

State of Minnesota
Legislative Audit Commission

Possible Evaluation Topics for 2020

CORRECTIONS, PUBLIC SAFETY, AND JUDICIARY

1. Driver Examination Stations

Requested by Representatives Hansen and Runbeck

To what extent are driver examination stations adequately staffed and operated, and how does this vary across the state? How are appointments for driving tests granted, and to what extent are some exam slots reserved for certain driving schools? How has the Department of Public Safety spent additional appropriations it received to improve the scheduling of driving skill examinations?

2. Infrastructure of County Jails

Requested by Representative Hansen

What are the ages and conditions of Minnesota's county jails? To what extent is facility regionalization or rehabilitation a viable option to replacement of individual county jails? Who is responsible for ensuring the adequacy and safety of these facilities, and are they fulfilling their responsibilities?

3. Gopher State One Call

Requested by a legislator

Who is in charge of this program, and how efficiently is it operated? Should operations remain with the current nonprofit organization, or should they be moved into the Department of Public Safety? Does Gopher State One Call maintain an adequate fund balance?

4. Oversight and Regulation of Private Security

Requested by a citizen

To what extent is there adequate oversight and regulation of private security officers and companies? What training is required of private security officers, and is it sufficient to ensure public safety?

5. Mass Surveillance

Requested by a citizen

Do state regulations regarding the use of closed-circuit television and/or cellphone surveillance sufficiently protect public safety and public privacy? Are there sufficient regulations regarding the distribution and handling of these data?

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENERGY, AND COMMERCE

6. Public Utilities Commission (PUC) Decision Making

Requested by Senator Gazelka

Does the PUC appropriately apply state statutory requirements when making decisions? To what extent are PUC decisions affected by external pressures or PUC members' personal biases towards particular types of energy generation?

7. Minnesota Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation (IRRR)

Requested by Senator Pratt; related OLA evaluation released in 2016

To what extent does IRRR have adequate and appropriate financial controls? What is the performance of the department's past loans? What are IRRR's expenditures, and to what extent is there appropriate oversight?

8. Community Solar Gardens Program

Requested by a legislator

What are the financial costs and benefits of this program to utility ratepayers, subscribers, developers, and community solar garden owners? Does state law still need to specify a methodology for setting the purchase price of solar energy produced through this program, in light of the development of a competitive solar market? What are the marketing practices of solar developers, and what are the terms and conditions of subscriber contracts?

9. Workforce Development Grant Programs

Requested by a legislator

To what extent does the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) provide sufficient oversight of its grantees? To what extent are grantees held accountable for how they use grant funds?

10. Public Utilities Commission Timeliness

Requested by a citizen

How often has it been necessary to extend statutory deadlines for PUC staff to complete their work? What impact do these extensions have on utilities, and thus ratepayers?

EDUCATION: E-12 AND HIGHER EDUCATION

11. Achievement and Integration Program (AIM)

Requested by Representatives Erickson, Nornes, Swedzinski, and Torkelson; related OLA evaluation released in 2005

To what extent are the program's current rules aligned with state statutes, and have any misalignments affected which school districts get funding? To what extent does the Minnesota Department of Education review and hold school districts accountable for meeting the goals established in their AIM achievement plans? Has the program made a positive impact on academic achievement or integration?

12. Charter School Student Transportation

Requested by Representative Hansen

To what extent do charter schools provide their own student transportation, and to what extent do they rely on local school districts to provide student transportation? What are the consequences of relying on local school districts for this service? How is the transportation of charter school students funded, and are the correct funding mechanisms in place?

13. Collaborative Urban and Greater Minnesota Educators of Color Program

Requested by Representative Davnie

How well do these programs prepare students for a teaching career (recruitment, retention rates, cohort support, etc.)? To what extent have these programs contributed to increasing the diversity of Minnesota's teaching corps? Is funding for the program sufficient, given the expansion in eligible programs? How well are state agencies implementing and overseeing this grant program?

14. Open Enrollment and Racial Segregation

Requested by Representative Hassan

What has been the impact of Minnesota's open enrollment laws on the racial segregation of students in the state's schools?

