

2021 *Legislative Fellowship Program*

PAID, full-time, professional, 13-month experience for college graduates



The Ohio Legislative Service Commission
www.lsc.ohio.gov

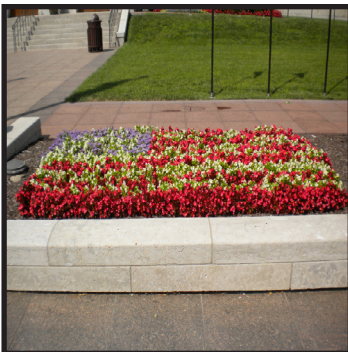
The Ohio Legislative Service Commission

2021 Legislative Fellowship Program

2020-2021

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Program introduction

The Ohio General Assembly, through the Ohio Legislative Service Commission (LSC), has sponsored a legislative fellowship program for over 50 years, now with

over 1,000 alumni. This unique program provides participants of all ages, backgrounds, and experiences with an introduction to state government and promotes careers in public service.

Traditionally, 20 fellows are assigned to work with members of the Ohio General Assembly, two with Ohio Government Telecommunications (OGT)/The Ohio Channel, and one or two with the LSC research or fiscal staff. The program objectives are to:

- Encourage outstanding college graduates to pursue careers in public service;
- Provide practical experience in the legislative process and legislative research;
- Develop a group of trained personnel from which persons may be recruited for permanent staff positions;
- Provide staff assistance to Ohio's elected officials.



"There is nothing like the Fellowship. The days literally fly by in the best way possible. Even though the year ends in a blink, the experience is truly rewarding. With all the amazing people you meet and the memories you can make every day, the Fellowship is an incredible opportunity."

Maggie O'Shea, 2015 LSC Fellow

B.A. English, The Ohio State University

J.D., The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law

Who should apply

Those who have an interest in public service, government, and/or the political system are encouraged to apply to the program, regardless of their college major or prior experience. Successful applicants are generally motivated by the opportunity to broaden their perspectives, gain practical experience, and have time for reflection regarding future career goals.

Fellow duties

LSC fellows engage in numerous activities and are given a variety of responsibilities. Specific duties depend on a fellow's assignment; however, most fellows perform some common duties. One of the primary responsibilities of most fellows is to assist legislators with constituent work. Constituent work requires fellows to assist the residents of a member's district when they have a problem or concern that involves a state issue or state program.

In addition to constituent work, fellows' duties usually include writing assignments such as press releases, newsletters, speeches, and committee memorandums. Fellows also may be asked to research public policy issues or legislation, and attend committees and other meetings.

Occasionally, a fellow may be asked to travel to a member's district for events and/or meetings. Fellows also assist with various office and administrative duties. These may include, but are not limited to, database maintenance, scheduling, filing, and office correspondence.

Assignments

Twenty fellows are assigned to work in the Ohio Senate or the Ohio House of Representatives, though some may focus on communications work in caucus communications departments. These fellows normally engage in the previously described duties.

One or two fellows work directly for the nonpartisan LSC. Their duties may include researching legislative issues and drafting legislation or providing fiscal services. These fellows also monitor floor sessions of the Ohio House.



Finally, two fellows work with OGT/The Ohio Channel. These fellows operate cameras for broadcasting legislative sessions and assist with other studio and field productions. Please contact LSC for additional information describing the specific duties of the two OGT positions. The application deadline and requirements for the OGT positions are different from the legislative positions.

Seminars

In addition to their daily responsibilities, the fellows participate in monthly seminars designed to expand upon an issue or aspect of the state. Seminars may have various formats and have included visits to state facilities, meetings with state officials, and exploration of industries and issues around the state.

Qualifications

Applicants must submit all application materials by the **April 1, 2020**, and have completed at least a bachelor's degree program by December 2020.

Persons with graduate or law degrees also may apply. There are no requirements placed on major fields of study except for the two fellows assigned to OGT/The Ohio Channel, who must have a media production or related degree.

Most successful applicants have a strong academic record, and all have excellent written and oral communication skills.

Residents and nonresidents of the state of Ohio may apply. Prior political involvement or participation in a political party is not required.

"Through the Fellowship, I was able to gain a deeper understanding of the inner workings of state government, and it equipped me with necessary skills to succeed in a career in public service and policy. The Fellowship was also a great way to network and meet a lot of interesting people. I would highly recommend the program."

Vincent Coleman, 2016 LSC Fellow
B.A. International Relations & Political Science
University of Cincinnati



Benefits

LSC fellows are paid \$33,800 annually with an opportunity to earn an additional bonus of up to \$2,000 upon completion of the program. Fellows receive sick leave, personal leave, vacation leave, and paid holidays, and at the discretion of LSC, may receive compensatory time off for overtime worked.

Fellows are immediately eligible to participate in the health care plan offered by the state and, after one year of continuous state service, are eligible for dental and vision coverage.

All fellows must participate in the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System. Deductions made on behalf of the retirement system are refundable, according to current federal law and state regulations, upon termination of state employment.

Future employment

The Fellowship program provides full-time, temporary employment lasting for 13 months. Two of the objectives of the program, however, are to “develop a group of trained personnel from which persons may be recruited for permanent staff positions” and to “encourage outstanding college graduates to pursue careers in public service.”

The program has been successful in meeting these objectives. Although no promises can be

made to any fellow regarding employment with the General Assembly or the state of Ohio following the program, many fellows are employed by state, local, or federal government agencies upon completion of their fellowships. Frequently, fellows are offered permanent positions with the General Assembly as legislative staff and as legislative liaisons for various state agencies. In the private sector, fellows have obtained employment with lobbying or public relations firms.

