

House and Senate Appropriations Chairs' Guidance for Area Committee Chairs

February 17, 2021

Chairs' Expectations

Area Committees are expected to work jointly in reviewing agency budgets and operations by focusing on core functions of government, program performance, funding levels, and potential changes to those levels in light of changing needs. Committees should also look for efficiencies across State government, including looking at duplicative programs and evaluating if fund levels are appropriate for non-core services, including non-profits and other non-essential services.

Committee Work

- Meet with staff to plan committee meetings; educational briefings should **begin the week of February 22**
- Rotate presiding over meetings
- Maintain transparency by having open meetings and posting documents to committee websites
- Support safe distancing practices in Committee meetings by using Webex.
- Consult other area committees for programs that cross multiple agencies

Joint Educational Meetings (items for potential review)

- Fiscal Research staff will provide relevant budget background
- Review base budget focusing on changes made to the base
- Review past legislative budget and policy actions
- Review interim committee reports
- Review federal changes impacting states
- Review COVID-19 related impacts on agency budgets
- Hear Governor's Budget (when appropriate)
- Evaluate agencies by looking at the programs and services they provide. For each program/service, look at:
 - Federal and State requirements.
 - Whether the program is appropriately funded to complete its mission.
 - Whether program outcomes justify expenditures.
 - Ways to manage growth and reduce expenditures.
 - Whether the set of services or programs the State offers is an effective way to address the issue.
 - Can some programs be eliminated?
 - Can the savings from those programs be used more effectively to run other programs?