15. Language Immersion Programs in Public Schools

Requested by Senator Franzen

To what extent do public schools offer language immersion programs? How has enrollment in these programs changed over time, and is there demand for more? How do these programs fit into the overall public education system? What is the process to begin or establish a language immersion program or school?

16. School Transportation Funding

Requested by a legislator; related OLA evaluation released in 2008

What funding exists for school transportation, and how are schools using these funds? To what extent is school transportation funding equitable and adequate? To what extent are schools accurately and consistently reporting their transportation expenditures?

17. Minnesota State Academies for the Deaf and Blind

Requested by a legislator

To what extent have the state academies fulfilled their statutory duties? How are the state academies' operating and capital costs funded? Is funding adequate? To what extent do the state academies provide services to all eligible students across the state?

18. Public College and University Student Fees

Requested by a legislator

To what extent have student fees changed over the past several years? How are student fees used, and who monitors their use? To what extent are students involved in decisions regarding the use of student fees?

19. Career and Technical Education Programs

Requested by the Minnesota Association for Career and Technical Education

How do K-12 school districts in Minnesota fund their career and technical education programs? How has state funding for this purpose been distributed? How do other states fund their career and technical education programs, and with what results?

20. Charter School Accountability

Requested by a citizen; related OLA evaluation released in 2008

In what ways are charter schools accountable to the public? What are the types of contracts that charter schools negotiate with private entities, and who oversees these contracts? Have charter school leaders ensured equitable access to information about their schools, for example, through advertising?

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENT

21. Compliance with Air and Water Quality Permits

Requested by Senators Abeler, Chamberlain, Kiffmeyer, Rosen, and Utke; related OLA evaluations released in 1991 and 2002

Does the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) adequately enforce air and water quality permits? To what extent is there adequate monitoring of the emissions and discharges allowed by permits? To what extent does MPCA take appropriate corrective actions when it discovers violations?

22. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)

Requested by Senators Chamberlain, Mathews, and Utke

To what extent does MPCA effectively and efficiently fulfill its responsibilities? Have there been failures in the agency's processes with respect to companies such as Water Gremlin and Northern Metals? Has MPCA correctly assigned penalties to entities violating their permits?

23. MPCA Oversight and Regulation of Water Gremlin

Requested by Senators Draheim, Howe, Mathews, and another legislator; this topic is the subject of a special review to be completed by OLA in 2020

Why was this company able to emit excessive levels of trichloroethylene for many years? Did this represent a failure of MPCA permitting, monitoring, or enforcement? If so, might similar problems exist in MPCA's oversight of other entities with permits?

24. MPCA's Permitting Process and Environmental Justice Factors

Requested by Senator Franzen

How, if at all, does MPCA take into account factors related to environmental justice before issuing a permit? What process does the agency currently use to determine that there will

be no adverse effects to environmental justice concerns? To what extent can the public participate in this process?

25. MPCA Coordination with Special Interests

Requested by Representative Quam

To what extent does MPCA coordinate with special interests to effect legal actions against state law or processes?

26. Monitoring and Regulating Pollution

Requested by a citizen

What measures are used to evaluate how Minnesotans are protected from polluting industries? Are Minnesota departments partnering with industries to reduce regulation while sacrificing public health and safety? What social, environmental, and economic metrics are used to monitor and regulate pollution?

NATURAL RESOURCES

27. DNR Special Revenue Funds

Requested by Representative Quam

To what extent are DNR special revenue funds used for purposes related to the fees that generate the revenue?

28. DNR Regulation of Lakes

Requested by Representative Erickson

To what extent does DNR provide consistent and effective oversight of Minnesota lakes regarding fish stocking, species regulation, and aquatic licenses? To what extent do these practices vary across the state and by species?

29. Department of Natural Resources' Mission

Requested by Senator Dibble

To what extent is the DNR's dual mission—(1) preserving and protecting natural resources and (2) exploiting natural resources—compatible within a single agency? Should the two purposes be divided into separate agencies?

30. Park-Dedicated Fees and Requirements

Requested by Representative Theis

To what extent are local municipalities collecting these fees, and how do they use the money? How do the revenues collected compare with expenditures, and do municipalities have growing reserve funds dedicated for parks?

31. DNR Rulemaking

Requested by a legislator

Does DNR overstep its authority during rulemaking?

