



September 26, 2023

TO: Interested Persons
FROM: Natalie Castle, Director, 303-866-4778
SUBJECT: Organizational Structure of Colorado's Legislative Staff

Summary

This memorandum provides an organizational structure of the staff of the Colorado legislature.

Figure 1 on page 3 shows the organizational chart of all state-funded staff of Colorado's legislative branch. These staff can be categorized as follows:

1. **Senate staff**, who are overseen by the top three officers of the Senate and the Secretary of the Senate. This includes the nonpartisan Senate Services staff, the partisan staff of the Majority and Minority caucuses, and aides.
2. **House staff**, who are overseen by the Speaker and a four-member House Services Committee appointed by the Speaker. The Chief Clerk of the House has authority over the nonpartisan House Services staff and the House aides. In practice, each of the caucus staffs are supervised by their caucus leadership, although the official authority belongs to the Speaker.
3. The four **nonpartisan agencies** over which the Executive Committee has authority with the help of an oversight committee for each agency. These consist of:
 - the Office of the State Auditor;
 - the Joint Budget Committee Staff;
 - Legislative Council Staff; and
 - the Office of Legislative Legal Services; along with the Office of Legislative Workplace Relations.

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Each of these staff agencies, including their responsibilities, oversight, and funding are described in more detail below.

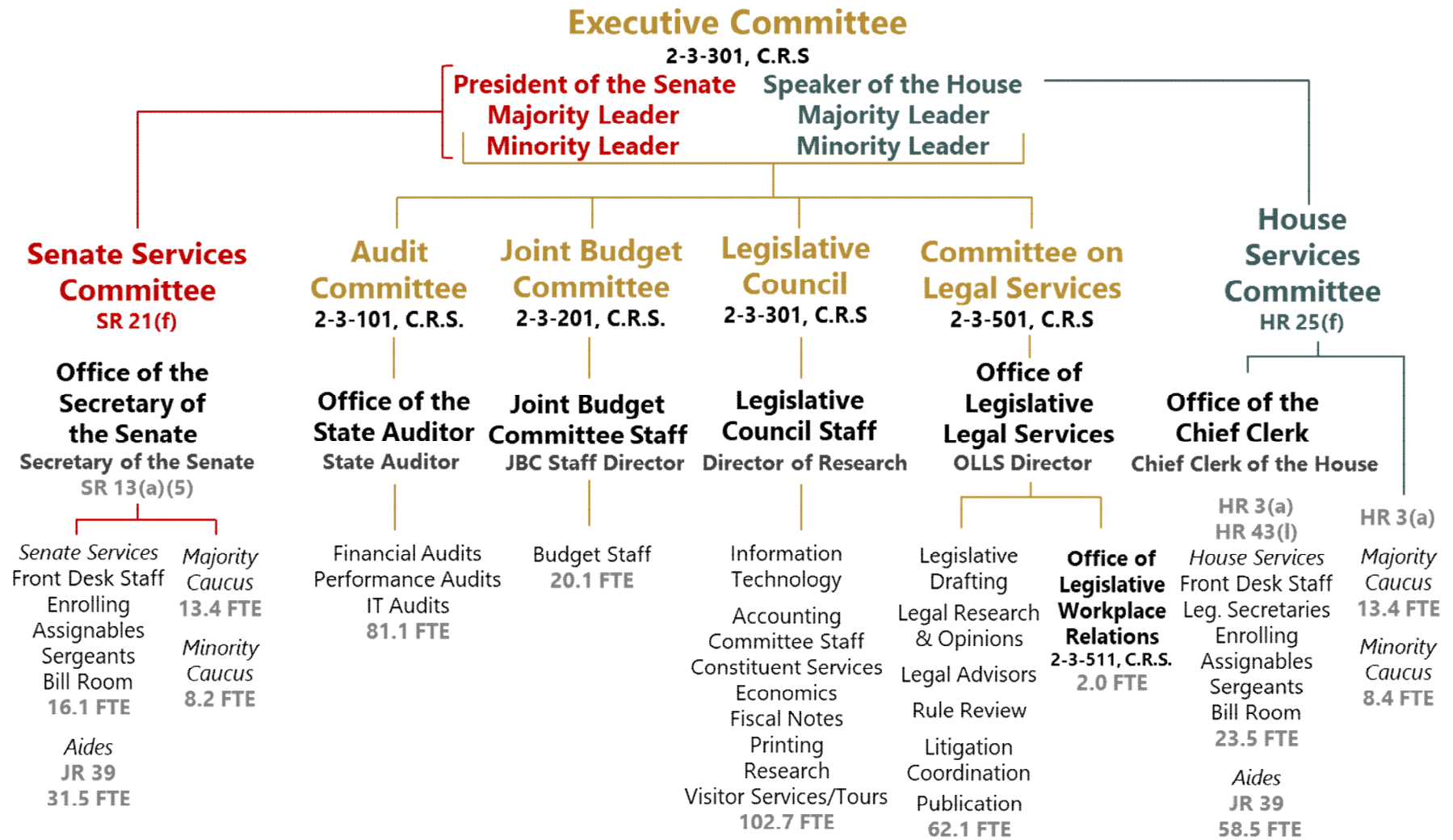
Some legislators may employ additional staff or interns using campaign or other funding. However, these staff are not included here because they are not directly employed by the State of Colorado. Contract staff are also not addressed here.

