of committee on whose behalf opinion is asked
- Delivery instructions if the request is to be delivered to a person or to a place other than the Capitol office of the requestor

Mapping and Geographic Analysis

The research division's mapping and redistricting staff uses geographic information system technology to correlate education, criminal justice, socioeconomic, or other policy issue data with geographic areas (e.g., tax rate by school district) for research and analysis and to produce maps relating to policy issues of interest to the legislature (e.g., hospitals and hospital districts or four-year college and university campus locations). A number of policy issue maps previously created by the staff are available on request. These can be viewed at <http://capweb/gtlc/specproj/mapinventory.html>. Other maps and geographic analyses can be produced on request.

Types of Services. The following types of services are available:

- Presentation maps—Display-size (up to 36" x 36") to publication-size color maps
- Geographic analysis—Correlation of policy issue data with specified geographic area or locations for analysis; usually rendered as presentation maps

Map or Geographic Analysis Request. Request a map or geographic analysis by one of these methods:

- **Phone:** contact Clare Dyer or Sam Davenport, (512) 463-1143
- **In writing:** deliver to a council receptionist on the 2nd floor, Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building, 1501 N. Congress Avenue; or mail to P.O. Box 12128, Austin, TX 78711-2128, Attn. Clare Dyer

Requesting research by e-mail is strongly discouraged. See **Request Procedures** to find out why.

Information to Provide. Please provide the following information with your request:

- Statement of issue and goal for the project
- Background information on the issue
- Time frame in which the map or analysis is needed
- Delivery instructions if the request is to be delivered to a person or to a place other than the Capitol office of the requestor

Policy Issue Research

The research division conducts policy issue research for legislators and committees, including background research for interim charges; legislative history research; statute searches; surveys of other states' practices, laws, and legislation; and syntheses of academic, government, or other research.

Types of Services. The following types of services are available:

- Spot research—Provides a short, informal answer by telephone or e-mail
- In-depth research—May provide materials obtained from other sources or prepare a formal memorandum, table, or other document

Policy Issue Research Request. Request policy issue research by one of these methods:

- **Phone:** contact Debbie Irvine, (512) 463-1143
- **In writing:** deliver written request and any background information to a council receptionist on the 2nd floor, Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building, 1501 N. Congress Avenue; or mail to P.O. Box 12128, Austin, TX 78711-2128, Attn. Debbie Irvine

Requesting research by e-mail is strongly discouraged. See **Request Procedures** to find out why.

Information to Provide. Please provide the following information with your request:

- Statement of problem or issue and specific information needed
- Background information on the issue
- Time frame in which the research is needed
- Delivery instructions if the request is to be delivered to a person or to a place other than the Capitol office of the requestor

Redistricting Support

The council provides support for the legislative, congressional, and State Board of Education redistricting efforts of the legislature.

Types of Services. The following types of services are available:

- Legal counseling and bill drafting services
- Phone support and office consultation for the RedAppl and RedViewer computer systems
- Census, election, and geographic databases
- Appointments to draw districts in the council's redistricting offices with or without the assistance of a RedAppl operator
- Maps (color and black/white in various sizes from 8.5" x 11" to 36" x 36")
- Reports (population, election, and other)
- Informational publications
- *Texas Redistricting* website (information on current and proposed districts; geography, population, and election data online or on electronic media) at <http://www.tlc.state.tx.us/redist/redist.htm>

Computer Assistance Request. To request assistance in using redistricting computer systems, call redistricting support services, (512) 463-6622.

Information Request. Request information, publications, reports, or maps by one of these methods:

- **Phone:** contact redistricting support services, (512) 463-6622; or Clare Dyer or Sam Davenport, (512) 463-1143
- **In writing:** deliver a written request to a council receptionist on the 2nd floor, Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building, 1501 N. Congress Avenue; or mail to P.O. Box 12128, Austin, TX 78711-2128, Attn. Clare Dyer

Note: Copies of publications and standard maps and reports are also available from the council's document distribution office, Room B.324, Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building, 1501 N. Congress Avenue, (512) 463-1144.

Requesting materials by e-mail is strongly discouraged. See **Request Procedures** to find out why.