32. Trout Habitat Grants

Requested by citizens

To what extent have Legacy Fund grants for improvement and restoration of trout habitat been used effectively? Has there been adequate state monitoring of project outcomes? Have grants been used to fund proven technologies for river or stream restoration—for example, that will withstand heavy rainfalls?

33. Utilization of Natural Resources

Requested by a citizen

What measures are used to evaluate how Minnesota's natural resources are utilized? What time frame is used? What social, environmental, and economic metrics are used?

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

34. Minnesota's Results First Initiative

Requested by Representative Erickson

How much does this program cost, and how many MMB staff are dedicated to the program? Who conducts the research, and how is the evidence evaluated? How does the rating system work, who determines the ratings, and how are the ratings subsequently used?

35. Procurement Process for Capital Projects

Requested by Senator Rosen

What processes do state agencies use to procure services associated with preventive maintenance and capital projects?

36. Campaign Contributions by Nongovernmental Organizations

Requested by Representative Green

To what extent do nongovernmental organizations contribute to election campaigns in Minnesota?

37. Department of Administration Contract Oversight

Requested by Representative Vogel

What checks and balances are in place to ensure that state agencies comply with contracting requirements, such as those regarding the RFP and bidding processes? To what extent does the Department of Administration monitor contracts and ensure they are consistent with the RFP and in the best interest of the state? Is compliance enforced equitably and consistently?

38. State Planning Agency

Requested by Senator Dibble

Has the elimination of the State Planning Agency resulted in a lack of essential data collection and research for use by the governor and cabinet, harmed the state's ability to

align policies and resources across the enterprise, or hindered the ability to better engage in long-term planning?

39. Collection of Sales and Use Taxes

Requested by Representative Erickson

What is the Department of Revenue's process for auditing the local collection of sales and use taxes? How many of these audits has the department conducted in recent years, what have been the reasons for the audits, and what were the audit findings?

40. Data Center Consolidation

Requested by Representative Nash

What progress has the Office of Information Technology Services (MNIT) made in consolidating state government's data centers, which house computer equipment such as servers, routers, and firewalls? Are there impediments to further consolidation? What have been the costs and benefits of consolidation so far?

41. Cybersecurity

Requested by Representative Nash

How serious are cyber attacks as a threat to Minnesota state government? To what extent is MNIT prepared to identify, deter, and resolve potential cyber attacks on state systems?

42. Disaster Contingency Account

Requested by several legislative staff; related OLA evaluation released in 2012

What is the state's approach to disaster recovery, and how is it funded? To what extent are the state's recovery efforts supplemented by local governments and nonprofit organizations? What are the expenditure trends of this account, and what controls are in place?

43. Collection of Fines through the Statewide Payables System

Requested by legislative staff

How effective are the courts' and Department of Revenue's efforts at collecting traffic and criminal fines?

44. Regulatory Capture of State Agencies

Requested by a citizen

To what extent have State of Minnesota departments been captured by corporations and other interest groups? How actively do state agencies collaborate with the people of Minnesota? How do state agencies define and use terms such as "partners," "customers," and "stakeholders?"

45. Connect 700 Program

Requested by a citizen

How effective has this program—which provides an alternative route to state employment for individuals with disabilities—been since it was introduced in 2016? To what extent

have individuals hired through this program received proper support and accommodations for their disabilities?

46. Data Privacy

Requested by a citizen

To what extent do state agencies sell information they have collected from the public (such as information about vehicle owners collected during vehicle registration)? How easy is it for members of the public to opt out of such data collection? Are members of the public sufficiently informed about the sale and use of their data? Does the state provide sufficient oversight of the disclosure, collection, and sale of those data?

47. MMB Management Analysis and Development Unit

Requested by a citizen

Has this unit done an effective job of soliciting input from program and agency stakeholders in its work for state agencies?

48. Contract and Grant Management

Requested by a citizen; OLA issued related evaluations in 2003 and 2007

To what extent do state agencies as a whole comply with state contract and grant requirements? Alternatively, to what extent has the Department of Human Services complied with these requirements?

