New Commissioner Handbook

Oregon Commission for Women

"Advocating Equality and Diversity"

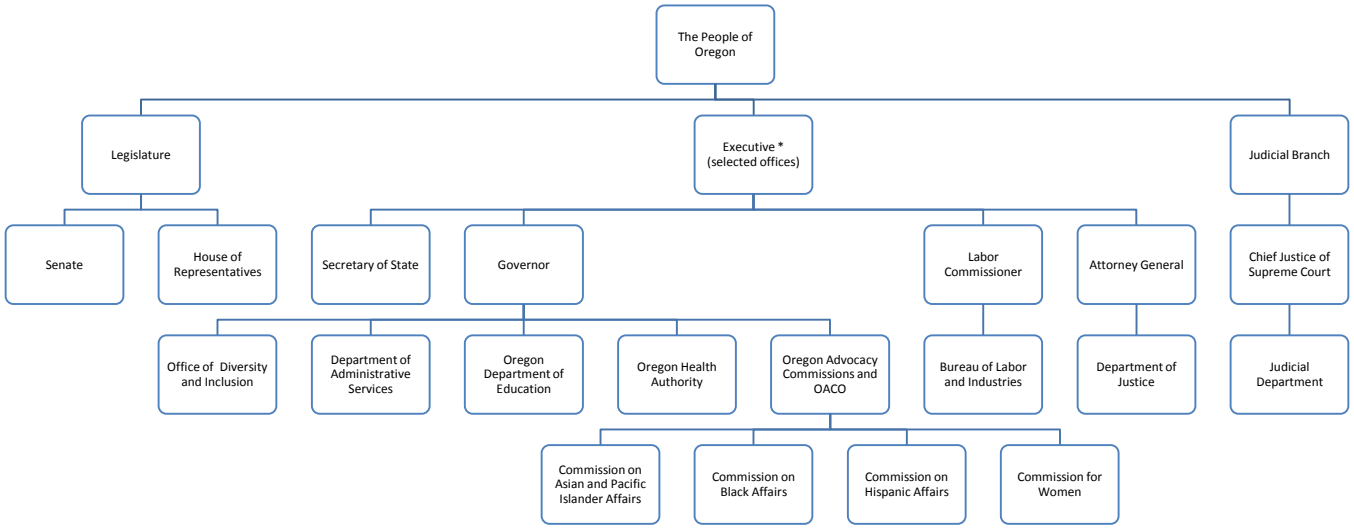
Welcome to the Oregon Commission for Women!

This handbook is designed to provide a basic foundation as you begin your term as a commissioner on the Oregon Commission for Women (OCFW). Review the material, think about its implications, and address any questions you might have to the Chair of the Commission for Women or to the staff of the Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office.

With your appointment you now serve as a policy advisor to the Oregon state government, working toward achieving and maintaining a safe, healthy environment, and growing success for women and girls throughout the state. As a member of the Oregon Commission for Women, your mission is to work for the social, legal and political equality for women and girls. The Commission does this by continually assessing the concerns and needs confronting women and girls and by researching issues, informing on these results, and providing advice and data for all elected and state policy makers. With this appointment, you can make a real difference in the lives of female Oregonians.

In this introduction to the OCFW, let's begin with a general review of Oregon's governmental structure as it relates to the OCFW. Next we'll discuss the Oregon Advocacy Commissions and the Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office, two state collaborative entities associated with the OCFW. We'll review topics related to your work as a commissioner and lastly provide some background on state legislation and its importance to the work of the Commission.

I. State of Oregon Governmental Structure



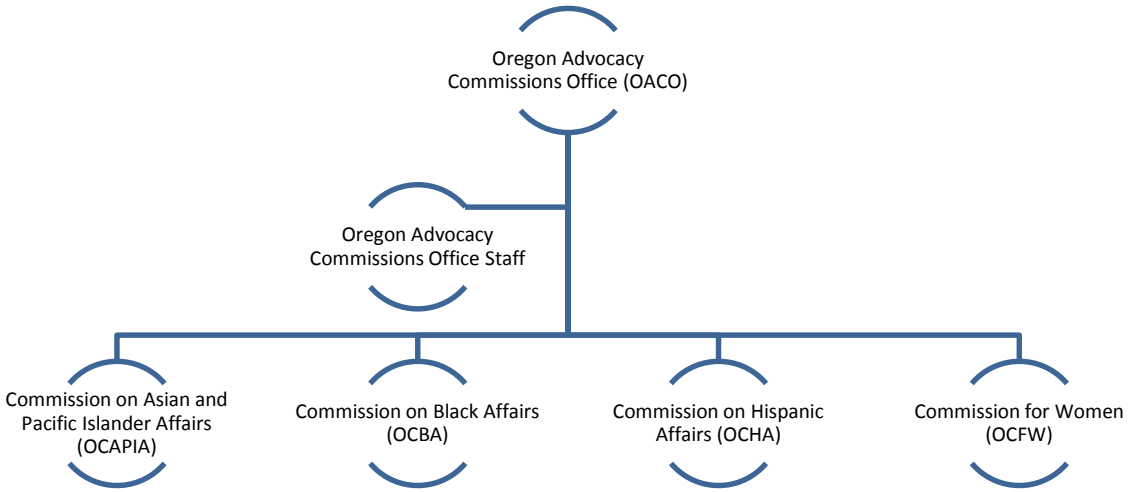
Oregon state statute establishes that commission policy guidance and direction are provided by the Governor and the State Legislature. In addition the offices of the Secretary of State and the Attorney General also provide the 300+ boards and commissions that serve in Oregon with policy and legal assistance respectively. The Judicial Branch provides oversight for the Oregon state court system and is headed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

