



January 2025



Joint Legislative Audit & Review Committee

The Legislature’s Performance Auditors

JLARC staff give the Legislature accurate and unbiased answers to its questions about how a program or policy is working

JLARC staff conduct performance audits, program evaluations, sunset reviews, tax preference reviews, and other analyses. JLARC and the position of Legislative Auditor are established in statute (Chapter 44.28 RCW).

Statute and audit standards require JLARC staff to be independent and provide objective analysis that is free of bias.

Key points

- JLARC’s nonpartisan staff prepare answers independently, per professional audit standards.
- The Committee, with eight Senators and eight Representatives evenly split between the parties, helps ensure this independence.
- The Legislature assigns the studies through policy and budget bills. The Committee also may assign studies.
- We follow the same confidentiality protocols as all staff in OPR and SCS.
- We are happy to speak with legislative staff, members, and any committee after a study is published. Contact the study team or the Legislative Auditor.

If it’s in state government, JLARC can study it

Examples of questions recently asked of JLARC include:

- How does each component of the state funding formula influence the amount of funding districts receive for special education?
- Does the paid family and medical leave (PFML) rate formula produce rates that meet statutory requirements? Is ESD’s program administration consistent with statute and best practices?
- Have tax preferences for interstate transportation businesses made the industry more competitive?
- How can Washington State Ferries improve its procurement of hybrid electric ferries?
- What were the racial equity effects of restricting in-person education during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- How are funds from the Dedicated Cannabis Account appropriated and spent?



JLARC Members

Senate
 Bob Hasegawa
 Liz Lovelett

Jesse Salomon, *Chair*
 Shelly Short
 Keith Wagoner, *Secretary*

House
 Emily Alvarado
 Stephanie Barnard
 April Berg
 Jake Fey

Stephanie McClintock
 Ed Orcutt, *Vice Chair*
 Gerry Pollet, *Assistant Secretary*



How do I request a study?

Members and legislative staff who are interested in having a study should reach out and let us know. We're happy to work with you to help you write study language for a bill or budget proviso.

Can you tell a member, legislative staff, or a committee what you're learning during the study?

We can share that work is underway and when the study will be complete. You will also have access to our study questions. However, professional standards state that we can't share what we are learning or finding before the study is published.

Things to consider in a study proposal

Do I want to evaluate the performance of existing policy or am I proposing a new policy?

JLARC staff serve the entire Legislature and do not take policy or advocacy positions.

Is there enough time to do it?

Auditing requires documentation and quality control. Most studies take 12-18 months to complete.

Our fiscal notes indicate the amount of staff time needed and any potential costs for working with expert consultants to answer the question.

Is JLARC the appropriate agency to do the work?

Depending on study timing, scope, or subject, the Washington State Institute for Public Policy or Joint Transportation Committee may be better positioned to conduct the review.

How does JLARC consider racial equity in its reviews?

RCW 44.28.076 requires JLARC to consider racial equity in all studies, or state why it is not necessary based on the study scope. If the member requesting a study has a particular focus or equity question, please work with us to include that in the mandate.

Keep up with JLARC's work

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Members and legislative staff should receive it by email.

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