HEALTH

49. Individual and Small-Group Market Health Insurance

Requested by Representatives Erickson, Gruenhagen, Haley, Scott, and several other legislators

What are the disparities among Minnesota's nine geographic rating areas in individual and small-group market health insurance rates? How can the state reduce or eliminate these disparities?

50. Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board (EMS RB)

Requested by Representatives Huot, Runbeck, and another legislator

Is this board properly managed? Has it followed proper practices for hiring staff and selecting contractors? Does the board have appropriate mechanisms for allocating funds around the state, and does the board adequately monitor emergency medical services response times throughout the state?

51. Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Oversight of Drinking Water

Requested by Representative Hansen

To what extent has MDH implemented effective monitoring of the state's drinking water? To what extent does MDH have appropriate regulations to ensure safe drinking water?

52. Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Indoor Ice Arena Rules

Requested by Representative Hansen

How effective are the state's regulations of carbon dioxide in ice arenas? To what extent does MDH provide oversight of these regulations and ensure compliance throughout the state?

53. Pharmacy Benefit Managers

Requested by Representative Gruenhagen

What is the role of pharmacy benefit managers, and what is their impact on the cost of health care?

54. Health Care Access Fund

Requested by Representative Gruenhagen

How has the money from this fund been spent, and has it been spent in compliance with state law? What are the consequences of changing or eliminating some of the taxes that support this fund?

55. Board of Nursing

Requested by Representative Liebling and a citizen; related OLA evaluation released in 2015

To what extent has the board implemented necessary changes in response to OLA's 2015 evaluation? Does the board process cases effectively and efficiently, and is the board well managed?

56. Board of Psychology

Requested by several citizens

What are the board's practices for processing applications and complaints? Who reviews the complaints, what criteria are used to make determinations, and are these practices reasonable? To what extent are disciplinary actions based on accepted criteria and guidelines?

57. Medical Practices Board

Requested by a citizen

To what extent does the Medical Practices Board provide adequate oversight of doctors and other certified practitioners? Does the board have a reasonable complaint resolution process?

58. Board of Behavioral Health and Therapy

Requested by a citizen

To what extent are the board's licensing requirements consistent with national standards? Does the board provide adequate oversight of licensed counselors, and does it have a reasonable complaint resolution process?

59. Oversight of Nursing Homes

Requested by a citizen; related OLA evaluation released in 2005

To what extent does the Minnesota Department of Health provide adequate oversight of nursing homes? Does the department adequately protect vulnerable adults who live in these facilities?

60. HIV/AIDS Programs and Services

Requested by a citizen

Is Minnesota's structure for providing HIV/AIDS programs and services—where the Minnesota Department of Health focuses on the public health aspects and the Department of Human Services focuses on services—effective? Do the two departments effectively coordinate their efforts? Does this structure best support Minnesota's goal of ending new infections of HIV in the coming years?

61. Critical Incidents in Assisted Living Residences

Requested by a citizen

Are the departments of Human Services and Health fulfilling federal requirements regarding tracking critical incidents affecting the health and safety of Medicaid beneficiaries receiving services in assisted living residences?

HUMAN SERVICES

62. Refugee Resettlement Program

Requested by Representative Green; related OLA special review released in 2018

What percentage of new refugees enter the workforce? What is the affect of refugees on all DHS programs? Is there a connection between the refugee program and the increase in crime?

63. Child Protective Services

Requested by Senator Mathews

To what extent are removals of children from home later found to be unwarranted? To what extent are there delays in the process to reunite families, and what are the causes for those delays?

64. County Health and Human Services Budgets

Requested by Senator Frentz

How much do counties spend on health and human services? How much do the federal and state governments reimburse counties for these services? How much remains for county taxpayers to cover?

65. County Implementation of MnCHOICES

Requested by Senator Abeler

To what extent have counties varied in their implementation of MnCHOICES, which is a comprehensive web-based tool that integrates assessment and support planning for individuals seeking access to long-term human services and supports?

66. Disability Waivers

Requested by Senator Dibble

To what extent do counties consistently determine eligibility for disability waiver services, based on MnCHOICES and, if applicable, other factors?

67. County-Based Purchasing vs. HMO-Provided Services

Requested by Senator Abeler

What is the difference between county-based purchasing organizations (CBPOs) and health maintenance organizations (HMOs)? Have DHS policies or practices placed CBPOs at a disadvantage relative to HMOs?