Bill or Amendment Request. Request a bill or amendment by one of these methods:

- **Online:** submit through LDR (Legislative Draft Request system: <http://ldr/>)
- **Hard copy:** fill out a paper draft request form and deliver to a legal division receptionist on the 2nd floor, Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building, 1501 N. Congress Avenue; or mail to P.O. Box 12128, Austin, TX 78711-2128
- **Phone:** contact the appropriate attorney or describe general subject matter to a receptionist, (512) 463-1155; see the attorney subject area assignment list (<http://capweb/gtlc/drafting/subjectarea.html>) to determine the appropriate attorney

Requesting drafts by letter or e-mail is strongly discouraged.
See **Request Procedures** to find out why.

Legal Counseling Request. To request legal counseling, contact the appropriate attorney or describe the general subject matter to a receptionist, (512) 463-1155; see the attorney subject area assignment list (<http://capweb/gtlc/drafting/subjectarea.html>) to determine the appropriate attorney.

Statistical Research

Research division statisticians provide statistical research assistance for formulating policy, evaluating program data and statistical information produced by other agencies, and conducting original research, including scientific surveys.

Types of Services. The following types of services are available:

- Compilation and analysis of data
- Statistical estimates and projections from data
- Evaluation of methodologies and conclusions in statistical studies conducted by others
- Advice on the use and interpretation of statistics or on how to formulate a design to answer a research question
- Statistical surveys and analysis of results

Statistical Research Request. Request statistical research by one of these methods:

- **Phone:** contact Pamela Lam-Yip, (512) 463-1143
- **In writing:** deliver a written request to a council receptionist on the 2nd floor, Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building, 1501 N. Congress Avenue; or mail to P.O. Box 12128, Austin, TX 78711-2128, Attn. Pamela Lam-Yip

Requesting research by e-mail is strongly discouraged. See **Request Procedures** to find out why.

Information to Provide. Please provide the following information with your request:

- Type of service desired
- Background information
- Copies of or reference to any relevant material available to the requestor
- Delivery instructions if the request is to be delivered to a person or to a place other than the Capitol office of the requestor

Statutory Revision

The Texas Legislative Council is required by law (Section 323.007, Government Code) to carry out a complete nonsubstantive revision of the Texas statutes. The process involves reorganizing the statutes in topical codes, such as the Penal Code; eliminating repealed, invalid, duplicative, and other ineffective provisions; and improving the draftsmanship of the law if practicable. Codes drafted under this program are enacted by bill.

Proposed chapters, revisor's reports, and other information on current code projects are available online. To view information on current code projects, go to <http://www.tlc.state.tx.us/legal/code.html>.

General Questions. For general questions about the codification process, call Deborah Fulton, Legal Division Director, (512) 463-1155.

Questions About an Enacted Code. For questions about a specific enacted code, call the appropriate attorney or describe general subject matter to a receptionist, (512) 463-1155; see the attorney subject area assignment list (<http://capweb/gtlc/drafting/subjectarea.html>) to determine the appropriate attorney.

Questions About a Pending Code Bill. For questions about a pending code bill, call the chief revisor (the attorney whose initials appear on the draft), (512) 463-1155; or, if the chief revisor is unavailable, call Deborah Fulton, (512) 463-1155.

House Engrossing and Enrolling

The council engrosses and enrolls house bills and resolutions. Text is prepared as expeditiously as possible in the order in which the documents are received.

The council does not engross senate documents that the house has amended, nor does the senate prepare a printing of house amendments to senate documents.

Types of Documents Processed. The council processes the following types of documents:

- House committee reports on house and senate documents (1st official house printing)
- 3rd reading engrossments of house documents
- Senate amendments to house documents (2nd official house printing)
- Special printings (usually engrossment of senate amendments to a house document)
- Conference committee reports on house and senate documents (3rd official house printing)
- Enrollments of house documents

Obtaining Information. To obtain information about house engrossing and enrolling, call Jeff Archer, Chief Legislative Counsel, (512) 463-1155.

Document Status. To check the status of documents, check TLIS or call the chief clerk's office, (512) 463-0845, to determine whether a house document has been delivered to the council for engrossment or enrollment. The chief clerk's office also is the appropriate contact for inquiries about the status of house committee report, senate amendment, and conference committee report printings.

Note: Documents are prepared in the order in which they are received from the chief clerk's office. Council staff exercises no discretion in the processing of engrossed or enrolled documents or official printings.