As a commissioner of the Oregon Commission for Women, you have been appointed by the Governor and approved by the Senate to serve the public-at-large as a special policy advisor to state government. As an advocacy commission member, you are responsible for studying existing policy and for making recommendations for change and implementation to state government collaboratively with your fellow commissioners. You will discuss ideas and policy issues with your colleagues on the OCFW and vote on the specific advice, positions or projects the Commission will support. You and the Commission may partner with community groups, elected officials and state officials in your

advocacy role for women. For a review of the Oregon Commission for Women Bylaws, refer to ***Appendix I***. The Commission for Women is one of four commissions collectively called the Oregon Advocacy Commissions (OACs) and staffed by the Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office (OACO). The Director of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion in the Governor's Office is the Senior Policy Advisor for the Governor to the OAC's, and the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the four commissions serve on the Diversity and Inclusion Kitchen Cabinet, which is chaired by the Governor. The Oregon Department of Administrative Services (DAS) oversees the overall management and financial structure for the Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office. Commissioners and staff members work with the Governor's Office and Oregon Legislature in the process of appropriating funds, proposing legislation and providing testimony. Some other state entities you may become engaged with as a commissioner include: the Oregon Department of Education (ODE), the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and the Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) under the Labor Commissioner.

With this basic framework for governmental structure, let's now move on to a more in-depth review of the Oregon Advocacy Commissions and the Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office.

II. Oregon Advocacy Commissions and the Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office



Oregon Advocacy Commissions

The Oregon Advocacy Commissions (OAC) are composed of four independent commissions each established by a separate statute during the administrations of three Governors and legislatures beginning with Governor Mark Hatfield in the 1960's. They are the Oregon Commissions on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OCAPIA), Black Affairs (OCBA), Hispanic Affairs (OCHA) and the Commission for Women (OCFW). Based on their statutory missions, for over 30 years the Oregon Advocacy Commissions have focused on advising policy, growing leadership and building success for communities of color and women at large in a non-partisan manner. The commissions play an important role in helping the public, communities, policy makers and governing bodies by providing research, information and advice on critical issues related to the needs of their constituent communities. As part of its mission, OAC supports three kinds of internships to enhance policy review and discussion. For a full description of these opportunities, refer to ***Appendix II***.

Since 2010, the key strategic priorities and benchmarks for action have included the areas of:

- education;
- jobs and economy;
- healthcare;
- justice, safety and policing;
- civic engagement,
- housing and stable families.

Strategic priorities, goals and initiatives have been developed by each commission and specific key performance measures (KPMs) required by the legislature are used to track performance against best practices. KPMs form the basis for a biannual review by each commissioner. The results of this review are presented as part of the agency request budget process required by the legislature. For a full discussion of the Oregon Advocacy Commissions' priorities and a review of recent accomplishments, refer to the 2011-2013 action plan report: http://www.oregon.gov/OAC/pdfs/oaco_brochure_strategies-action_plans_2011-13_website_ready.pdf.

Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office

The Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office (OACO) was created by statute in 2005 to support the work of the Advocacy Commissions. OACO assists the commissions in meeting all state agency requirements, including budgeting, evaluation and liaising with other agencies; public meeting requirements; correspondence; program administration; public outreach; web support, and other administrative duties. It also supports the Commissions in their statutory work including policy research and analysis; partnership development with state and community partners; leadership development; and monitoring existing programs and legislation designed to meet the needs of women and populations of color.

OACO works with the commissions to continually assess the issues and needs confronting people of color and women across Oregon and identify programs, projects and activities which the OACO will undertake regarding those issues. Their support for the work of the Commissions includes providing information to the commission about proposed legislation; tracking bills during a legislative session; coordinating testimony before legislative committees, and representing the Advocacy Commissions before legislative committees, elected officials and other groups. With regard to the KPMs process, the OACO staff prepares the evaluation procedures, trains commissioners on this process, and tracks the results for presentation in the biannual budget process.

