TIPS FOR WORKING WITH OLC: COMMITTEES AND SUBSTITUTES

The Office of Legislative Counsel is bound by attorney-client privilege and statutorily required confidentiality in dealing with the members of the General Assembly. Please see the following tips below.

1. **Get to know the committee's assigned attorney.**
   - Prior to session starting, we will email a list with attorneys assigned to each committee along with his or her contact info.
   - Get to know your committee's assigned attorney.
     - Learn their LC #. Each attorney in our office is assigned an LC #. This number identifies who drafted a particular piece of legislation.
     - You need to know when they are not in the room for a meeting because our office is the only one which can produce a substitute. There will be times (especially near crossover and the end of session) when an attorney will not be able to attend a committee meeting. If the assigned attorney cannot attend your committee's meetings he or she will try to let you know, but sometimes that is not possible. If you do not see the committee's assigned attorney or another attorney from our office in a meeting, you must write down (precisely) the changes voted on by the committee and submit them to our office in order to produce the substitute that you must report out.

2. **Committee meeting notices.**
   - Please send meeting notices to the committee's assigned attorney via email (preferable) or hard copy to the front office in 316 CAP. Emailing the legcounsel@legis.ga.gov folder should be an additional notification (if you choose to do so), but please always email the attorney assigned to that particular committee.
   - It is recommended that committee meeting notices which include bill numbers that are to be heard also include the LC # of that bill.

3. **Changes in committee meeting times and/or meeting upon adjournment.**
   - Please notify our office of any immediate changes or updates to committee times and/or locations. Our attorneys rarely are able to watch floor proceedings from either chamber, so we are unaware when floor sessions run long and a meeting must be rescheduled. Arriving to an empty committee room to learn that the chamber is still on the floor can impede the process.
   - If a meeting has been changed to upon adjournment, it is also very helpful to our attorneys if you or your intern call our office. You can ask to speak directly with the assigned attorney or simply tell the front desk that the chamber has adjourned and Committee X will start their meeting in a few minutes and the message will be passed along.

4. **Picking up substitutes ("subs") before a committee meeting.**
   - Our office does not have general "committee folders." A sub is placed in the folder of the member who made the request.
   - Only the member requesting the sub or their staff may pick up their sub for the committee unless they have authorized us to allow someone else to pick it up for them.
   - The chairperson of the committee and/or their staff may <u>not</u> pick up the sub of another member for the committee, even if they know about it, or have asked another member to drop the sub. Unless the requesting member has told us we can release their sub for pickup to the committee chairperson's staff, we cannot even acknowledge that we have drafted a sub.

- We do not make copies for committees.
    - It may be helpful to discuss developing a committee policy with your chairperson.
        - Some committee chairpersons refuse to hear a substitute in committee if the 01 and 02 have not been filed with the committee staff an hour (or even 24 hours) prior to the meeting. This gives your office enough time to make copies and place them in member folders for the meeting.
        - Some committee chairpersons require that all members desiring to have a substitute heard by a committee provide enough copies to be distributed to members at the meeting.
        - Please keep in mind, regardless of the policy the committee chairperson adopts, that preparing substitutes is the same process for preparing the bill and prior planning by members is required. Rushes should be avoided when possible.
- When you know a substitute will be heard by your committee, notify the assigned attorney via phone call or email. You must inform the attorney of the LC # being heard, even if the LC # is from the committee attorney. Oftentimes, attorneys draft numerous substitutes that are never presented to the committee. Sometimes, a substitute is drafted by another attorney in the office unbeknownst to the committee attorney. Our attorneys are expected to answer questions from the committee related to bills during meetings, which can be an impossible task when they do not know which version is being heard or did not know the substitute existed before they walk into the meeting.
- The front office does <u>not</u> keep up with who, among each office, has picked up a sub. So please communicate amongst those authorized to pick up legislation. When multiple staff from the same office come to pick up the sub and have not communicated with each other, it can lead to panic and confusion.

5. **Picking up substitutes after the sub has passed out of committee.**
    - Once a sub has passed out of committee, it now belongs to the committee chairperson.
    - If changes need to be made after passing out of committee, the new version will be drafted by our office and filed in the chairperson's folder. Only the chairperson or their staff may pick up the sub unless we are given authorization to do otherwise.
    - Meetings held in the afternoon will result in the committee substitute being ready to pick up in the morning unless the assigned attorney tells you otherwise.

6. **Other info.**
    - Please remember our confidentiality rules. We cannot send a pdf of a substitute or bill out to anyone but the requesting member. If you get requests for pdfs of a bill that has passed out of committee, please ask for that from the assigned attorney directly and do not have the requesting lobbyist or member of the public call our office. Once we send the pdf to you, it is in the member's discretion to allow others to view it.
    - Bills and substitutes require time for both drafting and editing. Please help us by reminding your chairperson and any members of the committee to plan accordingly when requesting legislation. If you need a bill or substitute by a certain time- always let us know that when making the request.
    - When requesting a substitute or changes to an existing bill draft that has not yet been assigned a number (released), it is easiest for our drafting purposes when the change is written directly on a printed copy of the bill.