Chapter 4

Information Resources

Publications, Reports, and Maps

The staff of the legislative council produces a number of publications and reports on topics relating to state government and the legislative process. These publications are available in hard copy or online at <http://www.tlc.state.tx.us>.

Legislators and legislative committees may suggest topics for new publications.

Legislative Reference Publications

- ***Guide to Texas Legislative Information***

An aid to locating legislative information and resources.

- ***Guide to Texas Legislative Council Services***

A detailed guide to services and products provided to the legislature by the agency.

- ***Texas Legislative Council Drafting Manual***

A compilation of legislative drafting guidelines covering such topics as bill format and content requirements, germaneness, citations, and style and usage.

- ***Reading a Bill***

A primer on how to read and understand a bill. Explains the principal parts of a bill and the function of each part.

- ***Memorandum on Local and Bracket Bills***

A discussion of the requirements relating to publication of notice of intent to introduce a local or special bill and standards governing consideration of bills that are limited to a particular class of political subdivisions or geographic areas through use of population or another classification device.

- ***Texas Legislative Manual***

A manual containing the U.S. and Texas Constitutions, the senate and house rules of procedure, information on the membership of the two houses and their committees, and information on the officers and employees of the two houses.

- ***Texas Constitution***

An update prepared following each election on proposed constitutional amendments to incorporate all changes approved by the voters.

- ***Amendments to the Texas Constitution Since 1876***

Basic information on all original sections of the constitution and all amendatory proposals, including subject content, dates and outcomes of amendment elections, and citations to the joint resolutions that contain the amendment text.

- ***Senate Rules***

A paperback volume of the annotated rules.

- ***House Rules***

A paperback volume of the annotated rules.

- ***Procedures Manual for Joint Committees***

Procedures governing the financial, administrative, and logistical operations of joint committees.

Legislative Analysis Publications

- ***Summary of Enactments***

Published after a legislative session. Provides a brief synopsis of all bills and all joint resolutions proposing amendments to the Texas Constitution that were passed by the legislature during the session.

- ***New, Renamed, and Abolished State Governmental Entities***

Published after a legislative session. Provides information on state governmental entities that were created, restructured, or eliminated by the legislature.

- ***Analyses of Proposed Constitutional Amendments***

Published before each election that has proposed amendments to the Texas Constitution on the ballot. Includes the text of the joint resolution, ballot language, background and analysis of the proposal, and arguments for and against passage of the measure. A condensed version of the publication, suitable for inclusion in legislators' newsletters, is also available online.

Policy Issue Reports and Maps

Each of these reports or maps focuses on a specific topic that is of interest to the legislative community at the time of publication. For a listing of available reports, go to <http://www.tlc.state.tx.us/pubspol/pubspol.html>.

For a listing of available maps, go to <http://capweb/gtlc/specproj/mapinventory.html>.

Historical Publications

- *Presiding Officers of the Texas Legislature*

A collection of brief biographies of those who have served as lieutenant governor or speaker of the house of representatives in Texas.

- *The Texas Capitol: A History of the Lone Star Statehouse*

A history of the location, construction, and restoration of the Texas Capitol.

Obtaining Publications. Council publications are distributed to legislators, the Legislative Reference Library, and state depository libraries and can also be found on the council's publications web page. A limited number of additional copies of publications are printed and may be requested from the council's document distribution office. Publications also may be accessed online from the publications web page of the council's Internet website at <http://www.tlc.state.tx.us/pubslegref/pubslegref.html>.

Request council publications by one of these methods:

- Most publications:
 - **Phone:** contact document distribution, (512) 463-1144
 - **Online:** send an e-mail to house.documentdistribution@tlc.state.tx.us; or request through the house document request form at <http://bilreq/House.aspx>
 - **In person:** go to Room B.324, Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building, 1501 N. Congress Avenue
 - **In writing:** deliver a written request to Room B.324, Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building, 1501 N. Congress Avenue; or mail to P.O. Box 12128, Austin, TX 78711-2128; or fax to (512) 463-2920
- *Texas Legislative Manual:* contact the records office, (512) 463-1155
- *Procedures Manual for Joint Committees:* contact the accounting office, (512) 463-1155

Request a publication in an alternative format by one of these methods:

- **Phone:** contact document distribution, (512) 463-1144
- **In writing:** mail a written request to P.O. Box 12128, Austin, TX 78711-2128, or fax to (512) 463-2920

Web Resources

The staff of the legislative council creates and maintains a number of websites and web applications for the legislative community and the public. Some resources are available only on the legislative intranet; others are Internet resources available from any computer with web access.

