

**Summary of [Act 144](#) (H.754), An act relating to restructuring and reorganizing
General Assembly staff offices**

*Prepared by Jennifer Carbee, Office of Legislative Counsel
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Sec. 1. Sergeant at Arms (2 V.S.A. chapter 3)

- Requires Sergeant at Arms to execute orders from the Joint Legislative Management Committee (JLMC), in addition to those of the Rules Committees and of either house
- Directs Sergeant at Arms and his/her employees to seek guidance from JLMC and operate in accordance with its policies
- New positions require JLMC approval
- All employees of Sergeant at Arms are subject to JLMC personnel policies
- Sergeant at Arms must propose budget to JLMC
- Sergeant at Arms, in consultation with Chief of Capitol Police Department, must prepare, maintain, and update at least biennially a strategic plan for the Capitol Police Department, subject to JLMC review and approval

Sec. 2. Office of Legislative Counsel (2 V.S.A. chapter 13)

- Revises spelling – “Office of Legislative Council” becomes “Office of Legislative Counsel”
- Updates language of chapter to reflect current duties of the Office
- Eliminates Legislative Council Committee and puts Office of Legislative Counsel under JLMC oversight
- Establishes position of Director and Chief Counsel, hired by JLMC
- New positions require JLMC approval
- All employees of Office of Legislative Counsel are subject to JLMC personnel policies
- Director and Chief Counsel must propose budget to JLMC

Sec. 3. Joint Legislative Management Committee (2 V.S.A. chapter 2)

- Adds to JLMC’s existing duties coordination of operations of Office of Legislative Operations
- Specifies functions of JLMC:
 - Prepare proposed budget for Legislative Branch, including budget for each office
 - Approve requests for new, permanent positions in staff offices for inclusion in proposed Legislative Branch budget
 - Approve reallocation of existing positions among staff offices
 - Approve and adopt policies to apply across Legislative Branch, including compensation and benefits plans, personnel policies and IT policies
 - Attend to other relevant management and oversight matters

Sec. 4. JLMC; conclusion of initial terms

- Moves from statute to session law provision specifying that the terms of JLMC members appointed in 2019 will end in January 2021 when new appointments are made

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Sec. 5. Joint Fiscal Committee; Joint Fiscal Office (2 V.S.A. chapter 15)

- Creates separate subchapters for Joint Fiscal Committee (JFC) and Joint Fiscal Office (JFO)
- Eliminates JFC role in oversight of JFO and puts JFO under JLMC oversight, except that JFC hires the Chief Fiscal Officer and establishes prioritization for JFO's work
- Establishes position of Chief Fiscal Officer, hired by JFC
- New positions require JLMC approval
- All JFO employees are subject to JLMC personnel policies
- Updates language of chapter to reflect current duties of JFO, including:
 - nonpartisan research and administrative services of a fiscal nature to certain committees as JFC direction, including the Institutions Committees, and services to other committees and members to the extent practicable
 - fiscal and budget assistance to JLMC and to other legislative offices
- Chief Fiscal Officer must propose JFO budget to JLMC

Sec. 6. Office of Human Resources (2 V.S.A. chapter 14)

- Creates Office of Human Resources to provide nonpartisan human resources services and establishes position of Director of Human Resources, hired by JLMC
- New positions require JLMC approval
- All Office of Human Resources employees are subject to JLMC personnel policies
- Specifies Office of Human Resources' duties, including:
 - Developing, in consultation with heads of other offices, compensation and benefits plans and personnel policies for legislative offices and employees for JLMC approval and providing advice, guidance, and technical assistance in administration of the plans and policies
 - Providing training on topics such as prevention of harassment and discrimination, implicit bias, time management, other workplace issues
 - Providing job recruitment services to other legislative offices
 - Providing performance evaluation services to other legislative offices
 - Providing advice and guidance to legislative employees, supervisors, legislators on labor and employment laws, policies, and practices
 - Coordinating legislative internship opportunities, including registering interns and developing and implementing internship policies and procedures
 - Developing processes for investigating and resolving disputes and other interpersonal issues involving legislators or legislative employees, or both
 - Investigating and resolving, and providing guidance and assistance with investigating and resolving, employee disputes and other personnel matters
 - Providing guidance and assistance with investigating and resolving conflicts involving legislators
- Director of Human Resources must propose budget for Office of Human Resources to JLMC