Funded primarily with state General Funds, the Commissions may also raise Other Funds from fundraising and donations. Of the 300+ Boards and Commissions serving in Oregon, the Advocacy Commissions are among the first to consolidate their administration under one office in support of increased administrative efficiencies and collaboration among the individual Commissions. As the great recession of 2005 deepened in Oregon, General Fund budgets for all state agencies including the Advocacy Commissions have undergone deep reductions that are beginning to ease as economic forecasts improve. For the OAC's, with support among the executive and legislative bodies, this has led to the restoration of some monies for travel, a new work-study student and other state-wide adjustments in the 2013-15 Budget. For a high level presentation on the Oregon Advocacy Commissions budget, refer to: https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2013R1/Downloads/CommitteeMeetingDocument/6797.

OACO is staffed by Lucy Baker, Administrator and Nancy Kramer, Executive Assistant. Its physical offices are located at 421 SW Oak St., Suite 770, Portland, OR 97204, with a mailing address of OACO, 1819 SW 5th Ave., PMB #313, Portland, OR 97201. Office phone numbers are: 503-250-2698 (Lucy) and 503-302-9725 (Nancy).

III. Oregon Commission for Women History

The Oregon Commission for Women has a long and notable history. In 1964, Governor Mark Hatfield established the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women to advise him of the needs and concerns of women in Oregon. In 1983, Governor Victor Atiyeh gave the Commission independent agency status with a directive to continue its mission, and the Legislature created the Oregon Commission for Women to work for the implementation and establishment of economic, legal, political, and social equality of women, and to continually assess the needs and issues of women and girls.

The Commission for Women consists of 11 members, and includes nine eminent community members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate, and two representatives from the Legislative Assembly, one appointed by the President of the Senate, and one appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Members appointed by the Governor serve for three-year terms with the possible reappointment of a member for one additional term, and legislators serve two-year terms. The Chair and the Vice Chair of the OCFW are elected by members of the commission and serve for a term of one year. The duties of the officers are specified in the OCFW bylaws which are part of this packet.

To meet your fellow OCFW commissioners and to learn some interesting facts about a group of women who are dedicated to furthering equality for all females, refer to the following link: http://www.oregon.gov/Women/Pages/members.aspx.

The Friends of the OCFW

Another group committed to supporting and promoting the work of the OCFW is The Friends of the Oregon Commission for Women, created in 2004 as an adjunct 501(c)(3) by concerned female state legislators and commissioners in response to the defunding of OCFW as part of state-wide budget shortfalls. According to the Friends' website the mission is "to support and promote the work of the Oregon Commission for Women and we do this through knowledge sharing, community

building, and transformative action." For more information about the role of The Friends and their collaborative relationship with the OCFW, review the following website: http://friendsoforegonwomen.org/.

Women of Achievement

Since 1985, the Oregon Commission for Women has recognized and celebrated women who, through their works and lives, have significantly improved the experiences of women in Oregon. To date 81 women have been honored with this award which demonstrates the state's appreciation for their accomplishments across Oregon. The women are recognized at a ceremony attended by the Governor and members of the Legislature and at a special awards event held in Portland. The Friends of the OCFW play an active role in the recognition ceremonies. During the nomination period, a copy of the nomination form for the Women of Achievement award can be found on: http://www.oregon.gov/women/Pages/pnp1.aspx . To learn about some past awardees, take a look at the Friends website on: http://friendsoforegonwomen.org/community/women-of-achievement. For a full listing of all past awardees go to the Oregon Commission for Women's webpage: http://www.oregon.gov/women/Pages/pnp1.aspx

IV. Commissioner Expectations

The 2011 Amended Bylaws for the Commission for Women provide direction for the commission's actions, procedures and organization. Specifically the bylaws set clear guidelines for member expectations, providing an approach for a commissioner to set personal goals and to assess goal achievement. The exact wording as written in the bylaws on expectations for commission members is listed below:

- Commit to community activism on issues that affect women;
- Regularly attend and participate in commission meetings as required by ORS 182.010, as well as actively participate in periodic work sessions and special planning meeting. Prepare by reading material in advance;
- Commit to provide leadership on at least one special project or work group;

- Maintain objectivity in all decisions (i.e., conflict of interest will always be noted, with individuals abstaining from votes where conflict of interest may be an issue);
- Exhibit a willingness to represent the commission and to advocate women's concerns at community meetings and in other public settings; and
- Periodically represent the commission in statewide advocacy and planning;
- Individuals will support the votes approved by a majority of the Commission. A Commissioner may raise a topic for reconsideration once, according to the procedure in *Robert's Rules of Order*, and no later than the regularly scheduled business meeting after a decision is made.