Legislative Intranet Resources

- **Capweb (Inside the Texas Legislature): <http://capweb>**

Serves as the default browser home page for the legislative community. Provides convenient links to many online legislative resources and items of current interest. During a legislative session, gives the dates and times when the senate and house will next convene.

- **Texas Appointment System (TAS): <http://tas/WebApp/UI/BasicSearch.aspx>**

Provides information about appointments made by the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house, and others having authority to appoint members to a legislative entity, a governor's task force, or a state agency, board, or commission, as well as basic information about the entity itself.

- **Texas Legislative Information System (TLIS): <http://tlis>**

Allows legislative users to track legislation and view bill text, bill history, bill analyses, fiscal notes, enrolled bill summaries, committee membership, committee minutes and witness lists, scheduling information, and senate and house calendar information.

- **Guide to Texas Legislative Information: <http://capweb/gtli/home.html>**

Provides a guide to a broad range of legislative information resources, with links to legislative intranet and Internet resources.

- **Guide to Texas Legislative Council Services: <http://capweb/gtlc/index.html>**

Provides a detailed guide to services and information provided by the council to the legislative community and how to obtain those resources.

- **Index of Data, Maps, and Reports:** http://capweb/dmr%20index/dmr_index.html
Provides online access to data, maps, and reports relating to policy issues and other matters of current interest to the Texas Legislature.
- **Computer Support Center:** <http://cscweb>
Provides information regarding computer services provided by the council and how to access those services.
- **How Do I . . .?:** <http://cscweb/Images/Robohelp/WebHelp/HowDoI.htm>
Provides online computer help.

Internet Resources

- **Texas Legislature Online (TLO):** <http://www.legis.state.tx.us>
Allows public users to track legislation; view bill text, bill history, bill analyses, fiscal notes, enrolled bill summaries, committee membership, committee minutes and witness lists, scheduling information, and senate and house calendar information; and access information about the legislative process, important legislative dates, government websites, and other items of interest.
- **Guide to Texas Legislative Information:** <http://www.tlc.state.tx.us/gtli/home.html>
Provides a guide to a broad range of legislative information resources, with links to Internet resources.
- **Research on the World Wide Web:** <http://www.tlc.state.tx.us/webguide/webguide.htm>
Provides a directory of state, federal, and other web resources for legislative research.
- **Texas Constitution and Statutes:** <http://tlo2.tlc.state.tx.us/txconst/toc.html>
Updated by the Texas Legislative Council following each constitutional amendment election and each legislative session. Has download options and keyword search.
- **Who Represents Me?:** <http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us>
Provides information about members and districts of the Texas Senate, the Texas House of Representatives, the Texas delegation to the U.S. House of Representatives, and the State Board of

Education, plus contact information for the U.S. senators from Texas. Offers information on the geographic and demographic composition of the districts. Users can determine the districts and representatives for any address, zip code, county, or city in Texas.

- **RedViewer:** <http://gis1.tlc.state.tx.us>

Provides interactive maps and demographic and election data reports for redistricting proposals and current districts of the Texas Senate, the Texas House of Representatives, the Texas delegation to the U.S. House of Representatives, and the State Board of Education.

- **Texas Redistricting:** <http://www.tlc.state.tx.us/redist/redist.htm>

Provides information relating to redistricting responsibilities and activities of the Texas Legislature.

- **Texas Legislative Council:** <http://www.tlc.state.tx.us>

Provides information about the agency, plus online access to publications, code project documents, and other items.

- **Texas Capitol Events:** <http://www.capevent.legis.state.tx.us>

Provides information about the Capitol and events occurring in the Capitol Complex.

House Document Distribution

The council's document distribution office performs the document distribution function for the house of representatives. The office distributes copies of house legislation and legislative documents, council publications, and redistricting and other materials to legislators and the public. Many of the documents and materials are also available online through TLIS or the Capweb home page.