Sec. 7. Office of Legislative Operations (2 V.S.A. chapter 16)

- Creates Office of Legislative Operations to provide nonpartisan operational, financial, committee support, and other administrative services and support JLMC
- Establishes position of Director of Legislative Operations, hired by JLMC
- New positions require JLMC approval

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- All Office of Legislative Operations employees are subject to JLMC personnel policies
- Specifies Office of Legislative Operations' duties:
 - Providing administrative support to JLMC and to other legislative committees
 - Providing payroll, billing, and expense reimbursement services to legislators and, as needed, to other legislative offices and legislative employees
 - Providing other administrative and operational services as needed to support legislators, legislative offices, and legislative employees
- Director of Office of Legislative Operations must propose budget to JLMC

Sec. 8. Office of Legislative Information Technology (2 V.S.A. chapter 21)

- Creates Office of Legislative Information Technology to provide information technology (IT) resources and nonpartisan technology-related services
- Establishes Director of Legislative Information Technology, hired by JLMC
- New positions require JLMC approval
- All Office of Legislative Information Technology employees are subject to JLMC personnel policies
- Eliminates Legislative Information Technology Committee and puts Office of Legislative Information Technology under JLMC oversight
- Specifies Office of Legislative Information Technology's duties:
 - Design, support, and maintain General Assembly's information systems;
 - Provide hardware, software, and customer support to legislators and legislative staff to enable them to fulfill their professional responsibilities
 - Ensure legislative records created, received, stored, or transmitted using IT are maintained in accordance with General Assembly's recordkeeping requirements
- Requires Director of Legislative Information Technology, in consultation with others, to prepare, maintain, and update at least biennially a long-range strategic plan for IT operations and services in the Legislative Branch, for JLMC review and approval
- Director of Office of Legislative Information Technology must propose budget to JLMC

Sec. 9. Joint Information Technology Oversight Committee (JITOC) (2 V.S.A. § 614)

- Adds to JITOC's charge providing periodic advice on legislative IT issues
- Allows JITOC to provide advice to Director of Legislative Information Technology and JLMC as appropriate regarding matters related to legislative IT

Secs. 10 and 11. Redesignations

- Secs. 10 and 11(a) move a section relating to parking enforcement in the Capitol Complex and on other State lands from 2 V.S.A. § 71 (Sergeant at Arms chapter) to 29 V.S.A. § 191 (Capitol Complex chapter)
- Sec. 11(b) moves a section providing authority, per diem compensation, and reimbursement of expenses for standing committees to meet during legislative adjournment from 2 V.S.A. § 406 (Office of Legislative Counsel chapter) to 2 V.S.A. § 23 (JLMC chapter)
- Sec. 11(c) moves a section on JFO's creation of a biennial report on basic needs budgets from 2 V.S.A. § 505 (JFC subchapter) to 2 V.S.A. § 526 (JFO subchapter)

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- Sec. 11(d) moves a section on contracts for Internet service from 2 V.S.A. § 754 (now-repealed Legislative Information Technology Committee chapter) to 2 V.S.A. § 705 (Office of Legislative Information Technology chapter)

Secs. 12 – 31. Conforming Revisions

- Sec. 12 directs the Office of Legislative Counsel to revise the V.S.A. supplements and replacement volumes as needed for consistency with the act, including changing the spelling of “Legislative Council” to “Legislative Counsel” and replacing cross-references to redesignated sections as appropriate
- Secs. 13-31 replace references to “Legislative Council” with “Legislative Counsel” and “Office of Legislative Operations,” as appropriate; correct statutory cross-references to redesignated sections; and make similar conforming revisions

Sec. 32. Continuation of Existing Rules and Policies

- Directs JLMC to continue to apply the rules and policies of the Joint Rules Committee, Legislative Council Committee, Joint Fiscal Committee, and Legislative Information Technology in effect on July 1, 2020 governing the operations of the respective legislative offices until JLMC adopts its own rules and policies to govern the operations of those offices

Sec. 33. Repeal

- Repeals chapter on Legislative Information Technology Committee

Sec. 34. Effective date

- Act took effect on July 1, 2020