Legislative Management Team

The Legislative Management Team is made up of the directors of the Legislative Council Staff, Office of Legislative Legal Services, Office of the State Auditor, and Joint Budget Committee Staff, along with the Secretary of the Senate and the Chief Clerk of the House. Chairmanship of the team rotates annually. The team fosters communication among the agencies and addresses significant policy and operational matters affecting all service agencies.



Figure 1. Colorado Legislative Staff Organizational Chart





Senate Staff

Senate staff include the nonpartisan Office of the Secretary of the Senate (a.k.a. “Senate Services Staff”), the partisan staffs of the Senate Majority and Senate Minority caucuses, and legislative aides employed by Senators.



Silver badge, black letters, gold seal

Oversight. The **Secretary of the Senate** is elected by a majority vote of the full Senate without regard to political affiliation and, pursuant to Senate Rule 21(f), is under the authority of the Senate Services Committee. Custom and practice is that the President appoints the Secretary, who is sworn in on the first day of session. Appointed by Senate leadership, the Senate Services Committee is, by custom and practice, comprised of the President and the Majority and Minority Leaders. In addition, pursuant to Senate Rule 13(a)(5), the Secretary of the Senate has administrative authority over all employees of the Senate.

Senate Services staff. Senate services staff include the assistant secretary of the senate, the journal clerk, the calendar clerk, the docket clerk, the reading clerk, the senate services clerk, assignable staff, enrolling staff, sergeants-at-arms, and (jointly with the House) bill room staff. The Office of the Secretary of the Senate was appropriated funding for a total of 16.1 FTE for FY 2023-24, including 6.5 permanent and 16 session-only positions.¹

Caucus staff. The Senate Majority caucus was appropriated funding for 13.4 FTE, including 11 permanent and 4 session-only positions, for FY 2023-24. The Senate Minority was appropriated funding for 8.2 FTE, including seven permanent and two session-only positions. In practice, these staff report to their respective party leadership. However, Senate Rule 13(a)(5) gives the Secretary of the Senate authority over these staff, under the oversight of the Senate Services Committee.

Aides. Pursuant to Joint Rule 39, the Executive Committee has authority over the administrative policies and compensation for legislative aides. In FY 2023-24, each senator may pay legislative aides for a total of 1,800 hours. A Senator may employ up to two aides at a time and may share an aide’s services with another member. Aides report jointly to the employing Senator and the Secretary of the Senate.

Funding. A total of \$5.4 million was appropriated for all Senate staff in FY 2023-24.

¹ Includes one half of bill room FTE, which is shared with the House.



Office of the State Auditor

The *Office of the State Auditor* (OSA) watches over government expenditures. Its charge is very broad: to conduct financial, performance, and information technology (IT) audits of all agencies — executive, legislative, and judicial — of state government, including colleges and universities. It performs similar duties with respect to political subdivisions of the state when required by law.

The State Auditor may also conduct special audits of any state agency upon the request of the Governor or the General Assembly, with the approval of the Legislative Audit Committee, and performs investigations, special audits, or management studies as directed by the committee. There are a number of state laws that require the State Auditor to review and evaluate practices or programs.

Specific responsibilities of the State Auditor include:

- reviewing all higher education enterprise designations;
- evaluating the investments of the Public School Fund;
- reviewing and evaluating programs funded from the Tobacco Settlement Agreement;
- auditing records management practices of state agencies;
- auditing of the hospital provider fee;
- assessing and reporting on the security practices of all state departments within all three government branches; and
- auditing the New Energy Improvement District and Program.

Generally, members of the General Assembly have less daily interaction with the State Auditor and the audit staff than with staff of the other legislative service agencies. In some cases, audit staff work out of the offices of the agencies or institutions they are auditing.