Available Documents. The following documents are available:

- House legislation (introduced, house committee report printing, 2nd reading engrossment, 3rd reading engrossment, senate amendment printing, conference committee report printing, and enrollment)
- Senate legislation (house committee report printing and conference committee report printing only)
- House calendars
- House daily journals
- Texas Constitution
- House rules
- Senate rules
- Council publications and informational materials
- Standard redistricting reports and maps
- House interim committee reports

Document Request. Request copies of a document by one of these methods:

- **Online:** send an e-mail to house.documentdistribution@tlc.state.tx.us; or request through the house document request form at <http://bilreq/House.aspx>
- **In person:** go to Room B.324, Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building, 1501 N. Congress Avenue
- **In writing:** deliver a written request to Room B.324, Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building, 1501 N. Congress Avenue; or mail to P.O. Box 12128, Austin, TX 78711-2128; or fax to (512) 463-2920

Request a publication in an alternative format by one of these methods:

- **Phone:** contact document distribution, (512) 463-1144
- **In writing:** mail a written request to P.O. Box 12128, Austin, TX 78711-2128, or fax to (512) 463-2920

Chapter 5

About the Texas Legislative Council

Overview

The Texas Legislative Council, under the guidance of a 14-member governing body, provides drafting, computing, research, and publishing services to the Texas Legislature and legislative agencies. The council also serves as an information resource for state agencies, the citizens of Texas, and others as time and resources allow.

Under the general direction of the executive director, the council staff is organized into six major divisions: administration, document production, information systems, legal, policy and planning, and research. Each division is under the supervision of a director.

Staff offices of the council are located in the Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building, 1501 N. Congress Avenue.

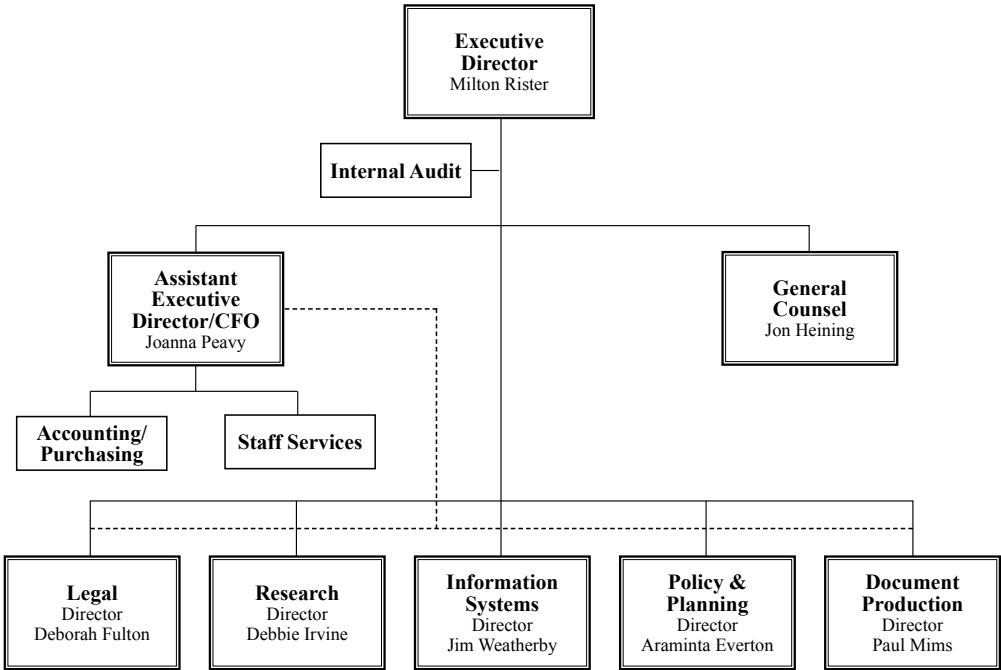
Nonpartisan Service. The Texas Legislative Council provides impartial and nonpartisan drafting, research, computer support, and other services to the lieutenant governor and to all members of the Texas Legislature.

Confidentiality Policy. Under Section 323.017, Government Code, communications between a legislator or the lieutenant governor and a council employee that relate to a request by the official for information, advice, or opinions from a council employee are confidential, and information, advice, and opinions given privately by a council employee to a legislator, or the lieutenant governor, acting in the person's official capacity, are confidential.