Legislation Establishing the Commission for Women (ORS 185.510-570) calls for submission to the Governor at the beginning of each biennium a report containing the concerns and issues confronting the women of Oregon and a plan for identifying the programs, projects and activities which the commission will undertake regarding those issues. The legislation also sets up a process for establishing special study committees. Finally ORS 185.540 lists specific duties for the commission which are presented verbatim below:

The Commission for Women shall:

- (1)(a) Analyze the legal status of women and men under the laws of Oregon relating to civil rights, contracts, income, property and the family in order to assure full equality and treatment under the law;
- (b) Monitor the implementation of laws affecting the legal rights and duties of women; and
- (c) Educate women about their legal rights and responsibilities under the law.
- (2)(a) Work for equal opportunity and treatment for women in employment through an analysis of the employment policies and practices of employers, both public and private;
- (b) Evaluate the development of methods to assure fuller employment options for women including nontraditional job opportunities, child care, job sharing and flextime and part-time employment; and
- (c) Examine methods to develop greater employment opportunities and potentials for women with particular consideration for the needs of minority women, older women, rural women and displaced homemakers.
- (3)(a) Evaluate the progress of providing equality of educational opportunities for women in Oregon as mandated by state and federal law;

- (b) Assist efforts to inform women about nontraditional educational and employment opportunities; and
- (c) Promote the elimination of sexist and racist barriers in the educational process, such as staffing patterns, teacher training, curriculum and textbook selection.
- (4)(a) Encourage women to pursue a variety of roles in life, both in the community and in the family;
- (b) Promote the full recognition of the contributions of women whether in the home, as volunteers in the community or in the labor market;
- (c) Promote the valuation of work within the home at a level comparable with work outside the home; and
- (d) Investigate family relationships which are detrimental to women and to the development of productive family life.
- (5) Encourage and recommend women to serve on appointive boards and commissions and encourage them to seek elective office.
- (6) Identify and address issues which may be unique to special categories of women including minority women, juvenile women, older women, rural women and displaced homemakers. [1983 c.105 s.5; 1995 c.79 s.68; 1995 c.278 s.29]

V. Work of the Commission for Women

The OCFW pursues its mission of advocating for women's equality by providing information, education, and advocacy to the Governor, the Legislature, community leaders, and members of the public on issues important to the lives of Oregon's women. Listed below are a number of the ways this is achieved and some examples of the Commission's recent work:

- Produce a bi-annual report on the status of women in Oregon with information that can be helpful for developing laws and policies related to women and girls. For the *Status of Women and 2012 Activities Report*, see http://www.oregon.gov/women/pdfs/2012_OCFW_report%20JG.pdf.

- Author or champion legislation that enhances the role and status of the female in Oregon. In 2013, Commissioner Megan Jacquot, JD, drafted the enacted legislation HB 2226A for confidential name change for domestic violence survivors. The OCFW gave supporting testimony on behalf of five other pieces of legislation and along with the other advisory commissions,

gave joint testimony on 10 other pieces of legislation (For a fuller discussion, see handbook section, ***VII. Working with Legislation***)

- Perform research, produce educational materials such as the *"Oregon Women and the Law"* legal handbook, provide information and referrals for citizens with questions or problems, and act upon citizen complaints when appropriate.

- Serve in advisory and informational capacities to public officials and non-profit organizations in Oregon and other states in order to benefit women and girls throughout the country. Provide a place for information dissemination, connection, collaboration and partnership among women serving agencies throughout Oregon. Last year the OCFW collaborated with such female-oriented organizations as the League of Women Voters, the Oregon chapter of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), Family Forward, and Girls, Inc. In addition the OCFW has also added a partnership with Portland State University's Center for Women, Politics and Policy to collaborate on leadership and policy development efforts.

- Receive invitations to speak at conferences, workshops, businesses, organizations, and educational institutions on matters related to health, legal rights, domestic violence and the economic status of women. Last year as part of a program on the Oregon Advisory Commissions, the OCFW Chair Stephanie Vardavas spoke at Portland's City Club luncheon meeting. Other presentations have been made at the Oregon AAUW state conference and Oregon Soroptimists' Club.

- Celebrate the accomplishments of women in Oregon through the annual Women of Achievement Awards event where selected women Oregonians are nominated and honored for their outstanding contributions. The 2012 Women of Achievement were honored at a Salem reception hosted by the Governor and a session of the state legislature. An awards brunch for the 2013 recipients was held at Ecotrust in Portland.

