



Guide to Rule-Making

This guide, required by Ohio Revised Code 119.0311, is intended to help members of the public who participate, or may wish to participate, in the rule-making process of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA).

Rule-making Requirements and Authorization

The Ohio Revised Code (ORC) requires and authorizes Ohio EPA to adopt administrative rules. Rules are adopted pursuant to Chapter 119 and section 111.15 of the ORC, which become part of the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC).

What is a rule?

A rule is a regulation or standard, having a general and uniform operation, which is adopted, promulgated and enforced by any agency under the authority of the laws governing such agency.

Rule-making Process

The rule-making process may be lengthy and complex, but in general, there are standard steps involved in the adoption of rules at Ohio EPA.

Drafting, Review, and Early Stakeholder Outreach

The first step in the rule-making process is for Ohio EPA to identify that a rule needs to be amended, rescinded, or created. There are many different reasons to change a rule, some include a quick change, (e.g., incorrect rule reference), a limited rule change (e.g., difficulties with interpretation or application), a full ORC 106.02 review (five-year review) and changes to state or federal law.

Ohio EPA has added an additional step to ensure stakeholders are brought into the rule process as early as possible. This additional outreach and request for information will allow for early feedback before the rule language has been developed by the agency. The notifications may be different for the type of rule changes necessary.

[For quick changes and limited rule changes](#)

The notification will identify the rule and the problem, contain a link to the current rule and provide information on how to comment.

Ohio EPA's Mission

Ohio EPA's goal is to protect the environment and public health by ensuring compliance with environmental laws and demonstrating leadership in environmental stewardship.

Ohio EPA's Vision

The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency is a trusted leader and environmental steward using innovation, quality service and public involvement to ensure a safe and healthy environment for all Ohioans.

Agency Organization

Ohio EPA has six major program divisions that implement Ohio's environmental regulations:

Air Pollution Control

614.644.2270 | epa.ohio.gov/dapc

Drinking and Ground Waters

614.644.2752 | epa.ohio.gov/ddagw

Environmental Response and Revitalization

614.644.2924 | epa.ohio.gov/derr

Environmental and Financial Assistance

614.644.2798 | epa.ohio.gov/defa

Materials and Waste Management

614.644.2621 | epa.ohio.gov/dmwm

Surface Water

614.644.2001 | epa.ohio.gov/dsw

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[For full ORC 106.02 reviews](#)

The notification will identify the rule, link to the current rule, and provide information on how to comment. If problems with the current rule or concepts on how the rule will be changed have already been identified by Ohio EPA, these may be included in the notification. If the intent is to file the rules as no-change, then this will be identified in the notification.

[For changes to state or federal laws](#)

The notification will identify the rule, include the federal or state law that is creating the need for the rule change, link to the current rule and provide information on how to comment.

[For other changes not covered by one of the above scenarios](#)

The notification will provide the best information necessary to allow the stakeholders to comment on the rule.

This notification is not considered an action of the director and would not be public noticed. This is considered an early courtesy to those interested parties that have already signed up to receive rule notifications. The notifications will include a deadline for submitting comments and will ask the commenters for feedback to assist the divisions in filling out the Business Impact Analysis required by the Common Sense Initiative Office (CSIO) process.

If any comments are received, Ohio EPA will consider those comments when drafting the rule changes. Ohio EPA will not create an official response to comments for these comments. If Ohio EPA feels additional outreach with stakeholders is necessary, the agency may hold stakeholder meetings, send out additional questions to stakeholders or create external advisory groups. This process does not suggest that Ohio EPA is required to send out drafts or negotiate rule language with stakeholders.

Interested Party Review

The interested party review process is designed to allow interested parties, stakeholders or citizens to make comments regarding the rule prior to adoption. Ohio EPA conducts the interested party review prior to filing the proposed rule with JCARR. JCARR's primary function is to review rules in accordance with Ohio's laws. JCARR, part of the Ohio Legislature, consists of five State Representatives and five State Senators.

Once the draft rule is completed, it is posted on Ohio EPA's website along with the completed Business Impact Analysis. Interested parties are notified that the draft is available for review. A deadline for submitting comments is set by Ohio EPA. This timeframe is normally 30 days but may be lengthened or shortened as needed.

Interested parties may register to receive notification through the State of Ohio's Rules E-Notification System at business.ohio.gov/reform or through Ohio EPA's listservs at epa.ohio.gov/find-regulations. Once registered, individuals will receive notices and communications regarding the creation, amendment, rescission, or continuation without change of any rule.

Consider Interested Party Comments

Ohio EPA collects, reviews, and considers each relevant comment, concern, or question received during the draft review period. Based on the comments received, Ohio EPA may revise the draft rules as appropriate. The time needed to review and incorporate the comments received varies depending on the complexity of the comments.

Submission of the Business Impact Analysis

Ohio EPA is required to send this analysis to the CSIO. CSIO has two options for the Business Impact Analysis:

- Prepare and send recommendations to Ohio EPA for eliminating or reducing adverse impacts.
- Allow 16 days to pass without preparing and sending recommendations.

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If a recommendation is received from the CSIO, Ohio EPA will respond to the recommendations and work with the CSIO to resolve the issues. If 16 days pass, the rules can be original filed with JCARR.