In addition, Rule 1.05 of the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct generally prohibits a lawyer from knowingly revealing to another person confidential information of a client, including confidential communications between the client and the lawyer made for the purpose of facilitating the rendition of professional legal services to the client.

Since the work of the lawyers and other staff employed by the council is confidential, the council staff will not disclose the fact that a legislator or the lieutenant governor has made a particular request for draft legislation or provide any other information about the request to any other person, including other legislators, without the express permission of the office for which the draft is being prepared. After a draft becomes an introduced bill or resolution, the council staff will answer questions concerning the bill or resolution only to the extent that the answers do not disclose confidential information concerning the bill or resolution.

Staff Organization



Agency Contact Information

Physical Address

The Texas Legislative Council staff offices are located in the Robert E. Johnson, Sr., Legislative Office Building, 1501 N. Congress Avenue, Austin, TX 78701.

Mailing Address

Texas Legislative Council
P.O. Box 12128
Austin, TX 78711-2128

Phone Numbers

Executive Offices.....	(512) 463-1151
Administration Division	(512) 463-1155
Document Distribution	(512) 463-1144
Document Production Division	(512) 463-1155
Draft Deliveries	(512) 463-1127
Help Desk Support Line	(512) 463-1158
Help Desk Move Line	(512) 463-1616
Human Resources.....	(512) 463-1155
Information Systems Division	(512) 463-1160
Legal Division	(512) 463-1155
Office Computer Consultants	(512) 463-1160
Policy and Planning Division	(512) 463-1151
Redistricting Support Services	(512) 463-6622
Research Division.....	(512) 463-1143

Administration Division

Executive Director	Milton Rister
Assistant Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer	Joanna Peavy
General Counsel	Jon Heining
Policy and Planning Director	Araminta Everton

The administration division is responsible for directing and coordinating the overall day-to-day operations of the council. The division consists of the executive director, the assistant executive director and chief financial officer, the general counsel, the policy and planning director, the staff services and facilities management department, the accounting and purchasing department, and support personnel for those departments and other council divisions.

Most of the division's functions relate to internal council operations. The division assists the legislature primarily by enhancing the ability of other divisions to provide direct services to legislators, the lieutenant governor, their staffs, and other legislative service agencies. The division provides direct service to legislative offices in the form of financial accounts management for joint interim committees whose operations are funded by the council.

Along with other council personnel, division staff members assist the house and senate with certain joint activities, including the inauguration of the governor and lieutenant governor and orientation programs for newly elected legislators.

Accounting and Purchasing. The accounting and purchasing department is responsible for accounting for all funds appropriated to the council, including funding for joint interim committees. This includes assisting with the preparation of the council's annual budget and legislative appropriation request. The department provides a monthly report of expenditures and budget balances to management as well as periodic reports of expenditure data on request. Department staff members are also responsible for the procurement of all goods and services required by the council and hardware and software for other legislative agencies supported by the council. In addition, the department operates the council's supply room.

Staff Services and Facilities Management. The staff services and facilities management department is responsible for telecommunications equipment and operation; property, facilities, and building space management; move coordination; warehouse storage and operations; safety programs; and scheduling and maintenance of the REJ Building conference center for legislative agencies and legislative clients. This department is responsible for the records management program within the agency. It directly assists the legislature by serving as the center for the distribution of the *Texas Legislative Manual*. Department staff members schedule building maintenance, including electrical, air conditioning, and heating, and manage the council's telephone receptionists, mailing and shipping, messenger staff, facilities inspections, parking coordination, recycling efforts, and custodial services. Staff members also provide keys and application forms for identification/access and parking.

Document Production Division

Director **Paul Mims**

Deputy Director **Janet Sullivan**

The document production division provides text and data input, proofreading, graphic design and layout, printing and photocopying, and delivery and distribution support for the following agency responsibilities:

- Preparation of council documents, including legislative and nonlegislative document drafts, correspondence, reports, and publications
- Preparation and distribution of house official printings, engrossments and enrollments, and house calendars
- Updating of council-maintained databases, including elections and local statutes

Administration. The director and deputy director supervise the daily activities of the division and provide a broad range of support to the council.

Data Transcription. The division's data transcription process involves text and data entry functions in the production of council drafts, legislation, code drafts, parchments, publications, manuals, reports, correspondence, and other documents.