VI. Your Role as an Appointed Commissioner

Now that you have read background information, let's review the basics on what a commissioner does.

Initial Paperwork - Upon appointment the first thing is to complete some administrative paperwork as requested by OACO. As a commissioner, you are considered to be an employee of the State of Oregon in several respects and are responsible for completing a board member questionnaire, a current W-4 form, a Self-Identification form, a Direct Deposit form, an I-9 form* and direct deposit forms. These items should be reviewed, signed and returned with the requested verifying information either in person to the OACO office or sent (fax, email or mail) to the address listed on the OACO website. These forms can be found on: http://www.oregon.gov/OAC/Pages/New_Commissioner_Welcome.aspx.
*Proof for the I-9 form must be seen by a staff person. Copies will not be accepted.

Commissioners who are not part of PERS, Oregon's government retirement system, are eligible for per diem payments of $30 minus taxes for attendance at a Commission public meeting, whether in person or by teleconference. Also, depending on budget availability, commissioners may receive reimbursement for travel associated with commission meetings. During times of budget reductions, DAS travel policies state that attending meetings by teleconference is the expected mode of participation. At all times carpooling and other cost-effective means of participation in commission work and meetings are appreciated.

Attendance - The OCFW is a working commission which places responsibility on commissioners to prepare for meetings by reading reports, proposals and other documents prepared and distributed by OACO staff. Expectations include 10 to 15 hours of work per month. Commissioners are also required to give reports on activities and to participate in discussions. State law also places an important emphasis on regular attendance and participation. Statute ORS 182.01 states that a commissioner who has two successive unexcused absences "shall forfeit his or her office unless prevented from attending" for reasonable cause. In such a situation, teleconferencing can be used to maintain attendance. (For a listing of the upcoming meeting dates, see ***Appendix III*** or http://www.oregon.gov/women/Pages/meetingsandevents.aspx.) You should also

be aware of Oregon's public records and meeting laws which support the state's commitment to transparency. All minutes and meeting notices of the OCFW are posted at a central state transparency website. See them at http://www.oregon.gov/women/Pages/meetingsandevents.aspx. For a full description of what is covered, review: http://www.oregon.gov/OAC/PDFs/Public_Records_and_Meetings_Manual.pdf. For each meeting a quorum of commissioners in attendance must be achieved. As stipulated in the open public meeting law, members of the public and the media are permitted at board meetings. For a quick reference on what is permitted under the Oregon open meetings rule, refer to: http://www.open-oregon.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/publicMEETINGSreader.pdf. It is important commissioners recognize that they operate in a public and open manner and maintain professional decorum in all actions. Commissioners must be familiar with and operate at all times within their governing statutes and bylaws and state and federal policies and laws. To review the legislation establishing the Commission for Women, ORS185.510-570, view: http://www.oregon.gov/women/Pages/about_us.aspx.

Teamwork - While each commissioner has an individual responsibility to uphold the Commission's statute and serve the electorate, each also has the responsibility to serve as a member of a team that is providing efficient and effective service. The shortest road to failure is to assume that you can act independently. Your success as a commissioner depends on how well the team composed of fellow commissioners, commission staff, partners and state officials function. In your role look to others, draw upon their experiences, and share the knowledge you bring from your work. Once you begin this process, you will find that teamwork evolves naturally as a necessary part of your role. In cultivating teamwork it is essential that your relations with other commissioners and officials be open and sincere. Your communication, negotiation, collaboration, and team-building skills and, most importantly, your integrity, are crucial to your success as a commissioner. You should present your opinion as clearly as possible when discussing issues and back your position with facts whenever possible; however, you must also be willing to actively listen to others' point of view - even if it is difficult. You will often find that the degree to which you are honest in your personal transactions with others is often the degree to which you effectively impact decisions. It is not necessary to be liked by or agreed with by others, but it is vital that they learn to trust you and rely on your integrity and expertise. As a

commissioner you should strive to establish an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation.

Ethics and State Rules - A significant influence in your success as a commissioner is your approach to potential ethical conflicts. For some commissioners what is considered normal activity in their everyday work life may not be allowed in their role as commissioner or public official. It is important to remember that as a commissioner you are considered a public official. The provisions in the Oregon Government Ethics law restrict some choices, decisions or actions of a public official.