A directory of former fellows and their current professions is available on our website at www.lsc.ohio.gov/fellowship.



Application procedures

To be considered for the 2021 program, application materials must be submitted on or before April 1, 2020. The required materials include each of the following items:

- a 2021 Legislative Application;
- a resumé;
- transcript(s) from each college or university attended (for more than one quarter or semester);



“I gained so much from the Fellowship experience. I gained an understanding and perspective on state government in Ohio that will benefit me throughout my career. I gained confidence in my abilities as I entered my professional life. But most importantly, I gained friendships and fostered relationships that have continued on after my Fellowship experience ended.”

Andy Shaffer, 2017 LSC Fellow

B.A. Finance, Miami University

J.D. Capital University Law School

- a reference sheet with the names and email addresses of two individuals who will submit letters of recommendation; and
- a carefully edited two- to four-page typewritten personal statement.



Each reference will be asked to submit a letter of recommendation. Typically, letters of recommendation are written by persons familiar with your academic work, employment experience, and/or extracurricular activities. **Applicants are requested not to request letters of recommendation from elected public officials unless they were employed by those officials and the recommendation relates directly to work performance.**

Personal interviews are conducted with selected applicants during the months of April and May. Every effort is made to complete the selection process by

the end of May. Those initially selected as fellows will be offered positions contingent on the satisfactory completion of a background check conducted with the applicant's prior approval.

Orientation program

The successful applicants will start their fellowship the first week of December 2020. A seven-day orientation program may include discussions of the legislative process; meetings with legislators, other elected officials, and staff; exercises in legislative research; workshops on useful skills and resources; and tours of state government offices and facilities.

Informational tours

LSC offers informational tours on most Mondays and Fridays in late January through March. These brief sessions provide detailed information about the program, which may assist individuals in deciding whether or not to apply for a fellowship position. The tours also provide an opportunity for prospective applicants to meet program staff and current fellows, and to see the Vern Riffe Center and the Statehouse. To sign up for a tour, contact program assistant Stefanie Thurman after the first of the year at (614) 644-1326.

"Being an LSC Fellow opened so many doors for me. I had access to opportunities and experiences that I wouldn't have had if not for the program - experiences that helped me grow immensely both professionally and personally. I also now have a network of people who were fellows either with me or in previous years who I connect with on a regular basis and help me on my path."

**Carla Carvalho, 2018 LSC Fellow
B.S.W., M.B.A., & M.S.W.
Florida State University**



Frequently Asked Questions

What if I am scheduled to graduate in December?

Applicants graduating in December are eligible to apply for the program; the only requirement is that you must be able to attend the majority of the orientation program during the first week and a half of December.

Do I have to be a recent college graduate to apply?

It does not matter when you received your undergraduate degree; we just require that you have one to be eligible for the program.

Will it hurt my chances of becoming a fellow if I do not attend an informational tour?

Not at all. The visits are meant to be informal and helpful in gaining more information about the program. They give you an opportunity to meet with current fellows and administrators and ask them questions, but we do not want anyone to unnecessarily miss work or class to come for a visit. If it is convenient for you, please schedule a visit.



"The Fellowship granted me the space to not only learn more about state government but also make life-long connections with people I never thought I would come into contact with. I can say with confidence that the various skills I've learned and developed during my time as a fellow will benefit my professional career and personal life in the future."

Gabrielle Woodberry, 2019 LSC Fellow
B.A. Criminal Justice & Spanish
The Ohio State University

Will you accept more than the required two letters of recommendation?

We will not accept more than the two letters of recommendation that we ask for, so please only have two submitted.

Is there a particular way the letters should be written and/or addressed? Can they be emailed and/or faxed to your office?

There is no particular way we would like the letters to be written; however, we do require that the letters be uploaded by the recommender.

Is there a particular way the personal statement should be written?

You have free rein to write on whatever you would like; we just require that the personal statement be at least two pages but no more than four pages long. It can be single or double spaced. We will use it to evaluate your writing skills.

Do I need to fill out an Ohio civil service application?

No, the Legislative Service Commission does not accept civil service applications.

What are the required work hours? Will I have to work overtime? Will I have time to have a second job or attend classes after work?

The required work hours are 8:30 to 5:00, Monday through Friday. Depending on the activity of the General Assembly, you may be asked to work late hours or to come in early. Fellows may receive some compensatory time for additional time worked beyond the 40 hours in a week. In the past, some fellows have secured part-time jobs or attended evening classes, with the understanding that their first priority is their commitment to the Fellowship program, requiring them to keep their evenings flexible.

What is the application process for the media production fellowship?

Two media production fellows are hired to work with Ohio Government Telecommunications (OGT)/The Ohio Channel. Applicants must have a media production-related degree or previous television production experience. A separate application is required and can be obtained from the LSC website or from the State of Ohio employment website (<https://careers.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/careers/>). The media production deadline is May 31. Applicants may apply to both programs.



Applicants needing an accommodation to participate in the application process, Statehouse tour, or interviews should contact the office listed below. Application materials may be obtained from the LSC website or from the State of Ohio employment website.

**Ohio Legislative Service Commission
Fellowship Program
Vern Riffe Center
77 S. High Street, Ninth Floor
Columbus, OH 43215-6136
www.lsc.ohio.gov
(614) 466-3615**

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