

The Office of Legislative Legal Services:
More Than Just Bill and Amendment Drafting
January 10, 2019
by Sharon Eubanks

With the 2019 legislative session under way, legislators have already been interacting with the staff of the Office of Legislative Legal Services for their bill and amendment requests. But the Legislative Legal Services staff, comprised of attorneys and other professional staff, provides a variety of written materials and services to legislators in addition to their bill and amendment drafting needs. We encourage legislators to learn more about and make full use of the products and services we can provide. Please visit our web page at <https://leg.colorado.gov/agencies/office-of-legislative-legal-services>.

Legislative Legal Services is the General Assembly's nonpartisan legal staff agency. As legislative lawyers, we maintain an attorney-client relationship with the General Assembly, as an institution, and not with each legislator. Therefore, we are obligated to serve the best interests of the institutional client, the General Assembly, as distinguished from the individual interests of any legislator. However, when working individually with legislators, we are statutorily bound to maintain the confidentiality of all bill and amendment requests before introduction, and we are ethically bound to maintain the confidentiality of the communications we have with each legislator, as a constituent of the institution.

In addition to our primary function of drafting bills, resolutions, and amendments, the Legislative Legal Services staff, upon request, can provide legislators with written materials to help them understand Colorado law and what other states are doing to address various issues and to help them explain their bills. Due to time constraints created by bill and amendment drafting demands, which are our first priority during the legislative session, our staff may not always be able to respond immediately to every legislator's request. But we do our best to provide the requested materials as soon as practicable, time permitting, and on a first-come, first-served basis. Examples of ancillary materials available upon request include:

More-detailed, written explanations of bills;

- Summaries of changes made to a bill in committee, in the first house, or in the second house;
- Tables comparing bill provisions;
- Explanations of state or federal statutes;
- Summaries of case law relevant to a bill;
- Summaries of case law interpreting a particular statute or issue;
- Legislative histories of issues or bills;
- Legislative histories of constitutional or statutory provisions;
- Comparisons of Colorado law with the law of other states on particular issues; and
- Lists of all Colorado statutes addressing an issue.