Oversight. The *Legislative Audit Committee*² (LAC) provides oversight over the OSA. The LAC is responsible for reviewing and releasing audit reports and recommending special studies. The LAC also recommends appointments for State Auditor to the leadership of the General Assembly every five years. The LAC is made up of four senators and four representatives with equal representation from the two major political parties, with two members of the committee appointed by each of the four caucus leaders. The LAC selects its own Chair and Vice-Chair.

² Section 2-3-101, C.R.S.



Director. The **State Auditor** is *appointed by a majority vote* of the members of the General Assembly to serve for a term of five years. The State Auditor is appointed without reference to political affiliation. While the State Auditor and her deputies are not subject to the state personnel system, the staff of the OSA are subject to the state personnel system.

Funding. The OSA was appropriated \$14.3 million and 81.1 FTE for FY 2023-24. Of this amount, \$12.8 million is General Fund and \$1.5 million is reappropriated from other state agencies. The bulk of the budget is spent on staff (74.8 percent) and contract audits (21.6 percent).



Joint Budget Committee Staff

The *Joint Budget Committee Staff*³ (JBC Staff) supports the Joint Budget Committee (JBC), which is the General Assembly's permanent fiscal and budget review agency. The staff of the JBC assists the committee in writing each year's state budget bill as well as any midyear (supplemental) adjustments to appropriations. To accomplish this task, the staff studies the management, operations, programs, and fiscal needs of state agencies. Each analyst is responsible for one or more particular departments, programs, or issue areas. The staff review related budget requests, statutes, and other pertinent information to provide written and oral recommendations for funding and program changes to the JBC.



Gold badge, black letters, black seal

The staff of the JBC is also responsible for staffing the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, and for preparing a fiscal analysis and amendments related to the appropriation clause for each bill heard by the Appropriations committees. In addition, the staff prepares the annual Long Bill Narrative, the explanatory document that accompanies the introduced version of the budget bill; and the Appropriations Report, which provides information on the final appropriation for the fiscal year, detail on program functions, and the TABOR revenue limit.

Oversight. The *Joint Budget Committee* provides oversight of the JBC Staff. Committee members must be members of their respective chamber's Appropriations Committee. The chairs of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees serve on the Joint Budget Committee, plus one additional majority party member and one minority party member from each chamber. In the House, the majority party members are appointed by the Speaker and the minority party member by the House Minority Leader as specified by House Rule 3(b)(8). Senate members of the committee are elected by their respective party caucuses and then officially appointed to the committee by the Majority Leader and Minority Leader as specified by Senate Rule 21(b). The committee elects its own chair and vice-chair.

Director. The **JBC Staff Director** is appointed by the Executive Committee of the Legislative Council from finalists interviewed and recommended by the Joint Budget Committee. The Director is appointed without reference to political affiliation. The JBC Staff are not subject to the state personnel system.

Funding. The JBC Staff was appropriated \$2.9 million General Fund and 20.1 FTE for FY 2023-24. Staff costs represent 97 percent of JBC Staff appropriations in FY 2023-24.

³ Section 2-3-201, C.R.S.



Legislative Council Staff

Legislative Council Staff (LCS) is the primary information technology (IT), committee, research, and institutional support staff of the Colorado General Assembly. LCS provides a full service IT department for the legislative branch, employing support, application development, system administration, digital accessibility, and cybersecurity positions. LCS also services as the General Assembly's primary research and committee staff, employing fiscal note analysts, economists, research analysts, committee analysts, and constituent services analysts. In addition, LCS houses the legislature's visitor services and tour guide staff; central accounting staff; and print shop staff.



Red badge, white letters, gold seal

Highlights of Legislative Council Staff's accomplishments during FY 2022-23 include:

- Responding to over 350 **research requests** from legislators and other stakeholders; and about 600 requests for information and/or aid from **constituents**;
- Staffing 19 **committees** of reference; six year-round committees; one joint select committee; and, during the 2022 interim, 16 interim committees and three working groups;
- Preparing 1,015 separate **fiscal notes** in FY 2022-23; of which 948 were prepared for 593 bills and resolutions during the 2023 session; 56 were prepared for 2022 interim committees; and 11 were prepared for the Ballot Information Booklet (Blue Book). In addition 31 fiscal summaries were prepared for the state Title Board. No citizen measures were circulated in FY 2022-23 that required a full fiscal impact statement;

Legislative Council Staff Values, Vision, and Mission

Values

As a nonpartisan staff organization, our work will be guided and informed by our commitment to:

- Service
- the Legislative Institution
- Excellence
- Integrity
- Respect
- Innovation

Vision Statement

Be a bold and innovative provider of trusted, nonpartisan services that meet the evolving needs of the legislature and Colorado.

