

Our Mission

The purpose of the LFC is to provide the Legislature with objective fiscal and public policy analyses, recommendations and oversight of state agencies to improve performance and ensure accountability through the effective allocation of resources for the benefit of all New Mexicans.

Purpose of Work

Staff conducts program evaluations, progress reports, policy spotlights, and legislative services to provide policymakers and the public with objective, independent and credible assessments of public agencies and government-funded entities to:

- determine whether taxpayer expenditures are producing desired results as intended by the Legislature;
- determine if publicly funded entities are complying with state and federal laws;
- improve the efficiency and effectiveness of state government operations and its responsiveness to the public;
- encourage management of all state agencies to improve fiscal and program accountability; and
- determine whether policy alternatives could improve operations and save taxpayers money.

Statutory Authority

LFC has broad statutory authority to examine and evaluate the finances and operation of all departments, agencies, and institutions of New Mexico and all of its political subdivisions (Section 2-5-3 NMSA 1978). Each agency or institution of the state and its political subdivisions shall, upon request, furnish and make available such documents, material or information as may be requested by the members of the committee or its director or staff which are not made confidential by law (Section 2-5-7 NMSA 1978).

The LFC may recommend changes to laws governing the state to improve government effectiveness and efficiency. In furtherance of its statutory responsibility, LFC may conduct inquiries into specific transactions affecting the operating policies and cost of governmental units and their compliance with state laws.

LEGISLATIVE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Representative Patricia A. Lundstrom, Chairwoman
Senator George K. Muñoz, Vice-Chair

DIRECTOR

David Abbey

DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR PROGRAM EVALUATION

Jon R. Courtney, Ph.D.

Legislative Finance Committee

State Capitol North
325 Don Gaspar -Suite 101
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Phone: (505) 986-4550
Fax: (505) 986-4545
E-mail: lfc@nmlegis.gov

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Program Evaluation Unit

What to Expect During a Program Evaluation



LEGISLATIVE
FINANCE
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What You Can Expect

To ensure an accurate evaluation is released evaluators will:

- identify a project leader who will serve as the primary contact for agencies;
- conduct a formal entrance conference to seek agency input about the scope and subject matter of the evaluation and establish project deadlines;
- provide timely responses to agency questions or concerns;
- conduct an exit conference to provide the agency an opportunity for feedback and suggestions for draft prior to formal response and report release; and
- provide at least seven calendar days after sending a draft of the evaluation to the agency to allow the agency to provide a formal written response to be included in published report.

Evaluators strive to objectively assess state operations while creating collaborative relationships with agency staff to create positive change

Our Expectations

To ensure an accurate evaluation is released in a timely manner, please:

- establish a single point of contact for the team to communicate with and make requests through;
- attend and participate in requested meetings and conferences as full and complete disclosure of information speeds the evaluation process and helps us produce an accurate and useful report;
- provide on-site workspace for our staff if requested;
- respond to information requests in a timely manner;
- provide comments on the draft report by the established deadline; and
- protect the confidentiality of information in draft evaluations, as they are not yet final or open to the public.

Our Process

Initiation and Planning

Program evaluators scope out the project, design research questions, and create a work plan to address research questions. Teams conduct preliminary research to obtain background information on an agency and meet with agency leadership at an entrance conference.

Field Work

The evaluation team performs research on statutory and regulatory framework; best practices in other states; interviews agency staff and other key stakeholders; and analyzes data requested from evaluated entities.

Reporting

The team creates a draft report for management and agency review. The agency has at least seven calendar days to provide a response. An exit conference with agency leadership is held to discuss agency feedback, suggestions, and concerns. The report is then published in preparation for a public hearing. The published report includes the agency response.

Public Hearing

The evaluation report is presented before the LFC and/or other legislative committees, addressing report findings and offering recommendations for improvement. Evaluated entities offer a response, and the committee has the opportunity to ask questions of the evaluation team and evaluated entities.

Closeout and Follow-up

Evaluated entities are asked to provide a plan to address evaluation recommendations. Program evaluators will then follow up with the entity at regular intervals to assess progress in addressing findings and implementing recommendations. This information is also included in the agency's LFC budget recommendation if applicable.

Learn more about the Program Evaluation Unit
and read LFC publications at
www.nmlegis.gov/Entity/LFC

Our Evaluations

Program Evaluations are systematic assessments of the results of state government spending and program activities. Program evaluations encompass a wide variety of objectives related, but not limited to, assessing program effectiveness and results; economy and efficiency; internal control; compliance with legal or other requirements; and provide prospective analyses, guidance or summary information and recommendations for improvement.

Progress Reports inform the Legislature and the public on how agencies are performing six months to a year after a program evaluation is performed. Progress reports review the initial evaluation findings and recommendations, and update data based on agency feedback.

Policy Spotlights answer timely questions within a short timeframe including special reviews, action plans, and accountability reports.

Results First Research Reports

use a cost-benefit approach to provide policymakers with new information estimating the long-term costs and benefits of investments in public programs.

Information Technology Project Evaluations

assess how successful IT project objectives were met and how effective the project management practices were in keeping the project on track, whether the investment was worthwhile and if the agency can adequately manage and operate the IT solution.

Health Notes are briefs intended to improve understanding of healthcare finance, policy, and performance in New Mexico.

Legislative Services include briefs or testimony regarding policy issues, best practices or summaries of recent work; and general legislative services that consist of gathering, providing or explaining information requested by decision makers or providing advice or assistance to management officials requiring more than five hours of work.