Propose Rules to JCARR

When the draft rule is complete, it is filed with JCARR, the Secretary of State, and the Legislative Service Commission (LSC). The Secretary of State maintains copy of the proposed rule. LSC reviews the proposed rule to ensure that it is properly formatted and codified.

When the rule has been filed with JCARR, it is called a “proposed rule.” Ohio EPA submits a Rule Summary and Fiscal Analysis (RSFA), Environmental Amendment/Adoption Form, and the Business Impact Analysis with the proposed rule. These forms answer many questions regarding the content of the proposed rule, the legal basis for the rule, the environmental justification, the adverse impacts to business, the estimated budgetary effect of the proposed rule and the estimated cost of compliance by all directly affected persons.

The proposal to JCARR starts the 65-day JCARR jurisdiction. Within the first 31 to 40 days of that jurisdiction, Ohio EPA will hold a public hearing to provide an opportunity for anyone to provide written or oral testimony on the rule.

Public Notice, Comment Period, and Hearing

When the rule is proposed, Ohio EPA public notices the proposal and begins the formal public comment period. The public comment period usually ends on the day of the public hearing. Ohio EPA conducts public hearings for all new, amended, and rescinded rules. A public hearing is the public’s opportunity to provide oral testimony for the record. Those who choose not to provide oral testimony are encouraged to submit their comments in writing. Ohio EPA considers all relevant comments when deciding whether to adopt, amend, or rescind a rule. Public hearing notices are posted in Ohio EPA’s Weekly Review, on the Register of Ohio’s website (registerofohio.state.oh.us) and Ohio EPA’s website at epa.ohio.gov/home/news-and-events/all-events.

Consider Public Comments

Written and oral comments received during the public comment period receive the same consideration. Ohio EPA carefully reviews all submitted comments and may revise the proposed rule as appropriate. These comments become part of the Hearing Summary that is submitted to JCARR.

JCARR Hearing and Jurisdiction

JCARR has 65 days to review new, amended and rescinded rules and 90 days to review no-change rules. JCARR can make a recommendation to invalidate all or part of the rule if it makes any of the following findings:

- The rule exceeds the scope of the agency's statutory authority.
- The rule conflicts with the legislative intent of the statute under which it is proposed.
- The rule conflicts with another proposed or existing rule.
- The rule incorporates a text or other material by reference and either the citation does not reasonably make the material readily available without charge or the agency incorrectly determined under division (B) of ORC 121.75 that the material was exempt from statutory requirements governing incorporation by reference (ORC 121.71 to 121.74).
- The agency has failed to prepare a complete and accurate rule summary and fiscal analysis of the rule as required by ORC 106.024.
- If the rule has an adverse impact on business (ORC 107.52), the agency has failed to demonstrate through the business impact analysis, recommendations from the Common Sense Initiative office, and the agency's memorandum of response, that the regulatory intent of the rule justifies its adverse impact on business.

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- If the agency is subject to ORC 121.95, 121.951, 121.952, and 121.953, the agency has failed to justify the proposed adoption, amendment, or rescission of a rule containing a regulatory restriction.
- The rule implements a federal law or rule in a manner that is more stringent or burdensome than the federal law or rule requires.

Finalize the Rule

Following the 65-day JCARR jurisdiction, the director of Ohio EPA adopts the rule and establishes the date the rule becomes effective. Once the rule is adopted, it is subject to appeal. The adoption of the final rule is public noticed in the Register of Ohio at registerofohio.state.oh.us and in Ohio EPA's Weekly Review.

Emergency Rules

In extraordinary circumstances, Ohio EPA may bypass most of this procedure and adopt emergency rules. This requires an order of the governor finding that an emergency exists and suspending the normal procedural requirements of ORC Chapter 119. Emergency rules automatically expire after 180 days, unless, in the interim, the agency has gone through the normal Chapter 119 rule-making procedure.

Public Involvement

There are many opportunities for the public to participate in the rule-making process. Some of the simplest, and most effective ways, are described here.

- Sign up for the interested party list at epa.ohio.gov/find-regulations to receive notification of rule-making activities.
- Sign up for the State of Ohio's Rules E-Notification System at business.ohio.gov/reform. Once registered, you will be notified electronically about agency rule actions. The E-Notification System notifies interested parties and allows comment feedback during the executive order review of rules for selected state agencies. This notification and comment feedback period will be conducted in concert with Ohio EPA's established interested party review period.
- Review and comment on draft rules.
- Review the rule proposal and public hearing notices.
- Attend Ohio EPA and JCARR public hearings.

Resources

- Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review - jcarr.state.oh.us
- E-Notification System - business.ohio.gov/reform
- Ohio EPA Rules and Laws - epa.ohio.gov/find-regulations
- Register of Ohio - registerofohio.state.oh.us
- Common Sense Initiative Office - governor.ohio.gov/priorities/common-sense-initiative/welcome/common-sense-initiative

Contact

For more information, contact Ohio EPA's Rules Coordinator, Mandi Payton at amanda.payton@epa.ohio.gov or 614.644.3134. If your question concerns a particular rule or technical requirement, please contact the appropriate division listed on the first page of this fact sheet.