Mission Statement

The Colorado Legislative Council Staff provides nonpartisan products and services to the legislature and the public to support and inform the policy making process, preserve the legislative institution, and promote transparency.



- Preparing quarterly economic and revenue **forecasts** and various annual school finance and budget-related forecasts;
- Maintaining public-facing interactive visualizations on the website, including the interactive visualization of the state budget⁴ (in partnership with the JBC Staff) and the online tax handbook,⁵
- Responding to more than 3,620 **information technology user support** requests and facilitating **remote public testimony** on over 1,600 hearing items for which approximately 6,500 people registered to testify during the 2023 session;
- Developing, enhancing, and maintaining more than **20 custom applications**, including the website, iLegislate, the voting system, the Colorado Legislative Information Communications System (CLICS), the XDOME statute publishing application, the CLIMBS budgeting application, the visitor services scheduling application, and research request applications;
- Strengthening the legislative branch's **cybersecurity** posture by providing regular training, implementing the new *@coleg.gov* email domain along with the legislative branch's proofpoint incidence; and making progress toward increased use of single sign on and multi-factor authentication, privileged access management software, and around-the-clock managed service monitoring;
- Providing ongoing maintenance and support for the General Assembly's **information technology equipment, networks**, audio infrastructure, and servers. Significant upgrades to network infrastructure were accomplished in FY 2022-23 and are ongoing, including upgrading and replacing:
 - network storage systems in the Capitol Complex and disaster recovery center;
 - data cabling between the LSB and Capitol;
 - network switches and data cabling for the Capitol building; and
 - the legislative branch's data backup system;
- Co-facilitating the **initiative review and comment process** with the Office of Legislative Legal Services for 72 initiatives submitted in FY 2022-23 for the 2022-2023 cycle;

⁴ <https://leg.colorado.gov/explorebudget/>

⁵ <https://leg.colorado.gov/agencies/legislative-council-staff/colorado-online-tax-handbook>



- Publishing and distributing the ballot information booklet (**Blue Book**), comprised of analyses for 11 measures in 2022 and 2 measures in 2023;
- Acting as an information resource and providing **Capitol tours** to about 100,000 visitors;
- Providing **centralized accounting** services for the legislative branch; including preparing the annual financial statements; and receiving a clean financial audit;
- Providing **printing services**, including but not limited to the printing of bills, journals, calendars, fiscal notes, committee reports, status sheets, and various other documents; and
- Publishing **Demographic Notes** on two bills and a **Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report** on one bill.

Oversight. *Legislative Council*⁶ provides oversight of Legislative Council Staff. Its 18 members are evenly divided between the House and the Senate and include the *Executive Committee of the Legislative Council*, which is made up of the top three officers in each chamber. The party representation from each chamber must be generally proportional to the party representation in each chamber. The committee's responsibilities include, but are not limited to, oversight over the Legislative Council Staff's budget request, any legislation requiring legislative staff resources, interim committees, and the ballot information booklet (a.k.a. "Blue Book").

Director. The **LCS Director of Research**⁷ is appointed by the Executive Committee of the Legislative Council from finalists interviewed and recommended by the Legislative Council. The Director is appointed without reference to political affiliation. LCS are not subject to the state personnel system.

Funding. Legislative Council Staff was appropriated \$19.9 million and 102.7 FTE for FY 2023-24, of which \$19.5 million is General Fund and \$411,000 is reappropriated. Appropriations include funding for IT software and hardware needs branch-wide, Blue Book printing and distribution costs, new legislator orientation, and several contracts for studies required by law. Staff costs represent 68 percent of LCS appropriations.

⁶ Section 2-3-301, C.R.S.

⁷ Section 2-3-304, C.R.S.



Office of Legislative Legal Services

The *Office of Legislative Legal Services*⁸ (OLLS) **prepares the bills, resolutions, and memorials** introduced in the General Assembly. No bill may be introduced in either house unless OLLS approves the bill's form. Most **amendments and conference committee reports** are also prepared by OLLS. OLLS also reviews all bills and amendments after they are passed by either house.



