



# Joint Legislative Audit & Review Committee Sunset Review Guide

February 2024

## What is a sunset review?

A sunset review is a specific kind of JLARC study. It assesses if the state still needs a program or agency.

## Sunset Act guides JLARC's review of a program or agency

A sunset review asks whether the program or agency:

- Complies with legislative intent.
- Operates efficiently and economically.
- Reaches expected performance goals and targets.
- Duplicates activities done by another entity or the private sector.

The review also examines the possible effect of ending or changing the program or agency.

## What are the agency's responsibilities?

Under the Sunset Act, an agency must:

1. Develop performance measures and a data collection plan.
2. Send the measures and plan to JLARC staff within one year of the legislation's effective date.
3. Implement the data collection plan.
4. Submit resulting performance information to JLARC.

## The Sunset Act is a Washington Law

*Chapter 43.131 RCW*

Legislature sets a date for a program or agency to end under the Sunset Act. New programs or agencies operate for at least seven years before the end date.

Agency sets performance measures and collects data.

JLARC staff completes a sunset review one year before the end date. The Legislative Auditor must recommend legislative action.

The Legislature decides whether to continue, change, or end the program or agency. If the Legislature does not take action, the program or agency ends.

## How can a legislator request a sunset review?

To add a sunset review, a bill must add two sections to the Sunset Act.

- One section sets an end date for the program or agency.
- The second section repeals the underlying laws for the program or agency the following year.

There are other ways to set an end date in law. The Code Reviser's Office can help. Contact them at (360)786-6777 or CROFrontDesk@leg.wa.gov.



**Eric Thomas, Legislative Auditor**

eric.thomas@leg.wa.gov  
(360) 786-5182

**Learn more on our website:**

<https://leg.wa.gov/jlarc>  
JLARC@leg.wa.gov | (360) 786-5171