**Budget and Account Administration**

**Budget**

Subject to availability of funds, each joint committee created by joint proclamation under the provisions of S.C.R. 11 is potentially eligible for a funding allocation from Texas Legislative Council appropriations that have been reserved for joint study committees. Council funding is not available for a joint committee created by statute unless it is specified in the statute and funds for this purpose are appropriated to the council.

**Budget Proposal.** Under the provisions of S.C.R. 11, the chair, or co-chairs acting jointly, of each joint committee seeking funding must submit a proposal for budget and staffing to the lieutenant governor and speaker within four weeks of the creation of the committee. The proposal must be submitted on the Joint Select Committee Budget and Staffing Form.

Certain staff support and other services are available at no charge to the committee. The budget request should include only those services for which the committee will incur a charge. Before developing a budget proposal, read the section on Committee Staffing and Contracts for more information on staffing and contract issues and the Administrative Support section for more information on administrative and support services.

**Budget and Staffing Form.** The Joint Select Committee Budget and Staffing Form must be used to submit a proposed committee budget.

***Item 1-Salaries.*** Under Item 1 on the budget form, list a total amount for all salaried committee staff proposed to be placed on the Texas Legislative Council payroll and paid from the council funds reserved for joint study committees. A corresponding Item 1 on the second page of the form provides space to itemize the staff and salaries included in this total.

Under the terms of S.C.R. 11, joint committees must use, to the greatest extent possible, existing legislative staff resources, and the budget request should not include staff on senate, house, or other legislative agency payrolls who are being used by the committee. Before developing a budget proposal, read the section on Committee Staffing and Contracts for more information on staffing restrictions, requirements, and procedures.

***Item 2-Contracts.*** Item 2 should include any staff, consultants, or expert witnesses whose services are proposed to be provided under contract. A corresponding Item 2 on the second page of the form provides space to describe the staff, consultant, and expert witness expenditures included in this total. Before developing a budget proposal, read the section on Committee Staffing and Contracts for more information on staffing and contract requirements and procedures.

***Item 3-Telephones.*** A joint committee headquartered with a senate, house, or other legislative office may choose to rely on existing telephone lines and equipment. Incremental costs will be absorbed by the office, as charges incurred by the committee cannot be segregated. A committee anticipating heavy telephone use may wish instead to seek approval for a separate installation. Before developing a budget proposal, read about Telephones in the Administrative Support section for more information.

***Item 4-Supplies and Purchasing.*** In order for routine office supplies and other purchases to be reimbursable from the committee’s budget and treated as a commitment of state funds, joint committees must make such purchases through the Texas Legislative Council. A committee may not independently obtain supplies or services or make purchases from outside or unauthorized sources. Before developing a budget proposal, read about Supplies and Purchasing in the Administrative Support section for more information.

***Item 5-Photocopying and Duplication.*** Before developing a budget proposal, read about Photocopying, Duplication, and Printing in the Administrative Support section for more information.

***Item 6-Printing of Final Report.*** A committee may have its final report printed by a legislative resource, such as the council print shop, Senate Publications and Printing, or House Reproduction, or by a nonlegislative resource, which will require soliciting bids for competitive pricing. Item 6 contains spaces to indicate whether the chair or co-chairs intend to have the report printed by the Texas Legislative Council or elsewhere. Before developing a budget proposal, read about Photocopying, Duplication, and Printing in the Administrative Support section for more information.

***Item 7-Mailings.*** Before developing a budget proposal, read about Mail and Messengers in the Administrative Support section for more information.

***Item 8-Travel Reimbursement.*** Travel expenses should include travel reimbursement for senate, house, and citizen members who are appointed by the lieutenant governor or speaker and for staff whose salaries are included within the committee’s approved budget. Other state employees or officials who travel with a joint committee are eligible for travel reimbursement by their employers under provisions of the General Appropriations Act. Citizen members appointed to a committee by the governor are reimbursed by the governor’s office under S.C.R. 11.