Gold badge, black letters, CO flag

In addition to the above duties, OLLS provides the following services:

- **Maintains legislative records.** The office maintains complete legislative records on bills, resolutions, and memorials drafted by the staff and considered and enacted by the General Assembly.
- **Coordinates litigation.** OLLS is the conduit through which legal counsel retained by the Committee on Legal Services communicates with the committee or the General Assembly. Staff attorneys may assist outside counsel in the preparation of pleadings, including briefs, and in other legal research and writing.
- **Performs legal research.** OLLS performs legal research for members of the General Assembly and may provide legal assistance in connection with contracts or other business conducted by the General Assembly.
- **Reviews initiatives.** OLLS and Legislative Council Staff are required by law to prepare written comments on draft language of proposed initiatives that would amend the constitution or statutes. In addition, the Director or the Director's designee sits on the Title Board, which sets titles for initiatives.
- **Reviews administrative rules and regulations.** Every rule adopted or amended by an executive agency is reviewed by OLLS to determine if the rule is within the power delegated to the agency and consistent with law.
- **Publications.** The Revisor of Statutes is responsible for various statutory publications: the session laws, the digest of bills, and printing the Colorado Revised Statutes.

⁸ Section 2-3-501, C.R.S.



Oversight. The *Committee on Legal Services* (COLS) provides oversight of the OLLS, may retain outside legal counsel to represent the General Assembly, either house thereof or any committee thereof, or any member or agency of the legislative branch as a third-party payor, oversees the review of executive branch agency rules, and oversees the publication of the Colorado Session Laws and Colorado Revised Statutes, among other duties. The COLS includes the chairs of the House and Senate Judiciary Committees, two members appointed by the Speaker, two appointed by the House Minority Leader, two appointed by the Senate President, and two appointed by the Senate Minority Leader. The committee selects its own chair and vice-chair.

Director. The **OLLS Director** is appointed by the Executive Committee of the Legislative Council from finalists interviewed and recommended by the Committee on Legal Services. The Director is appointed without reference to political affiliation. The staff of the OLLS are not subject to the state personnel system.

Funding. The OLLS was appropriated \$10.6 million General Fund and 64.1 FTE for FY 2023-24. Appropriations include operating costs for the Colorado Commission on Uniform State Laws, legal services for the legislative branch, and the publication of session laws and statutes. Staff costs represent 93 percent of OLLS appropriations in FY 2023-24.

Office of Legislative Workplace Relations

The *Office of Legislative Workplace Relations*⁹ (OLWR) receives and investigates complaints under the General Assembly's *Workplace Harassment Policy*, and provides workplace harassment and expectations training to members and staff annually. Additionally, the office consults on other human resources issues for staff and members.

Director. The **OLWR Director** reports to the OLLS Director, who serves under the oversight of the Committee on Legal Services. The Director is hired without respect to political affiliation. The OLWR staff are not subject to the state personnel system.

Funding. The OLWR was appropriated \$0.3 million General Fund and 2.0 FTE for FY 2023-24. Staff costs represent 94 percent of appropriations.

⁹ Section 2-3-511, C.R.S.



House Staff

House staff include the nonpartisan *Office of the Chief Clerk of the House* (a.k.a. “House Services Staff”), the partisan staffs of the House Majority and House Minority Caucuses, and legislative aides employed by representatives.



White badge, black letters, platinum seal

Oversight. The **Speaker** has authority over all House officers and staff, pursuant to House Rule 3(a). In addition, the House Services Committee provides oversight to all House staff. The Speaker appoints four members to the committee in proportion to the political membership of the House, including the chair and vice-chair (House Rule 3(b)(8) and 25(b),(d),(f), and (h)).

House Services staff. The **Chief Clerk of the House** is appointed by the Speaker without regard to political affiliation and, pursuant to House Rule 43(a.5), is under the authority of the House Services Committee. House services staff include the assistant chief clerk, the journal clerk, the docket clerk, the reading/bill status clerk, assignable staff, enrolling staff, sergeants-at-arms, a visitor aide, legislative secretaries, and (jointly with the House) bill room staff. The Office of the Chief Clerk was appropriated funding for a total of 21.8 FTE for FY 2023-24, including 7.3 permanent and 27 session-only positions.¹⁰

Aides. Pursuant to Joint Rule 39, the Executive Committee of the Legislative Council has authority over the administrative policies and compensation for legislative aides. In FY 2023-24, each Representative may pay legislative aides for a total of 1,800 hours. A Representative may employ up to two aides at a time and may share an aide’s services with another member. Aides report jointly to the supervising Representative and the Chief Clerk of the House.

Caucus staff. The House Majority caucus was appropriated funding for 13.4 FTE, including 11 permanent and 4 session-only positions, for FY 2023-24. The House Minority caucus was appropriated funding for 8.8 FTE, including seven permanent and three session-only positions. In practice, these staff report to their respective party leadership.

Funding. A total of \$7.1 million was appropriated for all House staff in FY 2023-24.

¹⁰ Includes one half of bill room FTE, which is shared with the Senate.