

State of Minnesota
Legislative Audit Commission

2025 Fall Program Evaluation Topic Selection Process Proposal

This spring, the Legislative Audit Commission (LAC) voted to change the process for selecting program evaluation topics in order to maximize the usefulness of evaluation reports and Program Evaluation Division (PED) resources. Below is a comparison between the previous and current processes.

Process	Topic Selection Timeframe	Number of Topics Selected	Evaluation Scope	Evaluation Timeframe	Topic List	Legislative Survey
Previous	1 time per year, spring	5 to 6 per year	Typically, large; provide significant background and answer several research questions	Approximately 10 months: April-February	Collect topics all year, request topics from legislators during session; start new list every year	Complete during legislative session
Current	2 times per year, spring and fall	3 to 4 every six months	Variable; focus only on areas where OLA identifies that we can add value; narrow in some cases and broad in others	Variable; 6 months or less for narrowly scoped evaluations; 12 months or more for broadly scoped evaluations	Collect topics all year, request topics from legislators during session; maintain spring topics on fall list; start new list in spring	Complete during legislative session; use results to select topics in spring

Based on the process adopted and PED resources, we propose the following procedure for selecting topics in Fall 2025.

Meeting 1: OLA presents the Evaluation Subcommittee with a full list of evaluation topic suggestions. This list will include the entire list of topics from the spring selection cycle and all topic suggestions OLA has received since creating that list. The subcommittee will select up to six new topics to be considered for a program evaluation. These six topics will supplement the four topics that appeared on the spring legislative survey but were not recommended by the Evaluation Subcommittee to move forward.

Meeting 2: OLA provides the LAC with background papers for up to ten program evaluation topics. The Evaluation Subcommittee meets to select four evaluation topics to recommend to the full LAC. The LAC meets to approve the final program evaluation topics to begin in winter/spring 2026.