68. Behavioral Health Division

Requested by a legislator

Does DHS follow sufficiently clear guidelines when awarding behavioral health grants?

69. Adult Day Care

Requested by a citizen

How well does DHS oversee the provision of day services for functionally impaired adults? To what extent does DHS ensure that public funds are used for eligible services?

70. Nonemergency Medical Transportation

Requested by a citizen; related OLA evaluation released in 2011

To what extent does DHS ensure that drivers and rides meet program requirements? To what extent does DHS adequately enforce program requirements and take adequate enforcement actions? How does the availability of nonemergency medical transportation services vary around the state?

71. Case Management

Requested by a citizen

What are the respective roles of the state and county in overseeing and coordinating case management services for individuals, and is there a need for greater clarity in these roles? To what extent have private providers of case management services conducted client assessments, determined eligibility, and provided services without county approval?

TRANSPORTATION

72. Metro Mobility

Requested by Representatives Erickson, Masin, and Moller

To what extent does Metro Mobility provide consistent, reliable, safe, effective, and efficient service? How well does Metro Mobility meet the demand for its services, and how cost-effective are these services? To what extent does Metro Mobility comply with federal regulations?

73. Safety of Metro Transit

Requested by Representatives Runbeck, Scott, and several other legislators

How does Metro Transit respond to safety concerns regarding buses and light rail transit? To what extent does it investigate and resolve Metro Transit incident reports, and to what extent does Metro Transit partner with local law enforcement? How do other states or regions ensure safety on public transportation?

74. Metro Transit Bus Operations

Requested by Representative Runbeck and Senator Osmek

What are the causes of Metro Transit's bus driver shortages? To what extent does Metro Transit rely on overtime, use of part-time drivers, or route reduction to compensate for driver shortages? What are the hiring practices and work culture for Metro Transit employees?

75. Metro Transit

Requested by Representative Quam

To what extent does Metro Transit operate efficiently and effectively?

76. Trunk Highway Funding

Requested by Senators Draheim, Howe, and Koran; related OLA evaluation released in 1997

What are the sources of funding for highways, and how is the money spent?

77. MnDOT Project Selection Process

Requested by Senator Dibble; related OLA evaluation released in 2016

Does the new project selection process provide meaningful information about choices and priorities for transportation investments? To what extent does the department have processes and controls in place to ensure effective and appropriate allocation of biennial appropriations? To what extent does the department link desired outcomes to resources?

78. MnDOT Highway User Tax Distribution Funds

Requested by Senator Dibble

How are these funds used? Do they support "highway purposes" as required by the state's constitution?

79. MnDOT Contract and Employment Goals

Requested by Senator Dibble

How well has the agency performed with respect to its goals and requirements for contracting and employing: disadvantaged business enterprises, targeted group businesses, veteran-owned businesses, etc.? If it is falling short, is the problem substantial and significant, and why? How could the agency improve?

OTHER

80. Board of Cosmetology

Requested by Representatives Albright, Nornes, Scott, Swedzinski, Torkelson, and several other legislators

What is the board's current funding level, and is it appropriate? To what extent does the board use its revenue effectively and efficiently? What are the different types of licenses the board issues, are the licensure requirements appropriate, and do they take into consideration necessary health protections?

81. Charitable Gambling Administrative Expenses

Requested by Senators Kiffmeyer and Rosen

How are charitable gambling proceeds allocated, and to what extent are proceeds allocated to "managers" and entities other than the intended beneficiaries? What are allowable expenses overall, and what are reasonable administrative expenses? To what extent is there sufficient oversight of these expenses?

82. Legacy Amendment Results

Requested by Representative Green and another legislator, related OLA evaluation released in 2011

Have the land acquisitions contributed to an increase in property taxes and tax-forfeited properties? What is the nontaxable acreage today compared to 2010? What are the results and accomplishments from dollars spent in all four Legacy funds? Are the four funds on track with their 25-year goals?

83. Department of Labor and Industry: Impact of Code and Permit Requirements

Requested by Representatives Nornes, Theis, and another legislator

To what extent have Department of Labor and Industry code changes or permit requirements had an impact on housing costs?