As a commissioner you must adhere to the Oregon Code of Ethics set forth in ORS 244.010-ORS 244.047 as well as to other executive and administrative rule regulations. Specific state ethics rules govern your public role as a commissioner, so it is important that you weigh all your official actions as a commissioner, as seemingly insignificant actions can result in ethics infractions. Listed below are three categories for you to review with links to more descriptive information; however, this material should not be considered a complete listing of all policies and rules. The OACO staff can provide prevailing ethics guidance as well as seek out general advice from a number of state sources knowledgeable on specific laws and regulations including the Oregon Government Ethics Commission, the Office of the Secretary of State and the Department of Administrative Services (DAS). If you need specific guidance in a situation, please contact the OACO staff which will assist with consultation or training from the Oregon Government Ethics Commission.

As a commissioner you must adhere to the policies and administrative rules set forth below:

- **ORS 244.010-ORS244.047** – Government ethics is defined with regard to policy definitions, gift limits, prohibited use of official position or office, honoraria, regulation of subsequent employment of public officials and financial interest in public contract. For a full description see the sections beginning on: http://www.oregonlaws.org/ors/244.010. For a summary of ethics laws concerning, gifts, food and drink, travel and entertainment, review: http://www.oregon.gov/gov/pdf/form/ethics.pdf.

- **ORS 260.432 - Restrictions on Political Campaigning** – (***Overview of Restrictions and Allowable Activities – the Office of the Secretary of State)*** The Advocacy Commissions are unusual in state government in that they are permitted to take positions on proposed legislation and advocate for those positions. But this allowance does not extend to influencing or using staff resources in ways related to referendum issues or votes. Along with a restriction on taking positions on or influencing referendum votes (a "referendum" is defined by *www.thefreedictionary.com/* as the submission of a proposed public measure or actual statute to a direct popular vote), it prohibits any activities related to referendum subjects while representing the Commissions including:

    - Discussing referendum-related subjects at commission meetings or other gatherings in official roles
    - Referendum-related e-mails from staff or commissioners
    - Responding to or forwarding referendum-related e-mailings
    - Referendum-related website postings on the Advocacy Commissions webpages including Facebook page

  Here is the link to the Secretary of State's manual devoted to this subject with excerpts from selected sections pertaining to boards and commissions: http://oregonvotes.org/doc/publications/restrictions.pdf.

  Commissioners may request review by the Secretary of State's Office of information they may wish to share regarding referendum related issues. Pending the outcome of the review for impartiality, a commissioner may share information about an issue pertaining to a referendum in certain circumstances.

  Selected State Policies and Rules – There are state policies and administrative rules that set the standards for workplace behavior and use of state resources pertaining to staff of state agencies, including Commission and Board members in their official roles. Copies of these documents can be found in the ***Appendices IV, V, and VI***. In addition at the beginning of each fiscal year all commissioners will receive an email from the OACO Administrator with attachments for each of the following policies.

- **Travel reimbursement and attendance of meetings by teleconferencing**

The document on travel is a compendium of several areas of state policy that provides guidance on travel reimbursement for commissioners or staff during periods of budget reductions or funding scarcity. The policies clarify that although board and commission members or staff shall be reimbursed for travel to their required meetings, *when funds are scarce or unavailable for travel, then attendance of meetings by teleconferencing is expected (in lieu of travelling to the meetings). See* ***Appendix III - DAS Travel Reimbursement Policies.***

- **Acceptable use of state assets (e-mail and teleconferencing numbers)**

The second document covers use of state resources such as e-mail, teleconferencing numbers, and other information assets. While it covers many aspects of this subject, the crux for commissioners and staff is that *commissioner's e-mails regarding commission business are considered official state correspondence and as such are subject to all state requirements regarding content* (*no porn, hateful language, or other inappropriate content)*. And in a related policy, *state funded teleconferencing numbers are considered to be state property, and are to be used only by commissioners and staff or by prearrangement with others to conduct commission business and permission for use may be withdrawn. See* ***Appendix IV - Acceptable Use of State Information Assets.***

- **Professional conduct**

The last three cover state policies on maintaining productive, safe environments for commissioners and staff around discrimination, harassment, violence and other conduct. *Policies on professional conduct pertain to all commissioners and staff while conducting commission business in any setting or medium. See* ***Appendix V - Discrimination and Harassment Free Workplace; Maintaining a Professional Workplace and Violence-Free Workplace.***

