

SOUTHERN OHIO AGRICULTURAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

RULES PROCESS OF THE SOUTHERN OHIO AGRICULTURAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

Mission and Overview

Senate bill 192 created the Southern Ohio Agricultural and Community Development Foundation (SOACDF). Our mission is to help create and enhance economic opportunities for Ohio's tobacco farm families and rural communities. The Foundation is governed by a 16-member Board of Trustees and is entrusted to make grants or loans to individuals, public agencies, or privately owned companies to carry out the plan and to adopt rules under the Administrative Procedure Act regarding conflicts of interest in the making of grants or loans.

Foundation Purpose and Principals

The charge of the Foundation is to endeavor to replace the production of tobacco in Southern Ohio with the production of other agricultural products and to mitigate the adverse economic impact of reduced tobacco production in the region by preparing, implementing, and keeping current a plan to develop means for tobacco growers to grow other agricultural products voluntarily. The plan may include:

- Increasing the variety, quantity, and value of agricultural products other than tobacco that are produced in those parts of Ohio in which tobacco has traditionally been grown;
- Preserving agricultural land and soils in those same parts of Ohio;
- Making strategic investments in communities that will be affected by the reduction in the demand for tobacco;
- Providing education and training assistance to tobacco growers to help them make the transition out of tobacco production.

SOACDF's rule making process and how to give input

SOACDF's rule making process is consistent with the requirements found in section 119.03 of the Ohio Revised Code. However, in addition to those requirements, SOACDF may include interested parties in the rule drafting process prior to the initial filing.

SOACDF will send copies of proposed rules to organizations or associations believed to represent affected individuals in addition to anyone else who requests copies of proposed rules. Members of the public interested in receiving notice of proposed rules should contact the Executive Director of SOACDF at P.O. Box 47, Hillsboro, Ohio 45133 (Phone: 937-393-2700).

After proposed rules are initially filed and notice is provided to interested parties, SOACDF will accept and consider comments, preferably in writing, from interested parties regarding the proposed rules throughout the rulemaking process.

Interested parties are encouraged to attend the public hearing held for the purpose of soliciting comments and suggestions. Although the public hearing presents a unique opportunity for interested parties to formally present their comments in person to representatives of SOACDF, comments may be submitted in writing prior to or during the hearing. All written and oral comments will be considered part of the official record.

Although the nature of the rule making process sometimes makes it difficult for an agency to incorporate suggestions offered late in the process and still comply with statutory deadlines, SOACDF will continue to consider comments submitted after the public hearing. However, comments offered after the hearing should be submitted as quickly as possible to give SOACDF an opportunity to fully consider and review the comments.

In addition to providing input throughout the entire rulemaking process, individuals with questions about particular rules or the rule making process in general should feel free to call the person identified as the SOACDF contact on the rule summary and fiscal analysis forms.

Lastly, upon filing a rule in a final form, SOACDF will send a copy of the rules to known interested parties and anyone else who has requested to be placed on the mailing list described above.