84. Department of Labor and Industry: Building Permit Fees

Requested by Representative Nash

To what extent is the Department of Labor and Industry enforcing reporting requirements related to building permit fees?

85. Legacy Spending on Children’s Museums

Requested by Senator Ruud

Are children’s museums using Legacy Amendment funds appropriately? Are children’s museums relying too heavily on Legacy funds to operate?

86. Gambling Regulation and Oversight

Requested by Representative Erickson, related OLA evaluation released in 2005

To what extent have the recommendations from OLA’s 2005 evaluation been addressed? To what extent does Minnesota’s regulatory structure ensure that adequate internal controls are in place? To what extent does the state’s gambling oversight meet the state’s regulatory goals efficiently and effectively?

87. Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC)

Requested by Representative Hansen; related OLA evaluation released in 2003

How efficiently and effectively does the commission manage and oversee the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport? Does this same level of oversight extend to the other airports under its authority? Is the commission’s governance structure appropriate considering the level of economic activity at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport?

88. Board of Animal Health Oversight of Domestic Animals

Requested by Senator Dibble

How well has the Board of Animal Health fulfilled its responsibility to “protect the health of the state’s domestic animals” with respect to companion animals? How well has it fulfilled its responsibility to enforce the provisions of the Commercial Breeders Licensing and Enforcement law?

89. Pension Plans

Requested by Representative Erickson

What benefits have been paid out, and why do they vary around the state? To what extent do the state’s pension liabilities exceed assets? What factors have contributed to the size of the unfunded liabilities? What is the long-term viability of these funds, and are there ways to make them more fiscally sound?

90. Prevailing Wage: Effect on Housing Programs

Requested by Senator Westrom, related OLA report released in 2007

To what extent have prevailing wage requirements affected housing grant programs? How much extra does it add to the cost of the project by requiring prevailing wages on nearly all projects? How many cities are not applying (or are hesitant to apply) for housing grants due to prevailing wage requirements? How many more housing units could be built without the prevailing wage requirement?

91. Prevailing Wage Calculations

Requested by Senator Westrom, related OLA report released in 2007

To what extent does the prevailing wage formula affect the hourly wages for similar workers in the private sector? How do other states calculate prevailing wage? How much have the rural broadband grants saved on each project by making prevailing wage exceptions to the program?

92. Municipal Building Permit Surplus Activity, Municipal Engineering Contract Services

Requested by Representative Theis

How much money is spent on these services, and are they duplicative? To what extent are cities and taxpayers getting a good deal?

93. Destination Medical Center

Requested by a legislator

Is the Destination Medical Center (DMC) initiative being executed in accordance with the very complex statute that created it? Are local decisions regarding the receipt and use of DMC monies between the state, county, city, and the DMC Board being made in accordance with the provisions of statute? Are the DMC administrative and operational processes involving the state, county, city, and DMC Board in conformance with statute?

94. Minnesota Veterans Homes Staffing and Operations

Requested by a legislator

To what extent does the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs ensure adequate and efficient operations at the state's five veterans homes? Do these homes have proper staffing to provide the necessary services to Minnesota veterans?

95. Next Generation 911 Project

Requested by citizens

Does this project—which is intended to upgrade statewide 911 emergency response systems to accommodate new technologies—have proper management, clear objectives and timelines, and accepted standards? Have the roles of the Department of Public Safety, MNIT, Statewide Emergency Communications Board, and other participating entities been clearly established? What has been accomplished since this project started in 2014?

96. 911 Emergency Fund

Requested by several legislative staff

What have been the revenue and expenditure trends for this account, which is established by *Minnesota Statutes* 2019, 403.11? For what purposes may the fund be used, and how is this determined? Given the proposed sunset on the surcharge that supports this fund, what is the future of the emergency radio system?

97. State Archaeologist

Requested by citizens; related OLA report released in 2001

Does the state archaeologist have clear standards for making decisions? Does the state archaeologist make appropriate decisions about which archaeologists may work on public property? Are there appropriate appeal mechanisms for these decisions?

98. Telecommunications Access Minnesota (TAM)

Requested by legislative staff

Is the surcharge still needed, and is TAM meeting its original intent? Should a state commission (Commission of the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing) be funded with a special fee, or should it be funded by the General Fund?