Document Distribution. The division's document distribution office distributes house legislation and related legislative documents, house calendars, and daily house journals. The office also provides copies of council publications and informational materials to the legislature and the public.

Graphics. The division's graphics services include production of council and legislative publications.

Printing. The division's printing services include reproduction of legislative draft documents, publications, manuals, interim committee reports, and other forms, reports, and products that support the council staff. During the legislative session, printing services include official house printings, 2nd readings, engrossments, enrollments of house documents, and house calendars.

Processing and Delivery. The division's processing and delivery staff receives legislation from the chief clerk and prepares legislative

documents for printing and storage in databases accessible to the public. The staff also prepares and delivers all legislative and nonlegislative council draft documents. The staff is responsible for the signing of all legislation by the presiding officers of the senate and house, secretary of state, comptroller, and governor.

Proofreading. The division's proofreading process verifies and reviews council drafts, legislation, code drafts, parchments, publications, manuals, reports, correspondence, and other documents.

Information Systems Division

Director **Jim Weatherby**

The information systems division provides computer support services to the legislative branch of Texas government, including legislators and their administrative offices, the Texas Legislative Council, the Legislative Reference Library, the State Auditor's Office, the Legislative Budget Board, and the Sunset Advisory Commission.

Administration. The administration section consists of the director and support personnel who assist in budgeting. The section is responsible for the overall policy direction of the division, the coordination of day-to-day IS operational activities, and the long-term strategic direction of the division.

Applications. The applications section works in partnership with legislative clients, the Computer Support Center, and the technical services section to provide specific solutions to meet the needs of the legislature and legislative agencies. The applications section develops custom software; assists in the evaluation, selection, implementation, and customization of purchased software or other technology; and assists clients in reviewing their work processes to determine if changes can be made to improve those processes.

Technical Services. The technical services section is responsible for providing the client desktop/laptop/server, storage, and mobile/network infrastructure to Capitol and district office clients. The section provides services to our clients on the infrastructure, including the distribution of council-developed applications, office automation applications, e-mail, remote and external access, security agents, and Internet access. The section consists of four groups: the **database support** group, the **workstation and server support** group, the **applications support** group, and the **network and storage support** group.

Data Center Operations. The data center operations section consists of two groups: **operations** and **production control**. The operations section monitors software and system problems on the council's computer network and performs backups of the LAN servers. Production control processes and maintains user IDs for the LAN system, defines printers for each user ID, and restores lost files for clients.

Computer Support Center. The Computer Support Center (CSC) is the initial contact point for all clients of the council's data processing system. The CSC is composed of seven groups: the **hardware**

section receives, inventories, installs, and troubleshoots all computer equipment purchased and supported by the council; the **Help Desk**, whose primary responsibility is first-level phone support; the **network control** section installs and maintains computer equipment in the legislators' district offices throughout the state, maintains the network infrastructure, including installing, configuring, and maintaining routers, hubs, and switches for the Local Area Network (LAN) in the Capitol Complex and the Wide Area Network (WAN); the **PC team**, which is responsible for second-level computer support; the **Training Center**, which provides classroom training and produces online help and procedural manuals for all legislative applications and PC software; the **office consultant** teams, which evaluate and address legislative offices' computer needs and issues; and a **quality assurance** team, which tests applications and assists in the selection of PC software and hardware for the legislature.

Legal Division

Director Deborah Fulton
Deputy Directors Eric Hougland
Mike Marshall
Chief Legislative Counsel Jeff Archer

The legal division provides professional, nonpartisan legal services for all members of the Texas Legislature and the lieutenant governor. The division emphasizes high-quality services, as do other divisions of the council, and offers many combined years of experience and expertise in almost any area of law.

The primary service provided by the attorneys of the legal division consists of drafting legislative and other legal documents, including bills, certain types of resolutions, floor and committee amendments and substitutes, conference committee reports, legal memoranda, and requests for attorney general opinions. Drafts are prepared in response to requests from a legislator or the lieutenant governor, who may communicate the request through an aide or other employee. As a courtesy and as workload permits, the legal division offers drafting services to the governor's office and executive agencies.

Another important responsibility of the legal division is the continuing statutory revision program. This ongoing project is a substantial part of the work performed by the division during the interims between legislative sessions. Recent codifications of Texas law prepared by the legal division and submitted to the legislature for enactment include the Insurance Code and Special District Local Laws Code.