Citizen members of subcommittees or advisory panels, if not also members of the full committee, are ineligible for travel reimbursement. Legislators serving on subcommittees or advisory panels are entitled to travel reimbursement regardless of their membership on the full committee. The committee reimburses the senate and house of representatives for this expense only if the approved budget includes funds for this purpose.

Before developing a budget proposal, read about Travel in the Administrative Support section for more information on travel reimbursement eligibility, budgetary responsibility, and reimbursement rates.

***Item 9-Special Outlays.*** When necessary to meet sound system needs and comply with taping requirements, a committee may need to rent a site for a meeting held outside Austin. Item 9 should be used to budget for this purpose. Other expenses that would be included in Item 9 are books and other publications, furniture, and equipment. Before developing a budget proposal, read about Special Outlays in the Administrative Support section for more information on meeting sites outside Austin.

***Item 10-Authority to Approve Expenditures.*** The committee is asked in Item 10 to designate one or two individuals authorized to approve expenditures. This may be the chair, one or both co-chairs, an aide from the senate or house, or another committee staff person. The designee or designees are responsible for signing contracts, purchase requisitions, travel vouchers, and other forms authorizing expenditures from the committee’s budget. In the absence of committee rules to the contrary, approval must be provided by the chair or co-chairs if no one is designated to approve expenses.

*Signatures.* The completed form must be signed at the bottom of the first page by the chair or both co-chairs. The lieutenant governor and the speaker must review and approve the budget. A space for their signatures is provided at the bottom of the form.

***Page 2-Budget Detail.*** As noted above, Items 1 and 2 on page two of the form provide space for more detailed information on the proposed salaries and contracts. Item 3 provides space for any other clarifications or justifications regarding the budget and staffing proposal.

**Submission and Approval.** Copies of the completed form must be submitted, together with any supplemental information that the chair or co-chairs may wish to add, to the lieutenant governor, the speaker, and the executive director of the Texas Legislative Council. Page two of the form contains space for clarifications regarding the budget request. Alternatively, the committee may attach a letter or memorandum.

If a joint committee continues through more than one fiscal year, a new budget must be submitted for each fiscal year.

**Account Administration**

On receipt of an approved joint committee budget, the Texas Legislative Council’s accounting office will establish an account from which expenditures for salaries, contracts, administration, and travel are to be made. No expenses will be processed until an approved budget is received in the accounting office.

The committee chair or co-chairs are responsible for the exercise of fiscal control to ensure that committee spending is in accordance with the approved budget. The accounting office will issue monthly reports comparing cumulative expenditures to the joint committee’s budget. These reports can be anticipated between the 10th and 20th day of each month and will be current as of the last day of the preceding month, assuming travel voucher submissions are timely.

**Gifts, Grants, and Donations**

A joint committee created pursuant to resolution, including a joint committee created under S.C.R. 11, may accept gifts, grants, and donations to fund or support committee activities. State law requires acceptance by a majority of the voting members of the committee in an open meeting ([Section 301.032, Government Code](http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/GV/htm/GV.301.htm#301.032)). Acceptance must be recorded in the minutes, which must include the name of the donor and the purpose of the gift, grant, or donation. A committee may confer with the Texas Legislative Council’s legal division to determine whether an offering falls within a category to which the statute applies.

A monetary gift, grant, or donation is to be forwarded to the council’s accounting office, together with a signed copy of the minutes from the meeting at which acceptance occurred. The money will be combined with other council funds, and the accounting office will be responsible for keeping the committee informed of amounts spent and encumbered and for ensuring that expenditures are in keeping with the purpose of the contribution as reflected in the minutes.

Any portion of a monetary gift, grant, or donation remaining unused and unencumbered after a committee’s expiration will be transferred in equal proportions to the accounts of the senate and house of representatives unless otherwise provided by the grantor or donor.