99. Minnesota Commission of the Deaf, Deafblind, and Hard of Hearing

Requested by a citizen

Does this commission employ proper contracting procedures? Does it operate with sufficient transparency? To what extent has this organization fulfilled its mission?

100. Fire Safety Account

Requested by legislative staff

What are the revenue and expenditure trends for this account over the past ten years?

101. Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Board

Requested by a citizen

Is the POST Board properly managed? Does the POST Board properly process and score license exams for individuals seeking to become peace officers?

102. State Petition Process

Requested by a legislator

Is the process fair to all?

State of Minnesota

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Corrections, Public Safety, and Judiciary

1. Driver Examination Stations
2. Infrastructure of County Jails
3. Gopher State One Call
4. Oversight and Regulation of Private Security
5. Mass Surveillance

Economic Development, Energy, and Commerce

6. Public Utilities Commission (PUC) Decision Making
7. Minnesota Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation (IRRR)
8. Community Solar Gardens Program
9. Workforce Development Grant Programs
10. Public Utilities Commission Timeliness

Education: E-12 and Higher Education

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12. Charter School Student Transportation
13. Collaborative Urban and Greater Minnesota Educators of Color Program
14. Open Enrollment and Racial Segregation
15. Language Immersion Programs in Public Schools
16. School Transportation Funding
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18. Public College and University Student Fees
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20. Charter School Accountability

Environment & Natural Resources

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22. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)
23. MPCA Oversight and Regulation of Water Gremlin
24. MPCA's Permitting Process and Environmental Justice Factors
25. MPCA Coordination with Special Interests
26. Monitoring and Regulating Pollution
27. DNR Special Revenue Funds
28. DNR Regulation of Lakes
29. Department of Natural Resources' Mission
30. Park-Dedicated Fees and Requirements
31. DNR Rulemaking
32. Trout Habitat Grants
33. Utilization of Natural Resources

Government Operations

34. Minnesota's Results First Initiative
35. Procurement Process for Capital Projects
36. Campaign Contributions by Nongovernmental Organizations
37. Department of Administration Contract Oversight
38. State Planning Agency
39. Collection of Sales and Use Taxes
40. Data Center Consolidation
41. Cybersecurity
42. Disaster Contingency Account
43. Collection of Fines through the Statewide Payables System
44. Regulatory Capture of State Agencies
45. Connect 700 Program
46. Data Privacy
47. MMB Management Analysis and Development Unit
48. Contract and Grant Management

Health

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- 50. Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board (EMSRB)
- 51. Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Oversight of Drinking Water
- 52. Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Indoor Ice Arena Rules
- 53. Pharmacy Benefit Managers
- 54. Health Care Access Fund
- 55. Board of Nursing
- 56. Board of Psychology
- 57. Medical Practices Board
- 58. Board of Behavioral Health and Therapy
- 59. Oversight of Nursing Homes
- 60. HIV/AIDS Programs and Services
- 61. Critical Incidents in Assisted Living Residences

Human Services

- 62. Refugee Resettlement Program
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- 64. County Health and Human Services Budgets
- 65. County Implementation of MnCHOICES
- 66. Disability Waivers
- 67. County-Based Purchasing vs. HMO-Provided Services
- 68. Behavioral Health Division
- 69. Adult Day Care
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Transportation

- 72. Metro Mobility
- 73. Safety of Metro Transit
- 74. Metro Transit Bus Operations
- 75. Metro Transit
- 76. Trunk Highway Funding
- 77. MnDOT Project Selection Process
- 78. MnDOT Highway User Tax Distribution Funds
- 79. MnDOT Contract and Employment Goals

Other

- 80. Board of Cosmetology
- 81. Charitable Gambling Administrative Expenses
- 82. Legacy Amendment Results
- 83. Department of Labor and Industry: Impact of Code and Permit Requirements
- 84. Department of Labor and Industry: Building Permit Fees
- 85. Legacy Spending on Children's Museums
- 86. Gambling Regulation and Oversight
- 87. Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC)
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Topic Selection Criteria

Used by the Legislative Audit Commission to Choose Evaluation Topics

1. **State Resources.** What state government resources are involved? (E.g., how much state money goes to this program?)
2. **State Control.** How much control does the state have over this program or activity? (E.g., do state, federal, or local laws regulate this program?)
3. **Impact.** Are significant social and/or economic impacts involved? (E.g., how many people are affected by this program?)
4. **Timeliness.** Is this an appropriate time for an evaluation? (E.g., is this program changing or have new procedures recently been implemented?)
5. **Feasibility.** Are data and resources available for an evaluation?
6. **Balance.** Would the topic contribute to a balanced work agenda? (E.g., has our office recently conducted an evaluation of this program?)