Policy and Planning Division

Director **Araminta Everton**

The policy and planning division is responsible for human resources and staff development activities, including recruiting and retention, professional development and continuing education, performance management, compensation management, succession planning, and internships. The division also is responsible for the coordination of agency-wide efforts, including policy planning, evaluation, and implementation. The division consists of the division director, the human resources department, and other staff.

Human Resources. The human resources department is responsible for payroll, benefits, and employment matters. The department also assists the division director in developing and administering policies and programs in recruitment, employee relations, performance management, benefits and compensation, training and development, and recognition.

Research Division

Director	Debbie Irvine
Policy Issue Research	Debbie Irvine
Bill Analysis	Tammy Edgerly
Mapping and Redistricting	Clare Dyer
Statistical Research	Pamela Lam-Yip
Resolutions and Publications	Patty McLeod

The research division provides professional, nonpartisan research, drafting, mapping, and redistricting services for all legislators, legislative committees, and the lieutenant governor. Specific services include congratulatory, memorial, and policy resolution drafting; bill analysis and bill version side-by-side comparison drafting; policy issue research; statistical research; data gathering and preparation; map production and geographic analysis; publication preparation; website creation and maintenance; and redistricting information and support.

Policy Issue Research. During a session, the staff of this section assists the Bill Analysis Unit, drafts side-by-side comparisons of the senate, house, and conference committee versions of bills and resolutions, and handles research requests.

The section produces several pre-session and post-session publications, including the *Summary of Enactments; New, Renamed, and Abolished State Governmental Entities*; the *Guide to Texas Legislative Information*; *Analyses of Proposed Constitutional Amendments* (a collaborative effort with other council divisions); and an update of the Texas Constitution following each constitutional amendment election. In addition, the section maintains the *Research on the World Wide Web* and other websites and posts summaries of all enrolled bills and joint resolutions on TLIS and TLO.

In support of interim activities, the section responds to legislator and committee requests for research, including background material for interim charges; surveys of other states' practices, laws, and legislation; searches and inventories of Texas statutes; and legislative history searches.

Bill Analysis (Session Only). During a legislative session, the staff of this group drafts, on request, analyses of bills placed on the agenda for a committee hearing and bills reported out of committee. A bill analysis

consists of a statement on the background and purpose of the bill; any instance in which the bill expressly grants new rulemaking authority to a state agency, officer, department, or institution; a description of the content of the bill; and the date(s) the bill goes into effect. For a bill that is amended or substituted by the committee, the bill analysis includes information on the committee's changes.

Mapping and Redistricting. The staff of this section uses geographic information system technology to correlate education, criminal justice, socioeconomic, or other data with geographic areas (e.g., tax rate by school district) for research and analysis and to produce maps relating to policy issues of interest to the legislature (e.g., hospitals and hospital districts or four-year college and university campus locations).

To support the legislature's redistricting activities, the section works with information systems staff to build and maintain election, census, and geographic databases and mapping and redistricting computer systems. The staff of the section produces maps and reports showing population and election information for proposed and enacted redistricting plans, as well as informational publications on redistricting, and maintains the *Texas Redistricting* website.

Statistical Research. In response to requests from legislators and committees, the staff of this section compiles and analyzes data; prepares statistical estimates and projections from data; evaluates methodologies and conclusions in statistical studies conducted by others; advises on the use and interpretation of statistics or how to formulate a design to answer a research question; and conducts statistical surveys and analyzes results. In addition, the section produces statistical and methodological publications as time allows.

Since 2001, the council's statistical research staff has been providing assistance to state agencies in designing or conducting statistical studies mandated by the legislature. This assistance helps to ensure that the legislature gets the information it needs and reduces the need for agencies to hire outside consultants.

Resolutions and Publications. The staff of this section drafts congratulatory, memorial, and legislative policy resolutions.

The section produces or coordinates the production of a number of research division and council publications, including the *Texas Legislative Manual*, the *Guide to Texas Legislative Council Services*, and the *Procedures Manual for Joint Committees*. Two historical publications—*Presiding Officers of the Texas Legislature* and *The Texas Capitol: A History of the Lone Star Statehouse*—are products of this section.

In addition, several Internet and legislative intranet websites are created and maintained by the section, including the council's Internet and intranet websites and the Capweb site.