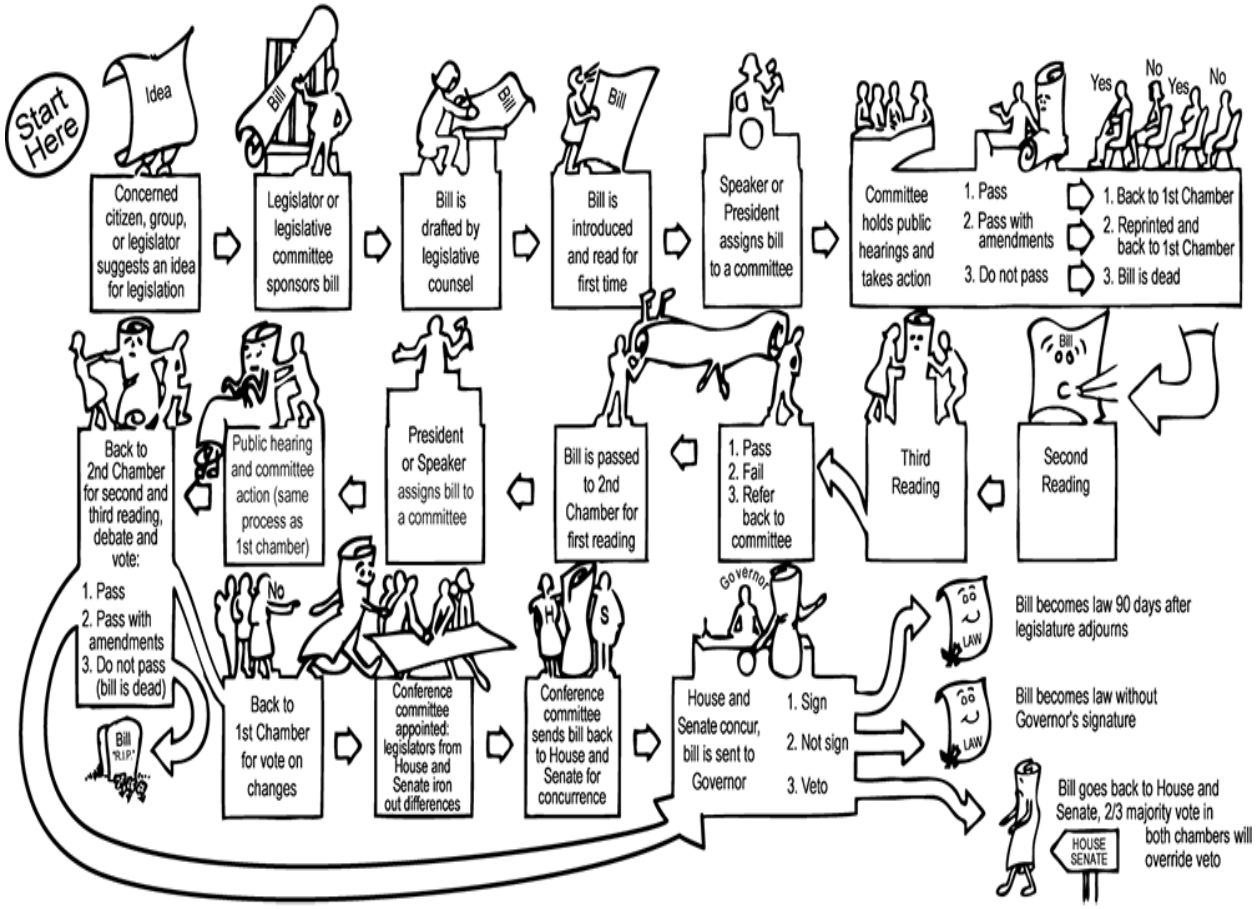
VII. Working with Legislation

One of the more interesting roles of the commissioner is to work within the commission to propose and support legislation that advances the economic, social, legal and political equality for women. For many commissioners this can be a new and fascinating experience. This section will outline the basics on how a bill becomes a law and then highlight the various roles a commissioner can play in this area.

How a Bill Becomes a Law

The citizen engagement website for the Oregon legislature provides both the narrative and an illustration of how a bill becomes a law. A bill, the most common type of measure, is a proposal for a law. All statutes, except those initiated by the people or referred to the people by the Legislative Assembly, must be enacted through a bill. The path of a bill, from the time it is just an idea to the time it arrives at the Governor's desk for approval, is paved with many detours. In order for a bill to become law, it must be passed by both houses in the identical form. This is achieved through a step-by-step process, often arduous and complex. For an example of how a bill becomes law, here using the House of Representatives as the house of origin, refer to the outlined process on: https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/citizen_engagement/Pages/How-an-Idea-Becomes-Law.aspx.