List of Recent OLA Program Evaluations 2011-2020, by Year

2020

Compensatory Education Revenue
Department of Human Rights: Complaint Resolution Process
DHS Oversight of Personal Care Assistance
Pesticide Regulation
Public Utilities Commission's Public Engagement Processes
Safety in State Correctional Facilities

2019

Debt Service Equalization for School Facilities
Economic Development and Housing Challenge Program
MnDOT Measures of Financial Effectiveness
Minnesota State Arts Board Grant Administration
Office of Minnesota Information Technology Services (MNIT)
Public Facilities Authority: Wastewater Infrastructure Programs

2018

Board of Animal Health's Oversight of Deer and Elk Farms
Early Childhood Programs
Fiscal Impact of Refugee Resettlement: An Assessment of Data Availability
Guardian ad Litem Program
Minnesota Investment Fund
Office of Health Facility Complaints
Voter Registration

2017

Clean Water Fund Outcomes
Home- and Community-Based Services: Financial Oversight
Minnesota State High School League
Minnesota Research Tax Credit
Perpich Center for Arts Education
Standardized Student Testing

2016

Agricultural Utilization Research Institute
Deer Population Management
Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB)
Mental Health Services in County Jails
Minnesota Department of Health Oversight of HMO Complaint Resolution
Minnesota Teacher Licensure
MnDOT Highway Project Selection

(Continued on back)

List of Recent OLA Program Evaluations 2011-2020, by Year (*Continued*)

2015

Managed Care Organizations' Administrative Expenses
Mineral Taxation
Minnesota Board of Nursing: Complaint Resolution Process
Minnesota Film and TV Board
Minnesota Health Insurance Exchange (MNsure)
Recycling and Waste Reduction
State Protections for Meatpacking Workers

2014

Agricultural Commodity Councils
Councils on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans, Black Minnesotans, Chicano/Latino People,
and Indian Affairs
DNR Forest Management
Health Services in State Correctional Facilities
Managed Care Organizations' Administrative Expenses
MnDOT Selection of Pavement Surface for Road Rehabilitation

2013

Conservation Easements
Law Enforcement's Use of State Databases
Medical Assistance Payment Rates for Dental Services
MnDOT Noise Barriers
Special Education
State Employee Union Fair Share Fee Calculations
State-Operated Human Services
Sustainable Forest Incentive Program

2012

Child Protection Screening
Consolidation of Local Governments
Fiscal Notes
Helping Communities Recover from Natural Disasters
Preventive Maintenance for University of Minnesota Buildings

2011

Civil Commitment of Sex Offenders
Environmental Review and Permitting
Governance of Transit in the Twin Cities Region
K-12 Online Learning
The Legacy Amendment
Medical Nonemergency Transportation

State of Minnesota
Legislative Audit Commission

**Proposed Schedule for 2020 Program Evaluation
Topic Selection Process**

February 12	First memo to legislators from LAC requesting topic suggestions
February 24	Reminder e-mail to legislators
February 28	Deadline for legislators to suggest topics to subcommittee
March 9	Subcommittee meeting to review suggested topics and narrow to 15 preliminary topics
March 16	Subcommittee meeting to review information about the preliminary topics and select 10 “semi-finalists” for survey
	OLA staff distribute legislative survey
<i>March 20</i>	<i>First legislative deadline</i>
<i>March 27</i>	<i>Second legislative deadline</i>
Week of March 30	Subcommittee meeting to select 5 topics to recommend for approval by commission
	Full commission meeting to approve topics for evaluation
<i>April 3</i>	<i>Third legislative deadline</i>
<i>April 3 – April 13</i>	<i>Easter/Passover break</i>