Listed below is the illustration of this narrative from the Legislature website:



A Commissioner and Legislation

As a commissioner, what are the various actions you can take with regard to legislation? During the legislative session (in odd years it is a short session, from February to early March; in even years it is a long session, from February to as late as July), you may be asked by your commission to do a number of things. One is to support proposed legislation that is before a committee for a hearing. Usually these bills pertain to the strategic priorities of the Commission or in support of the Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office budget. As a commissioner you will be asked for keywords of importance to the commission, such as health, poverty, and trafficking, which will be used by office staff to run through the database of what can be as many as 5,000 proposed bills in long session. Office staff will generate a report of all bills that come up and the commission will be asked to prioritize the bills and choose no more than 20. Then you will receive regular, usually weekly, updates on all legislation that the commission has identified as being of interest to it. This will come as regular e-mails from OACO staff tracking the bills of interest, flagging when there is a committee hearing or other opportunity for testimony, outlining the bill, providing back-up information, and asking you for

comments or an e-vote for support. Typically you respond to the email with your comments and inform all commissioners of your position with the "Reply All" tab. During the legislative session these emails can come quickly and require immediate attention, so it is important to check your emails often during this period. It is common for hearings – which are opportunities to provide testimony - to be scheduled within 24 to 48 hours of a bill's first reading

Another role a commissioner can play during the legislative session is to provide supporting written testimony on behalf of the OCFW for a bill along with a possible appearance before the legislative committee to provide the testimony and answer questions. Testimony can be supported jointly by all or some of the Oregon Advisory Commissions or by a single commission. Writing prepared testimony can be a fascinating but daunting experience. For inspiration you can see examples of all OCFW and other OAC testimony at their websites under "Advocacy." As a nominated commissioner you have already had the experience of appearing before the Senate committee to provide your personal testimony and answer questions. With one appearance under your belt, you might try testifying before the legislature on a topic that you have studied and are committed to. The legislature website for citizen engagement offers some practical pointers on how to prepare and give testimony. For a review, refer to: https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/citizen_engagement/Pages/How-to-Testify.aspx. Another resource as a new commissioner is the OACO staff who can assist you with wording and format. If this is your first time in dealing with legislation don't be intimidated since the experience can be fulfilling. Here is a list of testimony for the 2013 legislative session supported by the Oregon Advocacy Commissions and the Oregon Commission for Women. Some samples of testimony are included in the *Appendix VII*.

Joint Testimony from the four Advocacy Commissions:

HB 2328, Oregon Advocacy Commissions to Meet Jointly Annually, OAC Testimony
HB 2611, Culturally Competent Care, OAC Testimony
HB 2661A, Study on Public Safety Disparities, OAC Testimony *
HB 2668, Public Accommodation, OAC Testimony
HB 2669, Intern Protections, OAC Testimony
HB 3409A, Hair Care, OAC Testimony
SB 739, ODE Consultation on Oregon History, OAC Testimony *
SB 755, Minority Teachers Act, OAC Testimony *
SB 833, Short-Term Driver License, OAC Testimony
Oregon Education Investment Board Creation and Use of an Equity Lens, OACs Invited Testimony
HB 2226, Domestic Violence Survivor Name Change Bill, OCFW Testimony
HB 3364, Integrated Pest Management, OCFW Testimony
SB 744, Pay Equality Study, OCFW Testimony

SB 5501, Funds the Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office, OCFW Testimony

Finally the Commission may ask for commissioner help to draft legislation in support of the OCFW mission. A very successful example is the legislation approved by the Commission and drafted by OCFW Commissioner Megan Jacquot, JD. In 2013 HB 2226 A Domestic Violence Survivor Name Change Bill, was submitted through the Governor's Office, survived the legislative committee hearing process and moved on to passing by both houses of the legislature. Finally the Governor approved the legislation. Following its passage the Commission was further involved in the work to implement the bill with support from Commissioner Jacquot, the Oregon Law Center, and the Oregon Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime.

VIII. Conclusion

Governor Kitzhaber's excerpted words to board and commission members listed below provide the best conclusion to this handbook. Read it and think about your commitment to the Oregon Commission for Women. Remember what you have committed to do. Then just be the best commissioner you can be.

"*As Oregon state board and commission members you are participating in a long tradition of citizen involvement in state governance. Your generous contribution of time and talent assures the continuation of diverse and innovative approaches in governance in the state of Oregon….This role bestows upon you a responsibility to actively participate in your board's work by being prepared and by regularly attending meetings. In addition, it is extremely important that you maintain the highest ethics and use taxpayer monies wisely. I have pledged to maintain a system that is both transparent and held accountable to the citizens of Oregon, and you are on the frontlines of that commitment. Every board and commission is an integral part of our work in communities across the state and I appreciate your time and commitment to success. On behalf of all Oregonians, I thank you for your service."*

Appendix:

I. **Oregon Commission for Women Bylaws**

II. **OAC and Public Policy Research Internships**

III. **Oregon Commission for Women Meeting Dates (2014)**

IV. **DAS Travel Reimbursement Policies**

V. **Use of State Information Assets**

VI. **Discrimination and Harassment Free Workplace; Maintaining a Professional Workplace and Violence-Free Workplace**

VII. **Sample Testimony (2013)**

VIII. **Common Acronyms**